

THE NOBLE ELITE IN THE COUNTY OF KÖRÖS (KRIŽEVCI) 1400 - 1526

by
Tamás Pálosfalvi

Submitted to
Central European University
Department of Medieval Studies

in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Supervisor: Gábor Klaniczay

Budapest, Hungary
2012

Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION.....	5
1.1. JUSTIFICATION OF THE SUBJECT.....	5
1.2. RESEARCH OF THE LATE MEDIEVAL SLAVONIAN NOBILITY	10
1.3. THE SOURCES AND THEIR LIMITS	16
2. THE NOBILITY AND THEIR HISTORIES	19
2.1. THE NOBILITY IN THE COUNTY OF KÖRÖS: THE CRITERIA OF SELECTION.....	19
2.2. THE NOBLE FAMILIES – SHORT BIOGRAPHIES.....	42
2.2.1. <i>Balthasar Alapi (Alapić, de Alap)</i>	42
2.2.2. <i>Bakolcai (de Bakolcha, Bakowcha)</i>	45
2.2.3. <i>Berivojszentiváni (Sveti Ivan Berivoj, de Berivoyzenthivan)</i>	48
2.2.4. <i>Bikszádi (od Bisaga, de Bykzaad)</i>	50
2.2.5. <i>Bocskai of Raszinyakeresztúr (Bočkaj od Rasinje, Bochkay de Razynakeresztwr)</i>	52
2.2.6. <i>Elias Bosnyák/Begojevics of Businc (Buščinec, de Bwschyncz)</i>	61
2.2.7. <i>Čavlović (Chawlowych) of Gyurkovc (de Gywrkowcz)</i>	64
2.2.8. <i>Csupor of Monozsló (Čupor od Moslavina, Chupor de Monozlo)</i>	66
2.2.9. <i>Dersfi of Szerdahely</i>	71
2.2.10. <i>Dombai</i>	76
2.2.11. <i>Ervencei</i>	80
2.2.12. <i>Fáncs(i) of Gordova (Fanch od Grđevca, Fanch(y) de Gordowa)</i>	85
2.2.13. <i>Gereci (de Gerech/Gerecz)</i>	92
2.2.14. <i>The descendants of Belus (Beloš)</i>	95
14/a. <i>Gorbonoki (de Gorbonok, Kloštar Podravski)</i>	95
14/b. <i>Kerhen of Belosovc</i>	98
14/aaa. <i>Budor of Budrovca (Budor od Budrovca, Budor de Budrowch)</i>	101
2.2.15. <i>Grebeni/Batthyány (Grebenski, de Greben/Gereben)</i>	103
2.2.16. <i>Gudovci (od Gudovca, de Gudowch)</i>	112
2.2.17. <i>Hásságyi (Hašagi, de Hashagh, Hassagh)</i>	119
2.2.18. <i>Balthasar Hobetić</i>	121
2.2.19. <i>The descendants of Isaac</i>	122
19/a. <i>Borotva of Vrbovc/Tersztenice (Britvić od Vrbovca/Trstenica, Borothwa de Thersteniche)</i>	123
19/b. <i>Raveni (Ravenski, de Rawen)</i>	127
19/c. <i>Cirkvenai (od Crkvena, de Cirkvena, Cirquena)</i>	132

19/d. Kustyer of Szenternye (Kwscher de Zentherne, Zenthernye).....	135
2.2.20. Jakószerdahelyi (od Sredica, de Jakozerdahel)	138
2.2.21. Kamarcai (od Komarnica, de Kamarcha)	140
2.2.22. Kapitánfi of Desnice (Kapitanić od Dišnika, Capithanfy de Desniche).....	148
2.2.23. Kasztellánfi of Szentlélek (Kaštelanović od Svetog Duha, Castellanfy, Kastellanffy de Zenthlelek)	153
2.2.24. Kecer of Radvány (Kecer od Radovana, Kecher de Radwan)	162
2.2.25. Kerecsényi (Kerečenji, de Kerechen)	165
2.2.26. Kopinci (de Kopynch, Kwpyncz, Kopynczky).....	168
2.2.27. Kristallóci 1, 2 (od Kreštelovca, de Cristhalowch)	170
2.2.28. Latkfi of Berstyanóc (Latković, Lathk de Berschanowch)	173
2.2.29. Albert Lónyai (Lonjai, de Lonya)	175
2.2.30. Megyericsei (de Megerechye, Megwrechye, etc.).....	177
2.2.31. Mindszenti (de Mendzenth)	182
2.2.32. Musinai/Berzeneci (de Musyna, Berzenche)	184
2.2.33. Nelepec.....	187
2.2.34. Orrosovcí (Orros) (Orros de Orrosowch)	193
2.2.35. Pálfi of Szentmihály (Palffy de [Obramelcz, Abramowcz]zenthmyhal.....	195
2.2.36. Pataki (de Pathak).....	197
2.2.37. Pekri.....	199
2.2.38. Pogány (Pogan de Cheb, de Herbothya)	208
2.2.39. Nicholas Pozsegai (de Posega)	212
2.2.40. Prasovci (Praščevec, de Praschowcz).....	214
2.2.41. Predrihoi (Predrihovo, de Predryho).....	216
2.2.42. Rohfi of Décse (de Deche, Decche)	217
2.2.43. Stefekfi/Pan of Kravarina (Sthefekfy, Pan de Krawarina).....	223
2.2.44. Szász of Tamasovc (Zaaz de Thamasowcz).....	227
2.2.45. Szencsei (de Zenche, Zempchey)	230
2.2.46. Tahi (de Thah, Tah, Tahy).....	240
2.2.47. Tompa of Horzova	243
2.2.48. Tulbert of Berstyanóc (Tulbert od Brštanovca, Thulbert de Berschanowch, Berschyanocz, etc.).....	245
2.2.49. Turóci (de Thurocz, Thwroc).....	248
2.2.50. Vojkfi/Garázda (Voykfy, de Woykowcz/Garazda de Kerezthwr, Garazdyncz)	253
2.2.51. Other families	258

3. SOCIAL ANALYSIS	264
3.1. ORIGINS	265
3.2. WEALTH, TRAFFIC OF LAND AND SOCIAL MOBILITY.....	277
3.3. SERVICE, OFFICEHOLDING AND FAMILIARITAS	299
3.4. THE NOBILITY AND THE KING	320
3.5. MARRIAGE PATTERNS.....	338
3.6. THE NOBILITY AND THE CHURCH.....	345
3.7. ELITE OR NOT? INTERNAL STRATIFICATION AND DEFINITION	349
4. CONCLUSION	361
APPENDIXES.....	366
1. PERSONS LISTED AS REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SLAVONIAN NOBILITY	366
2. BANS, VICEBANS AND <i>ISPÁNOK</i> OF KÖRÖS AND ZAGREB 1423 – 1526.....	369
3. GENEALOGICAL TREES.....	373
4. MAP OF THE COUNTY	417
5. GAZETTEER OF PLACE NAMES	418
BIBLIOGRAPHY	421
PRIMARY SOURCES – UNPUBLISHED	421
PRIMARY SOURCES – PUBLISHED.....	421
SECONDARY LITERATURE.....	425

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Justification of the subject

At the origins of the present dissertation lay a research which was simply aimed at shedding some light upon the social background of the persons who functioned as vicebans in the late medieval *regnum Sclavonie*.¹ It soon became evident, however, that in terms of landed wealth the great majority of them were mostly, or exclusively based in the county of Körös. The reasons of this phenomenon will be explored later on. Yet it also became clear that such an analysis could not be complete without uncovering the whole social network which linked these families to the rest of the nobility within and outside Slavonia in the 15th and early 16th centuries. Hence my decision to include into the research the whole noble „elite” of the county of Körös, in the widest possible sense of the word.

I use the term „noble elite” to define the object of my research, although it is as chimerical as possible. With one exception, no one ever tried to find out whether such an elite within the nobility of a given county existed at all, in the sense that it can be defined in terms of wealth, attitudes, career possibilities or marriage strategies as distinct from the rest of the nobility both upwards and, more importantly, downwards. Expressions such as „well-to-do/rich nobility” (*tehetős/jómódú/vagyonos köznemesség* in Hungarian),² „illustrious noblemen” (*nemesi előkelők*),³ “noble elite” (*köznemesei elit*)⁴ or “nobility of middling wealth” (*középbirtokos nemesség*)⁵ are commonplace in the historical literature. Yet, with the exception perhaps of “well-to-do nobility” (in the Latin form of *nobilis benepossessionatus*), none of these terms is warranted by contemporary usage, but are the results of scholarly efforts at grasping social differences which must have been clearly perceived by contemporaries as well. Such categories are normally described in terms of official titles and revenues in the West: knights and esquires in England, chevaliers and écuyers in

¹ The Slavonian realm, *Regnum Sclavonie*, was a territorial-administrative unit within the medieval kingdom of Hungary. It was headed by the ban (*banus Sclavonie*), who was always appointed by the Hungarian king. It comprised, during the period which is investigated in the present dissertation, the two counties of Körös and Zagreb, and, from the latter part of the 15th century, that of Varasd (Varaždin). That is, these counties were, or became, subjected to the ban’s political and judicial authority. From a geographical, and indeed, social, point of view, the small county of Verőce (Virovitica) also belonged to Slavonia, although administered throughout the middle ages by an *ispán* of its own appointed directly by the king.

² István Tringli, *Az újkor hajnala. Magyarország története 1440-1541 [The Dawn of the Modern Age. A History of Hungary 1440-1541]* (Budapest: Vince, 2003), 129-130.

³ Pál Engel, Gyula Kristó and András Kubinyi, *Magyarország története 1301-1526 [The History of Hungary 1301-1526]* (Budapest: Osiris, 1998) 311.; András Kubinyi, *Mátyás király [King Matthias of Hungary]* (Budapest: Vince, 2001), 34.

⁴ Elemér Mályusz, *Zsigmond király uralma Magyarországon 1387-1437 [The Reign of King Sigismund in Hungary 1387-1437]* (Budapest: Gondolat, 1984), 139.

⁵ András Kubinyi, „A középbirtokos nemesség Mohács előestéjén.” [The Nobility of Middling Wealth on the Eve of Mohács.], in *Magyarország társadalma a török kiűzésének előestéjén [The Society of Hungary on the Eve of the Expulsion of the Ottomans]*, ed. Ferenc Szvircsek (Salgótarján, 1984) 5-24.

France, represent more or less clearly distinguishable strata within noble society, with corresponding levels of income.⁶ These categories, on the other hand, were indissolubly connected to an underlying chivalric-military ethos, the rites of which clearly marked the joining of any individual, of whatever birth, the ranks of the nobility, and the attribution of the quality of “noble” remained strictly dependent on the continuous manifestation of the outward signs of chivalric life.⁷ In Hungary, however, no such titles and no similar chivalric ethos and corresponding practice existed, and, the basis of taxpaying being the tenant session (*sessio jobagionalis*), no lists of noble revenues can be found or reconstructed. “The Hungarian nobleman was noble not because he was an offspring of knights or because he lived and thought as a knight, but simply because the land he lived on was his own, as opposed to the peasant who lived on someone else’s land.”⁸ This is probably one of the main reasons which prevented historians even recently, after the fall of ideological boundaries, from trying to fill with “numbers and facts” the vague categories cited above. The enterprise is far from straightforward.

Accordingly, Pál Engel was the only one to make an attempt at reconstructing a social stratification within the boundaries of a single county. He found that the families possessing from 150 to 300 tenant sessions can clearly be distinguished from the rest of noble society both upwards and downwards, and that the characteristic feature of this group was „the king’s service and courtly career”. He referred to this group as *nagybirtokosok*, literally „great landowners”. Below them he identified a further social layer which he called *középbirtokosság*, that is, something like „nobility of middling wealth”. The members of this group, roughly possessing 20 to 100 tenant sessions, furnished the social reservoir from which the *familiars* of aristocratic households were recruited. Since his analysis deliberately stopped at the important turn of 1440, his results were equally limited to the period preceding the death of Sigismund of Luxemburg. He stated emphatically himself that the model he had elaborated was only applicable within a given time-span, and was „not suitable to describe the structure of the medieval Hungarian nobility in general”.⁹

⁶ Chris Given-Wilson, *The English Nobility in the Late Middle Ages* (London: Routledge, 1996), 69-73. Gerald Harriss, *Shaping the Nation. England 1360-1461* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005), 136-138. Christopher Dyer, *Making a Living in the Middle Ages. The People of Britain 850-1520* (New Haven and London: Yale U. P., 2009) 340-341. Philippe Contamine, *La noblesse au royaume de France de Philippe le Bel a Louis XII: Essai de synthese* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1999), 131-133.

⁷ „Si la société politique bourguignonne accepte l’entrée d’hommes nouveaux dans le groupe nobiliaire, qui n’est en rien une caste, elle semble toutefois très attachée à l’idée qu’il n’est de noblesse que d’armes et qu’un individu, qu’il soit gentilhomme de naissance ou anobli, ne peut être juridiquement considéré comme noble au plein sens du terme que s’il «fréquente les armes». Bertrand Schnerb, *Noblesse et pouvoir princier dans les pays bourguignons au temps de Jean sans Peur (1404-1419)*. In: Marco Gentile and Pierre Savy eds., *Noblesse et états princiers en Italie et en France au XVe siècle*. École Française de Rome, 2009. 11.

⁸ Pál Engel, *The Realm of Saint Stephen. A History of Medieval Hungary 895-1526* (London, New York: I. B. Tauris, 2001), 84.

⁹ Pál Engel, *A nemesi társadalom a középkori Ung megyében [Noble Society in the County of Ung]* (Budapest: MTA Történettudományi Intézete, 1998), 109, where the argumentation of the book is summarised.

In a more recent work he also tried to define more widely what the „elite” of the county nobility meant and identify the kinds of activity typical within their ranks. Thus, according to Engel, the „elite of the county nobility was composed of the „well-to-do” (*bene possessionatus*) families: those whose wealth – ranging from 20 to hundreds of holdings – assured a decent living. The members of this group were the leading figures in the county assemblies, and it was mostly from among these men that the count’s¹⁰ deputies, the members of the diets as well as the castellans, stewards and leading retainers of the barons were chosen. They were distinguished from the lesser nobility by the title of *egregius*.”¹¹ In this second approach the two groups of nobility distinguished with regard to the county of Ung were thus united to form an „elite” clearly distinguishable from the ranks of the poor nobility, and the characteristic features of its members developed into a whole cluster. This, again, is an important warning with regard to the methodological imprecision which still pervades Hungarian historiography dealing with the nobility.

More recently, Tibor Neumann, in a thoroughgoing study of a noble family from the county of Nyitra, also hinted at the existence, within late medieval Hungarian noble society, below the barons, of an „intermediate stratum, which was distinguished from the mass of the well-to-do nobility by the possession of one or more fortifications and several hundreds of tenant sessions. Thanks to their wealth, members of these families frequently found their way into the royal court, and sometimes also acquired baronial offices there. Their separation from the ranks of the lower nobility was clearly perceived by the contemporaries: from the beginning of the 15th century members of this group were accorded the honorific title *egregius* even in case they had no office by virtue of which they should be given it [...]”¹² In Neumann’s classification this layer apparently corresponds to the *nagybirtokosok* of Engel, and a further defining characteristic, that of the possession of fortification(s) is added.

Another, partly overlapping, classification of the nobility was offered by Erik Fügedi exactly forty years ago: the three groups of the „great-landowning” aristocracy (*nagybirtokos arisztokrácia*), the middling nobility (*középbirtokos nemesség*), which played a leading role regionally, and the petty nobility (*kisbirtokos nemesség*) differed from each other in terms of wealth, social and political situation, authority and political functions. [...] The sharpest line divided the aristocracy from the

¹⁰ In referring to the persons governing the medieval Hungarian counties (*comes*), and their deputies (*vicecomes*) I use the parallel Hungarian terms (*ispán* and *alispán*); for none of the English words which turn up as equivalents in English texts about Hungarian history (count, sheriff, bailiff) do refer to institutions of the same nature. On the other hand, the use of the Latin terms would suggest the existence of a „titular nobility” which only began to form in Hungary at the very end of the middle ages.

¹¹ Engel, *Realm of Saint Stephen*, 340.

¹² Tibor Neumann, *A Korlátköviek. Egy előkelő család története és politikai szereplése a 15-16. században [The Korlátkövi. The History and Political Role of an Illustrious Noble Family in the 15th and 16th Centuries]* (Győr: Győri Egyházmegyei Levéltár, 2007), 9.

rest, whereas the divide between the middling and petty nobility is much more obscure.”¹³ The most important point in this definition, also confirmed by the research of Engel, is the impossibility of finding a sharp watershed separating the different groups within the nobility once one descended from the clearly visible spheres of the aristocracy. More recently, Fügedi tested the model elaborated by Engel on the example of a noble family from the county of Nyitra, and, while generally admitting its applicability for the reconstruction of social stratification, he also warned against treating the model too rigidly, emphasising the cases which defy classification.¹⁴

István Draskóczy, in his work focussing precisely upon the 15th century, also tried to distinguish different groups within the nobility and set the markers by which to identify their members. The group situated immediately below the aristocracy he called, with the reference to title (*egregius*), as that of the *vitézlők*. As for their landed wealth, the families belonging to this group possessed between 400 to 700 tenant sessions, one or two fortifications, some of them even a market town. Members of this layer frequently had access to the royal court, and even obtained baronial office, whereas their marriage alliances united them both upwards and downwards with aristocratic and noble families, richer and poorer respectively than themselves. The number of such *vitézlő* families, according to a report from the early 16th century, was a mere two in an average county. Below them Draskóczy identified a group with a landed wealth spreading widely from 10 to 200 tenant sessions, the main distinguishing feature being the absence from their possessions of fortifications, market towns and even tolls. The activities and family alliances of such families were normally limited to their native county, furnishing the deputies of the county *ispán* and *szolgabírák* from their ranks. They frequently joined the service of local magnates, becoming castellans in their castles, and from the middle of the 15th century the envoys to the general assemblies were also elected from their numbers. Yet roads leading to the royal court were only exceptionally opened before them.¹⁵

Further attempts at establishing categories within the late medieval Hungarian nobility on the basis of different distinguishing features, on a regional or country-wide level, could surely be cited, but there is no point in doing that. It has already become obvious that no general classification has been worked out so far which could be employed automatically or with slight modifications for the analysis of any given region of Hungary. Indeed, most general statements about the stratification of the nobility, including those cited above, are directly based on the model established by Engel with regard to the county of Ung, with modifications added by the individual authors according to their

¹³ Erik Fügedi, *A 15. századi magyar arisztokrácia mobilitása [The Mobility of the Medieval Hungarian Aristocracy]* (Budapest, 1970), 11.

¹⁴ Erik Fügedi, *Az Elefánthyak. A középkori nemes és klánja [The Elefánthy Kindred. The Medieval Nobleman and his Clan]* (Budapest: Osiris, 1999), 166-176.

¹⁵ István Draskóczy, *A tizenötödik század története [The History of the 15th Century]* (Budapest: Pannonica, 2000) 104-107.

own particular knowledge.¹⁶ Although employing basically the same criteria, all these authors have come to divergent conclusions, the reason for which is the still almost complete absence of regional studies based, as that of Engel, on the knowledge of the complete available source material of the area concerned.

It is thus the investigation of a yet unknown or at least undefined group within the medieval nobility which I intended to undertake within the boundaries of a single county, that of Kőrös in Slavonia, for the period between 1400 and the traditional breakpoint marked by the battle of Mohács.¹⁷ In the absence of a more convenient label, I shall term it „noble elite”, and will return to the problem in the second part of the dissertation, and examine whether such a term can at all be used and whether a social reality corresponding to it existed or not.

¹⁶ All general accounts of the history of medieval Hungary or any of its periods involve as a matter of fact at least a brief description of the nobility. Take, for instance, András Kubinyi's book on king Matthias [Kubinyi: Mátyás király 34.], where the author distinguishes, within the nobility, an elite 'with hundreds of tenants', comprising some 400 to 500 families in all. István Tringli, for his part (Az újkor hajnala 129-130.) writes about the wealthy noble families, of which there were only a couple of hundreds in the whole country, and only a handful in each county; according to him, the minimum amount of tenant sessions needed to be counted to this stratum was 50, but at least some of its members also possessed one or more fortifications. Neither Kubinyi, however, nor Tringli, nor any of the other historians introduces any new criterion as a basis for internal stratification.

¹⁷ The endpoint of the research, although traditional, is open to dispute, as all chronological markers would be. The battle of Mohács involved no immediate social consequences in the county of Kőrös, any more than it did in Hungary proper. Long-term changes were caused by the gradual extension of territory under constant Ottoman occupation, which only began in the 1540s. Yet, besides the „traditional” character of the year 1526, there is one practical consideration which argues for its adoption: namely the availability of sources. Thus, whereas the pre-Mohács charters are all accessible in one collection, at least in photocopies, the post-1526 charters are widely scattered in different collections and even different archives and countries, so their gathering would consume at least as much time as the thorough scrutiny of the pre-Mohács material. As for the starting point, that is, around 1400, it seemed convenient from several points of view. Since I was interested in the later medieval period, the major problem was whether I would include the Angevin period or not. What proved decisive, on the final account, was my limited knowledge of the Angevin period on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the fact that from around 1400 there is a marked increase in the number of extant sources with regard to the preceding period. It is from this point of view that the consolidation of the rule of king Sigismund, rather than his accession in 1387, seemed a more convenient starting point. It was by no means treated rigidly, for in retracing the origins of several families I was as a matter of fact forced to look beyond it, sometimes into the very obscure beginnings of Hungaro-Slavonian history.

1.2. Research of the late medieval Slavonian nobility

Unfortunately enough, the structure and development of the late medieval Slavonian nobility as well as the history of late medieval Slavonia as such have hitherto remained almost completely outside the sphere of interest of historians in Croatia and Hungary alike. Whereas the problem of the origins of Slavonia was once the focus of a heated, though somewhat futile debate between the experts of the two countries,¹⁸ and, despite some mutual gestures, there is still no consensus in this matter, the subsequent centuries of Slavonian history, much better enlightened by written sources, have not received the attention they deserve.¹⁹ The reasons of this ignorance, as it seems, are different in the two countries concerned.

In Hungary the „limited extent”²⁰ of scholarly interest in the history of medieval Slavonia can broadly be explained by two main reasons. The first is the absence of research whatsoever on the medieval nobility in a regional context. Before 1990 it was one of the ideological consequences of the prevailing political regime, but, surprisingly enough, the subject has since remained as neglected as before, with only a few notable exceptions, such as Engel Pál's book on the medieval nobility of the county of Ung. The other reason is the absence on the territory of medieval Slavonia, that is, modern Croatia, of a considerable Hungarian minority, which, as in the case of Transylvania, whose status in the middle ages was in many respects similar to that of Slavonia, would surely have incited Hungarian historians to pay much more attention to it than they eventually did. Consequently, what we have dispersed throughout books and articles are mostly remarks on things regarded as „Slavonian peculiarities” within a realm (*regnum*) whose society and administration was not basically different from Hungary proper.

In Croatia, on the other hand, historical attention turned rather towards Croatia „proper”, that is, the territory of the early medieval kingdom, and towards Dalmatia. As regards the latter, this phenomenon can only be seen as quite natural, in view of the huge source material which is available in the archives of the Dalmatian cities in quantities not matched anywhere else beyond the mountains. The apparent neglect of the history of late medieval Slavonia can be regarded as somewhat surprising, however, as the region itself is generally treated in Croatian historiography as

¹⁸ See Stanko Andrić, „Klaićev udio u rasprama Hrvatske i Mađarske historiografije.” [The Part of Klaić in the Field of Croatian and Hungarian Historiography]. Posebni otisak iz zbornika radova Vjekoslav Klaić život i djelo (Zagreb – Slavonski Brod, 2000) 89-96.

¹⁹ There is one work which stands out in both scope and detail and has remained a constant point of reference in Hungary and Croatia ever since its publication: Dezső Csánki, *Körösmegye a XV-ik században* [The County of Körös in the 15th Century] (Budapest, 1893). Yet, as this book was originally intended to make part of the author's magnum opus on the historical geography of 15th-century Hungary, he made no efforts at reconstructing intra- or interfamilial links with regard to the individual settlements discussed, but simply listed all people and families who appeared as owners of any given locality. His book is therefore an indispensable tool of topographical identification, but is of little help for social reconstruction.

²⁰ Attila Zsoldos, „Egész Szlavónia bánja” [The Ban of Whole Slavonia], in *Analecta medievalia I. Tanulmányok a középkorról*, ed. Tibor Neumann (Budapest-Piliscsaba: Pázmány Péter Katolikus Egyetem, 2001), 271.

making part of Croatian national history, and attached only in terms of „state structures” more closely to the medieval kingdom of Hungary than Croatia proper.²¹ To what extent this (partial)²² self-restriction can be attributed to the realisation of the fact that the history of Slavonia, unlike that of Croatia, cannot be interpreted without a similarly profound knowledge of Hungarian history, is open to debate; what is certain is that Croatian historiographical production concerning noble Slavonia is as fragmented and sparse as that in Hungary.

On the Hungarian side, Pál Engel prepared the genealogies of several noble families who were, or became, rooted in Slavonia, among them several of those which are treated in the present dissertation.²³ In some cases his reconstructions are in need of no or very little correction; in others, however, the lacunae are conspicuous. For instance, with regard to the Bocskai²⁴ and Pekri families,

²¹ Eg.: *Povijest Hrvata. Prva knjiga. Srednji vijek*, eds. Franjo Šanjek and Franko Mirošević. (Zagreb: Školska Knjiga, 2003), 190: „Although already king Ladislav tried to attach Slavonia with closer links to the Hungarian kingdom by the foundation of the bishopric of Zagreb in the early 1090s, the region remained an integral part of the Croatian kingdom throughout the Árpáadian period [...] In the social identity of the nobility which had developed in Croatia south of the Velebit mountain at the end of the high middle ages, Slavonia could not be other than part of Croatia.” This situation was further reinforced at the end of the 15th century, when „the constitutional union of Slavonia and Croatia was effected [...] at the general assembly at Buda in March 1492.” (ibid. 203.). In what this structural cohesion between Croatia and Slavonia manifested itself more exactly either before or after 1492 is hard to tell on the basis of this book, for, beyond some very general remarks about „social development”, it reveals nothing about either the political structures or the noble society of Slavonia.

²² Urban history (especially that of Zagreb), for instance, or the history of Croatian noble families whose activity extended over Slavonia, are exceptions to this rule.

²³ Pál Engel, *Magyar középkori adattár, Középkori magyar genealógia* [Hungarian Medieval Database, Medieval Hungarian Genealogies], CD-ROM (Budapest, 2001).

²⁴ The spelling of names presents serious, and sometimes unsolvable, problems. The region which constitutes the subject of this dissertation once belonged to the medieval kingdom of Hungary, and now makes part of Croatia. Some of the localities after which the families examined below were named have survived until now, others disappeared without trace. Those which exist today bear Croatian names, which do not always correspond to the medieval names, and the same applies to the current denomination of several families. Thus, the descendants of ban Tibold are commonly referred to in Croatian historiography as Svetački, a name which first appears after 1526; the name of the settlement where they lived was Szencse (Zenche, Zemche) in the middle ages, and its lords called of Szencse (de Zenche), and, at the very end, even Szencsei (Zempchey). Similarly, the members of the Slavonian branch of the Tétény kindred were known as Pekri, perhaps Pökri (de Pukur, Pewkur, Pewker, and a lot more versions, but also frequently Pewkry), whereas they are referred to as Pakrački in modern Croatian historiography, a form which never occurs in any medieval document. It is, of course, absolutely possible that the predominantly Croatian population of the regions where these noble families lived called them by the names of Svetački and Pakrački respectively; yet it remains a fact that these names have no recorded medieval memory. The vanished residence of one branch of the Kasztellánfi family is now called Sveti Duh (Duhovi, near Garešnica), that is, Holy Spirit, in Croatian; in medieval documents it is almost exclusively called Szentlélek (Zenthlylek, Zenthleluk, etc.), which is the equivalent Hungarian name, and occasionally Sanctus Spiritus. Moreover, the characteristic name of the family is given either in its Latin form (filius/filii Castellán), or in Hungarian as Kasztellánfi (Castellanfy, Kastellanfy, etc.), but never as Kastelanović. It is again possible, and even probable, that the Croatian peasants they dominated called them Kastelanović; on the other hand, it is the same probable that the name Kasztellánfi used by the local scribes was the name used by the family itself. The situation is the same with families like the Rohfi (generally simply Roh, filii Roh, but occasionally also Rohfy, Rohffy), and the Kapitánfi (filií Capitan, but later regularly Capitanfy, Kapitanffy). The market town where the Kapitánfi lived is called in medieval charters Desnice (Desniche, Desnica), and is now known as Dišnik. The town of Deche/Decha, after which the Rohfi were called, disappeared. The medieval village of Bakolca (Bakolcha, Bakolcza) is now called (Donja) Bukovica; its owners in the medieval charters turn up as *de Bakolcha*, and I have found no trace of their Croatian denomination either in the middle ages or thereafter. The case is similar with the kindred owning Ervence, a settlement vanished by now; they are always referred to as *de Erwenche/cze* in the charters, along which it would have been possible to forge a Croatian name, although, apparently, Croatian historians also use the charter form (eg. Duje Rendić-Miočević et al., *Diplomatički Zbornik kraljevine Hrvatske, Dalmacije i Slavonije. Codex diplomaticus regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae*. Volumen XVIII. 1395-1399 [Zagreb, 1990] 285.). Another problem is created by the mere historical longevity of certain families and the transformations it involved. Thus, the Alapi family may have turned

it is the two most important members respectively, that is, Péter Bocskai and Lajos Pekri, who have not found their proper place on the family tree. The same author in his great archontological work²⁵ furnished ample information with regard to the individual careers of a great number of persons based in the county of Körös, but, since he stopped in 1457, the greater part of the period covered by the present dissertation remained outside the remit of his collection. Engel also devoted a paper to the history of the Fánecs family in the 14th century,²⁶ yet he apparently wrongly searched for their origins in the medieval county of Somogy. Norbert C. Tóth added important new information to the history of the same family in the later middle ages, but since his aim was limited (the reconstruction of the family's wealth in 1424), he refrained from depicting their history in detail, and his genealogical tree, although more complete than that of Engel, is still not perfect.²⁷ Elemér Mályusz, in a study devoted to the political structures of the Hungarian kingdom in the age of John Hunyadi, treated the careers of Benedict Turóci and Akacius Csupor in the period concerned, and Engel also

„Croatian” enough by the early 17th century to be called Alapić, but before 1526 they are exclusively called of Alap (de Alap), a village in the Hungarian county of Fejér, and sometimes Alapy. Again, the standard Croatian name for the Csupor family is Čupor Moslavački/od Moslavina. It is apparently believed [see Stanko Andrić, “Podgorje Papuka i Krndije u srednjem vijeku: prilozi za lokalnu povijest (prvi dio).” *Scrinia Slavonica* 8 (2008), 60.] that the kindred descended from a certain Moyslav, a Slav chief, whose name lived on in the form of Moslavina. But the name of this settlement is always rendered as Monoszló (Manaslou, Monozlou), which can certainly not be derived from Moyslav, whose existence, moreover, is purely hypothetical. Nor are members of the kindred called *de genere Monozlo* before the 14th century. Consequently, and in order to avoid the confusion which would inevitably emerge from any effort at trying to solve all these problems, I adopted the following solution. In all cases where the families concerned have a „family name” alongside the name of the settlement where they resided, I used the Hungarian form which is closest to the documented medieval version, with the English prefix of, giving, when it first appears, in brackets the medieval Latinised and the actual Croatian name, if there is one, of the namegiving settlement, with the Christian name Anglicised (thus: George Kasztellánfi of Szentlélek [de Zenthlelek, Sveti Duh/Duhovi, Cro.], Andrew Kapitánfi of Desnice [de Desniche, Dišnik, Cro.], Ladislav Rohfi of Dégse [de Deche]). In cases where the families were simply called by a possession, I used the Hungarian form with the -i suffix, again giving, if possible, the Croatian, and always the charter version (Ladislav Erveneci [de Erwenche], Stephen Prasovci [de Praschowcz, Praščevec], etc.). Of course, it by no means implies that the members of these families spoke Hungarian, or thought about themselves as Hungarians; some of them may have spoken Hungarian, some Croatian, or, most probably, both. One of the very few cases when the spoken tongue of a given individual can be determined comes from 1518: when contradicting to an introduction, Bernard Musinai aired his obvious indignation with the following words (*talia verba in vulgari protulit*): *Zarok rya* (I shit on it) (DF 209455). Thus, Bernard did speak Hungarian, which does not mean that he did not speak Croatian as well. These problems, of course, do not emerge with regard to those families which were, and continued to be after their arrival to Slavonia, called by settlements which are sited in modern Hungary; for instance, the Batthyány, Pogány, Dersfi, Kerecsényi, and so on; in their cases I have merely anglicised the Christian name. Also, in the case of families and persons whose name was evidently Croatian in the middle ages, such as the Čavlović or the Hobetić, I retained the Croatian spelling. In case of the medieval settlements which can be certainly identified with a modern one, I give the Croatian equivalent at the first occurrence, and all of them are offered in a list at the end of the dissertation. As for medieval settlements which have disappeared by now, I retained the form found in the charters, without trying to find out what the correct spelling would be either in Croatian or Hungarian; in dubious cases I give the form which figures in the source itself. I have also called the county with which this dissertation is dealing Körös instead of Križevci, which, again, is by no means an indication that it can be regarded as ethnically Hungarian in the middle ages.

²⁵ Pál Engel, *Magyarország világi archontológiája 1301-1457* [*The Secular Archontology of Medieval Hungary*], I-II (Budapest: MTA Történettudományi Intézete, 1996)

²⁶ Pál Engel, „Néhány XIV. századi erdélyi alvajda származása” [The Origins of Some Deputy Voevods of Transylvania], in *Emlékkönyv Jakó Zsigmond születésének nyolcvanadik évfordulójára*, eds. András Kovács, Gábor Sipos and Sándor Tonk (Kolozsvár, 1996) 176-186.

²⁷ Norbert C. Tóth, „A Gordovai család vagyoni helyzete 1424-ben” [The Landed Wealth of the Fánecs of Gordova Family in 1424], in *Várak, templomok, ispotályok. Tanulmányok a magyar középkorról*, ed. Tibor Neumann (Argumentum, 2004.), 271-290.

dealt briefly with the Csupor family in connection with the early history of the Hunyadi family.²⁸ Iván Borsa consecrated a brief paper to the history of the Kerhen of Belosovc family,²⁹ whereas Géza Pálffy succinctly summarised that of the Budor of Budrovc in the middle ages in a study which basically dealt with the post-1526 period.³⁰ I myself reconstructed in detail the “public” life of another leading Slavonian nobleman, Ladislás Hermanfi of Greben (Grebengrad),³¹ and György Rácz recently retraced the origins of the Batthyány family, purging the fabulous historical tradition which has so far dominated the research.³² Evidently enough, many of the families treated in the present dissertation turn up here and there on the pages of historical works of a more general character in various contexts, which is natural in view of their manifold activities and interregional connections, and these works will be cited at the appropriate places. None of these works, however, can spare us the effort of turning directly to the charters in order to gather the greatest possible amount of information with regard to the families concerned; for it is evident that it is by that means alone that any historical investigation can yield results which may claim durability for themselves. As for the Croatian side, Vjekoslav Klaić devoted a long article to the history of the Szencsei family, which, despite its age and some errors of reconstruction, remains a mine of information even today.³³ Thanks to Klaić, the Szencsei is one among the two Slavonian families whose history can be followed from beginning to end with relatively many details. The other is the Kasztellánfi, whose family record has recently been retraced by Ivan Jurković and Pavao Maček in a book of particular form, of which more will be said at the appropriate place below.³⁴ Alongside these two families, others, which likewise figure in the present dissertation, such as the Csupor,³⁵ the descendants of Izsák,³⁶ the successive owners of Ludbreg (Ludbreg),³⁷ or the Budor,³⁸ were also

²⁸ Elemér Mályusz, „A magyar rendi állam Hunyadi korában” [The Hungarian Corporate State in the Age of Hunyadi], *Századok* 91 (1957) 531, 535. Pál Engel, “Hunyadi pályakezdése” [The early career of Hunyadi], in *Honoris causa. Tanulmányok Engel Pál tiszteletére*, eds. Tibor Neumann and György Rácz (Budapest-Piliscsaba: MTA Történettudományi Intézete – Pázmány Péter Katolikus Egyetem Bölcsészettudományi Kara, 2009) 516-517.

²⁹ Iván Borsa, „A Gorbonoki, majd Belosovci Kerhen család történetéhez” [On the History of the Gorbonoki, later Kerhen of Belosovc Family], in *Somogy megye múltjából. Levéltári Évkönyv* [separatum] (Kaposvár, 1991), 5-12.

³⁰ Géza Pálffy, „Egy szlavóniai köznemesi familia két ország szolgálatában: a Budrovc Budor család a XV-XVIII. Században” [A Slavonian Noble Family in the Service of Two Countries. The Budor of Budrovc Family in the 15th to 18th Centuries], *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 115 (2002/4) 923-1007.

³¹ Tamás Pálosfalvi, „Grebeni Hermanfi László alnádor. Egy tekintélyes szlavón köznemesi politikus pályaképe. Első közlemény” [Deputy Palatine Ladislás Hermanfi of Greben. The Career of an Influential Slavonian Noble Politician. Part One], *Századok* 141 (2007) 843-877; Második közlemény [Part two], *Századok* 142 (2008) 267-313.

³² György Rácz, „Egy főnemesi család eredete és „pályakezdése”. A Battyányiak az Anjou- és Zsigmond korban” [The Origins and the Early Career of an Aristocratic Family. The Batthyány in the age of the Angevins and Sigismund], in *Honoris causa. Tanulmányok Engel Pál tiszteletére*, eds. Tibor Neumann and György Rácz (Budapest-Piliscsaba: MTA Történettudományi Intézete – Pázmány Péter Katolikus Egyetem Bölcsészettudományi Kara, 2009) 301-357.

³³ Vjekoslav Klaić, „Plemići Svetački ili nobiles de Zempche (997-1719)” [The Noble Family of Szencse], *Rad JAZU*, knjiga 199 (1913) 1-66.

³⁴ Pavao Maček and Ivan Jurković, *Rodoslov plemića i baruna Kastelanovića od Svetog Duha (od 14. do 17. stoljeca)* [The Family of the Nobles and Barons Kasztellánfi of Szentlélek], (Slavonski Brod, 2009).

³⁵ Marko Bedić, „Čupori Moslavački” [The Csupor of Monoszló], *Kaj – časopis za književnost, umjetnost i kultura*, 28/3 (1995) 53-67.

³⁶ Josip Buturac, „Iz prošlosti Cirkvene i okolice” [On the Past of Cirkvena and its Region], *Križevački zbornik* 2 (1982) 93-115; Idem, *Vrbovec i okolica 1134-1984* [Vrbovc and its Region] (Vrbovec, 1984)

offered some treatment in Croatian, yet none of these articles aspired to the same comprehensiveness as the two works devoted respectively to the Szencsei and the Kasztellánfi.

In an article which was published almost simultaneously with the work of Klaić on the Szencsei, Juraj Čuk explored the early history of several noble families which lived in the region south of the Drava river; although his research was based uniquely on the documents published by Smičiklas in his great collection, his results are sometimes of relevance even today.³⁹ More recently, Marija Karbić devoted a small article to Damian Horváth of Litva (Čabrad, SL), who acquired extensive estates in Körös and rose to become ban of Slavonia in the 1470s,⁴⁰ and she dealt with the history of the noble community of Turopolje in the neighbouring county of Zagreb as well.⁴¹ The same author examined extensively the history of the Borić family from the county of Pozsega (Požega);⁴² indeed, it seems that Pozsega is more covered by regional studies on the nobility than Slavonia itself.⁴³ Although not directly concerning the county of Körös and its noble elite, all these studies do offer some information and insight for us, even if the structure of the nobility in the counties of either Zagreb or Pozsega could be very different from what we find in Körös.

Even more useful for the study of the nobility in the county of Körös is the prolific literature on local history which, after earlier beginnings,⁴⁴ has recently been flourishing in Croatia. Represented before all by the articles Ranko Pavleš,⁴⁵ but contributed to by others as well,⁴⁶ these works add a

³⁷ Marija Winter, „Ludbreški grad i njegovi gospodari” [The Town of Ludbreg and its Lords], *Podravski zbornik* 6 (1980) 357-369; Hrvoje Petrić, „Ludbreg i ludbreska podravina u srednjem vijeku” [Ludbreg and its Region along the Drava River in the Middle Ages], *Podravski zbornik* 21 (1995) 29-37.

³⁸ Josip Buturac, „Feudalna gospostija i plemićki rod Budor” [The Feudal Lordship and Noble Family Budor], *Podravski zbornik* 15 (1989) 99-103.

³⁹ Juraj Čuk, „Podravina od Bednje do Vočinke i susjedna područja do polovice četrnaestoga vijeka (plemstvo – posjedi – uprava)” [The Region along the Drava from Bednja to Atyina and the Neighbouring Territories until the Middle of the 14th Century (Nobility – Possessions – Administration)], *Vjesnik Kraljevskog hrvatsko-slavonsko-dalmatinskog zemaljskog arkiva* 18 (1916) 169-232.

⁴⁰ Marija Karbić, „Od hrvatskog sitnog plemića do ugarskog velikaša i hrvatskog bana: Damjan Horvat od Litve i njegova obitelj” [From a Petty Croatian Nobleman into a Hungarian Baron and Ban of Croatia: Damján Horváth of Litva and his Kindred], in *Croato-Hungarica. Uz 900 godina hrvatsko-mađarskih povijesnih veza. A horvát-magyar történelmi kapcsolatok 900 éve alkalmából*, eds. Milka Jauk-Pinhak, Csaba Kiss Gy. and István Nyomárkay (Zagreb, 2002) 119-125.

⁴¹ Marija Karbić, „Heiratsstrategien des Kleinadels von Turopolje (Slawonien) im späten Mittelalter,” *East Central Europe* 29/1-2 (2002) 167-176.

⁴² Marija Karbić, „Posjedi plemićkog roda Borića bana do sredine XIV stoljeća” [The Possessions of the Noble Kindred of Borić Ban], *Scrinia Slavonica* 5 (2005) 48-61.

⁴³ Borislav Grgin, „Hrvatska historiografija o Požegi i Požeškoj županiji u razvijenom i kasnom srednjem vijeku” [Croatian Historiography relating to Pozsega and the County of Pozsega in the High and Late Middle Ages], *Scrinia Slavonica* 8 (2008) 113-132.

⁴⁴ Kamilo Dočkal, „Srednjovjekovna naselja oko Dobre Kuće” [Medieval Settlements around Dobručka], *Starine JAZU* 48 (1958); Idem, „Srednjovjekovna naselja oko Streže” [Medieval Settlements around Streza], *Starine JAZU* 46 (1956), 145-202.

⁴⁵ Ranko Pavleš, „Srednjovjekovna topografija Cirkvene, Žabne i njihove okolice” [The Medieval Topography of Cirkvena, Žabna and their Surroundings], *Cris* 2009/1, 17-29; Idem, „Apatovec, Cerovo Brdo i neki susjedni posjedi u srednjem vijeku” [Apatovec, Cerovo Brdo and some Neighbouring Possessions in the Middle Ages], *Cris* 2004/6, 35-46; Idem, „Četiri posjeda u srednjovjekovnom kalničkom kotaru” [Five Settlements in the Medieval District of Kemlék], *Cris* 2006/1, 5-13; Idem, *Koprivničko i đurđevačko vlastelinstvo. Povijest, topografija, organizacija* [The Lordship of Kapronca and Szentgyörgy. History, Topography, Organisation] (Koprivnica, 2001).

lot to the reconstruction of the medieval topography of Slavonia, which had been greatly altered by the consequences of the Ottoman conquest and occupation. Apparently, this kind of topographic reconstruction suffers from one major weakness, as it relies uniquely on published sources. It, moreover, pays practically no attention to the families who owned in the middle ages the settlements in question. Consequently, none of these works can spare us the effort of turning directly to the charters, an effort which, as will hopefully become evident later on, pays off abundantly even in cases which have so far seemed definitively settled once and for all.

⁴⁶ Zdenko Balog, *Križevačko-kalnička regija u srednjem vijeku [The Region of Körös-Kemlék in the Middle Ages]* (Križevci, 2003); Stanko Andrić, „Podgorje Papuka i Krndije u srednjem vijeku: prilozi za lokalnu povijest (prvi dio)” [The Region at the Feet of the Papuk and Krndija Mountains in the Middle Ages: Contributions to Local History (First part)], *Scrinia Slavonica* 2008/1. 55-112.

I.3. The sources and their limits

The county of Körös was chosen, as mentioned before, partly because of my previous research on the government of late medieval Slavonia,⁴⁷ but also partly because of the relatively abundant source material available for this region of the medieval Hungarian realm.⁴⁸ Although the choice was thus evident, it involved some risks as well. Körös was one of the greatest and most densely populated counties of medieval Hungary, but also one of those most seriously afflicted by Ottoman incursions and occupation. Consequently, the source material, albeit abundant, is of very uneven distribution. Part of the county fortunately falls within the orbit of the Batthyány⁴⁹ archives, perhaps the biggest and certainly the richest collection of medieval Hungarian sources.⁵⁰ This collection is like a strong headlamp, sharply enlightening the contours of local society within its reach. Yet, as most of the other noble archives perished together with the families as the Ottoman expansion proceeded, the rest is left in semi-darkness, only occasionally highlighted by information stemming from the material of local ecclesiastical institutions, numerically rich, but spread over a huge territory. One example, that of the Pekri family, will sufficiently illustrate the problem facing the historian. The estate of Garignica (vanished), once part of the huge lands owned by the Tétény kindred (*genus*),⁵¹ was in the course of the 15th century incorporated into the Grebeni/Batthyány patrimony, together with the charters which concern it.⁵² Consequently, we have extensive knowledge about one branch of the Pekri family, down to the three consecutive marriages of the

⁴⁷ Tamás Pálosfalvi, „Cilleiek és Tallóciak: küzdelem Szlavóniáért (1440-1448)” [The Counts of Cilli and the Tallóci: Struggle for Slavonia (1440-1448), *Századok* 134 (2000) 45-98. Idem, „Vitovec János. Egy zsoldoskarrier a 15. századi Magyarországon” [Vitovec János. A Mercenary Career in 15th-Century Hungary], *Századok* 135 (2001) 429-472. Idem, Grebeni Hermanfi I-II.

⁴⁸ The medieval county of Körös, which extended from the river Drava in the north to the river Sava in the south, was characterised by important internal differences in terms of geography and settlement structure. It is evident that the regions along the great rivers, mostly marshlands, as well as the mountainous areas, were much more sparsely inhabited than the fertile plain lands. Correspondingly, there were areas of small but numerous noble estates, such as the region around the town of Körös itself, for instance, and others dominated by great domains with a more dispersed settlement structure. Yet in purely geographical and, consequently, economic terms virtually no county of Hungary could be regarded as a meaningful unit. The county of Körös, as all the other counties, was an administrative unit artificially created, albeit obviously in accordance with some salient geographical features, by the political power. As such a unit, however, it later developed a common identity, which was represented and expressed by the comital nobility and its political organs. It is in this sense that it offers a social sample worthy of examination, with a great number of difficulties, of course, which will emerge during my investigation and with which I will try to deal in due course.

⁴⁹ In the case of this family I have retained the current, officially sanctioned Hungarian orthography, even though it is by no means warranted by the medieval forms of the name.

⁵⁰ Magyar Országos Levéltár, Diplomatikai Levéltár, Batthyány család levéltára.

⁵¹ In the following pages, I use the term kindred with reference to the early medieval *genera*, whose existence is attested until the early 15th century. In order to avoid confusion, in all other cases I retained the word family to denote those family groups which descended from a single ancestor but were later separated into two or more branches, whether they divided their ancient lands or not. For referring to this „larger” family, kindred may also have been an option, as was done, for instance, by Martyn Rady, *Nobility, Land and Service in Medieval Hungary* (London: Palgrave, 2000), 96. Yet distinction is not entirely clear even there, *genus* sometimes being retained for denoting the early kindreds. The problem was clearly perceived by Fügedi as well (Elefánthyak 8-10.), but the solution that he opted for, namely adopting the foreign word clan is not convincing at all. In fact, Rady also refers to the Elefánthy as a kindred: Ibid. p. 97.

⁵² These charters mainly concern the estate of Garignica, acquired by Balthasar Batthyány in the early 1490s.

otherwise insignificant Susan Pekri and the dozens of charters regarding trivial judicial matters. On the other hand, that branch of the family which moved to the estate later called Petrovina (*Pethrowyna*), and played a much more important role both locally and finally outside Slavonia as well, but left no archives of its own, is extremely difficult to follow, and even their exact descent is hard to establish.⁵³

Yet by far the most important consequence of this situation is that all historical reconstruction is seriously affected by the fragmentary nature of the source material available. It becomes ever more evident as one descends the social scales to reach the lower regions of the leading nobility, but before merging into the sea of the poor nobility. Thanks to the Batthyány archives, I was able to reconstruct with exceptional detail the career of László Hermanfi of Greben, founder of the Batthyány influence in Slavonia. Even his many journeys to the royal court and his participation to different assemblies could be retraced. Alongside his own son-in-law, Boldizsár Batthyány, he is practically the only one to be portrayed with such detail in late medieval Slavonia.⁵⁴ Yet his peers in the families of roughly the same wealth and social prestige, even though impossible to depict so vividly, still have a bigger chance of turning up, by the mere size and scattered nature of their possessions, in a relatively great number of charters. Thus at least the main elements of their careers can be reconstructed and their relative place within local society assessed. But take, for example, the case of Mihály Berivojszentiváni (Sveti Ivan Berivoj, *Berywoyzenithiwan*). Although his market town is known from the tax-list of 1495, all the references to his *castellum*, to the annual fair held in the town, as well as to his being titled *egregius*, and to his participation in arbitrations, all important indicators of social status, come from the Batthyány archives.⁵⁵ Consequently, in case the latter had been lost, he would not be more than a name to us, with no social reality behind. All in all, the source material is rich enough above a certain level for families to disappear altogether from our eyes; nevertheless, it should always be kept in mind that all the information and the conclusions based upon them depend heavily on the amount and especially the distribution of the source material.

Alongside the Batthyány archives, all the important collections preserved currently in Croatian and Hungarian archives, which can reasonably be supposed to offer information for the history of Slavonia, have been scrutinized as thoroughly as possible. The county of Körös was served by two places of authentication (*loca credibilia*), the twin chapters of Zagreb and Csázma (Čazma). Unfortunately, it is the archives of the former which have survived more completely, whereas it was the chapter of Csázma, situated in the county of Körös itself, to which the nobility of this county turned in greater numbers in order to have their legal affairs put to writing. Although, at least in the

⁵³ See below the chapter on the Pekri family.

⁵⁴ Pálosfalvi, Grebeni Hermanfi I-II.

⁵⁵ For the references see below the chapter on the Berivojszentiváni.

late 15th century, the nobility of Slavonia were required by their own local customs to content themselves with the services of the two Slavonian places of authentication, this rule seems never to have been totally obeyed, and, consequently, a lot of information about Slavonian-based families can be found dispersed in charters emanating from neighbouring institutions such as the chapters of Pozsega and Pécs, but also the chapter of Buda, for instance. We also know that Slavonian noblemen travelling to the royal court, wherever it was based, frequently profited by their stay there to turn directly to the royal chancelleries for charters in everyday administrative affairs as well. This means, of course, that only after the inspection of all charters emanating from the royal court could we say with certainty that we have gathered all relevant information; this effort, however, would surely not be justified by the result.

In the case of noble families which also had possessions outside Slavonia, I tried to gather all the relevant material from other, non-Slavonian collections as well, although it is certain that important pieces have slipped my attention. Moreover, the problem is complicated by the fact that, thanks generally to marriages, parts of the archives of Slavonian families were also transferred to those of other, sometimes geographically distant families. Thus, important charters concerning the Kasztellánfi and Vitéz of Kamarca (*Kamarcha*) families have been incorporated into the Ostffy archives, whereas others, touching upon the history of the Turóci and Garázda, are now making part of the Niczky archives. Information on Stephen Pekri can be found in charters issued by the chapter of Nyitra (Nitra, Slo.). Of course, if the marriage partners can be identified by other sources, we have good chances to find the way to these non-Slavonian collections; otherwise it is a matter of pure chance. How some of the charters concerning the Kerhen of Belosovc family have finally been integrated into the Balassa archives, is unknown; it is a warning that practically no collection should be left unresearched. As is well known, Hungarian medievalists are extremely fortunate in that practically the entire charter material concerning the territory of the medieval Hungarian kingdom is available in the form of photocopies in the Hungarian National Archives, and these are now even accessible on the internet.⁵⁶ Yet for a great part of them only very incomplete abstracts are available, whereas in the case of another, equally numerous group individual inspection is the only means of finding out whether they contain anything valuable for my subject. Nevertheless, it is to be hoped that even the amount of information I have been able to collect is extensive enough for my conclusions to be in need of only slight modifications when all that is still unknown now will come to light in the not too distant future.

⁵⁶ www.mol.arcanum.hu/dldf/opt, also available through the homepage of the Hungarian National Archives: www.mol.gov.hu.

2. THE NOBILITY AND THEIR HISTORIES

2.1. The nobility in the county of Körös: the criteria of selection

It is relatively easy to draw the line which separates the *bene possessionati nobiles* from the upper section of the lay nobility, which is, not always clearly defined, called aristocracy in Hungarian scholarship:⁵⁷ persons regularly distinguished with the title *magnificus* from the age of Sigismund are naturally excluded from our investigations. Of course, I am conscious that in the first part of the 15th century the *magnificus* title is still reserved for those persons who actually hold a baronial office; yet, after the “landslide” of royal donations which followed the accession of king Sigismund (1387), and the consequent emergence of a real elite of aristocratic families with thousands of tenant sessions each spread throughout the kingdom, organised into huge castle lordships, the line of division between them and the rest of the nobility is fairly clear.⁵⁸ With regard to the county of Körös, with one notable exception (Orbona [Obrovnica]), the presence of these persons/families was attached to the fortifications of the county generally referred to as *castrum*, around which the greatest estates of the county were grouped. Although, as we shall see, the possession of a *castrum* was not exclusively confined to the barons, the overwhelming majority of these buildings was in their hands throughout the period, which underlines the difference of a social nature between *castrum* and *castellum* in the late middle ages. Moreover, most of the barons, for whom the term magnates is probably more appropriate from the second half of the 15th century, who owned the castles in the county of Körös, also had extensive possessions in Hungary proper, and visited only sporadically, if at all, their Slavonian estates. The counts of Cilli (Celje, Slo.) (Rakonok [Rakovec,], Kemlék [Veliki Kalnik], Szentgyörgy [Đurđevac] and Kővár [Stari Grad, Koprivnica]), the Tallóci brothers (Szentgyörgy),⁵⁹ the Maróti (Velike [Kraljeva Velika], Vasmegyericse [Međurić],

⁵⁷ In the absence of a titled nobility of the English type, it is always a matter of individual judgement of which families are treated as belonging to the aristocracy in a social sense. Fügedi (Mobilitás 1.), regards the aristocracy in the 15th century as „the top layer of the ruling class”, which includes the holders of the chief offices and their families. Yet, as Pál Engel remarked, it is only from the very end of the 15th century „that one can speak, in the legal sense, of a hereditary class of magnates in Hungary.” Engel, *Realm of St Stephen* 342.

⁵⁸ On this see Pál Engel, *Királyi hatalom és arisztokrácia viszonya a Zsigmond-korban [The Relationship between the Royal Power and the Aristocracy in the age of Sigismund]* (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1977). Although the term itself (*magnates*) appears only later in the 15th century, Pál Engel uses it with reference to the late Angevin and early Sigismund era as well (Engel, *Realm of St Stephen* 188., 207).

⁵⁹ The Tallóci family is an interesting case which illustrates the difficulties of approaching Hungarian noble society in terms of social stratification. Originally from a family of merchants, probably from the Dalmatian island of Korčula, they rose meteorically in the last decade of the reign of king Sigismund, holding important offices and controlling dozens of castles all along the southern marches of the kingdom. Yet, in terms of personal wealth, they were certainly not richer than many among the well-to-do nobility who never left their native region. After the acquisition of the huge estate of Szentgyörgy, the situation changed, and their sociopolitical status was then in keeping with their landed wealth for some time; but, after 1445, and especially after 1448, when they lost Szentgyörgy, and alienated the majority of their remaining possessions, the surviving members of the family sank again into the ranks of the well-to-do county nobility. (For some time they remained counts of Cetina, in the Kingdom of Croatia, but this had apparently no practical

Valpó [Valpovo]⁶⁰), Újlaki (Racsa [Rača], Raholca [Orahovica], Kontovc [Kontovac], Berzőce [Stara Brezovica], Szenterzsébet [Jugovo Polje]), Garai (Atyina [Voćin], Szaplonca [Stupčanica]), Móroc of Meggyesalja (Zdenc [Zdenci]), Drágfi (Vasmegyericse), Ernuszt (Szentgyörgy and its appurtenances), Bátori (Zdenc), Kórógyi (Darnóc [Drenovac]) Beriszló (Fejérkö [Bijela Stijena]), Egervári (Kemlék, Velike), Kanizsai (Velike, Vasmegyericse), Bánfi of Alsóindva (Szaplonca), Geréb, Perényi (Valpó) families as well as Benedek Battyányi (Atyina) and duke John Corvin (Rakonok and Kemlék) all held the most important offices of the realm,⁶¹ were ever more frequently referred to as *magnates*, and many among them (Újlaki, Bátori, Geréb, Bánfi, Drágfi, Kanizsai, Ernuszt, Perényi, Móroc, Egervári, Beriszló) were legally separated from the bulk of the nobility by the law of 1498.⁶² It is highly illustrative that, with two exceptions, none of the castles and estates enumerated above ever came into the hands of non-baronial local families before 1526;⁶³ they were either donated to already well-established magnates or used to found the material fortunes of persons freshly elevated to a baronial status (Ernuszt, Egervári). The only link attaching them to the county of Körös (unless they were at the same time bans of Slavonia) was that they employed, at least partly, local noblemen as their *familiares* governing their castles and leading their troops. It is only in this last respect that they will concern us in our investigation of the rich nobility in the county of Körös.⁶⁴ Although open to debate, I also counted among the barons John, son of Juga from the Polish Szteszew family, a kinsman of voevode Stibor, whose estate of Racsa with the castle there devolved upon Miklós Újlaki.⁶⁵ I did the same with the Erdődi family, who inherited the lands of the Csupor and the Rohfi in the last decade of the 15th century; although Valentine and Peter Erdődi were generally titled merely *egregius*, as the nephews of cardinal Bakócz they certainly belonged already to the aristocracy of the realm, and owned land in several counties outside Körös.⁶⁶

implications with regard to their situation in Hungary, where they were no more accorded the magnificus title before 1526.). Thus, it would be strictly impossible to find one category into which to squeeze the entire history of the family. In any case, since after 1448 their landed wealth was confined to the county of Verőce, they do not concern us here. See Elemér Mályusz, „A négy Tallóci fivér” [The Four Tallóci Brothers], *Történelmi Szemle* 23 (1980) 4, 531-576; Tamás Pálosfalvi, Die Familie Tallóci im Mittelalter, in *Lajos Thallóczy der Historiker und Politiker*, eds. Dževad Juzbašić and Imre Rész, (Sarajevo – Budapest, 2010) 183-190.

⁶⁰ Although the castle of Valpó itself was situated in the county of Baranya, the majority of its appurtenances lay in that of Körös.

⁶¹ See Csánki, *Körösmegye*, passim. For the information concerning their officeholding see Engel, *Archontológia*, under the different names, and also the archontological lists in Fügedi, *Mobilitás*, 105-124.

⁶² For the list see Pál Engel, „A magyar világi nagybirtok megoszlása a 15. században” [The Distribution of the Landed Wealth of the Secular Nobility in 15th-Century Hungary] I-II, in Idem, *Honor, vár, ispánság. Válogatott tanulmányok*, ed. Enikő Csukovits (Budapest: Osiris, 2003) 46-47.

⁶³ The two exceptions are Kemlék, which was donated to Balthasar Alapi by duke Corvin, and Vasmegyericse, which was possessed by the Paksi family for a decade between 1479 and 1489.

⁶⁴ On this see below the chapter on *familiaritas*.

⁶⁵ See Daniela Dvořáková, *A lovag és királya. Stiborici Stibor és Luxemburgi Zsigmond [The Knight and his King. Stibor of Stiboric and Sigismund of Luxembourg]* (Pozsony: Kalligram, 2009) 389.

⁶⁶ Vilmos Fraknói, *Erdődi Bakócz Tamás élete 1442-1521 [The Life of Thomas Bakócz of Erdőd 1442-1521]* (Budapest, 1889), part II, chapter V. on the acquisitions of the archbishop-chancellor in Slavonia and elsewhere.

Below this level things are much less clearcut, however. The authors cited above proposed roughly four criteria along which it is possible to separate the group of „*nagybirtokos*” nobility from the rest of the nobility: the more or less regular attribution of the *egregius* title, a given number of tenant sessions, the possession of one or more fortifications, and access to the royal court. The simplest way would have been to start with, as Pál Engel did, a tax register enumerating all the nobility and the number of their tenant sessions in the county of Körös. Unfortunately, in Slavonia we have no early registers comparable to the source used by Engel, which go back to the end of the 14th century. The first source of this type is the tax list of 1495, which enumerates all the four administrative districts (*processus*) of Körös county. It is, however, undeniably a very late source, and has special problems of its own, to be discussed later on.⁶⁷

Although, as we shall see later, the possession of fortifications is an important and useful indicator of noble wealth, it nevertheless involves problems of terminology, chronology and identification.⁶⁸ These problems are further complicated by the fact that from the early 15th century the county of Körös was one of the regions most exposed to Ottoman incursions, which resulted in a new, basically defensive meaning being attributed to the possession of fortifications.⁶⁹ Similar problems emerge with regard to the access of the nobility to the royal court as an indication of „social preeminence”. The function and form of the royal court was transformed profoundly between the death of king Sigismund and 1526, and so were the forms and ways of noble interaction with it.⁷⁰ Moreover, this aspect of noble activity is very difficult to grasp, and most exposed to the historian’s luck with his/her sources, and as such not an ideal starting point for the kind of investigation I intended to carry out.

Consequently, I decided to start with the fourth criterion, namely to gather all the persons titled *egregius* independently of any office in the charters between the emergence of this honorific title in the first third of the 15th century⁷¹ and 1526.⁷² This approach, as against the other three, is justified

⁶⁷ Josip Adamček and Ivan Kampuš eds., *Popisi i obračuni poreza u Hrvatskoj u XV i XVI stoljeću* [Tax Lists and Accounts from Croatia in the 15th and 16th Centuries] (Zagreb, 1976), 7-15. On the problems of its use see below pp. 40-42.

⁶⁸ On the architectural, terminological and social problems presented by the different kinds of fortifications see chapter 3.2. below.

⁶⁹ It must have been the constant, and ever increasing, Ottoman menace which had led by the early 16th century to the official acknowledgment of the right of each Slavonian nobleman to erect a *castellum* on his own possessions (1515 [DL 94811]: „*unusquisque nobilium erigendi [...] castella in bonis suis ex vetusta regni consuetudine liberam habet potestatis facultatem*”, and compare DL 104278.). The adjective „old” was attached as a matter of fact to all customs held by the nobility, regardless of its real age. I will return to the defensive functions of *castella* in chapter 3.2. On the problem of Ottoman influence see Grgin, Borislav, „The Ottoman influences on Croatia in the second half of the fifteenth century.” *Povijesni prilozi* 23 (2002): 87-103., esp. 93-94.

⁷⁰ There is no special study devoted to the function of the royal court as a place of interaction between the king and the nobility, „as a centre of patronage and service” (Harris, *Shaping the Nation*, 22) in the later middle ages. I will set out in detail the lines of development which emerged from the investigation of the nobility in Körös in chapter 3.4.

⁷¹ The title appears in Slavonia in the 1420s, and spreads rapidly from the 1430s, which seems to be in keeping with the „national” trends. See Engel, *Ung megye*, 97.

in so far as it is based upon recorded contemporary observation.⁷³ During the reconstruction of the list I ignored the fact whether the title was used merely once or several times, partly because of the unequal repartition of the sources, partly because some detailed case studies convinced me that the attribution of the title was *never* accidental. Of course, the use of this criterion as a means of selection is no less free of difficulties than that of the other three. Firstly, as Pál Engel stated with regard to the *magister* title, „its use, as that of all titles of prestige, was never consistent, and adapted itself to the varying social circumstances”.⁷⁴ Since, however, the great majority of the charters upon which our collection was based emanated either from the royal court or from the local places of authentication, their relative value is roughly the same. Another, more serious problem, as we have already seen, is the consequence of the unequal survival of our sources. Thus, whereas those families whose lands and archives were later incorporated into the Battyányi domain, have a much greater chance of turning up in our charters with the *egregius* title, greater numbers in this case do not necessarily mean greater social prestige.⁷⁵ Thirdly, since the title was as a rule given not only to the vicebans and deputy prothonotaries, but also, for instance, to the castellans of the major baronial castles, it is always possible that a person called *egregius* was given the title by reason of an office otherwise unknown to us. And finally, the attribution of the title seems to have been subjected to particular considerations which remain beyond our comprehension.⁷⁶

⁷² I have left out of consideration the charters from the very end of the period, among them the rich *protocollum* of the chapter of Csázma (DF 277175), for these reflect a clear inflation of the title, which is attributed to persons whose ancestors never bore it, and whose social situation, unlike in the preceding period, by no means justifies the attribution of the title even after thorough examination. Thus, in 1519 for instance, John Tahi, Michael Tomadovci, Christopher Tomadovci, John Csezmicsei, John Bornemisza of Zebenyanc, Gregory Temerjei, Paul Mocsilai and Ladislás Vitéz of Kamarca are designated as royal men, all of them comprised by the title *egregii* (DF 209458); some of them, such as John Tahi and Ladislás Vitéz will concern us below, as they are revealed by other sources to have been more prominent as the rest. The others, however, emerge at most as *szolgabírák*, and their inclusion, together with dozens of others who turn up with the title in the 1510s and 1520s, would have greatly encumbered the text. This, of course, involved a pre-selection already based on the knowledge of the entire source material. Anyway, I only use these references in case I have found corroborative information in other, earlier sources, or if other indications of social prestige support them. This phenomenon of inflation, which equally affected the notions of *castrum* and *castellum* for instance, can also be observed elsewhere, but especially after 1526. Personal communication by Tibor Neumann. Whether it was already connected to the basically post-Mohács emergence of the so-called “*vitézlő nép*”, has yet to be examined. On the latter see Zsigmond Pál Pach et al. eds., *Magyarország története 1526-1686 [The History of Hungary 1526-1686]* I-II (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1987) I. 389; Géza Pálffy, *A tizenhatodik század története [The History of the 16th Century]* (Budapest: Pannonica, 2000) 154-160.

⁷³ “*sine proceribus nobilium, quales egregios vulgo vocamus, quales etiam in uno comitatu vix duo vel tres sunt.*”, cited by András Kubinyi, „A kaposújvári uradalom és a Somogy megyei familiárisok szerepe Újlaki Miklós birtokpolitikájában” [The Role of the Estate of Kaposújvár and the Familiares in Somogy county in the Territorial Policies of Nicholas Újlaki], in *Somogy megye múltjából. Levéltári Évkönyv* (Kaposvár, 1973) 35., in note 18.

⁷⁴ Engel, Ung megye, 97.

⁷⁵ Thus, whereas in the case of Ladislás Hermanfi of Greben or his adopted son, Balthasar Batthyány, we have several dozens of instances of their being titled *egregius*, in the most various contexts, for several members of the Pekri family from the Petrovinai branch we have to content ourselves with a handful of references, or only one or two, which, of course, by no means indicates a social difference of the same order.

⁷⁶ For instance, in 1493, when an inquisition is held in the county of Körös, Peter Bocskai is accorded the *egregius* title, whereas his kinsmen, Sigismund and Nicholas, who otherwise also regularly receive it, are titled simply as *nobilis*. Similarly, Peter Gudovci, George Kapitánfi and Stephen Gorbonoki do receive the title, but Francis Pekri does not, although he is not denied it otherwise (DF 233293). It is impossible to know what lays behind such distinctions.

All in all we find almost 90 families and persons for the whole period between cca. 1420 and 1526 who can thus be involved in the investigation.⁷⁷ This, albeit certainly incomplete, is undeniably a huge number, even with the restrictions to be set forth below. Engel found only two families in the county of Ung who were decorated with the *egregius* title before 1437,⁷⁸ whereas Tibor Neumann counted some eight families in that of Nyitra which fell into the same category at the end of the Middle Ages.⁷⁹ Of course, these roughly ninety families and persons were not all simultaneously present in the county of Körös: many of them arrived in the course of the 15th century, whereas others disappeared during the same period. This phenomenon will constitute the object of a separate investigation later on. Moreover, some of them played such an ephemeral role in the region that their existence there can safely be left out of consideration. Thus, before all, the Lusiczky family, who possessed the estate of Dobrakucsá (Dobra Kuća) for some years,⁸⁰ or Stephen Dorozslai, who owned that of Szobocsina, likewise for a very limited period,⁸¹ or the Italian Sabatinus Viola, who was donated by king Matthias the estate of Garignica but sell it within a couple of years.⁸² Simon Nagy of Szentmárton seems to have been a *familiaris* of John Hunyadi in Slavonia; he obtained half of the estate of Kristallóc (Kreštelovac, Cro.) in 1453, but lost it only three years later, and left the

⁷⁷ The following persons receive the title with reference to some possession in the county of Körös (the families follow each other in alphabetical order, all the persons listed within each family): Balthasar **Alapi**, Lawrence **Bánfi** of Gara, Balthasar **Batthyány**, Michael **Berivojszentiváni**, George and Peter **Bikszádi**, Ladislás, John, Sigismund, Peter and Nicholas **Bocskai** of Keresztúr, Nicholas **Borotva** of Tersztenice, Elias **Bosnyák** of Businc, Blaise and Andrew **Budor** of Budrovc, Peter **Butkai**, Paul **Čsavlović** of Gyurkovec, Gaspar **Csernarekai**, John **Csezmicei**, Nicholas, Gaspar, George and Stephen **Csupor** of Monoszló, Leonard **Dacsó** of Ór, Ladislás **Darabos** of Nádasd, Martin, Stephen and Nicholas **Ders(fi)** of Szerdahely, George **Diakói**, Nicholas, Francis, David and John **Dombai**, Stephen **Dorozslói**, Ladislás, Stanislas, Nicholas and Akacius **Ervencei**, Bartholomew, Ladislás, Frank, Peter and Emeric **Fáncs** of Gordova, Peter **Fintics** of Poljana, Gregory **Fodorovci**, Wolfgang and Sigismund **Frodnohar** of Bednya, Paul **Garázda** of Keresztúr, Anthony, Peter, and Nicholas **Gereci**, John and Francis **Geszti**, Thomas, Nicholas, Briccius, Emeric and Stephen **Gorbonoki**, Herman, George, John, Andrew and Ladislás **Grebeni**, Peter and Stephen **Gudovci**, John **Gyulai**, Stephen **Hássági**, Balthasar **Hobetić**, Gregory **Horváth** of Gaj, Vitus **Horváth** of Szeglak, John Vitéz, Vitus and Akacius Garazda, Nicholas of **Kamarca**, Andrew, Stephen, George, Vitus and Sylvester **Kapitánfi** of Desnice, Nicholas (2), Gaspar, Akacius, George and John **Kasztellánfi**, Francis **Kecer**, George and Peter **Kerecsényi**, Michael, Peter and Nicholas **Kerhen** of Belosovc, John **Kishorvát**, Anthony and John **Kopinci**, Matthias **Kustyer**, Peter **Lacovich** of Butinc, Michael **Latk** of Berstyanóc, Albert **Lónyai**, George **Ludbregi**, Nicholas and Frederick **Lusicki** of Dobrakucsá, Frank, Emeric, Francis, Bernard and Stephen **Megyericsei**, Peter **Miksec** of Cirkvena, Nicholas **Mindszenti**, Sandrin **Musinai**, Simon **Nagy** of Szentmárton, Paul, Dominic, Ladislás, David, Nicholas, Benedict and Francis **Nelepec** of Dobrakucsá, Nicholas **Orros** of Orrosovc, John and Francis **Ost(fi)**, Nicholas **Ördög** of Prodaviz, Bernard **Ördög** of Vragovc, George and Ladislás **Ósi**, Michael **Paksi**, Valentine and Nicholas **Pálfi** of Szentmihály, Paul **Pan** of Kravarina, Albert, Nicholas and George **Pataki**, Christoph **Paschingar**, Ladislás **Paska** of Pasinc, John **Pechiban** of Chomorag, Ladislás, Nicholas, Francis, Stephen, John, Louis (2) **Pekri**, Thomas and George **Pestenyei**, Francis and Thomas **Pető** of Gerse, George **Piers**, Anthony **Pocsaji** of Namény, Sigismund **Pogány**, Nicholas **Pozsegai**, Stephen **Prasovci**, John **Predrihoi**, Michael (2) **Raveni**, Ladislás, John, Michael and Bernard **Roh** of Dèce, Oswald **Rumi**, Viola and Francis **Sabatinus** of Garignica, Thomas and Gregory **Safar** of Pestenye, John **Stefekfi** of Temenica, George **Supanics** of Prezecsnafo, Nicholas **Székely** of Kövend, Ladislás, John, George and Francis **Szencsei**, Nicholas and John **Szerecsen** of Kristallóc, Louis and Francis **Szerecsen** of Mesztegyő, John **Tahi**, Anthony **Tarko** of Kristallóc, Valentine **Terbenyei**, Michael **Tompa** of Horzova, Tulbert and Nicholas **Tulbertfi** of Berstyanóc, Benedict and Bernard **Turóci**, Jan **Vitovec**, Nicholas **Vizaknai**, Ladislás **Zalai**.

⁷⁸ Engel, Ung megye 97. n. 409.

⁷⁹ Neumann, Korlátköviék 9. It is true that the title *egregius dominus*, examined by Neumann, was somewhat more illustrious than *egregius* alone. In my analysis I paid no attention to this difference.

⁸⁰ See below the chapter on the Nelepec.

⁸¹ Between 1489 and 1491. Pálosfalvi, „Grebeni Hermanfi” I. 856.

⁸² Pálosfalvi, „Grebeni Hermanfi” I. 858-863.,

region for all thereafter.⁸³ Another man settled by Hunyadi in Slavonia for political reasons was Nicholas Vizaknai (Ocna Sibiului, Rom.), deputy-governor of Transylvania, who received the important estates of George Ludbregi in 1452 through adoption, and seems indeed to have taken possession of them, but soon disappeared from Slavonia.⁸⁴ Anthony Pocsaji of Namény, apparently a similar creature of John Hunyadi, will turn up briefly below together with the Lónyai.

Others, who possessed land in the county of Körös for a more protracted time, seem nevertheless to have remained socially or in terms of their landed wealth attached to other regions of medieval Hungary, and cannot consequently be regarded as belonging to the nobility of the county. Of course, to define who were regarded or who regarded themselves as belonging to the noble community of any given county is one of the most intricate problems. On a very basic level, a necessary precondition was to have some land there;⁸⁵ yet it is evident that not all people with land in Körös were connected with the same ties to the local noble community. Evidently, there is no trouble with those who owned the whole or the bulk of their landed wealth in Körös, for in their case the problem of multiple affinities does not even emerge. But if we take the example of the Fánacs of Gordova (Grđevac), which is far from isolated, we see that at least two thirds of their lands were situated in Somogy, at least one of them even assumed the office of *alispán* there, and another acted as envoy sent by the same county to the general assembly. Yet they were always called by their Slavonian possession of Gordova, where they seem to have kept their residence, were regularly listed among the representatives of the Slavonian nobility, and also took the office of viceban and *ispán* of Körös. They were thus in all probability regarded as belonging to the noble community of Körös.⁸⁶ Yet in other cases the situation is by no means so evident.

It was, consequently, necessary to elaborate a number of criteria by which to judge dubious cases. The first approach is based on names. That is, if an individual is at least sometimes called by a locality in Körös, he is reasonably supposed to have stayed there with some regularity. Thus, whereas Sigismund Pogány, although he was as continuously absent from Slavonia as the Paksi, and had as much land outside the province as they did, was sometimes called of Herbortya (Veliki Poganac)⁸⁷, and so were his father, Emeric, and brother, John, none of the members of the Paksi family was ever called by either Vasmegyericse or Sukanc (*Schwkanecz*). Another approach is based on the regular involvement in the internal affairs of the county concerned, which, in our case,

⁸³ Although his widow and son tried to reobtain in in the 1460s. On Simon Nagy see Pálosfalvi, „Vitovec”, 436-439.

⁸⁴ DL 14558, DF 255746.

⁸⁵ DF 233293: „habens nobilitatem in comitatu Crisiensi”, here nobility being equivalent to land.

⁸⁶ For the references see the chapter on the Fánacs family below.

⁸⁷ Originally called by Herbord of the Osli kindred, its present Croatian name derives from the Hungarian name Pogány. The village in which, as we will see below, the fortification called Herbortya stood, namely Oslovc, borrowed its name from the kindred itself (Osli).

evidently means Slavonia of which the county of Körös was the main constituent.⁸⁸ Thus, members of the Dombai and Batthyány families, while always continued to be called by their places of origin in the counties of Somogy and Fejér respectively, and also continued to own land there, turn up regularly in the common affairs of the Slavonian nobility, which proves that they were effectively accepted as belonging to it. Thus, with very few exceptions to be explained below, I counted as members of the nobility of Körös those families whose members turn up as vicebans, Slavonian tax-collectors, deputies to the general assembly delegated from either Körös or from Slavonia in general, or as mere participants to any collective activities of the Slavonian nobility as a corporate body. All this is evidently open to criticism, but decisions had to be taken; unfortunately, this aspect of medieval noble life in Hungary is one of those problems which have never been systematically treated in Hungarian historiography so far.

Even so, there are exceptions, some omissions need more detailed justification, and some cases are extremely difficult to decide, whatever the qualifications. Already complicated is the case of the Geszti family, from the county of Bodrog, who owned the estate of Szentjakab (Sveti Jakob, *Zenthjacab*) and a *castellum* there, also a part of Csezmice (*Chezmiche*), and one of them was even viceban in the 1470s.⁸⁹ Nevertheless, they seem never to have resided there, and the bulk of their lands lay outside Slavonia; it is no wonder, then, that they were never listed among the representatives of the Slavonian nobility, a further proof that they were not regarded as such. Yet if we follow the history of their Slavonian possessions into the 16th century, we come across a certain Alexius (Elek) Móré, who by 1517 had taken over Szentjakab, and already four years before is attested as a landowner at Csezmice as well.⁹⁰ Since he inherited the lawsuit which opposed the Battyányi and the Geszti because of Szentjakab, and he turns up in the case as Alexius Móré of Dada,⁹¹ his identification becomes easy: he came from the Móré of Dada family in the county of Szabolcs, and inherited the Geszti lands in Körös through his marriage with Anne, presumably the daughter of John Geszti.⁹² In 1507 he was *ispán* and castellan of the royal castle of Diósgyőr.⁹³ He is not known to have resided in Slavonia before his death sometime before 1521. But his case is important as a warning that persons otherwise regularly titled *egregius*, holding important offices, and owning considerable land in Körös may nevertheless remain “invisible” to us if we concentrate solely on the local charter material.

⁸⁸ Here as elsewhere, I use the term „county of Körös” as almost synonymous with Slavonia. The framework for the political activities of the elite nobility of the county of Körös in the late middle ages was constituted by Slavonia itself, be it as vicebans, tax-collectors or envoys and representatives of whatever kind.

⁸⁹ On the origins of the Geszti family and their relationship to the Gyulai see András Kubinyi, „Ernuszt Zsigmond pécsi püspök rejtélyes halála és hagyatékának sorsa” [The Mysterious Death of Sigismund Ernuszt, Bishop of Pécs, and the Fate of his Inheritance], *Századok* 135 (2001) 328-329.

⁹⁰ Adamček – Kampuš, *Popisi* 61, 99.

⁹¹ DL 101427.

⁹² DL 23572.; Engel, *Középkori magyar genealógia*, Győr nem 1. Óvári-ág 2. tábla: Gyulai.

⁹³ DL 21756, DL 46827, here as of Dada.

The Bánfi of Gara (of the Dorozsma kindred), who descended from Desiderius (Dezső) Garai, ban of Macsó (Mačva, today Valjevo, Srb.), and Kishorvát of Hlapčić families, the latter newcomers from Croatia, owned the castle of Darnóc from the 1420s and 1470s respectively.⁹⁴ Although no member of either family was ever titled *magnificus*, and they bore no baronial office, and would thus qualify for the target group, they also possessed extensive landed wealth in the county of Valkó (Vukovar),⁹⁵ and nothing shows that they were ever regarded as belonging to the noble community of Körös in any sense; anyway, the Bánfi, related to the baronial Garai family, must generally have appeared as magnates to many, especially locally, although their landed wealth did not considerably exceed that of the Batthyány, for instance, in the 1490s.⁹⁶ The case of Jan Vitovec himself is certainly to be treated separately: even as a viceban, at the same time the mercenary captain of the counts of Cilli, he was far above the nobility of Körös, and after 1457 he quickly entered the baronage, of which his sons were also members.⁹⁷ I also ignored Nicholas Ördög of Pölöske, great grandson of the famous ban Mikcs from the Ákos kindred, who recovered the huge estate of Szentgyörgy in 1425, but lost it ten years later and completely disappeared from Slavonia thereafter.⁹⁸ Likewise left out of consideration was the Ludbregi family, descendants of ban John Csúz, who seem to have faded into obscurity after their estate of Ludbreg, together with their other lands in the counties of Zagreb and Sopron, had been pledged to Andrew Rohonci in 1421.⁹⁹

An interesting and controversial case is that of the Székely of Kövend family. Although sometimes receiving the *magnificus* title, they were regularly titled *egregius*, and possessed the important estate of Dobrakucsá in Körös, whose name they even bore sometimes. Yet they also obtained the estate of Fridau (Hung. Ormosd) in Styria, of which they even became the barons, and they seem to have held their residence there. Moreover, while being influential members of the court of both Matthias and his Jagello successors, they do not appear to have showed any interest in the internal affairs of Slavonia before 1526.¹⁰⁰ It was for this reason that I excluded them from the scope of the

⁹⁴ Engel, *Archontológia* I. 297-298.; Csánki, *Körösmegye* 53-54.

⁹⁵ Dezső Csánki, *Magyarország történelmi földrajza a Hunyadiak korában*. I-V. (Budapest, 1890-1913.), II. 371.

⁹⁶ Their possessions are extensively listed in DF 265809 (1507): the castles of Darnóc and Nartszentmiklós in Körös, the *castella* of Szlakovc, Cerna, Kosztormánszentdénés and Gara in Valkó, the *castellum* of Kisdarnóc in Pozsega, and several possessions in Bács, with all their appurtenances. As a matter of fact, the Bánfi of Gara are treated among the aristocratic families by Pál Engel as well (*Magyar világi nagybirtok* 31.)

⁹⁷ Pálosfalvi, „Vitovec”, *passim*.

⁹⁸ Engel, *Archontológia* I. 426. Nicholas Ördög of Pölöske was still struggling to regain the estate from the Ernuszt brothers as late as 1495. DF 231190.

⁹⁹ Engel, *Archontológia* I. 363.; ZsO. VII. 861., 1933.

¹⁰⁰ James Székely, captain of Radkersburg and Pettau before and after 1490, imperial councillor (for Maximilian of Habsburg); his brother, Nicholas, courtier, captain of the royal *aulici*, then ban of Jajce, and royal *familiaris*. See András Kubinyi, *Matthias Rex* (Budapest: Balassi, 2008), 104, 142, 149, 155 (on James); Idem, „Bárók a királyi tanácsban Mátyás és II. Ulászló idejében” [Barons in the Royal Council in the Time of Kings Matthias and Wladislaw II], *Századok* 122 (1988) 210., DL 94603, DL 37728, DL 94640, DL 94802 (on Nicholas). Both James and Nicholas date their letters mostly from Fridau/Ormosd (DF 258417, DL 37727, DL 46502, DL 70085); in 1499 Nicholas, in a charter again dated at Ormosd, calls his brother „*magnificum dominum Jacobum Zekel de Kewend dominum in Ormosd*” (DL 37728.). James referred to himself as „*Jacob Zegkl vonn Kewend herr zu Fridau*” (DL 94614.). On the other hand,

present research. John Gyulai, who descended from the Győr kindred, and whose lands lay in the county of Baranya, acquired some property in the county of Körös thanks to his lord, duke John Corvin. He owned the estate of Kustyerolc (Gušcerovac) for a mere two years in the early 1490s, whereas that of Dubovc (Dubovac) became his property definitively in the first decade of the next century. Nevertheless, his greatest acquisitions, the castles of Vinica (Vinica) and Trakostyán (Trakošćan), as well as the *castellum* of Kamenica (Kamenica Ivanečka), all lay in the county of Varasd, the *alispán* of which he was in the service of margrave George of Brandenburg. Consequently, I neglected him despite the fact that in 1495 he was duke Corvin's deputy in Slavonia, although the local nobility protested heavily.¹⁰¹ The situation is very much the same with the Szerecsen of Mesztegyő family, of Italian origins. They owned the castle of Döbrököz in the county of Tolna, and the town of Mesztegyő in that of Somogy, before obtaining the important estates of Zagyolca (Čadavica) and Szuhamlaka (Suhamlaka) in Körös in the late 15th century. Peter Szerecsen was the Slavonian viceban of Miklós Újlaki in the early 1460s, without apparently having a single parcel of land there, and thirty years later Louis Szerecsen once acted as tax-collector in Slavonia. Yet, since they were attached by both the bulk of their lands and their social relations to the counties north of the Drava, there seemed to be no reason to include them into the analysis.¹⁰² Again, the Paksi family had possessed the estate of Bradna (Trema?), perhaps since the 13th century, to which by the middle of the 15th century was added the *castellum* of Szentlászló (*Zenthlazlo*), and owned the estate of Vasmegyericse for a decade before the death of king Matthias.¹⁰³ As late as 1507 still some 60 tenant sessions were listed in their hands at Sukanc.¹⁰⁴ Nevertheless, and despite the fact that Louis Paksi did appear at least occasionally at Vasmegyericse when the *castellum* was theirs in the 1480s,¹⁰⁵ they do not seem to have showed any interest in the affairs of Slavonia,¹⁰⁶ and were rather attached to Hungary proper, where the majority

I know of only one letter issued by Nicholas Székely at Dobrakucsá (DL 94668), but this was during his officeholding as ban of Jajce, when he is reasonably supposed to have stayed sometimes in his Slavonian castle. They are indeed sometimes called by their Slavonian estate, when their people there were involved in a legal case (eg. DF 255922, DL 34147.). In these same charters they are titled *magnificus*, and see also DL 34249, DL 33232. With one exception, to which I will return later, they apparently only appear in Slavonia as representatives of the royal will sent to the Slavonian estates, as, for instance, Nicholas in 1504 (DF 268164); the same can be observed with regard to John Paksi.

¹⁰¹ On the Gyulai family see Kubinyi, Ernuszt 327-339.

¹⁰² On the Szerecsen *ibid.* 339-352.

¹⁰³ Csánki, Körösmegye 40.

¹⁰⁴ For Bradna, see ZsO. IX. 690. It belonged perhaps originally to the castle lordship of Kemlék, which was held by palatine Lorand, ancestor of the Paksi family, in the late 13th century. See János Karácsonyi, *A magyar nemzetségek a XIV. század közepéig [The Hungarian Noble Kindreds until the Middle of the 14th Century]* (Budapest, 1900) 927. For Sukanc see Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 30. Sukanc had a church dedicated to Saint Ladislav, and was situated near Lesnek, later Lesnekhegy, owned by the Hospitallers of Vrana (Csánki, "Körösmegye" 78.). *Lesnek alio nomine Zabadfalu*, the later with a Saint Ladislav church (DL 33744, 1295), originally belonged to the Szencsei family. It is certainly there that the castellum called Szentlászló, attested in the possession of Emeric Paksi, stood (Engel, "Archontológia" I. 427.). I was unable to find out how and when the Paksi acquired it.

¹⁰⁵ DL 56642, DL 56210.

¹⁰⁶ On one occasion, in June 1490 at Buda, Paul Pakosi appears among the representatives of the Slavonian nobility (DF 252107), but the case is entirely isolated.

of their landed property lay. Part of Sukanc later was acquired by George Sztrazsemljei (Stražeman), who also possessed some of the Kasztellánfi lands, and the castle and estate of Csáktornya (Čaklovac), which belonged to the priory of Vrana.¹⁰⁷ Ban of Jajce in the first decade of the 16th century, he was a nobleman from the neighbouring county of Pozsega,¹⁰⁸ however, and nothing is known about his activities in Slavonia. The Rumi brothers, members of a fairly well-to-do noble family from the county of Vas, possessed a noble house at Dorozzlóbakva (Turnašica? *Dorozlóbakwa*) in the early 16th century, and probably earlier, but nothing else seems to have attached them to Slavonia.¹⁰⁹ And, finally, another interesting case which is similar to that of Alexius More in some way. The Szentgróti family, from the neighbouring county of Zala, and the Hagymás of Berekszó, originally from that of Temes, possessed jointly the estate of Zlavina/Zlanya (Slanje) in the northwestern corner of Körös right into the second half of the 15th century, yet no member of either family ever turns up with the *egregius* title in connection with this Slavonian estate of theirs.¹¹⁰ They would again remain hidden to us in case we had no further knowledge about their landed wealth in Körös. The estate amounted to more than 50 inhabited tenant sessions and boasted a *castellum* from 1483 at the latest,¹¹¹ yet none of these families seems ever to have resided there, nor were they called by it, and anyway their possessions in Temes (Timiș, Rom.) and Zala respectively were much more important, the Szentgróti even possessing the castle of the same name in the county of Zala.¹¹² After the death of John Szentgróti his portions somehow descended upon Francis Sárkány, from the same county of Zala, whereas by 1517 the whole estate had been reunited in the hands of Francis Kecser.¹¹³

In one respect, however, I did include at least some of these families into my investigation, namely in the chapter upon the origins of the families in the county of Körös, for their cases widen the circle of examples upon which the ways of land acquisition can be studied. Some other non-Slavonian families or persons, which/who became involved in the history of local families which

¹⁰⁷ The portion Szircs which is listed in 1517 in the hands of George Sztrazsemljei was in 1507 held by Michael Pakosi. It seems to have been taken over by George with half of Sukanc, we do not know by what right. Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 30, 98. Csáktornya: ibid. 100.

¹⁰⁸ Ban: Lajos Thallóczy and Sándor Horváth eds., *Jajcza (bánság és vár) története (1450-1527) [The History of the Town and Castle of Jajce]* (Budapest, 1915) 189.; their lands, Csánki, *Történelmi földrajz* II. 427, 443.

¹⁰⁹ DL 104209: „*egregiorum Emerici et Oswaldi de Rom [...] curiam nobilitarem [...] in possessione ipsorum Darozlawyabwkowa.*” Descendants of a certain Dorozzló, they had presumably acquired their lands in Körös in the 13th century; in 1354 referred to as Dorozlouch and Obakua (DF 254164.), the two villages later merged into Dorozzlóbakva. On their possessions see Csánki, *Történelmi földrajz* II. 847.; on the careers of the individual members see Engel, *Archontológia* I. 207.

¹¹⁰ The estate was acquired by the Türje kindred, from which the Szentgróti originated, in the 13th century (Karácsonyi, *Magyar nemzetségek*, 1034.). See also Csánki, *Körösmegye*, 66: Eccl. S. Crucis de Zlavina. 1514: „*possessionum Sclawyna et Kerezthwr*” (DL 60024.). This Keresztúr is today’s Križovljan. The Szentgróti also had a right, likewise since the 13th century, in the possessions of Orbona, Pósahegy, Ceraborda and Gragenna, which king Wladislaw granted away in 1491 for infidelity. DL 33450. See Karácsonyi, *Magyar nemzetségek* 1034.

¹¹¹ DF 255872: „*castelli Zlawynya [...] Nicolai Haghmas de Berekwow ac Ladislai de Zenthgerolth*” 1503: „*castellum [...] Sclawynya*” (DL 68040).

¹¹² Zala, Temes: Csánki, *Történelmi földrajz* II. 80., III. 15.; on the castle, Engel, *Archontológia* I, 425.

¹¹³ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 27, 94.

are separately treated in the dissertation, but do not deserve a chapter of their own, such as the Pető of Gerse or Peter Butkai, or George Diakófi and the Ósi family, Vitus Horváth, Leonard Dacsó and John Pechiban, will be dealt with under the family with which their history became intertwined.

The families listed above had landed interests that spread over several counties, which, although raising methodological problems, at least makes their histories relatively easy to reconstruct. There are others, however, who were undoubtedly based, at least partly, in the county of Körös, and yet their origins and “belonging” are far from unproblematic. Interestingly, these cases concern that part of the county which had once belonged to Baranya. To start with, the Bakonyai family, apparently from the Hermán kindred,¹¹⁴ owned the fairly important estates of Szuhamlaka and Szagyolca right up to their extinction in the 1480s. Bakonya itself lay in the county of Baranya, whereas the family’s main possessions, Sellye and Barcsiszentmihály, the latter with a *castellum*, in Baranya and Somogy respectively.¹¹⁵ The offices taken by members of the family clearly show a non-Slavonian orientation,¹¹⁶ and no member of the family ever appeared in a function that could be linked to the noble community of Körös. Yet the origins of the family’s Slavonian lands nevertheless present problems that need to be solved, even if not within the framework of the present dissertation.

The Bakonyai lands, together with parts of Darnóc, were acquired in the 1460s and 1470s, apparently by right of pledge, by a nobleman from Croatia called Gregory Horváth of Gáj (*Gay*).¹¹⁷ Gregory Horváth was a man of influence, castellan of Diósgyőr and then of Buda, until the mid-1470s, when he suddenly disappears from sight, probably because he fell out from the royal favour.¹¹⁸ In 1478 he emerges among the representatives of the Slavonian nobility, and he seems to have constructed a *castellum* at *Branynch*, which is certainly to be identified with today’s Vranesevci in Körös.¹¹⁹ But apart from that, we know nothing about his links with the nobility of Körös, and anyway the bulk of his lands lay in Baranya. Some of his possessions went with the hands of his daughter to the Szerecsen of Mesztegnyő, who shared in the 1510s and 1520s the estates of Szuhamlaka and Szagyolca with the kinsmen of Peter Váradi, the late archbishop of

¹¹⁴ Engel, *Archontológia* II. 18., identified by their coat-of-arms.

¹¹⁵ In fact, the lands which appear in the hands of the Bakonyai family in the counties of Somogy and Baranya in the later middle ages seem originally to have belonged to the Viszlói kindred, whose early history was closely connected to that of the Monoszló in Baranya. It is possible that the origins of Szuhamlaka and Szagyolca should be looked for in the same direction, especially in view of the fact that they lay between the two great blocks of land owned by the Monoszló in the region, namely Monoszló (Moslavina Podravska) and Darnóc (Drenovac), and that originally the Hermán kindred does not seem to have had lands in this region at all. The Bakonyai lands are listed in DL 18391.

¹¹⁶ Engel, *Archontológia* II. 18. Stephen Bakonyai was viceban of Croatia in 1418, but it is conveniently explained by the fact that the brother of his lord, John Albeni, was bishop of Pécs then.

¹¹⁷ DL 17340., DF 265797. Earlier, he had also taken into pledge the castellum of Palina, in the county of Valkó, from John Viszlói: DL 93345. He may have been related to the Lawrence of Gaj (Laurencio de Gay) who in 1495 received money from the treasurer “ad conservacionem castris sui Gay vocati in confinibus et metis Turkorum Croacie siti”. Johann Christian von Engel, *Geschichte des Ungarischen Reichs und seiner Nebenländer. I. Theil*. Halle, 1797. 157.

¹¹⁸ Kubinyi, *Ernusz*, 345-346.

¹¹⁹ DL 17501: „Leonardo castellano Gregorii Horwath de Branynch”.

Kalocsa, and with members of the Nagylucsei family, who had received parts of the Bakonyai inheritance from king Matthias. Matthias Érsek was the brother of Peter Váradi, whereas Benedict Bári, who likewise possessed more than fifty tenant sessions at Szagyolca and Szuhamlaka, seems to have been the son of John Nagylucsei.¹²⁰ Gregory Bári, presumably the son of Benedict, was tax-collector of Slavonia in 1517.¹²¹ He seems to have resided in the county of Somogy, however, and both families disappeared from Körös soon thereafter, for around 1520 their portions were listed in the hands of Urban Fáncsi, to whom I will return below.

Pesténye (Pistana), in the vicinity of Raholca, seems originally to have been a district of considerable size. In the late middle ages the major part of it was owned by the Újlaki family, whereas the rest was in the hands of a populous family which was named by it.¹²² I have been unable to trace back their origins to earlier than the end of the 14th century, but then they certainly possessed at Bodony in the county of Baranya, and probably at Monyorós as well, both of which had originally belonged to the Győr kindred.¹²³ During the 15th century members of the family appear as neighbours and royal men¹²⁴ both in Körös and Baranya, and in 1507 George Pestenyei was deputy *szolgabíró* of Körös county.¹²⁵ Then, sometime during the first decade of the 16th century, a certain Thomas Sáfár of Pesténye somehow, presumably by way of marriage, acquired the lands of the important Monoki family in the counties of Zemplén, Abaúj and Sáros, where he was referred to as Horváth, and thus became rich enough to be titled *egregius*. Evidently thanks to his rise, one of his kinsmen, Gregory, was also once accorded the title, yet since the career of Thomas Sáfár, perhaps in the service of treasurer Benedict Battyányi,¹²⁶ took place outside Slavonia, and seems otherwise to have involved no consequence for the rest of his family, I have left them out of consideration.¹²⁷

¹²⁰ He is certainly not identical with the brother of chancellor Urban Nagylucsei, as supposed by András Kubinyi (Ernusz 347.), for he died before 1482, and could thus not be listed in 1507. See Engel, *Középkori Magyar Genealógia*, Nagylucsei, and DL 20718, DL 30060.

¹²¹ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 103. Although he is once rendered as George by the editors (*ibid.* 65.), in the original his name certainly reads as Gregorius.

¹²² Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 8., 33.

¹²³ Nagy Imre et al. eds., *Codex diplomaticus domus senioris comitum Zichy de Zich et Vásonkew. A zichi és vásonkői gróf Zichy-család idősb ágának okmánytára*. I-XII (Budapest, 1871-1931), IV. 379-381; DF 94320.

¹²⁴ Royal men (*homines regii*) designate persons who were delegated by the king or one of the judges of the court (palatine or judge royal) to carry out acts like formal introduction into a piece of land, accompanied by the testimony of an ecclesiastical institution. Despite the name, these people had no connection with the king, of course; they were in all probability elected by the beneficiary of the act itself. The ban of Slavonia also had the right to order introductions and other similar acts, in which case I adopted the term banal men. On the delegation of royal men see later on pp 324-325.

¹²⁵ DL 34305, DL 14491, DL 17515 (this time in the county of Baranya). Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 33., *vicejudez nobilium*.

¹²⁶ That it was in the service of Benedict Battyányi that Thomas Sáfár made a career is no more than pure hypothesis. It is based, on the one hand, on the very name of Thomas, for *sáfár* was a term evidently connected to the financial administration; and, on the other hand, on the fact that Benedict Battyányi, who owned the estate of Atyina, in the neighbourhood of Pesténye, was treasurer at the very time when Thomas Sáfár rose socially.

¹²⁷ DL 75983, DL 94320, DL 75997 (for Thomas and Gregory Pestenyei)

The situation is somewhat similar with Terbenye, near Szalatnok (Turbina, in the outskirts of Slatina). Nobles of Terbenye (Tubina) are already referred to at the end of the 13th century,¹²⁸ and they are identical to the Gerdei family from Baranya, whose ancestor had received it from king Béla IV.¹²⁹ Then, in the middle of the 15th century, we see a certain Valentine parvus of Terbenye, who is also called by the possession of Bár in the county of Baranya, and is referred to as *miles* and titled *egregius*. Since this Valentine parvus died before 1475, he cannot be identical to the other Valentine who in 1478 turns up equally as of Terbenye, and who was certainly a foreigner, also called of Podbucsa (Podbuča), presumably in the county of Pozsega. He may have been settled in Körös by the Újlaki family.¹³⁰ Whether he was related to the Andrew Horváth who is listed as owning Terbenye in 1495, or to the person called Gaspar who held it in 1507, is unknown. What we know for sure is that by 1513 Terbenye had devolved upon Benedict Battyányi together with Atyina and other neighbouring lands.¹³¹ What certainly is worth remarking in this respect is the strong social and territorial links which apparently continued to attach this region of the county of Körös to that of Baranya even after they had been administratively separated.

Further down the social ladder we find families whose members were regularly titled as simple *nobiles*, and the *egregius* title was accorded but once or twice to one single person. This is the case with the Csezmicsei, Zsupán of Prezechnafő (*Prezechnafew*), Ördög of Vragovc (*Wragowcz*), Pasinci (*Paschyncz*), Fintics of Poljana (*Fynthycz de Polyana*), Lacovich of Butinc (*Laczowycz de Bwthhyncz*) families, among others. In these cases we normally do not know why the title was given to the person in question, but, as I have stated above, it was never wholly accidental, so our ignorance should be attributed to the lack of sources. Four examples will suffice to prove the point. Peter Fintics of Poljana was *szolgabíró* of Körös for several years in the early 16th century.¹³² His family seems originally to have belonged to the castle nobility of Körös itself, and his landed wealth was quite modest.¹³³ Accordingly, he is as a rule titled simply noble, with one exception in 1501, when he is given the *egregius* title by the banal notary. The case is especially interesting since four other noblemen of approximately the same status appear as mere *nobiles*. The key to understanding the case seems to reside in Peter's relationship to George Kerecsényi, the other person figuring in

¹²⁸ „in vicinio terre nobilium de Tubina” (DF 252338.)

¹²⁹ György Györffy, *Az Árpád-kori Magyarország történeti földrajza I-IV [The Historical Geography of Hungary in the Árpád Age]* (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1966-1998), I. 305-306. Gyula Kristó et al., eds., *Anjou-kori Oklevéltár I-XV, XVII, XIX, XXIII-XXVIII, XXXI* (Szeged – Budapest, 1990-2010), II. 456.

¹³⁰ DL 34305 (1450): „Valentino milite parvo dicto de Turbine”; DL 14491 (1451): „egregio Valentino de Thurbine”; DL 17656 (1474): „Johannis filii quondam Valentini parvi de Baar”; DL 103818 (1478): „egregius Valentinus de Podbwcha alias de Therwbenye (!) missis et destinatis universis populis et jobagionibus magnifici domini Laurencii ducis de Wylak in dicta possessione Thewrbenye vocata commorantibus [...] egregius Valentinus Thwrbenye de Podbucha homo et (nacione) alienigena”.

¹³¹ Adamček – Kampuš, *Popisi* 8, 33, 64.

¹³² 1510 (DL 37878) – 1515 (DL 22659); 1520 (DL 102232) – 1523 (DL 35785). I only indicate the earliest and latest known dates of his officeholding.

¹³³ 4 inhabited tenant sessions in 1495, 19 in 1513. Adamček – Kampuš, *Popisi* 15, 56-57. It is, admittedly, quite a marked increase, yet in itself not enough to serve as the foundation for a durable rise.

the charter with the *egregius* title. George himself belongs to the group whose members were accorded the title with no exception, and his son, Paul, had already been betrothed with Dorothy Mikcsec. As for Peter, he had married another woman from the same family, namely the daughter of Nicholas Mikcsec, and it must have been this newly established family link with the Kerecsényi, and, also, with the Mikcsec of Cirkvena (Cirkvena), which made him seem to the scribe of the charter as well as to those present as deserving the title.¹³⁴

Peter Lacovich (*Laczowych*) was also *szolgabíró* of Körös, partly at least together with Peter Fintics, and his landed property of the same size.¹³⁵ It is thus very remarkable to see him in 1516 before the convent of Somogy being titled *egregius* together with Balthasar Batthyány and his two sons, among whom Francis was already master of the cupbearers, and they were certainly incomparably richer than Peter.¹³⁶ Yet the case was not wholly accidental, for only two years later Peter was again given the title, this time by the royal chancellery, when he received a donation together with another Batthyány, namely Benedict, castellan of Buda, and accordingly titled *magnificus*.¹³⁷ In his case, it seems to have been his otherwise not known, but certainly close relationship to the Batthyány family which earned him the distinction.

It is in 1497 that Ladislav Paska of Pasinc appears with the *egregius* title, together with Stephen Gorbonoki (Kloštar Podravski).¹³⁸ The tiny possession whose name Ladislav bore lay in the vicinity of Gorbonok,¹³⁹ and he is not known to have acquired more land anywhere else. The key to the case is offered by a charter of roughly the same time, in which the same Ladislav, titled simply *nobilis*, turns up as the *officialis* of Stephen Gorbonoki, himself *egregius* again, at his estate of Racsicaszentistván (*Rachiczazenthisthwan*).¹⁴⁰ It was thus either his office, or his close relationship to his lord, or, most probably the combination of the two, which made him appear to the *szolgabírák* of Körös, or their scribe, as deserving the *egregius* title.

And finally, George Zsupanics (*Szwanich*, Županić) of Prezečsnafő (*Prezechnafew*), the son of Benedict called “zsupán” (župan), probably because he was *comes terrestris* of Kemlék¹⁴¹, was titled *egregius* at least twice, in 1493 and 1513.¹⁴² The Prezečsnafői family also belonged to the castle nobility of Kemlék,¹⁴³ and their landed wealth seems to have remained restricted to the village whose name they bore. The father of George, Benedict, was listed twice among the

¹³⁴ DF 282471.

¹³⁵ Szolgabíró 1513 (DL 22440) – 1515 (DL 22659); Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 62, on his lands.

¹³⁶ DL 101493.

¹³⁷ Dezső Szabó, *A magyar országgyűlések története II. Lajos korában [The History of the Hungarian Diets in the Time of Louis II]* (Budapest, 1909.), 130-131.

¹³⁸ DL 104065.

¹³⁹ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 9.

¹⁴⁰ DL 104077.

¹⁴¹ DF 218805. See DF 233293: „*comitem terrestrem vulgo swpan dictum*” (with regard precisely to Nagykemlék).

¹⁴² DF 233293, DL 101460.

¹⁴³ DL 102112.

representatives of the Slavonian nobility in the 1470s, and also functioned as *szolgabíró* of Körös,¹⁴⁴ which, perhaps with his office of *comes terrestris*, surely provided him with some local prestige which was inherited by his son. Later on, however, George Zsupanics was one of the castellans appointed by Balthasar Batthyány to the important castle of Szentgyörgy, when he governed the Ernuszt lands,¹⁴⁵ and in 1512, together precisely with Peter Lacovich, he apparently acted as tax-collector in Slavonia.¹⁴⁶ It was surely these offices, reflecting the support of Balthasar Batthyány, which justified the *egregius* title given to him by the chapter of Zagreb a few years later. Since, however, apart from the exceptional attribution of the *egregius* title, nothing else (landed wealth, office-holding, marriage alliances resulting in social rise, etc) permits to treat the family of either Peter, nor those of Ladislav and George, as standing out of the ranks of the petty nobility, I decided to exclude them and their like from the present investigation.

In other cases, on the other hand, alongside the likewise exceptional attribution of the *egregius* title we have other considerations which exclude an automatic rejection of the families/persons concerned from the ranks of the elite. Valentine Pálfi of Szentmihály (*Obramowczzenthmyhal*), for example, one of the „star-lawyers” at the turn of the 15th-16th centuries, was for several years castellan of Zdenec in the service of the Bátori family, a post which involved the title as a rule. As the wide circle of his clients show, however, he was a person of not only local authority.¹⁴⁷ Nicholas Orros of Orrosovc (*Orrosowcz*), another „professional” lawyer in the last decades of the 15th century, was also titled *egregius* as long as he was an *officialis* of the Bánfi family on the important estate of Orbona. Moreover, he was several times tax-collector of Slavonia, a post normally reserved for persons of much greater wealth, and he also acted as the representative of the Slavonian nobility.¹⁴⁸ It is in this respect highly conspicuous that other persons administering the estate of Orbona were titled as simply *nobiles*.¹⁴⁹

Another category of seemingly „dubious” cases is represented by John Stefekfi of Temenica (*Themennycha*). His ancestors apparently had lived in complete obscurity, but he possessed some half dozen villages in the late 15th century and again had a *castellum* of his own, and was accordingly frequently given the *egregius* title. Indeed, his fortification merited to be mentioned by name in one of the decrees of king Matthias. Yet a careful scrutiny of the sources has revealed that this obscurity was in reality no more than apparent, and the emergence of John Stefekfi in the

¹⁴⁴ 1478 (DL 18011) – 1479 (DL 70046)

¹⁴⁵ DL 104203.

¹⁴⁶ DL 47028, a quittance issued by George Kasztellánfi, where they are not referred to as tax-collectors, but the case is difficult to explain otherwise.

¹⁴⁷ For the references see the chapter on Valentine Pálfi below.

¹⁴⁸ For the references see the chapter on Nicholas Orros below.

¹⁴⁹ DF 277175/186: „*Nobilis Johannes Simonffy de Mylethyncz familiaris necnon officialis in Orbona magnifici domini Jacobi Banffy de Alsolyndwa*”

egregius group can by no means be regarded as accidental.¹⁵⁰ The situation is somewhat similar in the case of the Budor of Budrovc, as we will see below. Nevertheless, it must be seen that these persons and their families cannot be treated as making part of the noble „elite” of the county without further qualifications, a problem to which we will have to return in the second part of the present dissertation.

A separate group is constituted by the *familiares* of the counts of Cilli, foreign and Hungarian alike, some of whom acquired considerable estates in the county of Körös during their dominance there between 1423 and 1456. Five of them figure in the list of of the *egregius* group. Wolfgang Frodnohar, Georg Pyers and Christoph Paschingar will be treated below, separately or in connection with the history of local families, and so will be the Hungarian Rohonci family. Among the Hungarian (that is, non-Slavonian) families who owed their establishment and rise in the county of Körös to the counts of Cilli, we find Ladislav Zalai, who, at least according to his name, came from the county of Zala.¹⁵¹ He received from count Ulrich the estate of Dobovc in the county of Körös in 1446. He possessed the estate, where a *castellum* was erected, until his heirless death sometime before January 1464.¹⁵² He possessed considerable land in Körös, but we simply know too little about him to treat him in a separate chapter. We will nevertheless use his example, together with those of others, before all in the chapter of geographical mobility and its means.

The remaining families and persons roughly fall within two groups of unequal size. The first contains those among them who were always or regularly titled *egregius*, regardless of any office held or the varying amount of the property owned. The second comprises those who were sometimes accorded the *egregius* title, but were at least as frequently titled as *nobilis*, or, speaking about families, some members were given the *egregius* title, whereas others were denied it. In their case the use of the title seems to have been more dependent on individual considerations, and sometimes reflects personal careers which only become visible upon further investigation. These two groups constitute the starting point of our analysis, especially if a further investigation along the other three criteria will have revealed that they indeed constituted a distinguishable stratum within the nobility.

At first we should try to determine the landed wealth of the families and persons which figure on the list based on titles, and see whether any concordance can be established between the two lists thus acquired. This task is not as simple as it would seem at first glance, for in Slavonia we have no early tax registers, and by the time the first comprehensive list was prepared in 1495, several of the families had disappeared, whereas others arrived only later. However, in knowledge of the size of

¹⁵⁰ See below the chapter on the Stefekfi family.

¹⁵¹ According to one piece of information, in 1461 he was holding some possessions in pledge from the Ostfi family in the county of Zala.

¹⁵² DF 233189, DF 233198, DF 233309.

the individual estates (that is, the number of inhabited tenant sessions they comprised) even their wealth can be reconstructed with some probability. Fortunately, between 1495 and 1526 we have several more or less complete lists from the county of Körös, from which even those figures can be completed which for some reasons are missing from that of 1495.¹⁵³

At first I enumerate those families which can be found in the register of 1495,¹⁵⁴ the numbers representing the tenant sessions in the possession of the individual families (within brackets I give the corresponding figures from the registers of 1507 where available):

a. In the district of Andrew Toka of Kopacsovc:

Fáncs of Gordova 114 [137] estate of Gordova

Marcinko of Predriho 73 [69] Predriho

Gereci 90 [105] Gerec

Kerhen of Belosovc 69 Belosovc, Kerhevina¹⁵⁵, Lestakovc, Novaszentmárton (Nowazenthmarthon), Csezmicze (Chezmycze)

Sandrinfi of Musina 53 [32] estate of Musina (Mosyna)

Gorbonoki 183 Drávamelléki (Drawamwelleky), Gorbonok, Racsicaszentistván (Racchyczazenthistwan), Szentmihály (Szencse), Belosovc

Megyericsei 69 [84] estate of Megyericse (Megywreche)

Orros 13 Orrosovc, Csakovc (Chakowcz)

b. In the district of George Vitézfy of Kamarja:

Rohfi of Décse 198 Kutenya, Kaptolovc, Blagay, Glogowy, Sosen, Dianföld (Dyanfeld), Décse (Deche), Gyuganc (Gywgancz)

Ervencei 26 Ervence¹⁵⁶

Kasztellánfi/Lónyai 237 Hom (14), Szentlélek, Szircs, Dimicskfölde, Podgorja, Popud, Újhely, Bikszád (the last two only George)

Pekri 220 Petrovina

Szencsei 326 estate of Szencse, Peklence

Borotva of Tersztenice 95 Tersztenice (Therzthenyecz), Szentdienes

Pan Paul 57 Kravarina, Temenice

Mindszenti 21 Mindszent, Mellesovc

¹⁵³ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 23-36, 49-67, 89-105, 120-130.

¹⁵⁴ Ibidem, 7-15.

¹⁵⁵ „Kerhennyna”, false reading for Kerhewyna.

¹⁵⁶ The Georgius de Erwence who is listed on p. 10 as possessing part of Szencse and Kozacsina is almost certainly a misspelling of Georgius de Zemche; no person bearing the name György is known from the Ervencei family from this period.

Berivojszentiváni 45,5 Berivojszentiván

Kapitánfi of Desnice 76 estate of Desnice

Tulbert of Berstyanóc 59 estate of Berstyanóc

Pálfi 11 Obramovcszentmihály

Garázda 34 Garazdinc

c. In the district of Demetrius Miletinci:

Pogány 69 estate of Herbortya

Frodnohar of Bednya 126 estate of Bednya

Bocskai of Raszinya 67 estate of Raszinya

Kamarcai 10 Kamarca

Tompa of Horzova 15 Beketinc, Horzova, Temerje

Hásságvi 26, plus 25 in the district below, 51

d. In the district of George Prasovci:

Pataki 7 Patak

Cirkvenai 41 Cirkvena

Raveni 39 Raven

It becomes apparent at the first sight that roughly half of the families in the „*egregius*” group are missing from the list drawn on the basis of the 1495 register. The reasons are basically threefold. Some of them are absent because their possessions were exempted by royal orders: before all, Balthasar Batthyány, then ban of Jajce, with 588 sessions; then Peter Gudovci, the deputy prothonotary of Slavonia, with 200 sessions; Bernard Turóci, viceban, with 198 sessions; and, last but not least, Peter Bocskai of Raszinya with 200 sessions.¹⁵⁷ David Dombai is surely missing because at the time when the register was prepared he was revolting against the king and his lands consequently confiscated. In his case not even the later registers are helpful, for in 1507 we find a mere 6 tenant sessions in the hands of his kinsman, Josa Dombai.¹⁵⁸ Yet we know that he owned half of the ancient Gorbonoki lands in Körös, so the number of his plots should be put well in excess of 100. The lands of the Dersfi family, on the other hand, were not registered in 1495 for

¹⁵⁷ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 6-7. Since the rate of the tax was half a florin per tenant session, the sums have to be doubled to get the sum of tenant sessions. It is certain that the Petrus Bwthkay, from whose lands a tax of 100 florins is remitted, is identical with Peter Bocskai, for he is absent from the corresponding tax register. On the other hand, the Petrus Bochkay who is listed among the owners of Gordova (ibid. 7.) is in fact Peter Butkai, who, as we will see below, acquired part of the Fánacs lands by marriage.

¹⁵⁸ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi, 28.

reasons unknown to us. In 1507 Nicholas Dersfi is registered as having 101 sessions in Körös.¹⁵⁹ The Nelepeci are also missing from the register of 1495, whereas in 1507 Francis Nelepeci is listed with 16 sessions at Dobrakucsá.¹⁶⁰ By that time, however, the family had lost the major part of the estate, which in 1495 was registered in the hands of James Székely with some 150 tenant sessions. The absence of other families from the list is accounted for by the fact that they had disappeared by the time it was drafted. The lands of Ladislas Hermanfi of Greben were inherited by his adopted son, Balthasar Batthyány. Georg Piers and Christoph Paschingar, two foreign *familiares* of the counts of Cilli, had possessed the estates of Szobocsina (40 tenant sessions in 1507)¹⁶¹ and Garignica (35 in 1517)¹⁶² respectively in the middle of the 15th century. Nicholas Pozsegai, who inherited the estate of Garignica, died without heirs in the early 1480s. Nicholas Gereci¹⁶³ and a Muslim refugee called Josa the Turk in Hungary, had received from king Sigismund the estate of Kristallóc (88 sessions in 1507) in 1428 but lost it in 1456. The Bikszádi family, which had possessed the estate of Bikszád (48 sessions in 1495), died out in the 1480s and their lands were inherited by George Kasztellánfi. The Rohonci family, of the Héder kindred, which had possessed the estate of Ludbreg from 1421 until the early 1450s, likewise became extinct, and their lands acquired by Benedict Turóci. The lands of John Ost of Herbortya, on the other hand, had been inherited by the Pogány. Those of Stephen Csupor, the last member of his kin, devolved upon the Erdódi family (572 sessions in 1494)¹⁶⁴. The Kustyer (Kustyerolc with 36 sessions in 1507), Stefekfi (Temenice with 25 in 1495) and Latkfi (Mogor/Latkovina with 48 in 1507) families also disappeared before 1495.

Others, on the other hand, are missing from the register of 1495 because they acquired their lands in the county of Körös thereafter. Elias Bosnyák (altogether 75 sessions in 1507), John Gyulai (Dobovc with 35 sessions in 1507), Paul Čavlović (Ervence and Vojkovc with 52 sessions in 1507), the Kerecsényi family (Kopozovc, Markovc, Klenovc with 23 sessions in 1507, and the Cirkvenai inheritance), the Kecer family (Poljana and part of Raszinya with 72 sessions in 1507), Balthasar Alapi (the estate of Nagykemlék) and John Tahi (the entire Gorbonoki inheritance) all belong to this group. Others, such as Balthasar Hobetić, also rose into the *egregius* group after 1495, together with Stephen Prasovci (43 sessions in 1517), one of the few to have avoided our net of criteria, basically because his appearances as *egregius* all fall within the years immediately preceding Mohács, the charters of which have been, as stated above, deliberately left out of consideration. A unique case is

¹⁵⁹ Ibidem, 27-28.

¹⁶⁰ Ibidem, 30.

¹⁶¹ Ibidem, 28, then in the possession of the chapter of Csázma.

¹⁶² Ibidem, 100.

¹⁶³ There were two villages called Gerec in the medieval county of Körös. The Gereci family from which this Miklós originated had come to Slavonia sometime during the Angevin era from the distant county of Szatmár. See below the chapter on the Gereci family.

¹⁶⁴ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 4, as „*bona domini Agriensis*”

that of the Kopinci, all the lands of whom (altogether 43 sessions in 1495) were listed in the hands of a certain George More.¹⁶⁵

With some exceptions, all the families listed above, that is, those who were selected upon the basis of the *egregius* title, can be found among the greatest non-baronial landowners in the county of Körös. Most of them had more than 50 inhabited tenant sessions, and even most of those among them who seemingly possessed less can, upon further investigation, be shown to have had much more than is apparent upon the basis of the royal tax registers. Thus, among those who fell very short of the 50 sessions limit, the Ervencei, for instance, had already lost the estate of Szobocsina by 1495, whereas the Kamarcai, as we will see later, turn up under various names in the tax-registers, and their landed wealth cannot consequently be summed up without reconstructing their history before. The same is true of families such as the Pataki, Garázda or Tompa of Horzova, as indeed of the Orros and Pálfi, whose (albeit only temporary) emergence in the *egregius* group will only become comprehensible upon a closer investigation of their history. Even more important, no other family, with one exception, turns up as having more than 40 tenant sessions. It is the enigmatic Bakolcai family, which is listed with the important figure of 192 tenant sessions,¹⁶⁶ yet we were unable to find any one of them in the *egregius* group. This means, quite naturally, that a close correlation can be established between the attribution of the *egregius* title and a certain amount of landed wealth. According to the tax-registers the line which separates the *egregius* group from the rest of noble society below runs somewhere between 20 and 50 inhabited tenants sessions, although it should be remarked that this line is far from clearcut.

Unfortunately, moreover, the royal tax registers are for a number of reasons unable to reflect other than a very faint picture of noble wealth. One of the major problems with such lists is that they only enumerate sessions inhabited at the time of their preparation, which is quite normal in the case of royal tax lists. Moreover, even these numbers must have been subjected to considerable manipulations on the part of the lords. The figures we find therefore indicate only the minimum amount of tenant sessions owned by the individual families. Three examples will suffice to prove this. A seigneurial register of the estate of Gordova drafted in 1504 enumerates 148 inhabited sessions, which is quite close to the figure we find in the tax list of 1507 (137). Yet at the same time 92 deserted sessions are equally listed,¹⁶⁷ the importance of which lays in the fact that deserted sessions were not necessarily uncultivated and were consequently a source of income for the lord.¹⁶⁸ The estate of Kristallóc figures in 1507 with 87 sessions, whereas in 1517 we find 70 there.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁵ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 7, 11, 13.

¹⁶⁶ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 8.

¹⁶⁷ C. Tóth, „Gordovai család”, 282; Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 32.

¹⁶⁸ Tibor Neumann, „Telekpusztásodás a késő középkori Magyarországon” [The Abandonment of Tenant Sessions in Late Medieval Hungary], *Századok* 137 (2003) 849-884.

¹⁶⁹ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 31, 99.

Fortunately we have a separate register of the estate prepared by Ladislav Hermanfi of Greben in 1472, which enumerates 85 inhabited sessions, again quite close to the figures found in the tax lists. The number of deserted sessions is 33, to which are added 19 possessed by „landless” tenants (*inquilini*).¹⁷⁰ Even more convincing is the case of the Dersfi lands. We have seen that in 1507 101 tenant sessions were registered there, whereas in 1425 as many as 407 individual tax-payers were listed in a seigneurial register.¹⁷¹ Of course, the number of tax-payers is not identical to that of tenant sessions, and the number of the latter can have diminished during the course of more than eighty years, yet the discrepancy is nonetheless astonishing. In other cases we cannot exactly account for the discrepancies between the figures found in the tax lists and what seems to have been the real situation. The example of Desnice is revealing in this respect. In 1495 76 sessions are listed on the estate, but this sum does not contain the portion of Balthasar Batthyány.¹⁷² Yet in 1488, when Ladislav Hermanfi made an accord with Matthias Kapitánfi, the portion of the latter alone contained 91,5 sessions, 73 of which were inhabited.¹⁷³ The case of Garignica is even more difficult to account for. The estate is first registered in 1517 with a mere 36 sessions, a figure which seems absurdly low.¹⁷⁴ For a basis of comparison we have a register from the middle of the 15th century, when the sessions then held by Ladislav Pekri were enumerated. Sixteen among the appurtenances of the castellum can be identified with those named in 1491, when it came into the possession of Balthasar Batthyány, and in these sixteen villages alone 123 sessions are counted.¹⁷⁵ In 1418 the possessions of Majos Gereci were estimated: alongside 144 inhabited tenant sessions (a figure considerably in excess of the number registered in 1495), 54 uninhabited sessions were also found, all of them having buildings.¹⁷⁶

A further weakness of these lists is that they merely enumerate tenant sessions. Neither fortifications nor market towns are registered separately, they have consequently to be identified on the basis of the charter material, which, thanks to the peculiar circumstances of its survival, is in itself a source of uncertainty. The same is true of other sources of income, such as fairs and markets, tolls and ferries, but also woodland and pastures. To give but one example, in 1418 not only dozens of mills were registered on the Gereci lands, but also three ferries on the Drava river, extensive woodland along the same river, all of them valuable sources of revenue; only the fishponds

¹⁷⁰ DL 103731: „*registrum super porcionem possessionalem egregii Ladislai Hermani de Greben in Krystallowcz [...]* factam”

¹⁷¹ Árpád Nógrády, „A földesúri adó és az adózás elve a késő középkori Magyarországon” [Seigneurial Tax and the Concept of Taxation in Late Medieval Hungary], in András Kubinyi, József Laszlovszky and Péter Szabó eds., *Gazdaság és gazdálkodás a középkori Magyarországon: gazdaságtörténet, anyagi kultúra, régészet* (Budapest: Martin Opitz, 2008), 366-368.

¹⁷² Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 11.

¹⁷³ DF 219032.

¹⁷⁴ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 100.

¹⁷⁵ DL 103610, DL 101123.

¹⁷⁶ Elemér Mályusz et al. eds., *Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár I-XI (1387-1424)* (Budapest, 1951-2009), VI. 1465.

belonging to one of the villages were said to yield 400 florins a year. Moreover, several among the families and persons listed above owned property outside the county of Körös, some of them even more than there, a fact which obviously influenced their social position in Slavonia. Furthermore, the division of land within the individual families, one of the possible causes of different social and political behaviour of their members, cannot be reconstructed backwards, with the exception of a few families for which the extant charter material complements conveniently the information offered by the list of 1495. The latter is thus no more than a starting point for the further analysis and as such turns out to be more useable than it may seem at first sight.

At any case, the concordance between title and landed wealth seems evident even before any thoroughgoing analysis is done. In the next step I involved another indicator of social prominence in my investigation, by comparing the list with another one which contains all the vicebans and counts of Körös who had possessions in the county of Körös between 1400 and 1526.¹⁷⁷ The concordance is again remarkable: out of a total of 44 persons/families only 5 cannot be found on the list based on title. Among them Mathusel Mecseneci (*de Mecchencze*), viceban of Paul Csupor, although at first sight apparently a subaltern figure who can safely be left out of consideration, will be treated later on in the context of the Vojk kindred. Sigismund Hanchihar was a *familiaris* of the counts of Cilli, who obtained the estate of Bednya but disappeared soon without offspring.¹⁷⁸ The Ciráki family, from the county of Sopron, who held the estate of Szobocsina in the middle of the 15th century, likewise disappeared from Slavonia soon thereafter.¹⁷⁹ As for Domozlaus Ataki (*de Athak*), otherwise called Bohemian, he seems to have been a foreign retainer of Jan Vitovec, who served as viceban for some months in 1458, but consequently disappeared without trace.¹⁸⁰ The Jakószerdahelyi family, on the other hand, was certainly related to the Kamarcai, as I will try to prove it below, and should thus not be regarded as an exception.

The list of names I have thus prepared is, of course, no more than a heterogeneous conglomerate which is not very revealing in itself. My only aim was to define the target of the analysis, and, from this point of view, the list can indeed be used as a starting point. It is reasonably hoped that we have

¹⁷⁷ The list, arranged in chronological order (but without regard to the repeated office-holding of the individual vicebans), is based partly on Engel, Archontology I. 19-20, and partly on my own research. The whole archontology of the bans of Slavonia and their deputies is published in the appendix of the dissertation. Adam **Kasztellánfi**, Nicholas **Borotva** of Tersztenice, Mathusel Mecseneci, Andrew **Rohonci**, Sigismund Hanchihar of Bednya, Stephen Vitéz of **Kamarca**, Ladislás **Szencsei** senior, Peter Ade **Kasztellánfi**, Herman **Grebeni**, Akacius **Csupor**, Thomas Ciráki, George **Bikszádi**, Gaspar **Kasztellánfi**, Benedict **Turóci**, Jan Vitovec, Nicholas **Dombai**, Nicholas Ade **Kasztellánfi**, Domozlaus Ataki, Blaise Briga of Jakószerdahely, Ladislás **Szencsei** junior, Peter **Szerecsen** of Mesztegnyő, Ladislás **Roh**, Nicholas **Kasztellánfi**, Akacius Ade **Kasztellánfi**, Ladislás **Hermanfi of Greben**, John **Mindszenti**, John **Gesztí**, Nicholas **Pozsegai**, Peter **Bocskai**, Andrew **Kapitánfi**, Michael **Kerhen**, Bernard **Roh**, Louis **Pekri**, Bernard **Turóci**, **Marcinko of Predriho**, Balthasar **Alapi**, John **Gyulai**, George **Kasztellánfi**, Vitus Garázda of **Kamarca**, Elias **Bosnyák** of Businc, Francis **Nelepeci**, Balthasar **Battyányi**, Nicholas **Dersfi** of Szerdahely, Paul **Kerecsényi**

¹⁷⁸ On his career see Engel, Archontológia II. 94.

¹⁷⁹ Thomas Ciráki was apparently taken by Matko Tallóci to Slavonia, and received the estate of Szobocsina in order to be able to assume the office of viceban there. DL 100723.

¹⁸⁰ DF 255809, DF 275929, DF 275930.

captured all those people who, in the period between 1400 and 1526, belonged to the highest non-baronial stratum of the nobility in the county of Körös. In order to proceed further, however, it was necessary to research every single entity separately, and collect as many data as possible from the charters. I have thus prepared biographies of each of the families and persons, which enumerate the most important political, military and social facts of each of the family members for whom information is available. The length of these narratives depends of course partly on the number of sources, partly on the biological lifetime of the family concerned. Thus, whereas in some cases the story developed into a real „family history”, in other cases we have but bits and pieces which cannot even be connected to each other. The overall picture is consequently bound to remain somewhat obscure and full of blank spaces, but this is an obstacle that no historian researching the pre-Mohács nobility can avoid. In each case I started with the origins of the family, if these could be retraced at all, and limited myself to merely indicating the main lines of its history after 1526 if it had any. Having done all this, I will have enough socio-historical material to carry out a deeper analysis and see whether it is at all reasonable to speak about a noble elite and if yes, in what sense.

It should be remarked that these “biographies” do not merely constitute a kind of appendix to the dissertation: indeed, they form the very basis of it, upon which all the analyses and conclusions put forward in the second part are founded. The essence of this approach has been perfectly summarised by a great French historian: “A life makes sense only when compared with other lives. One way to situate the individual life is to reconstitute the lives of other members of the same social or occupational group. Collective biography of this kind goes by the name prosopography [...]. Prosopography aims to be exhaustive. It does not focus exclusively on the illustrious but also looks at the obscure. When all possible data have been gathered a social history can be reconstructed [...] and individual lives can then be examined against this background.”¹⁸¹ I have tried to solve many problems concerning the origins and descent of the individual families in these narratives, and frequently to refute traditional views. These narratives, therefore, are also intended to serve as a starting point for all future research on the nobility of the county of Körös and of Slavonia in general; yet, though I have always aimed at gathering all the extant pieces of information, no doubt many of my biographies will be completed by other researchers in the future. The narratives follow each other in a simple alphabetical order (with the exception of the supposed descendants of Belus, and those of Isaac, whom I grouped under the same heading), and by no means reflect an order of importance.

¹⁸¹ Bernard Guénéé, *Between church and state: the lives of four French prelates in the late Middle Ages*. University of Chicago Press, 1991, 7-8. (Originally published as *Entre l’Eglise et l’Etat. Quatre vies de prélats français à la fin du Moyen Âge (XIII-XVe siècles)*. Paris: Gallimard, 1987).

2.2. The noble families – short biographies

2.2.1. Balthasar Alapi (Alapić, de Alap)

The founder of the post-Mohács Alapy (Alapić) of Nagykemlék family is still sometimes linked to the Kishorvát of Hlapčić, with whom, however, he had nothing to do.¹⁸² For it is beyond doubt that the family from which Balthasar descended had for centuries been living in the village called Alap in the county of Fejér, which, moreover, seems to have been the only possession of the populous family.¹⁸³ Yet nothing memorable is known to have happened to the family until 1432/33, when, somewhat unexpectedly, Stephen Alapi is recorded as a member of king Sigismund's entourage escorting the ruler to the imperial coronation in Rome.¹⁸⁴ In October 1432 at Siena he and his kinsmen were rewarded by the king for his services done in Germany and Italy with the portions of Ladislav Majos at Alap.¹⁸⁵ Among his relatives enumerated in the charter we do not find Ladislav, however, who was the father of Andrew Alapi,¹⁸⁶ who, in his turn, laid with his marriage the foundations for the family's future expansion in Slavonia.

Sometime before 1460 Andrew married Margaret, daughter of Ladislav Batthyány,¹⁸⁷ took the name of his wife,¹⁸⁸ and thus founded the Batthyány of Alap family. Margaret had previously been married first to Stephen Grebeni and then to Peter Fácns, and the portions of the latter in the family estates in the counties of Somogy and Körös were redeemed by Andrew Alapi.¹⁸⁹ The fact that in January 1463 the retainers of Andrew together with those of Frank Fácns robbed and burnt down the *castellum* of George Fácns at Gordova must already have been connected to his emergence as co-possessor of the Fácns lands.¹⁹⁰ A year later Andrew promised to hand over to Gaspar, son of Peter, his portion of the Fácns possessions, in return for which Gaspar engaged himself to resign in favour of his stepfather his maternal share in the Batthyány lands.¹⁹¹ In 1470, however, he pledged again for 1000 florins to Andrew all his portions in the counties of Somogy and Körös.¹⁹²

From the marriage of Andrew with Margaret Batthyány two sons were born: Stephen and Benedict. Stephen seems to have died young, whereas Benedict, who was constantly called Batthyány, and

¹⁸² See for example the relevant article in Magyar Nagylexikon I. A-Anc (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1993), 408.

¹⁸³ DL 66430., 66432., 66434., where several members of the kindred are listed.

¹⁸⁴ Enikő Csukovits, „Egy nagy utazás résztvevői (Zsigmond király római kísérete)” [The Participants of a Great Journey. The Entourage of King Sigismund at Rome], in Enikő Csukovits ed., *Tanulmányok Borsa Iván tiszteletére* (Budapest: Magyar Országos Levéltár, 1998), 33.

¹⁸⁵ DL 66430. He was a *familiaris* of Ladislav Majos of Dáró, himself a court *familiaris*.

¹⁸⁶ DL 66432.

¹⁸⁷ Engel, Középkori magyar genealógia, Batthyány.

¹⁸⁸ DL 106555: „*egregii Andree Alapy de Bathyan*”

¹⁸⁹ DL 15940.

¹⁹⁰ DF 255767.

¹⁹¹ Indeed, in 1475 we find Andrew Alapi and Balthasar Batthyány as co-owners of the Batthyány lands in Somogy: DL 100856.

¹⁹² DF 233204.

received a common coat-of-arms with Balthasar Batthyány,¹⁹³ became royal treasurer in the 1500s and acquired the estate of Atyina in the county of Körös.¹⁹⁴ Balthasar Alapi, on the other hand, was never called Batthyány, yet Benedict was once referred to as his cousin (*frater patruelis*),¹⁹⁵ and he himself called him his brother (*frater carnalis*).¹⁹⁶ It is thus probable that Balthasar was born from the marriage of Andrew Alapi with another woman, either before or after his marriage with Margaret Batthyány. This would also explain why he upheld no claims to the Batthyány lands.

We do not know how and when Balthasar entered the service of duke John Corvin, which eventually led to his establishment in Slavonia. He is first mentioned as the duke's castellan of Medve in 1492, but the charter refers to earlier services as well, and later the duke emphasised that Balthasar had supported him since his (i.e. Corvin's) youth.¹⁹⁷ Yet it is highly probable that it was thanks to Balthasar Batthyány, himself captain of Medve before 1490, and Corvin's *familiaris* in 1490, that he joined the duke's entourage sometime before that date. The government of Medve had traditionally been linked to that of the twin castles of Rakonok and Lukavec (Lukavec), which were thus also subjected to Balthasar and his colleague, Bernard Turóci. It was as castellan of Medve that the former obtained his first possessions in Slavonia.

In 1494, however, we already find him at the head of the equally important castle of Varasd as the duke's captain there.¹⁹⁸ In the same year he is also attested as Corvin's man administering the thirtieth of Zagreb.¹⁹⁹ In February 1495 it was Balthasar Alapi who, together with John Gyulai, represented the duke in the latter's case against his treacherous castellan, Peter Poki.²⁰⁰ At the end of 1496 he was appointed as the duke's viceban together with Marcinko Predrihoi, with whom he is also mentioned as castellan of Bozsjákó (Božjakovina), in the county of Zagreb, in 1497.²⁰¹ Late in 1497, when Corvin was temporarily removed from the banate, Balthasar continued to serve him as his castellan of Nagykemlék, but also as that of Krupa and Japra, in the county of Zagreb, for in 1502 the duke asserted that Balthasar had been governing those two castles for eight years then.²⁰²

As soon as Corvin was restored to the banal office, Balthasar returned as his viceban, and continued to function as such until the duke's death in 1504, at first together with Marcinko, then with Peter

¹⁹³ Antal Áldásy, "Batthyány Boldizsár és Benedek címeres levele 1500-ból [The Coat-of-Arms of Balthasar and Benedict Batthyány from 1500], *Turul* 12 (1894) 94-96.

¹⁹⁴ On the career of Benedek see Ferenc Soós, *Magyarország kincstartói 1340-1540 [The Treasurers of Hungary]* (Budapest: Argumentum, 1999) 54-55., 57., 61. Atyina: DL 33230.

¹⁹⁵ DL 32874.

¹⁹⁶ DL 47563: „*Item quia magnificus dominus Benedictus de Batthyan est frater meus carnalis indivisus*”

¹⁹⁷ DF 233228: „*ad cumulatissima obsequiorum suorum merita, que in pluribus locis iuxta sue possibilitatis exigenciam cum sincera fidei et fidelitatis constancia exhibere curavit, cuius obsequia non peregrino testimonio verum oculata fide conspeximus*”; „*a juvenili nostra etate*”: DL 32874.

¹⁹⁸ DF 255929.

¹⁹⁹ Ioannes Baptista Tkalčić, ed., *Monumenta historica liberae regiae civitatis Zagrabiae I-XIV* (Zagrabiae, 1889-1932) VIII. 91.

²⁰⁰ Kubinyi, „Ernuszt Zsigmond” 331.

²⁰¹ DF 256800.

²⁰² DL 32874.

Bocskai, and finally with Bernard Turóci. In October 1498 he was listed among the leading *familiares* of the duke who were occupied with him in the defence of Croatia.²⁰³ As a reward of his services he received from his lord in 1500 the estate of Vokovina (Vukovina) in the county of Zagreb with a *castellum* erected there.²⁰⁴ At the same time he also purchased further possessions in the same county.²⁰⁵ In 1502, in exchange for the enormous sum of 8000 florins, which he had thus far spent on the defence of the castles of Krupa and Japra, he received from Corvin the castle and estate of Nagykemlék in Körös by perpetual right.²⁰⁶ Within a couple of years he had thus accumulated a landed wealth in Slavonia which amounted to some 300 inhabited tenant sessions, and included a castle and a *castellum*.

In the late spring of 1505, after a brief vacancy of the banal seat, Alapi and Turóci resumed the office of viceban for some months, before the deputies of the new bans were finally appointed. Consequently, he went over to Croatia, first as viceban of that realm and later as captain of the royal light cavalry detachment there.²⁰⁷ In December 1509 we still find him in the Croatian castle of Bihács (Bihać, BH) in the company of Andrew Both, although what exactly he was doing there is uncertain.²⁰⁸ What is sure is that he was not a partisan of the rebellious ban, for in the meantime he had been appointed by the king as ban of Jajce, and functioned as such until 1511.²⁰⁹ In July 1513 he was compelled to pledge his castle of Nagykemlék to his own wife for 4300 florins in order to pay his men their dues by reason of their service at Jajce.²¹⁰ At the end of the same year he returned to Slavonia as the deputy of ban Peter Beriszló, at first alone, and later in the company of Balthasar Batthyány. In September 1515 he was ordered by Beriszló to mobilise the troops of Slavonia and his own for an expedition to provision Jajce.²¹¹ He remained Beriszló's deputy until at least the spring of 1518. His removal from the office of viceban seems to have been connected to the „very great discord and enmity” between archbishop Bakóc and palatine Perényi on the one hand, and ban Beriszló on the other, which were reported on during the summer of 1518, and resulted in the mutual mobilisation of troops.²¹² The exact nature of this conflict is not clear; yet a year later Thomas Pető of Gerse, in a letter written to Balthasar Alapi, while lamenting over the latter's absence from Buda at the time when palatine Perényi died, urged him to be present at the planned

²⁰³ DF 279501.

²⁰⁴ DF 255506. In fact, Alapi already bought these estates from the duke four years before: DF 261789.

²⁰⁵ DF 255507.

²⁰⁶ DL 32874.

²⁰⁷ DF 255212 (1508): „*capitaneo gencium nostrorum levis armature in regno nostro Croacie alias vero vicebano regni eiusdem nostri Croacie*”

²⁰⁸ DL 46925.

²⁰⁹ Thallóczy – Horváth, Jajcza CCLXXIII.

²¹⁰ DF 219219.

²¹¹ DF 257166.

²¹² Marino Sanuto Világkrónikájának Magyarországot illető tudósításai I-III, ed. Gusztáv Wenzel, in Magyar Történelmi Tár XIV (1869), XXIV (1877), XXV (1878), III. 101-102: „*come erano nasute gradissime discordie et inimicitie el reverendissimo Strigoniense et el conte palatin da una parte, et el reverendo Vesprimiense ban de Corvatia del altra, per certe loro rixe particular*”

congregation at Siklós, lest something evil should be done to him, „by word or letter”, by the sons of the late palatine.²¹³ Whatever the case, a year later Alapi was again a member of the royal court, receiving as such 700 florins as a salary.²¹⁴

Balthasar prepared his last will in 1524 in the castle of Nagykemlék. By that time already his grave had been prepared in the church of Saint Briccius beneath the castle. Its most important stipulation was aimed at a future division between his own heirs and those of Benedict Battyányi of all the possessions acquired by himself and his brother. By the time the testament was drafted Balthasar was living with his third wife, Helen Sárkány,²¹⁵ whose kinsman (brother?), Ambrose, had entered the baronage by becoming judge royal just a few months before. He also mentioned his second wife, Barbara Swampek, in all probability the daughter of Sylvester Swampek of Lothomberg (Ljutomer, SLO).²¹⁶ Yet for some reason he failed to refer to his first consort, called Catherine, who was the daughter of a merchant from Zagreb, and from whom he had at least a daughter called Barbara.²¹⁷ His son, John, who continued the family after Mohács, and his sister, Catherine, both mentioned in the last will, were born either from Barbara or from Helen.

2.2.2. Bakolcai (de Bakolcha, Bakowcha)

In 1495 the estates of Bakolca and Sziget figured with almost 200 inhabited tenant sessions, a landed wealth of considerable size;²¹⁸ yet its origins and devolution present problems impossible to be solved on the basis of the available evidence. The family may originally have settled in the county of Baranya, at least some of them were named after the village of Koromszó there.²¹⁹ Yet they also had considerable possessions in the northern part of the county of Somogy (parts of Lulla, Gyöngöd and Jaba, the whole of Gyugy, Belder and Tab, further off Miháld, Büki and Keleviz),²²⁰ and in Bodrog, where they possessed Szeremlyén.²²¹ This latter was later owned by the Benedictine abbey of Bába, of which they were the patrons, or at least pretended to be.²²² In 1345 Egidius, the son of Peter, *honestus magister*, is already referred to as possessing the estate of Bakolca

²¹³ DL 93801.

²¹⁴ DL 104370.

²¹⁵ Béla Iványi Dr, *A körmendi levéltár memorabiliái [The Memorabilia of the Archives of Körmend]* (Körmend, 1942. 52-53.

²¹⁶ DL 47563.; DF 219219.

²¹⁷ Tkalčić, Monumenta XI, 66.: „*proba et honesta domina Katherina filia condam Stephani institoris olim concivis nostri nunc vero consors legitima nobilis Balthasaris de Alap*”; DF 255512.

²¹⁸ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 8.

²¹⁹ Engel, *Középkori magyar genealógia, Bakolcai (Koromszói)*.

²²⁰ DL 99932, DL 2846.

²²¹ Zichy család okmánytára I. 606.

²²² Beatrix F. Romhányi, *Kolostorok és társaskáptalanok a középkori Magyarországon [Monasteries and Collegiate Chapters in Medieval Hungary]* (Pytheas, 2000) 11.; Georgius Fejér ed., *Codex diplomaticus Hungariae ecclesiasticus et civilis I-XI* (Budae, 1829-1844), VIII/4. 244: „*prefati monasterii falso praetendunt se fore patronos*” (Egidius Bakolcai and Stephen Koromszói).

(Donja/Nova Bukovica) in the county of Körös.²²³ This Egidius maintained that the possession of Konchian, which lay within the boundaries of Bakolca itself, belonged to him by right of inheritance, and founded his claim upon a charter of king Bela IV, in which the ruler had restored to a certain *comes* Stephen, son of Peter, the possession of Konchyan.²²⁴ In 1345 Konchyan was in fact in the hands of Egidius Bakolcai, then referred to as Kechkonchon (*recte*: Kethkonchon),²²⁵ which is identical with the Alsó and Felső Kuchan which turn up in the 1470s. The two major blocks of land owned by the family, namely Bakolca and Sziget (*Zygeth*), were neighbours to that of Darnóc from the south and the north, and Sziget was bordered by the estate of Monoszló (Podravska Moslavina) to the east. Darnóc (originally Novák) and Monoszló are known to have originally been in the possession of the Monoszló kindred, and Darnóc, as we will see it below, had some evident links with Bakolca later, but, in the absence of seals as a means of identification, it is impossible to go any further. Anyway, the dispersion of the known lands of the family in several counties, their size, as well as the fact that master Egidius (the name itself is characteristic of the Monoszló kindred) married the daughter of Paul Garai of the Dorozsma kindred, a prominent figure in the first half of the 14th century,²²⁶ certainly hint at fairly illustrious origins. The subsequent history of the family is all the more obscure, however.

Prior to 1402 Demetrius, son of Nicholas held some villages in the county of Baranya which had been pledged to his mother by his stepfather, John Besenyő.²²⁷ In 1433 Sigismund was member of the royal entourage at the imperial coronation in Rome.²²⁸ In 1473 bishop Oswald Tuz of Zagreb held portions of the estate of Bakolca, presumably together with the estate of Darnóc, but it is unknown how he obtained them. In 1469 it was for John, bishop of Pécs and ban of Slavonia that his vicebans occupied the estate of Darnóc, and, since his colleague was then John Tuz, it is reasonable to suppose that it was in this way that the castellany came into the possession of the Tuz family.²²⁹ In that year (1473) bishop Oswald was confirmed by the king in the possession of parts of Bakolca, and Sigismund, son of Demetrius was listed among the neighbours.²³⁰ Another neighbour named then was George Bebek of Pelsőc, who also held portions of Bakolca, which he pledged to the Polish Jane of Csánig, *sororius* of bishop Oswald.²³¹ It was Francis Bebek (died in 1406) who

²²³ Tade Smičiklas et al., ed., *Codex diplomaticus regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae* II-XVIII (Zagrabiae, 1904-1990), XI. 225-226.

²²⁴ DL 2799.

²²⁵ Smičiklas, *Codex diplomaticus* XI. 225-226.

²²⁶ Engel: *Középkori magyar genealógia*, Bakolcai (Koromszói).

²²⁷ *Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár* II. 1538.

²²⁸ Csukovits, „Nagy utazás”, 33.

²²⁹ DL 74533.

²³⁰ DL 17501.

²³¹ DL 103811, 106886. DF 252430 (the bishop's *sororius*). Jane is referred to as *comes de Zalathnok* in 1477, which means that he was in the service of bishop Oswald of Zagreb (DF 231675). This Jane seems to have been the son of the Jane who had apparently come to Hungary with king Wladislaw I, and settled in the county of Vas. Engel, *Archontológia* II. and DF 252218.

had possessed the estate of Darnóc by right of pledge, and it seems probable that the roots of the family's presence in the estate of Bakolca go back to that period.²³² Three years later Peter, son of Stephen Bakolcai, representing his kinsmen, the sons of Demetrius, Sigismund, Stephen and Ladislás, exchanged their possessions at Bakolca and its appurtenances with the same Jane of Csánig for 1000 florins and some of the latter's villages in the county of Zala.²³³ Henceforth Jane bore the name of Bakolca,²³⁴ but Sigismund, son of Demetrius also seems to have retained at least some portions of his paternal estates;²³⁵ in 1481 he was one of the noble jurors in the county of Körös at the congregation of Zagreb,²³⁶ and a year later he is mentioned as a royal man.²³⁷ In 1511 the tenants of the widow of the same Sigismund were mentioned among the neighbours of the town of Szalatnok (Slatina).²³⁸ Ladislás Bakolcai joined the service of duke Lawrence Újlaki, and became his castellan of Racsá before 1518; his son, Christopher, was likewise in the service of the Újlaki family.²³⁹

In the meantime, however, important changes had taken place. Jane of Csánig seems to have disappeared from the region by 1495, although he certainly had two sons living in 1500,²⁴⁰ and his portions apparently reverted to the Bakolcai. Three years before the share of Peter Bakolcai in the estate had come into the hands of John Pechiban of Chomorag, formerly viceban of Croatia, as well as of Andrew and Leonard Dacsó of Ór.²⁴¹ The appearance of John in the region should perhaps be linked to Matthias Geréb, ban of Croatia from 1483 to 1489, who owned together with his brothers the neighbouring estate of Valpó. As for Andrew and Leonard Dacsó of Ór, they came from the distant county of Ung. Leonard made a career in the county of Baranya in the service of the Geréb family, where he became their castellan of Valpó, and was hence called Porkoláb.²⁴² Interestingly, in 1495 he alone was listed among the three of them as owning parts of Bakolca. John Pechiban had a son, equally called John, and two daughters, Sophie and Margaret, who married Vitus Horvát of Szeglak and the Styrian George of Swamberk (Schwanberg, AU) respectively. The latter tried to obtain the portions of the late John, but to no avail. By 1516 a *castellum* had been erected at Bakolca, although we do not know by which among the co-owners.²⁴³ Around 1520 Leonard was

²³² Engel, *Archontológia* I. 297.

²³³ DL 17884.

²³⁴ Jane de Bakolca: István Tringli, „Az 1481. évi szlavóniai közgyűlés” [The Slavonian Judicial Assembly in 1481], in Enikő Csukovits ed., *Tanulmányok Borsa Iván tiszteletére* (Budapest: Magyar Országos Levéltár, 1998), 316.

²³⁵ DL 19829.

²³⁶ Tringli, „Szlavóniai közgyűlés” 314.

²³⁷ DF 275093.

²³⁸ DF 252259.

²³⁹ DL 22378., DL 23000.

²⁴⁰ Neither he nor his sons figure in any of the tax lists from 1495 on.

²⁴¹ DL 19829.

²⁴² In 1485 he receives a royal donation as a *familiaris* of Peter Geréb: DL 107601; castellan of Valpó: DL 20236 (1494); in 1505 he is one of the envoys of the county of Baranya at the diet of Rákos: DL 39335.

²⁴³ DL 33841.

still owning a portion of Sziget, alongside the widows of Sigismund and Ladislás Bakolcai, whereas Bakolca was registered under the widow of Sigismund alone.²⁴⁴

In view of the obscure prehistory of the family it is all the more interesting that the wife of duke Lawrence Újlaki, called Magdalena, certainly belonged to the Bakolcai family, even though she cannot be linked to any of the known members of the family, nor it is known what lay behind this apparent *mésalliance*. Apart from the service of Ladislás and Christopher Bakolcai as Újlaki *familiares*, the only sign of a closer contact between the two families is the intervention of Lawrence Újlaki in 1520 on behalf of the widow of Sigismund Bakolcai with the collectors of the Slavonian tax.²⁴⁵ After Mohács Francis Bakolcai received the bishopric of Csanád from king Ferdinand, and in 1529 Ladislás More of Csula, who had married the widow of duke Lawrence, petitioned for him, referred to as his kinsman (*consanguineo meo*), that of Vác.²⁴⁶

2.2.3. Berivojszentiváni (Sveti Ivan Berivoj, de Berivoyzenthivan)

The Berivojszentiváni family descended from a castle warrior (*várjobbágy*) of Somogy called Berivoy.²⁴⁷ Since he originally belonged to the castle of Garics, his descendants were occasionally referred to as of Garics (Garić).²⁴⁸ The sons of Berivoy were ennobled and their lands detached from the castle by king Ladislás IV after they had taken part in the siege of Győr among the troops of ban Henry, in 1273. In the 14th century the family was split into three branches, each established by one of the three sons of Thomas, son of Berivoy. Only one of them, the descendants of Martin, came to some prominence, however. In the 1350s Thomas, son of Martin was accorded the *magister* title as the representative of the wife of Ladislás Töttös.²⁴⁹ It must have been this Thomas who provided for an annual fair on the possession of Szentiván, attested since 1353.²⁵⁰ His nephew and namesake, Thomas Cigány became castellan of Pécs in the service of bishop John Albeni early in the 15th century.²⁵¹ It seems to have been him who erected the *castellum* on the possession of Szentiván, also referred to as Jalsovc, which is attested throughout the 15th century.²⁵² He died heirless, however, in the Bosnian campaign of 1415,²⁵³ as did his cousin, the son of master Thomas,

²⁴⁴ DF 282508.

²⁴⁵ DL 104383.

²⁴⁶ Emilij Laszowski ed., *Monumenta Habsburgica Regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae* I (1526-1530) (Zagreb: JAZU, 1914) 216.

²⁴⁷ Engel: Középkori magyar genealógia, Szentiváni. Imre Szentpéteri and Iván Borsa eds., *Az Árpád-házi királyok okleveleinek kritikai jegyzéke [A Critical Register of the Charters of the Kings from the Árpád Dynasty]* I-II (Budapest, 1923-1987) no. 2393 (1273): „*jobagiones castris Simigiensis*”

²⁴⁸ Smičiklas, *Codex diplomaticus* XII. 210.

²⁴⁹ *Ibidem* XIII. 465.

²⁵⁰ *Ibidem* XII. 195-196.

²⁵¹ Engel, *Archontológia* I. 390.

²⁵² „*castello Jalsowcz nuncupato in eadem possessione Berivoyzenthivan constructo*”: DL 103891. (1484).

²⁵³ DL 100437.

and some of their lands were donated by king Sigismund to members of the Grebeni and Kasztellánfi families.²⁵⁴

In the course of the 15th century only the descendants of Farkas, son of Thomas survived, and themselves were split into two branches. None of them played any role worthy of mention in the first half of the century, however. In 1418 George, son of Nicholas was exempted by the king from the obligation of warfare until his death.²⁵⁵ In 1451 and then again in 1454 John, son of Adam was referred to as a royal man.²⁵⁶ It was his son Michael who again rose to become an esteemed member of local noble society. He was regularly titled *egregius*, the only member of his family to receive this distinction.²⁵⁷ He was listed among the representatives of the Slavonian nobility in January 1478, preceding members of such families as the Fáncs and the Pekri.²⁵⁸ At the same time he exchanged his portions at Mecsenice (*Mecchenycze*) for those of Ladislás Hermanfi at Berivojszentiván.²⁵⁹ In 1480 he was one of the arbitrators chosen by his neighbour, Ladislás Roh, and the place of the arbitration was Berivojszentiván itself.²⁶⁰ He died before 1484, when all his lands were in the hands of his widow called Dorothy.²⁶¹ His son, John, who is mentioned in 1478, seems to have died before his father.

His kinsmen from the other branch of the family, Peter, Stanislas and George, who then claimed the portions of their deceased relative,²⁶² were always titled simply *nobilis*, and did not share the local respect enjoyed by Michael. In 1468 Peter was listed among the *familiares* of Nicholas Dombai, castellan of Atyina,²⁶³ whereas in 1494 the same Peter, as it seems, was in the service of Balthasar Batthyány.²⁶⁴ A certain Ladislás called „Taylor” (*sartor, zabo*), who was then mentioned equally as of Berivojszentiván, but was cited at his portion at Butkafölde (*Buthkafewlde*), was in the same year one of the castellans of Batthyány at Greben,²⁶⁵ and later was appointed as castellan of Kristallóc.²⁶⁶ In 1495 Peter and Ladislás shared all the appurtenances of Berivojszentiván.²⁶⁷ Later George Diakói (Diakóvölgyi), castellan of Szenterzsébet (Jugovo Polje), and then of Raholca, also acquired a portion in the estate, although it is not known by what right; presumably by marriage.²⁶⁸ In 1517 we

²⁵⁴ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár IX. 755.

²⁵⁵ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár VI. 2427.

²⁵⁶ DL 102115., 106788.

²⁵⁷ DL 102200, DL 102201, DL 100942, DL 103843.

²⁵⁸ The lists which enumerate the representatives of the Slavonian nobility are given in the Appendix with all the necessary archival data. Since these lists can easily be identified by the date, no further reference will be made to them in the footnotes.

²⁵⁹ DL 100896.

²⁶⁰ DL 100942.

²⁶¹ DL 103891.

²⁶² Ibid.

²⁶³ DF 255801.

²⁶⁴ DL 104011.

²⁶⁵ DL 104017.

²⁶⁶ DL 104126.

²⁶⁷ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 11.

²⁶⁸ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 99. On George Diakói see below the chapter on Balthasar Hobetić.

also find a certain Demetrius possessing 11 tenant sessions at Berivojszentiván, and he is surely identical with the Demetrius Szentiváni who acts as an arbitrator in a case involving Benedict Battyányi, the archbishop of Esztergom and the Bánfi family.²⁶⁹ In 1519 Nicholas Berivojszentiváni was designated royal man,²⁷⁰ and the family is lost from sight thereafter. The Michael Szentiváni, who was one of the *szolgabírák* in the county of Körös in 1530 may have belonged to the Berivojszentiváni family.²⁷¹

2.2.4. Bikszádi (od Bisaga, de Bykzaad)

The Bikszádi family apparently belonged to the kindred which received from king Bela IV „the land called Rakonok in the duchy of Slavonia” in 1245.²⁷² It is impossible to know, however, from where *comes* Nicholas and *comes* Thomas, whose sons were rewarded for services in foreign embassies and their participation in the campaign against the Mongols, came to Slavonia. What is sure is that Mikcs, son of Michael, from whom the Bikszádi family descended,²⁷³ was also related, perhaps through marriage, to the Gárdony kindred. It was Hektor, son of Ulkoszló (Vukoslav) who bought in 1328 the land of Bikszád (Bisag) in the vicinity of his own land, and gave it to Mikcs, with reference to their kinship, three years later.²⁷⁴ We know nothing about this Mikcs, and not considerably more about his son, Emeric. Once he was referred to as a master,²⁷⁵ and his local prestige is indeed borne out by the fact that in 1398 he was one of the arbitrators elected by count Stephen of Blagay in his dispute with Paul of Zrin.²⁷⁶ We do not know whom he married, but the husband of his sister was Andrew Vratnai, whose father was castellan of Nagykenlék,²⁷⁷ and who bequeathed his lands to his brother-in-law.²⁷⁸

Emeric had two sons, George and Nicholas. While the latter merely turns up in an arbitration in 1412,²⁷⁹ George became a knight in the court of king Sigismund.²⁸⁰ His service there may have been continuous, for in 1429 at Győr he received, together with his brother Nicholas, and their distant kinsmen of Rakonok, the *jus gladii* from Sigismund for their estates in Körös and Zagreb counties, and somewhat later at Pozsony they were all confirmed in their ancient properties by receiving the

²⁶⁹ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 99.; DF 252279.

²⁷⁰ DL 101531.

²⁷¹ Ferdo Šišić ed., Acta comitialia regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae I (1526-1536) (Zagreb, 1912) 267.

²⁷² Szentpéteri – Borsa 823; Anjou-kori Oklevéltár XV. 201.

²⁷³ Engel: Középkori magyar genealógia, Bikszádi.

²⁷⁴ Anjou-kori Oklevéltár XII. 435.; Anjou-kori Oklevéltár XV. 201.

²⁷⁵ Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus XVII. 188.

²⁷⁶ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár I. 5305.

²⁷⁷ Engel, Archontológia II. 260.

²⁷⁸ Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus XIV. 414.

²⁷⁹ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár III. 2800.

²⁸⁰ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár VI. 1903.

royal right in them.²⁸¹ George seems to have joined Matko Tallóci as soon as he arrived to Slavonia as governor of the see of Zagreb,²⁸² and became his *ispán* of Zagreb after his appointment as ban of Slavonia. In 1439 both George and Nicholas were listed among the leading Slavonian nobility at Körös, and George apparently took sides with the Tallóci brothers after the civil war had broken out in 1440.²⁸³ Yet the family seems to have suffered no losses as a result, and, moreover, in the autumn of 1445 George became one of the Slavonian vicebans of count Ulrich of Cilli, the chief opponent of his previous lord.²⁸⁴ It is even more interesting that in August 1446 George was present in the court of John Hunyadi, then still in open conflict with count Ulrich, and upon the request of George and his kinsmen, the governor confirmed the charter of king Bela IV about the donation of Rakonok.²⁸⁵ Shortly thereafter one of his sons, whose name is unknown to us, died at the siege of the Bosnian castle of Dubočac, in the army of ban John Székely, and the charter of John Hunyadi which mentions this fact also refers to certain misdeeds which George had committed in all probability as a *familiaris* of count Ulrich.²⁸⁶

The surviving son of George, Peter, proved to be the last male member of his kin. In February 1457 he was one of the envoys of the nobility of the county of Zagreb to king Ladislav V,²⁸⁷ whereas in 1466 he figured among the representatives of the Slavonian nobility who negotiated with bishop Oswald of Zagreb.²⁸⁸ A year later we find him, together with other leading Slavonian noblemen, among those who harrassed the synod of Zagreb.²⁸⁹ In 1469 we meet him as an arbitrator,²⁹⁰ whereas two years later he was listed as third among the representatives of the Slavonian nobility. In the summer of 1472 he was captivated at Zagreb upon orders by bishop Oswald by the leaders of his troops, presumably in connection with some dispute about Rakonok, which had been donated to the Tuz family by king Matthias.²⁹¹ He was soon released, however, and in 1473 we again see him as participating to an arbitration.²⁹² A year later he was again listed among those Slavonian nobility who negotiated with bishop Oswald,²⁹³ and was even elected as one of the envoys then sent to the king.²⁹⁴ Late in 1476 he was one of the royal men sent for the introduction of Miklós Bánfi into the

²⁸¹ DF 231112, 231102. The former charter refers to their services „*in nonnullis nostris et regnorum nostrorum arduis agendis et validis expedicionibus*”

²⁸² Andrija Lukinović ed., *Povijesni spomenici Zagrebačke biskupije* VI (Zagreb, 1994) 460-462.

²⁸³ In January 1441 he seals the charter in which the Dombai brothers swear to help Herman Grebeni, a leading supporter of ban Matko Tallóci: DL 102091.

²⁸⁴ And not of Frank Tallóci, as maintained by Engel, *Archontológia* I. 21.

²⁸⁵ DF 231223.

²⁸⁶ DF 231225: „*non obstantibus quibuscumque excessibus suis in quibus hactenus repertus fuisse*”

²⁸⁷ DF 218846.

²⁸⁸ DF 252046.

²⁸⁹ Tkalčić, *Monumenta* II. 310-312. On the background of the incident see Pálosfalvi, „Grebeni Hermanfi” II. 293-294.

²⁹⁰ DL 16793.

²⁹¹ Tkalčić, *Monumenta* II. 348-350.

²⁹² DL 103746.

²⁹³ DF 252060.

²⁹⁴ Ioannes Kukuljević aliter Bassani de Sacchi ed., *Jura regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae*. Pars I-III. (Zagrabiae, 1861-1862) I. 211-212.

estate of Orbona,²⁹⁵ and less than a year later he was again sent to the king as an envoy by the Slavonian nobility.²⁹⁶ At that time he was at the height of his local influence; indeed, he seemed influential enough for the Rohfi of D cse to entrust one of their possessions into his protection.²⁹⁷ In 1478 he was again enumerated among the leading Slavonian nobility, although this time his name was for some reason relegated to the lower region of the list. He died soon afterwards, before January 1479.²⁹⁸

The wife of Peter apparently belonged to the Grebeni family,²⁹⁹ but it is sure that he had no surviving male heir. It was not, however, the family of his wife, but that of his sister that he preferred to favour. Anne Biksz di had married Nicholas Kasztell nfi, and bore to him a son called George. It was to this George that Peter Biksz di bequeathed his estates, together with the *castellum* erected at Biksz d.³⁰⁰ Although in the 1480s Ladislas Hermanfi of Greben tried to reclaim them with reference to the act of 1331, it was to no avail,³⁰¹ and Biksz d remained in the possession of George Kasztell nfi, who was sometimes even called of Biksz d.³⁰²

2.2.5. Bocskai of Raszinyakereszt r (Bo kaj od Rasinje, Bochkay de Razynakerezhwr)

The Gutkeled kindred established themselves in Slavonia in the middle of the 13th century. Apay I was ban of Slavonia in 1237-39, and was followed in this office by his brother Nicholas in 1240.³⁰³ Whereas the descendants of Apay remained in the northern part of the county of K r s, on the possession of Raszinyakereszt r (Rasinja) after which the family was named later, the offspring of Nicholas returned to north-eastern Hungary, the original „settlement region” of the Gutkeled kindred. Thus, until the 1330s they are only referred to in matters concerning the counties of Zempl n and Szabolcs.³⁰⁴ After the extinction of the Apay-branch the descendants of ban Nicholas, and those of his brother, Cs p n, inherited the Slavonian estates, and divided them among themselves in 1379. The sons of Nicholas Bocskai, Stephen, Peter and John received the possessions west of the Danube, namely the estate of Apajkereszt r (Raszinyakereszt r) with the castle then called Kozmadamj n and its other appurtenances.³⁰⁵ It was from the three sons of

²⁹⁵ DL 33429.

²⁹⁶ Kukuljevi , Jura regni I. 208-209.

²⁹⁷ DL 107041.

²⁹⁸ Ibidem.

²⁹⁹ Dorothy Grebeni, who was a nun in the Franciscan cloister at  buda, called in a letter the widow of Peter Biksz di her sister. DL 45768.

³⁰⁰ DL 102197.

³⁰¹ DL 101029.

³⁰² See below the chapter on the Kasztell nfi family.

³⁰³ On the early history of the family see Kar csonyi, Magyar nemzets gek 509-510.

³⁰⁴ Ibid. 510-511.

³⁰⁵ DL 96795. On the relationship between the different branches of the Gutkeled kindred see Engel, K z pkori magyar geneal gia, Gutkeled nem, s rv rmonostori  g, 1. t bla.

Nicholas that the three branches of the Bocskai family, which played an important role in the history of Slavonia, descended.

Among the three branches the descendants of Stephen were the less prominent. Stephen himself was *ispán* (*alispán*) of Stephen Lackfi in the county of Varasd,³⁰⁶ but no other office is known to have been held by him. It is certain, however, that neither the fall of Lackfi nor the revolts against king Sigismund affected the family, for one of the sons of Stephen, George, is continuously referred to as a member of the court between 1398 and 1405.³⁰⁷ In August 1405 he was present as a knight of the court at the introduction of count Herman of Cilli into the estate of Szamobor (Samobor).³⁰⁸ He is consequently completely lost from sight, however, although he was still alive as late as 1447.³⁰⁹ His brother, Apay son of Stephen is even more of a dim figure, the only certainty about him being his wife, Apollonia de Surdis, the daughter of Nicholas, nephew of John, archbishop of Esztergom.³¹⁰

The son of Apay, Stephen Apay was for a brief period *alispán* of Baranya, presumably as a *familiaris* of Ladislás Garai.³¹¹ (His fellow in the office, his kinsman Stephen Bocskai, son of Peter, is known to have been a *familiaris* of palatine Nicholas Garai in 1419.³¹²) The son of George, „little” Ladislás³¹³ held no office at all: in 1439 he is listed among the leading Slavonian nobility, and in 1452 he is one of the arbitrators in the case between the pretenders for the important estate of Ludbreg);³¹⁴ otherwise his life is covered with mist. He married from the Csornai family, from the Osli kindred, based in the counties of Sopron and Vas.³¹⁵ Stephen Apay had one son, Oswald, and three daughters, Catherine, Rusinta and Helen. Oswald seems to have lost his parents at a young age, for in 1457 it was with reference to the damages suffered as an orphan (*in tenera nostre orphaneitatis etate*) that he granted the same privileges to his tenants of Szentkozmadamján which had so far been enjoyed by those of Ladislás son of John on the same estate.³¹⁶ Oswald died heirless soon thereafter, but mortgaged before his house (*curia*) in the *civitas* of Raszinya together with its appurtenances for 800 florins to a noble family from the county of Vas, the Szölcei, from whom

³⁰⁶ Engel, *Archontológia* I. 224.

³⁰⁷ *Ibidem*, 492.

³⁰⁸ DF 255586.

³⁰⁹ DF 261833.

³¹⁰ Engel, *Középkori magyar genealógia*, Lipoveci (de Surdis). The other daughter of Nicholas married Benedict Himfi junior. The mother of the two daughters was Anne Hahóti, which accounts for the fact that in 1444 Demetrius Himfi (son of Benedict) and Stephen Apay (son of Apay) are recorded as possessing at Hahót and other villages in the county of Zala: DL 45440.

³¹¹ Engel, *Archontológia* I. 105.

³¹² *Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár* VII. 1010.

³¹³ DL 94233. (16. Sept. 1468): „*Nicolaum filium quondam alterius Ladislai parvi de eadem Razynyakerezthwr*”

³¹⁴ DL 101749.

³¹⁵ DL 104119. In this charter Nicholas Bocskai is said to be the daughter of Catherine Csornai, and, since his daughter is called Dorothy, it is evident that he is identical with Nicholas senior.

³¹⁶ DF 218847.

they later descended on the Darabos of Nádasd from the same county.³¹⁷ Thanks to a rare coincidence, we know the husbands of all three sisters of Oswald: Catherine was married to Gregory Török of Keményfalva, Rusinta to Anthony Sitkei of the Ják kindred, and Helen to Blaise Zicsi.³¹⁸

Ladislás, son of George had two sons from his wife called Catherine: Stephen and Nicholas the elder³¹⁹. Apart from one single mention Stephen does not occur in the sources, he seems to have died as a youth. Nicholas the elder, on the other hand, only died sometime after 1495³²⁰, but is the same difficult to grasp. Their financial situation could not be very promising, for in 1467 Catherine was unable to repay six florins to Wolfgang Frodnohar that she had previously borrowed for her needs, and was consequently forced to mortgage two sessions to John Bocskai in return for his help.³²¹ Nicholas the elder married twice from the same family, the Pogány of Cseb from the county of Zala, owners of the neighbouring estate of Herbortya. His first wife was the daughter of Emeric Pogány, Catherine, who bore him a son, Blaise, who joined the Franciscan order in 1500.³²² Secondly Nicholas married Barbara, sister of Peter Pogány, from whom he had two daughters, Dorothy and Catherine.³²³ Dorothy in her turn married Francis Kecer who thus acquired the portions of Nicholas in the Bocskai estates.³²⁴ The absence of Nicholas the elder from our sources seems to be explained by his removal from Slavonia altogether: his possessions had for some reason been mortgaged to people unknown to us and later redeemed by his brother-in-law, Peter Pogány at his own expenses.³²⁵

The descendants of John, son of Nicholas are much easier to follow in our sources. Nicholas, son of John most probably entered the court of king Sigismund, where he met Pipo Ozorai and became his lifelong *familiaris*. In 1413 he fought in the Friuli campaign, then served Pipo as his *alispán* of Arad county (1417-1425). In 1424 he followed Pipo for his campaign to Szörény, and in 1426 to

³¹⁷ DL 35991. The Szölcei and the Nádasdi Darabos had concluded a treaty of mutual inheritance in 1431: Csánki, Történelmi földrajz II 852. The widow of Stephen Apay, called Helen, and mother of Oswald, later married Ladislás Darabos of Nádasd: DL 94202.

³¹⁸ In 1484 the daughters were suing their cousin, Nicholas son of Ladislás before the ban, but the only extant document of the process is a prorogation. DF 219005.

³¹⁹ „*Nicolai Bochkay senioris de Razynyakerezthur*” – DF 277030.

³²⁰ He is still registered as alive by the tax-list of 1495: Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 13.

³²¹ DF 262149.

³²² DL 59768: „*Nicolaus de Bochka [...] in persona nobilis domine Katherine consortis sue filie [...] condam Emerici Pogan de Cheb*”; DF 276912.

³²³ *Ibidem*. In fact, the sister of Peter Pogány is once called Dorothy and is said to be the wife of Francis Kecer (DL 22548.). Pál Engel accepted the testimony of this charter and reconstructed accordingly the genealogy of the Pogány family (Engel, Középkori magyar genealógia, Pogány (csébi, enyerei). Yet we know from other sources that the wife of Francis Kecer was in reality the daughter of Nicholas Bocskai, called Dorothy (eg. DF 276907), whose mother was indeed the sister of Peter Pogány. We have no reason to doubt the assertion of Blaise Bocskai, who is reasonably supposed to have had exact information upon the mother of his half-sisters. To make things more complicated, however, it is worth remarking that Peter Pogány had in fact two sisters, one called Catherine, and the other Barbara, both of whom had a daughter called Dorothy: DF 276898.

³²⁴ DL 22548.

³²⁵ DF 276912.

Wallachia.³²⁶ After the death of count Pipo he seems again to have entered the royal court and remained there until his death.³²⁷ He jointly held the estate of Kristallóc *pro honore* in 1427.³²⁸ Late in 1426 he accompanied the king to Transylvania,³²⁹ and in the autumn of 1427 he was among the leaders of the royal troops sent to Serbia.³³⁰ His faithful services there did not remain unpaid, and he also contracted a treaty of mutual inheritance with another nobleman of Körös county, Peter Toka of Kopacsovc (Kopačevac).³³¹ He was also able to secure a canonry for his brother, Stephen, although the latter may never have definitively entered the clergy.³³²

Nicholas married Martha Gorbonoki,³³³ who bore him a son, Ladislav and a girl, Margaret. Yet Martha also had from her previous husband, Thomas Veres of Büssü, two sons, John and Vitus, and a girl, Veronica.³³⁴ These children were brought up by their stepfather, Nicholas, and later also bore the name Bocskai. Thus the estate of Büssü and its several appurtenances in the counties of Somogy and Tolna came into the possession of Nicholas and his heirs.³³⁵ Vitus entered the church and became first canon and then provost of the chapter of Zagreb.³³⁶ His sister, Veronica, married Frank Megyericsei from Körös county.³³⁷

The son of Nicholas Bocskai and Martha Gorbonoki, Ladislav, had all chances of entering into the footsteps of his father. He was born sometime after 1412, and nothing is known about him until the early 1440s. He surely began his career during the last years of king Sigismund, however, for when he was rewarded by Wladislaw I in January 1441, the king referred to his services done to kings Sigismund and Albert.³³⁸ In the civil war which followed the death of Albert he took sides with Wladislaw Jagello and fought in the king's Transdanubian campaign in the spring of 1441. He received the estates of Blaise Zicsi, confiscated for infidelity, and the king entrusted to him the protection of the wife of Nicholas Prodavizi, another rebel to the king.³³⁹ He seems to have

³²⁶ Pál Engel, „Ozorai Pipo” [Pipo of Ozora], in: Idem, *Honor, vár, ispánság. Válogatott tanulmányok*, ed. Enikő Csukovits (Budapest: Osiris, 2003) 272 and n. 154. The 1424 campaign: Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár XI. 1354.

³²⁷ Engel, *Archontológia* I. 504.

³²⁸ *Ibidem* 354.

³²⁹ DL 94161.

³³⁰ DL 94167.

³³¹ DL 94163.

³³² Engel, *Ozorai Pipo*, 295. n. 154. There is no trace of him thereafter.

³³³ DF 231687: „*dominam Martham consortem Nicolai de Bochka filiam scilicet quondam Stephani filii Beke de Gorbonok*”. In fact, the widow of Thomas Veres is once referred to as Martha, daughter of *Egidii parvi de Mochola*, who, apparently, cannot be identical to Martha Gorbonoki. DL 94179. But in 1404 we meet *Egidius parvus* of Gorbonok (DL 8901), which makes it obvious that the two persons were in fact the same. How the Gorbonoki came to possess in the county of Somogy has yet to be cleared.

³³⁴ DL 94161.

³³⁵ DL 94210.

³³⁶ Appointed as provost by bishop John (1428): Lukinović, *Povijesni spomenici* 245-246; 1466: DL 94227.

³³⁷ DL 94210.

³³⁸ „*primum quondam dominis Sigismundo imperatori et Alberto regibus Hungarie*”: DL 94184.

³³⁹ DF 262056.

remained in royal service in the following years, and disappeared together with king Wladislaw in the fatal battle of Várna (Varna, BLG) in November 1444.³⁴⁰

The untimely death of Ladsilas must have been a serious blow for his family. At first his widow, Ursula took care of the sons, John and Sigismund Apay³⁴¹, then, presumably because of her death, their uncle, provost Vitus provided for them as a tutor. The situation of John and Sigismund was indeed precarious, and as early as April 1447 governor Hunyadi was asked to receive them into his special protection, especially against their own kinsman, Stephen son of George.³⁴² After coming of age, the brothers seem for some time to have lived in peace together on their portions of Raszinyakeresztúr, but later their relationship deteriorated to the point that in 1478 János was sentenced at the banal seat to (temporary) loss of all property against his own brother.³⁴³ In 1464 John was engaged in the defence of the Bosnian castles, in royal service, as it seems, so he is reasonably supposed to have participated in the previous royal campaign there.³⁴⁴ Although none of the two brothers held any office either in Slavonia or outside thereafter, both remained esteemed members of the local noble community.³⁴⁵ Their sister, Margaret was married to Thomas Vince of Szentgyörgy.³⁴⁶

Both John and Sigismund died after 1497, but only the former had surviving children. He married Anne, the daughter of Nicholas Kasztellánfi.³⁴⁷ Among his four sons, Nicholas the younger, Peter, John and Thomas, only Nicholas seems to have come to adulthood, for the other three disappear from our sources after 1475.³⁴⁸ Nicholas the younger at first entered the *familia* of the neighbouring magnate family, the Ernuszt of Csáktornya, and assisted them in the anarchy following the death of king Mathias in occupying the castle of Tapalóc (Topolovac) from the Dersfi family.³⁴⁹ After the fall of bishop Sigismund of Pécs in 1496 Nicholas shifted his allegiance and joined duke John Corvin. In November 1497 he was mobilised among the other *familiares* of the duke,³⁵⁰ and this event seems to be in connection with the fact that at the same time Nicholas the younger mortgaged his portions on Raszinyakeresztúr to his own father for 100 florins.³⁵¹ In 1506 he was already dead:

³⁴⁰ DF 261865: „quia prefatus Ladislaus in conflictu regio pridem cum sevissimis Turcis inito periclitatus fore dinoscitur”

³⁴¹ „Sigismundus aliter Apay”: DL 16223.

³⁴² DF 261833.

³⁴³ DF 276927.

³⁴⁴ „in defensione seu tuicione castrorum nostrorum in regno Bozne habitum”: DF 261835.

³⁴⁵ They were constantly accorded the *egregius* title by all local institutions. Before 1468, however, John was excommunicated upon the request of the nuns of the Island of Rabbits for having devastated one of their villages in the county of Somogy. DF 261838.

³⁴⁶ DL 94227.

³⁴⁷ Maček – Jurković, Rodoslov plemića 148.

³⁴⁸ DL 94262.

³⁴⁹ Miklós Komjáthy, „A somogyi konvent II. Ulászló-kori oklevelei az országos levéltárban. 1. közlemény” [The Charters of the Convent of Somogy from the Reign of Wladislaw II in the Hungarian National Archives. First part], in József Kanyar ed., Somogy Megye Múltjából (Levéltári évkönyv) 4 (Kaposvár, 1973) 51-52.

³⁵⁰ DF 261957.

³⁵¹ DL 94293.

at that time his son, Stephen and his daughter, Catherine received from king Wladislaw the royal right in all the possessions of their late father.³⁵² Stephen occurs frequently in the sources,³⁵³ but nothing is known about his eventual functions or services; we see him for the last time in the summer of 1524, when together with Louis Pekri and Paul Čavlović he donates a half session to the rector of the St Wolfgang chapel by the church of Szentlélek (Duhovi).³⁵⁴ We know of no children born to him and his wife, Barbara, but it is almost sure that the Francis Bocskai who possessed portions of Raszinyakeresztúr in the 1540s,³⁵⁵ and was the enemy of bishop Simon of Zagreb in 1539,³⁵⁶ was his son.

John Bocskai also had two daughters, Helen (Ilka) and Hedwig,³⁵⁷ and the latter became the wife of Nicholas Batthyány. From this marriage were born two daughters, Sophie and Justine, who later married John Gyulai and Paul Čavlović respectively.³⁵⁸ As for Ilka, she seems to have been identical with the Helen Bocskai who was head of the cloister on the Island of Rabbits in the 1520s.³⁵⁹

It was from Peter, son of Nicholas that the most outstanding member of the whole family, Peter Bocskai descended. His grandfather, Stephen was a *familiaris* of palatine Nicholas Garai and his *alispán* of Baranya.³⁶⁰ Nothing is known about the services of his son, Ladislas, either in the service of a baron or in the royal court, but he surely contracted a very advantageous marriage. His wife was Margaret Csire of Álmosd, from the Ákos kindred, whose kinsmen played an important role in the queen's court.³⁶¹ In the troublesome years following the death of emperor Sigismund it was from the dower of Margaret that Ladislas Bocskai spent as much as five thousand florins upon the defence of the family's common castle, Apajvára, as well as of his own *castellum* of Kéthely (Kedhely, Koledinec) and the possessions pertaining to it. In return he was obliged to pledge all his acquired estates to his wife, with the stipulation that in the case of his dying before Margaret she would have to care for the upbringing and education of their son, Peter.³⁶²

³⁵² DL 94307.

³⁵³ In 1514, for instance, he goes together with his wife Barbara to the church of Mary Magdalen at Csázma „*causa solvendi voti ipsorum*”: DF 262396.

³⁵⁴ DF 261910. He had obtained a portion in the estate of Szentlélek by the right of his descent from Peter Kasztellánfi on the female line. DF 232597.

³⁵⁵ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 137.

³⁵⁶ Emilij Laszowski ed., *Monumenta Habsburgica Regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae* II (1531-1540) (Zagreb: JAZU, 1916) 425.

³⁵⁷ DL 94262.

³⁵⁸ DL 49544.

³⁵⁹ Attila Hegedűs and Lajos Papp eds., *Középkori leveleink (1541-ig) [Medieval Letters until 1541]* (Budapest, 1991) 137-138.

³⁶⁰ In 1438 we find him in the service of ban Ladislas Garai (Tkalčić, Monumenta II. 153.). *Alispán* of Baranya: Engel, Archontológia I. 105.

³⁶¹ Engel, Archontológia II. 52-53.

³⁶² DL 33353.

Accordingly, Peter was born sometime before 1450, possibly around 1440. The beginnings of his early career are impossible to grasp; it is nevertheless revealing that when we first see him after 1450 it is as an elected arbitrator at Buda in the company of John Geszti, viceban of Slavonia, Ladislás Egervári, future ban, and another important nobleman from Körös, Akacius Kasztellánfi.³⁶³ Shortly after the arrival of ban John Ernuszt to Slavonia he was appointed as his *ispán* of Zagreb, and a year later, between 24 June and 7 July he also replaced Ladislás Hermanfi as one of the vicebans.³⁶⁴ After the death of his lord, an event occurred which remained unparalleled in the history of Slavonia. At first king Matthias left the two vicebans, Peter Bocskai and Nicholas Pozsegai in office as „delegated judges with full authority and power of the same banate”.³⁶⁵ Then, apparently still unable to find a successor to Ernuszt, the king accorded to Bocskai the banal title with the evident aim of removing him from office as soon as the right person was found. During July and August 1476 Bocskai exerted almost unlimited banal authority: the octaval courts were held in his name, he directed orders of introduction to the local chapters, and was accordingly titled *magnificus*.³⁶⁶ Yet he did not appoint a viceban, and did not have an authentic banal seal either. Immediately after the news of the appointment in the last days of August 1476 of László Egervári as ban of Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia arrived to Slavonia, following a brief period of hesitation Peter Bocskai assumed the direction of affairs as the new ban’s deputy,³⁶⁷ and left his office only sometime after 15 October, when Egervári finally appointed two vicebans of his own choice. But the leave of Bocskai by no means meant that he had lost Egervári’s favour. On the one hand, he seems to have remained in office as *ispán* of Zagreb even after his removal from the office of viceban. On the other hand, he returned as Egervári’s deputy before 18 September 1479, taking the place of Ladislás Szencsei. Again, the reasons of the change are unknown to us; it is nevertheless certain that Szencsei did not die, for later he reappeared as one of the vicebans of Blaise Magyar, in the company precisely of Peter Bocskai. The latter remained in office during the banate of Matthias Geréb, moreover, and only left together with his lord sometime after 26 October 1489, when Egervári took over again the authority in Slavonia. Between 1479 and 1489 Bocskai thus spent more than ten years without interruption in the office of viceban under three different bans, by far

³⁶³ DL 17355.

³⁶⁴ All archontological data are taken from the table which is published in the appendix of the present dissertation. The corresponding archival references can also be found there.

³⁶⁵ „*Petrus Bochkay de Razynakerezhthur et Nicolaus Posegay de Garygnicza alias vicebani et comites comitatus Crisiensis necnon vacante honore banatus regni Sclavonie per regiam serenitatem loco legitimorum banorum cum plena auctoritate et potestate ipsius banatus iudices deputati*”. János Karácsonyi, „Oklevélkivonatok a szentmiklósi és óvári gróf Pongrácz család levéltárából” [Abstracts from the Archives of the Pongrácz Family, Counts of Szentmiklós and Óvár], in *Történelmi Tár* 1896, 524.

³⁶⁶ Eg. DL 102190, 94527, DF 231661, 231667. The anomaly of the situation was nevertheless clearly perceived by the local authorities, for the chapter of Zagreb for instance directed its report on 22 July 1476 to *magnifico domino regni Sclavonie bano*, as if hesitating whether Bocskai merited the full title. DL 107028.

³⁶⁷ 15 August 1476: The new ban confirms his charter „*sigillo prefati Petri Bochkay de Razynakerezhthur vices nostras gerentis*”. DL 17875.

the longest term of office-holding in the history of late medieval Slavonia. It is equally important to remark that it was during his service that the *ispánság* of Zagreb was definitively united with that of Körös and the vicebanate; after [1484] the viceban(s) was (were) always simultaneously *ispán(s)* of Körös and Zagreb.

The authority of Peter Bocskai within the Slavonian nobility grew parallel to his long activity as viceban. In 1478 he was still listed fourth among the representatives of the Slavonian nobility, in January 1490 he was second behind deputy-palatine Ladislas Hermanfi. In the meantime he was one of the elected nobles who worked out a compromise with bishop Oswald of Zagreb in the matter of tithe-paying,³⁶⁸ and a year later, in 1486 he defended the interests of his Slavonian fellow nobles at Buda.³⁶⁹ In 1489 he acted as tax-collector of Slavonia, and his work there was cut short by the death of king Matthias.³⁷⁰ He returned again to the capital as one of the representatives of the Slavonian nobility during the summer of 1490.³⁷¹ It may have been the jealousy aroused by his local authority and his land acquisitions, to be discussed later, which led to his being accused before Wladislaw II in 1491 of having joined, together with Balthasar Batthyány and Peter Gudovci, Maximilian of Habsburg, and taken part in the occupation of the castles belonging to the bishopric of Zagreb. They finally managed to clear themselves of the accusations brought against them,³⁷² and the subsequent royal donations made in favour of Peter Bocskai prove that he continued to benefit from the king's favour until his death. In 1492 he was tax-collector of Slavonia in the company of Balthasar Batthyány,³⁷³ and in the same year he was second only to Balthasar Batthyány among the Slavonian nobles who confirmed the Habsburg succesion at Buda.³⁷⁴ A year later he occupied the possessions of Stephen Csupor, presumably in the service of the royal commissioner, Andrew Both of Bajna.³⁷⁵ In November 1495 he was again in the king's camp at Bács, and profited from his presence to obtain a royal confirmation of his possessions for himself and his daughters.³⁷⁶ In the same year he received, together with Peter Gudovci, 200 florins „for the compromise they made

³⁶⁸ DF 268111.

³⁶⁹ DF 268110.

³⁷⁰ DL 19674.

³⁷¹ DF 252107.

³⁷² DL 19718. Edited in Ferdo Šišić ed., *Rukovet spomenika o hercegu Ivanišu Korvinu i o borbama Hrvata s Turcima (1473-1496) s dodatkom (1491-1498) [A Handful of Sources on Duke John Corvin and the Struggle of the Croats with the Turks (1473-1496), with Additions (1491-1498)]* (Zagreb, 1936) 318.

³⁷³ Ibidem 337-338.

³⁷⁴ See also DL 38645.

³⁷⁵ „*Egregius Petrus Bochkay de Razinya occupator et capitaneus castris Zarwaskew vocati et possessionum de Monozlo*”: DL 35732, abstract published by Elemér Mályusz ed., *A szlavóniai és horvátországi középkori pálos kolostorok oklevelei az Országos Levéltárban* [The Charters of the Medieval Pauline Monasteries of Slavonia and Croatia in the Hungarian National Archives], in *Levéltári Közlemények* 13 (1935) 257.

³⁷⁶ Jakov Stipišić and Miljen Šamšalović eds., *Isprave u Arhivu Jugoslavenske Akademije*, in *Zbornik Historijskog instituta JAZU* 2 (1959), 3 (1960), 4 (1961) and 5 (1963) (continuous numbering), no. 3332.

with the nobility [of Slavonia] so that they make no obstacles in the matter of the royal taxation.”³⁷⁷ His involvement in the tax collection may again have caused difficulties for him, for late in 1496, when the dismissed treasurer Sigismund Ernuszt was called to Buda under a letter of safeguard, he also went to the capital, entrusting the protection of his possessions and family to his kinsman, Sigismund Bocskai.³⁷⁸ He finally suffered no harm, yet, and at the end of his life he even returned to the government of Slavonia as one of the vicebans of duke John Corvin.

In the course of his long career Peter Bocskai considerably enlarged his landed wealth. In 1484 he took into pledge the portions of Ladislas Szencsei in the castle of Szombathely (Subocki grad) and its appurtenances,³⁷⁹ and despite the enormous sum of 3000 florins the affair was surely not fictitious.³⁸⁰ He also bought some possessions in the county of Varasd and provided for a royal confirmation of them.³⁸¹ Yet by far the most important acquisition was the estate of Kustyerolc with the *castellum* there, which Peter purchased in 1492.³⁸² It was apparently also him who had definitively formed Szentlőrinc (Gostović) into an independent estate by erecting there a *castellum* before 1481.³⁸³ He was, at least for some time, burgher (*civis*) of the free royal town of Zagreb, and owned a “palace” (*pallacium*) there.³⁸⁴

Peter Bocskai died early in 1502. From his marriage with Margaret Kasztellánfi³⁸⁵ he had three daughters: Martha, Elisabeth and Potenciana. Martha married first a certain George Chemerovich (Chemeroich, Chemerowych), the identity of whose is impossible to establish.³⁸⁶ Her second husband was Francis Szencsei, to whom she bore a son, Wolfgang (Farkas).³⁸⁷ Erzsébet was married to Louis Pekri, who thus established himself in Raszinya and its appurtenances.³⁸⁸ The third daughter, Potenciana was betrothed with Stephen, son of Peter Gudovci.³⁸⁹ It cannot be decided, yet, whether it was from Potenciana or from his second marriage that the daughter of Stephen Gudovci called Elizabeth was born, who later married John Pekri.

³⁷⁷ Thallóczy – Horváth, Jajcza 120: „Egregiis Petro Gwdowchy et altero Petro Bochkay propter compositionem quam fecerant cum regnicolis, ut nullum contrarium in facto taxe regie maiestati tenerent, ex commissione regie maiestatis simul cum bonis ipsorum in regno Sclavonie dati fl. Ilc.”

³⁷⁸ DF 262302: „omnia tam castellum tam possessiones cum familia v. e. in proteccionem commendamus tamquam vestra propria”

³⁷⁹ DF 255882.

³⁸⁰ His tenants at Szencse are mentioned: DF 255877.

³⁸¹ DL 101136.

³⁸² Kubinyi, „Ernuszt Zsigmond”, 330.; DF 231846.

³⁸³ His castellan there is mentioned in 1481: DL 37582.

³⁸⁴ Tkalčić, Monumenta XI. 71-72.

³⁸⁵ Daughter of Nicholas Kasztellánfi and Helen (Ilka) Grebeni: DL 101278.

³⁸⁶ In a banal charter issued in May 1502, the name of one of the vicebans, namely that of Bernard Turóci, was crossed, and the name of George Chemerowych of Raszinya written above (DF 255959.). This would mean that he had taken the place of his father-in-law as the deputy of duke Corvin, but this is our only piece of information on him as viceban. In 1493 George Chemerowych and Nicholas Bocskai are referred to together as *familiares* of the Ernuszt family (DL 19772).

³⁸⁷ DL 94317.

³⁸⁸ DF 276909.

³⁸⁹ DF 219077.

I was unable to connect to any of the known branches of the Bocskai family a certain John Bocskai, who turns up in 1522 as castellan of Lobor.³⁹⁰ Indeed, it is remarkable that he did not even have portions at Raszinya, only some tenant sessions in the neighbouring village of Ebres.³⁹¹ I did not find any trace of him either in the post-1526 sources.

2.2.6. Elias Bosnyák/Begojevics of Businc (Buščinec, de Bwschyncz)

His origins are impossible to trace back with any certainty. The first time he appears in the late 1480s he is referred to as the son-in-law (*gener*) of a certain Philip Porkoláb.³⁹² In a document from 1487 both Philip and Elias are called the brothers-in-law (*sororius*) of George Bontusovci (*de Bonthwsowch*), who was the son of Andrew Bontusovci and the daughter of Nicholas Bancz of Businc.³⁹³ Businc lay in the neighbourhood of Rojcsa (Rovišće),³⁹⁴ and the Businci may originally have had some connections with the Raveni/Cirkvenai kin, but it is not known whether they had once also belonged to the castle of Körös. In any case, in 1416 we find the Businci in the company of the Raveni family who tried to obtain the estates of Ladislav Cirkvenai with reference to his heirless death in the Bosnian war.³⁹⁵ Bontusovc, on the other hand, seems to be located in the southern part of the county, somewhere between Monoszló (Moslavina and Desnice).³⁹⁶ We know nothing about the origins of Andrew Zermek of Bontusovc who married Agatha, the daughter of Nicholas Businci, and thus acquired portions in the lands of the latter; their son, George was *szolgabíró* of Körös county in 1507-12.³⁹⁷

The most probable solution to explain the relationship between this George on the one hand and Philip Porkoláb and Elias on the other is that while Philip married the unknown sister of George, Elias in turn married a girl born from this latter marriage. Unfortunately, this hypothesis does not lead us closer to the possible origins of Philip and Elias. The name „porkoláb” was generally attached to those who had previously held a castellanship, and, indeed, Philip is attested as castellan of Zagreb in 1481.³⁹⁸ Zagreb was a free royal city, although we do not know whether Philip was appointed directly by the king or by the ban. At first both he and Philip are referred to merely as

³⁹⁰ DL 23629.

³⁹¹ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 94, 127.

³⁹² DL 102233: „*Philippus Porkolab, Elias gener eiusdem*”; Philip is once mentioned as the father-in-law (*socer*) of Elias (DF 232101). In 1494 he is said the *germanus* of the same Philip, which should be a misspelling (DF 231891.). As late as 1498 he is identified as the *gener* of Philip: DF 232006.

³⁹³ DL 19483.

³⁹⁴ Between Rojcsa and Businc the border was the river Velika (*metas predictae possessionis Bwschyncz appellate [...] separat et distingit a metis et terris [...] Stephani Dersfy ad opidum Roycha spectantibus*) (DL 19483.).

³⁹⁵ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár V. 2512.

³⁹⁶ At least according to the parish list of 1501 (Csánki, Körösmegye 76.)

³⁹⁷ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 27 (1507); DF 279477 (1512). He continuously held the office in the meantime.

³⁹⁸ Lajos Thallóczy and Samu Barabás eds., *A Blagay-család oklevéltára [The Charters of the Blagay Family]* (Budapest, 1897) 390. In 1475 Philippus literatus de Buschyncz is listed among the *prediales* of bishop Oswald, a group clearly distinguished from the noble *familiares* where, for instance, John Zekyra of Bontusovc is enumerated. DF 261839.

„staying in Businc”,³⁹⁹ and no other possession is ever attached to their name. Nevertheless, Philip seems to have been originally more potent, for already as a provisor of Jajce Elias is still identified as a *gener* of Philip. Further traces lead us towards Jakószerdahely (Sredice) and Miletinc, where in 1513 the widows of Elias Bosnyák and George Bontusovci possessed jointly with Philip.⁴⁰⁰

As regards Elias, from 1494 he is generally called the Bosnian (*Bosnyak*), and sometimes also referred to as „Begoyewych”,⁴⁰¹ which clearly hints at his Bosnian origins. How he got to Slavonia is probably bound to remain unknown to us for all; he may have been either a captive or a refugee or a simple renegade. As early as March 1492 we find him among the representatives of the Slavonian nobility at Buda, although in the lower regions of the list.⁴⁰² In the summer of 1494 he commanded, together with Philip and George Businci, the army (*exercitum*) of ban Ladislav Kanizsai.⁴⁰³ The next year we see him as a tax-collector in the county of Pozsega.⁴⁰⁴ A year later he was appointed as *provisor curie* of Jajce and functioned as such until 1502.⁴⁰⁵ The bans of Jajce at the time of his appointment were Ladislav Kanizsai and John Bebek, and Elias, to judge from his role in 1494, was apparently a *familiaris* of the former. Later on, however, he probably became an agent of the royal will who operated more or less independently under the subsequent bans of Jajce. As such he governed the Benedictine abbey of Bela and the castle of Aparovc belonging to it. Despite the fact that in November 1500 king Wladislaw donated the abbey to the duke of St Sava and ordered Elias to hand it over to him, in 1502 we still find the castellans appointed by Elias in Aparovc.⁴⁰⁶ Moreover, the castle of Atyina and its extensive appurtenances in the county of Körös were likewise allotted to him by the king *pro officio*.⁴⁰⁷ It was also Elias who upon royal order occupied the estates of George Szencsei and held them until the latter was granted pardon.⁴⁰⁸ As provisor of Jajce he was also castellan of the *castellum* Podgradja (in the county of Pozsega), and disposed of at least some of the royal troops stationed in Pozsega.⁴⁰⁹ Parallel to his office at Jajce he also acted as tax-collector in Slavonia.⁴¹⁰

³⁹⁹ DF 255925: „*Philippus litteratus, Elias Bosnyak in Bwsthyncz commorantes*”

⁴⁰⁰ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 61-62.

⁴⁰¹ DL 101451: „*egregii condam Elie Begoyewych de Bwschyncz*”

⁴⁰² He also seems to be identical to the Elias who figures on the list which contains the members of ban Ladislav Egervári's following on the same occasion: DL 38645.

⁴⁰³ DF 232065.

⁴⁰⁴ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 5. He is certainly not identical to the *Helias*, castellan of Bihać, who was sent by ban Ladislav Kanizsai to the pope in the spring of 1494. Šišić, Rukovet 81-82.

⁴⁰⁵ Stipišić – Šamšalović, Isprave 3351 (1496); DF 219138 (1502/1503).

⁴⁰⁶ DF 219138. On the relationship between the abbey of Béla and the bans of Jajce see Stanko Andrić, „Benediktinski samostan Svete Margarete u Bijeli” [The Monastery of Saint Marguerite et Bela], in *Tkalčić*. Godisnjak drustva za povjesnicu zagrebacke nadbiskupije 9 (Zagreb, 2005) 68-74.

⁴⁰⁷ DF 268148.

⁴⁰⁸ DF 268149.

⁴⁰⁹ DL 59870: „*Elias Bosnyak [...] feria quinta proxima post predictum festum beati Francisci confessoris proxime ut dicitur preteritum quasdam gentes sew stipendiarios eiusdem vestre maiestatis de civitate Posegawar vocata levando et exportando ac versus predictum castellum Podgradya veniri faciendo*”

⁴¹⁰ DL 46451, 1498.

The offices held by Elias Bosnyák were lucrative enough to enable him to enlarge his possessions in Slavonia. We do know that upon the tenants of Atyina he frequently levied both ordinary and extraordinary taxes, and his behaviour there was surely not exceptional. Thus by 1507 he possessed 75 tenant sessions in the county of Körös and a further 18 in that of Zagreb.⁴¹¹ Moreover, sometime before September 1498 a fortification (*castellum*) had been erected at Businc.⁴¹² In 1502 he felt rich enough to try to buy back the castle of Dobrakucsá for his son-in-law, Francis Nelepeci.⁴¹³

In 1505 he was one of the envoys sent by the Slavonian nobility upon whose request the judge royal transcribed the decrees of the famous diet of Rákos.⁴¹⁴ It may have been at Buda that the newly appointed bans of Slavonia, Andrew Both of Bajna and Francis Balassa designated him as one of their vicebans. He could not take his office, however, before Andrew Both and his new colleague, Mark Horvát had effectively occupied the banate in the first months of 1506. And even then he remained in office for less than a year, for before February 1507 both he and the other viceban, Vitalis Garázda of Kamarca were removed and replaced by Louis Pekri and Francis Nelepeci. Since the latter was the very son-in-law of Elias, the change may have been preceded by an agreement between them. Neither was he affected by the fall from grace of his former lord, Andrew Both, for in 1508/09 he was officially given 200 florins from the Slavonian tax, the same sum as allotted to the viceban of the day, Paul Čavlović, although we do not know for what kind of services.⁴¹⁵ In 1509 the treasurer, Francis Várdai wanted to entrust to him anew the collection of the Slavonian tax, but he refused and recommended someone else instead of himself.⁴¹⁶ Sometime after 1505, but most probably after his leave from the office of viceban, he joined margrave George of Brandenburg, and became his castellan at Rakonok.⁴¹⁷ His service there must have come to a bad end, however, for in 1510 he was already being sued by the margrave for some violent acts committed on the latter's lands, and Elias even insulted physically the margrave's attorney at the congregation of the Slavonian nobility.⁴¹⁸

Despite his ambitions and ample resources, not all his efforts at enlarging his possessions in Slavonia succeeded. He failed, for example, to acquire the considerable heritage of Andrew Henning of Szomszédvár (Susedgrad), in the county of Zagreb, although he had already procured for himself

⁴¹¹ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 17, 19, 29, 31. In 1504 he is also attested as a neighbour around Tersztenice, so he must also have had lands there, which likewise points in the same direction. See Klaić, „Plemići Svetački” 42-43.

⁴¹² DF 232006.

⁴¹³ On this affair see the chapter on the Nelepeci. Elias Bosnyák as the father-in-law of Francis Nelepeci: János Karácsonyi, „Katonai Becsületbíróság 1515-1516” [Military Court of Honour 1515-1516], in *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* (1891) 487.

⁴¹⁴ Kukuljević, Jura regni 254-259.

⁴¹⁵ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 46.

⁴¹⁶ DL 25524.

⁴¹⁷ DL 37949.

⁴¹⁸ DL 37866.

a royal mandate of introduction.⁴¹⁹ A year before, in July 1505, he did receive a royal donation, together with Stephen Prasovci and Peter Horvát, castellan of Dombró.⁴²⁰ This donation seems to have been the origin of his settlement in the county of Zagreb. It is not surprising that George Prasovci, together with whose son he received the royal grant in 1505, commissioned Elias Bosnyák (and George Kerecsényi) with the execution of his last will.⁴²¹ Elias Bosnyák died before October 1512, without leaving a male heir.⁴²² Some of his lands were accordingly inherited by his son-in-law, Francis Nelepeci,⁴²³ whereas others were in 1520 still held by his widow.⁴²⁴

2.2.7. Čavlović (Chawlowych) of Gyurkovc (de Gywrkowcz)

As I will try to demonstrate below, it was in all probability from Croatia that the Čavlović family, later called of Gyurkovc, came to Slavonia, apparently during the reign of king Matthias. In any case, there is no trace of the family in the county of Körös before. Sometime prior to 1490 a certain Čavlović the younger (*Challowith junior*) was listed in the service of the king with 32 horsemen.⁴²⁵ Unfortunately, it is impossible to decide whether the person in question was John Čavlović or his presumed kinsman (brother or son), Paul.⁴²⁶ In any case, he figures in the group of the Slavonian nobles, although no Čavlović can be found in the tax list from 1495.

The most important would be to identify the village whose name the family bore. Gyurkovc seems identical to the village possessed by the Palicsnai family, where Ladislav Grebeni and later Balthasar Batthyány also held portions.⁴²⁷ Yet it is impossible to tell how and when the Čavlović acquired the village or at least part of it, and whether it was already connected to the marriage of Paul from the Batthyány family, to be discussed later on. Whatever the case, the Paul Horváth who is mentioned at Gyurkovc in 1500 can be identified, although not without some hesitation, with the later Paul Čavlović, and thus at least his geographical origins become evident.⁴²⁸

What is beyond doubt is that John Čavlović married the daughter of Emeric Raveni, called Helen (Ilka), and thus became related to Balthasar Batthyány.⁴²⁹ He died before May 1497, when his

⁴¹⁹ Stipišić – Šamšalović, *Isprave* no. 3827.

⁴²⁰ DF 255550. This Peter Horvát of Vinodol is surely identical to the Peter Horvát whom Elias recommended as tax-collector four years later.

⁴²¹ DF 232179.

⁴²² DL 101451.

⁴²³ Adamček – Kampuš, *Popisi* 58. In 1543, when Businc appears again, John Nelepeci is still holding a portion of it together with a number of other people. *Ibidem* 136.

⁴²⁴ *Ibidem* 122.

⁴²⁵ DL 104613.

⁴²⁶ Apart from the „family” name, the fact that both of them were called of Gyurkovc makes their relationship evident.

⁴²⁷ DL 100901.

⁴²⁸ DL 107125: „*nobilis domina Margaretha relicta quondam Jacobi de Bakhegh et Paulus Horwath gener eiusdem*”; their village called Gywrkowcz is mentioned. Bakhegh was indeed in the county of Körös (Adamček – Kampuš, *Popisi* 31.), yet I have met no noble family of this name in the sources.

⁴²⁹ Balthasar’s adopted father, Ladislav Hermanfi, had married Anne Raveni, sister of Emeric.

widow is mentioned.⁴³⁰ The beginnings of the career of his brother or son, Paul, are obscure. In case our identification with Paul Horváth is right, he was the deputy of George Kanizsai as ban of Belgrade in 1503.⁴³¹ Late in 1508 he was appointed, together with Balthasar Batthyány, as Slavonian viceban of John Ernuszt and George Kanizsai. They left from office early in 1510, and whereas Batthyány later returned as the deputy of ban Peter Beriszló, Čavlović also served the bishop-ban, but it is not clear exactly where and how.⁴³²

Later on, however, he was removed from Slavonia and became increasingly attached to the royal court. This was evidently a consequence of his (second) marriage with Justine Batthyány, the daughter of Nicholas, by which he obtained a share in the Batthyány lands in the county of Fejér.⁴³³ Moreover, he thereby also became the brother-in-law of John Gyulai, who had married Justine's sister, Sophie. In 1518 he was already a noble *assessor* of the royal council elected from the county of Fejér, and represented the same county at the assembly of Tolna.⁴³⁴ A year later he accompanied Stephen Verbóci in an embassy to the Pope.⁴³⁵ In 1522 he is referred to as castellan of Óvár, in the county of Moson,⁴³⁶ and in 1526 he was royal *consiliarius*.⁴³⁷

Nevertheless, he remained firmly rooted in Slavonia, where he acquired further possessions. By 1507 at the latest he had certainly put his hand upon a considerable portion of Ervence, possibly by right of pledge.⁴³⁸ He also acquired the estate of Vojkkeresztúr, that is, the inheritance of master Nicholas Vojkfi, deputy prothonotary of Slavonia (died in 1504) with the *castellum* standing there.⁴³⁹ After the extinction of the Adefi branch of the Kasztellánfi family, he also became joint owner of the estate of Szentlélek, again by right of his wife. In July 1524 he donated, together with Louis Pekri and Stephen Bocskai, and his own wife, Justine, a tenant session to the local Saint Wolfgang chapel.⁴⁴⁰ He had at least three sons, Wolfgang, Louis and John, none of which can be followed after 1526.⁴⁴¹

⁴³⁰ DF 231968: “*nobilis domina Ilka vocata filia nobilis Emerici de Rawen relicta vero quondam Johannis Chawlowych dicti de Gywrkowcz*”.

⁴³¹ DL 25420.

⁴³² DL 104635: „*Circa dominicam oculi Paulo Chalowyth et Emerico Fanchy servitoribus reverendissimi domini bani ad rationem sallarii sui de panno londis ul. XI pro fl. VIII. d. LXXX*”.

⁴³³ Iván Borsa, “A Somogy Megyei Levéltár Mohács előtti oklevelei” [The pre-Mohács charters preserved in the archives of Somogy county]. In: József Kanyar ed., *Somogy Megye Múltjából. Levéltári Évkönyv. 14.* Kaposvár, 1983. 77. In 1522 he is even cited „*de domo habitacionis sue solite videlicet residencie eiusdem in possessione Batthyan*”: DL 91065.

⁴³⁴ András Kubinyi, „A királyi tanács köznemesi ülnökei a Jagelló-korban” [The Noble Assessors of the Royal Council in the Jagello Period], in: Éva H. Balázs, Erik Fügedi and Ferenc Maksay eds., *Mályusz Elemér emlékkönyv* (Budapest, 1984) 263. n. 27..

⁴³⁵ Vilmos Fraknói, “Tomori Pál kiadatlan levelei”, in *Magyar Történelmi Tár* 1882. 85. Here as “Paulum Horwath Charlawisth”.

⁴³⁶ DL 91065.

⁴³⁷ DL 24305

⁴³⁸ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 29.

⁴³⁹ DL 101519. Probably by marrying the widow of master Miklós, see below at the Garázda/Vojkfi.

⁴⁴⁰ DF 261910.

⁴⁴¹ DL 101519.

2.2.8. Csupor of Monoszló (Čupor od Moslavina, Chupor de Monozlo)

The Monoszló kindred, from which the Csupor family descended, was one of the most illustrious, and its presence in Slavonia can be dated back to as early as the 12th century.⁴⁴² The possessions of the kindred originally spread in a long chain of southern counties from that of Zagreb to Csanád,⁴⁴³ and their political importance was entirely in keeping with their landed wealth. Thomas I was ban of Slavonia under Andrew II, his grandsons held important posts under Stephen V and played a considerable role in the internal disturbances following the death of the king.⁴⁴⁴

The Csupor family, however, which descended from master Stephen called „Csupor”, the son of Stephen,⁴⁴⁵ had no possessions outside Slavonia. Perhaps because one member of the kindred, namely Peter, fought against king Charles on the side of the Kőszegi brothers,⁴⁴⁶ perhaps for some other reasons, no members of the kindred are known to have played any role worthy of mention under the Angevins. Consequently, the Csupor family, although still one of the richest in Slavonia, gradually became one of purely local importance. Stephen himself and all his sons bore the title of master, a sign of social eminence, but the *vicecomitatus* of Krassó county, which Thomas son of Stephen held for some years in the service of palatine Nicholas Garai around 1380 was but a distant and dim reflection of the kindred’s former glory.⁴⁴⁷ Moreover, one of his brothers, John, who in 1395 was one of the two Slavonian noblemen who asked Sigismund to transcribe the judicial privilege originally issued by king Louis I,⁴⁴⁸ got involved in the revolt against the king in 1403, and consequently his portions in the family estates were donated to his nephews, Paul and Stephen.⁴⁴⁹

Yet it was precisely the service of Garai which opened the way for a new social rise. When Nicholas Garai the younger was appointed as ban of Croatia and Slavonia, Paul, son of George became his castellan of Klissza (Klis) in Croatia.⁴⁵⁰ Garai proved a staunch supporter of king Sigismund, and consequently remained one of the pillars of the reign until his death. His choice as a lord was thus the best possible decision in these critical years, and paid off well. Yet Paul seems to have soon shifted his allegiance to another of king Sigismund’s leading barons, namely count

⁴⁴² Karácsonyi, Magyar nemzetségek 834. It is to be remarked, however, that the kindred is not mentioned as of Monoszló (de genere Monozlo) before the 14th century.

⁴⁴³ Ibidem 839-841. I also reckon among the original lands of the kindred the estate of Monoszló (Moslavina Podravska) along the river Drava, which was owned by the chapter of Pécs in the later middle ages.

⁴⁴⁴ Ibidem 836-837.

⁴⁴⁵ Engel, Középkori magyar genealógia, Monoszló nem Csupor.

⁴⁴⁶ Pál Engel, „Az ország újraegyesítése. I. Károly küzdelmei az oligarchák ellen (1310-1323)” [The Reintegration of the Country. The Struggles of Charles I against the Oligarchs (1310-1323)], in Idem, Honor, vár, ispánság. Válogatott tanulmányok, ed. Enikő Csukovits (Budapest: Osiris, 2003) 347.

⁴⁴⁷ Engel, Archontológia I. 144.

⁴⁴⁸ Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus XVIII. 37.

⁴⁴⁹ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár IV. 2847.

⁴⁵⁰ Engel, Archontológia I. 343.

Hermann of Cilli, whose daughter, Barbara became queen of Hungary. In 1408 Paul was appointed by the king as *ispán* of the counties Körös and Zággráb, and in 1412 he became ban of Slavonia.⁴⁵¹ It should be added, however, that the administration of the estates belonging to the banal *honor* was in the hands of queen Barbara.⁴⁵² One of his brothers, George, was the *alispán* of Varasd for count Herman of Cilli, whereas the other, Stephen was the queen's *magister tavarnicorum* in the early 1410s, and her master of the doorkeepers after 1423; he also acted as royal tax collector in Slavonia.⁴⁵³ Both Paul and Stephen were titled *magnificus*, and thus counted among the real barons of the realm. It was therefore not without reason that Akacius, son of Paul called himself „*de genere baronum procreatus*”⁴⁵⁴, whereas his brother, bishop Demetrius modestly described himself as having descended on both lines „from the great baronial kindreds of the Hungarian realm”.⁴⁵⁵ Paul died an unglorious death in Bosnia in 1415,⁴⁵⁶ Stephen disappeared after 1429. Among the sons of Paul Akacius and George entered the royal court, and accompanied, together with the third brother, Demetrius, king Sigismund for the imperial coronation to Rome.⁴⁵⁷ In 1435 Akacius was referred to as imperial knight and acted as tax collector in Slavonia.⁴⁵⁸ It may have been already in Italy or upon their return that they acquainted themselves with Matko Tallóci, ban of Slavonia from 1435. It was evidently due to the influence of Tallóci that the youngest of the three brothers, Demetrius became bishop of Knin in 1438,⁴⁵⁹ whereas Akacius was appointed as viceban and *ispán* first of Zagreb and later of Körös.⁴⁶⁰ The third brother, George joined John Hunyadi and became his deputy-voevode of Transylvania.⁴⁶¹ Bishop Demetrius was even involved in the conflict between the Tallóci brothers and the counts of Cilli over the bishopric of Zagreb, when in December 1444 ban Matko helped him with the force of arms to occupy the episcopal palace at Zagreb. Although bishop Demetrius had to leave after the death of Matko Tallóci, he did not give up his pretensions to the see of Zagreb until 1466.⁴⁶²

After the political takeover of the counts of Cilli in Slavonia the Csupor brothers naturally turned to John Hunyadi for assistance. Although their possessions do not seem to have suffered any loss in

⁴⁵¹ On the career of Paul see Engel, *Archontológia* II. 54.

⁴⁵² Engel, *Királyi hatalom* 73.

⁴⁵³ Engel, *Archontológia* II. 54.; *Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár* X. 862., XI. 717.

⁴⁵⁴ Lukinović, *Povijesni spomenici* 374.

⁴⁵⁵ *Ibidem* 588: „*ex utroque parente de magno baronum genere regni Ungarie*”. We do not know who the wife of ban Paul was, but this statement of his son proves that he married himself with a woman belonging to one of the baronial families.

⁴⁵⁶ Elemér Mályusz, *Zsigmond király uralma Magyarországon 1387-1437 [The Reign of King Sigismund in Hungary 1387-1437]* (Budapest: Gondolat, 1984) 111.

⁴⁵⁷ Csukovits, *Nagy utazás* 33.

⁴⁵⁸ DL 44073.

⁴⁵⁹ Engel, *Archontológia* I. 85.

⁴⁶⁰ In fact, he may have been simultaneously *ispán* of Körös and Zagreb from the recovery of the Tallóci brothers in Slavonia in 1440 until beyond October 1442, when he is last referred to as viceban.

⁴⁶¹ Engel, *Archontológia* I. 15.

⁴⁶² Pálosfalvi, „Cilleiek és Tallóciak” 71. On the subsequent history of the see of Zagreb until the removal of bishop Demeter see *Idem*, „Vitovec János” 468-469.

the tumultuous years of 1445/46, Akacius certainly left Slavonia and became a member of Hunyadi's entourage.⁴⁶³ He fought in the Ottoman campaigns of the governor.⁴⁶⁴ At the assembly of September 1447 he was listed, together with Benedict Turóci, in the group of nobles above the ordinary county envoys.⁴⁶⁵ George, in his turn, seems to have cared more for the salvation of his soul; for it was apparently him, and not his namesake among the sons of Gaspar, who founded the Franciscan monastery at (Monoszló)váralja, and petitioned in 1465 at Rome for a permission to visit the Holy Sepulchre with two other laymen.⁴⁶⁶ It is possible that he even entered the monastery he had himself founded at Váralja.⁴⁶⁷ The 1440s early 1450s brought the time of internal strife for the Csupor as well: on the one hand, between the sons of ban Paul and Gaspar, son of Stephen, and, on the other, between the sons of Paul themselves, concerning the division of their paternal lands.⁴⁶⁸ Although both Akacius and George seem to have disappeared from the political scene after 1447, their attachment to Hunyadi paid off abundantly in the next generation.

George seems not to have left offspring, whereas among the sons of Akacius, born from his wife, Mary Kórógyi, the daughter of Philip (Fülpös) Kórógyi, *tárnokmester* of the queen,⁴⁶⁹ John and Ladislav must have died quite early.⁴⁷⁰ The third son, Nicholas, made a career which surpassed even that of his grandfather, ban Paul. It was evidently thanks to the services of his father done to governor Hunyadi that he had access to the court of the latter's son, king Matthias in the late 1460s. First attested as a court knight in 1467,⁴⁷¹ he made a rapid career which stands almost unparalleled

⁴⁶³ He is referred to as Hunyadi's janitor in 1448, although it is uncertain what the term means: DL 55389.

⁴⁶⁴ DL 44518.

⁴⁶⁵ Mállyusz, "Magyar rendi állam" 531.

⁴⁶⁶ Váralja: Romhányi, Kolostorok 45., following János Karácsonyi, *Szt. Ferencz rendjének története Magyarországon 1711-ig I-II [The History of the Franciscan Order in Hungary until 1711]* (Budapest, 1922-1924) II. 554. Pilgrimage: Archivio Segreto Vaticano. Sacra Poenitentieria Apostolica. Registra Matrimonialium et Diversorum, vol. 12 [1465] „*Georgius Chupor miles Zagrabienensis cupit visitare Sacrum Sepulcrum dominicum cum aliis duobus sociis secularibus*”. It is not known whether he finally undertook the journey or not. In fact, it is not easy to make a distinction between the two George. The elder George, son of Paul, was still alive in May 1464 (DL 35097., faulty abstract in Levéltári Közlemények 12 (1934) 135.), whereas the other George, son of Gaspar, seems to have disappeared by 1468, when only his brother Stephen is mentioned (DF 255802.). Since in 1452 neither he nor Stephen is mentioned together with their father, at that time they may still have been minors. The other George is recorded to have donated land to the Pauline monks of Garics in 1460 (Levéltári Közlemények 12 (1934) 114.), and was especially concerned about the fate of his soul at that time (ibidem 115.), it seems thus reasonable to attribute to him the foundation of the Franciscan cloister as well. See the next note as well.

⁴⁶⁷ In 1469 the widow of Gaspar Csupor laid a complaint against a certain „Gregory” Csupor, Franciscan friar, who failed to repay her a debt he had contracted while still living in the world; it is, in fact, very probable that Gregory is a misreading of George who, in case this hypothesis is true, was still alive then. Menyhért Érdűhelyi, „Kutatásaim a római levéltárakban” [Researches in the Roman archives] *Katholikus Szemle* 10 (1896) 628.

⁴⁶⁸ Erdődy 11078., 11082, 11084-11088.

⁴⁶⁹ DF 255968. In this charter the wife of Michael Rohfi, that is, Catherine Csupor, is said the daughter of Mary Kórógyi. In his last will, Stephen Csupor called Catherine his *soror*, which would literally mean that she was also the daughter of Gaspar, whose wife then would be Mary Kórógyi. Since, however, the widow of Akacius is constantly called Mary, and that of Gaspar Anne, it is more reasonable to suppose that Catherine was merely a cousin of Stephen, and that she was in fact the daughter of Akacius Csupor and Mary Kórógyi; this marriage would also account for the fact that Nicholas Csupor received from Matthias the Kórógyi inheritance, to which he could lay a claim via his mother.

⁴⁷⁰ They are last mentioned in 1453: Levéltári Közlemények 11 (1933) 92.

⁴⁷¹ András Kubinyi lists him as a court knight as early as 1459 (Idem, „A Mátyás-kori államszervezet” [The Government of Hungary under King Matthias], in Hunyadi Mátyás. Emlékkönyv Mátyás király halálának 500.

in the period. He was present as still a court knight in the king's campaign against Jan Svehla in January 1467,⁴⁷² in the suppression of the Transylvanian revolt later during that year, and in the subsequent Moldavian expedition.⁴⁷³ In 1468 he was appointed as voivode of Transylvania and *ispán* of the Székelys,⁴⁷⁴ and became one of the most trusted supporters of Matthias. He participated in the king's Bohemian and Polish wars,⁴⁷⁵ took an active part in the royal council,⁴⁷⁶ and was rewarded with immense lands, among them the important estate of Verőce (Virovitica) and the title of perpetual *ispán* which went with it, and the whole heritage of Gaspar Kórógyi, one of the richest magnates of southern Hungary.⁴⁷⁷ He was also one of the major beneficiaries of the confiscations which afflicted the noble leaders of the Transylvanian revolt.⁴⁷⁸ It is impossible even to gauge what could have been the top of his career had not a premature death put an end to his astonishing rise in 1474.

Yet his career, however successful, remained an intermezzo in the history of the family. He had no children, his brothers deceased before him, and his cousin from the other branch of the family inherited neither his immense possessions nor his political influence. The estates he had received from Matthias, with the exception of some of the Transylvanian ones, were all granted away by the king shortly after his death to influential barons of his court.⁴⁷⁹

At the time of the death of Nicholas his only surviving kinsman was Stephen, son of Gaspar. The branches of Nicholas and Thomas seem to have disappeared by the second decade of the 15th century. As for the descendants of Stephen, once master of the janitors for queen Barbara, they proved either unable or unwilling to accomplish anything comparable to the breathtaking rise of Nicholas. Gaspar, his only known son from his marriage with Margaret, daughter of the otherwise obscure Peter Podhorcsányi from the county of Hont,⁴⁸⁰ is almost impossible to grasp; one piece of information seems to prove that he was constantly staying in Slavonia,⁴⁸¹ and died before May 1462.⁴⁸² His wife, as we have seen above, was a certain Anne of unknown origins.⁴⁸³ Among his

évfordulójára, eds. Gyula Rázsó and László V. Molnár (Budapest: Zrínyi, 1990) 128, n. 120.), but the date of the charter he refers to is in fact 1467. DL 33355.

⁴⁷² DL 100762.

⁴⁷³ Árpád Nógrády, „Mennyit ér a kegyelemlevél?” [What is a Letter of Pardon Worth?], in Tibor Neumann and György Rácz eds., *Honoris causa. Tanulmányok Engel Pál tiszteletére* (Budapest – Piliscsaba, 2009) 238. He took part in Moldavian campaign *inter ceteros aule nostre milites*: DL 36393.

⁴⁷⁴ Shortly before 4 January 1468. Franz Zimmermann et al. eds., *Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der Deutschen in Siebenbürgen I-VII*. (Hermannstadt, 1892-1991), VI. 318.

⁴⁷⁵ „*Universorum gencium regalium in marchionatu Moravie capitaneus supremus*” (Vienna, February 1470): DL 107471. In April 1471 he is *relator* of a royal charter at Pressburg: DL 100809.

⁴⁷⁶ Kubinyi, „Bárók a királyi tanácsban” 204.

⁴⁷⁷ DL 33423.; Engel, *Világi nagybirtok* 66. n. 129.

⁴⁷⁸ Nógrády, *Kegyelemlevél passim*.

⁴⁷⁹ Engel, *Világi nagybirtok* 55.

⁴⁸⁰ Engel, *Középkori magyar genealógia, Monoszló nem Csupor*.

⁴⁸¹ DF 231261 (1450): „*opidum Monozlo locum scilicet habitacionis egregii Gaspar Chwpor de eadem Monozlo*”.

⁴⁸² *Levéltári Közlemények* 12 (1934) 124-125.

sons George must have died fairly young; in 1463 he obtained together with his brother, Stephen, an authorisation to build a fortification on any of their lands in Körös from king Matthias.⁴⁸⁴ Stephen, on the other hand, although occasionally titled *magnificus*,⁴⁸⁵ remained a person of purely local influence. He took part in important arbitrations,⁴⁸⁶ was one of the special royal deputies sent out for defining the borders separating the royal castellany of Medve from the possessions of the bishopric of Zagreb,⁴⁸⁷ and by reason of his extensive estates seemed important enough to Oswald, bishop of Zagreb to sue him separately before the legate's court in the case of the tithe.⁴⁸⁸ In 1491 he was one of the executors of the last will made by deputy-palatine Ladislas Hermanfi of Greben,⁴⁸⁹ whereas among the appointed executors of his own testament we find bishop Oswald himself as well as people of baronial status such as two counts of Blagaj and John Henning of Szomszédvár.⁴⁹⁰ His outstanding status within Slavonia is proved by another fact as well: on the list prepared sometime before the death of king Mathias about the number of horsemen maintained by the Slavonian and Croatian nobility for the service of the king, Stephen Csupor figured with 40 cavalry, with which he came second in Slavonia behind Boldizsár Battyányi (50), and only slightly fell short of the contingents equipped by the counts of Blagaj and Zrin (50 respectively).⁴⁹¹ It is all the more conspicuous that we do not find him on any of the lists enumerating the leading Slavonian nobility, nor was he present among the Croatian and Slavonian leaders at Buda in March 1492. In the last case his absence may have been explained by his illness, but his previous „abstinence” from the internal affairs of Slavonia certainly needs some answer.

The last two years of Stephen were probably the most difficult in his whole life. In December 1490 the invading troops of Maximilian of Habsburg devastated and burnt his lands and even lay siege to his *castellum* in Monoszló.⁴⁹² Fortunately enough, we have Stephen's own *post festa* account of what happened before. According to him, Balthasar Batthyány made a secret agreement with the captain of Maximilian, James Székely, and promised to win the support of the leading Slavonian nobility for the Habsburg. Upon the request of Batthyány, Stephen Csupor unsuspectingly sent his chaplain to him, and when the latter informed his lord, he immediately turned down the offer and decided to remain faithful to Wladislaw II. Things were a lot more complicated, as we will see later,

⁴⁸³ She may have belonged to the Blagay family: Thallóczy-Barabás, Blagay oklevéltár 382-383. This hypothesis is perhaps underpinned by the fact that Stephen posed as an arbitrator in a case involving the members of the Blagay family, and designated two members of the same family among the executioners of his testament.

⁴⁸⁴ Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Vienna, Archives of the Erdödy family 11094.

⁴⁸⁵ DF 282454, 255911, 255913. This latter charter is especially interesting, for, whereas Stephen Csupor is titled *magnificus*, Bernard Rohfi is called *egregius*.

⁴⁸⁶ Thallóczy-Barabás, Blagay oklevéltár 384-386; DL 107065.

⁴⁸⁷ DL 37582.

⁴⁸⁸ DF 268111.

⁴⁸⁹ DL 107608.

⁴⁹⁰ Levéltári Közlemények 13 (1935) 253-257.

⁴⁹¹ DL 104613. On the dating of the list see section on the Szencsei.

⁴⁹² DF 231847.

but it remains a fact that consequently several villages belonging to Monoszló were robbed by troops sent by James Székely from Csázma.⁴⁹³ Moreover, only a year later the castellan of Rakonok, on the way to Jajce with his foot soldiers, camped again in the town of Monoszló, causing considerable damage to its inhabitants and to their lord.⁴⁹⁴

Stephen Csupor seems at that time to have been already ill; he prepared his last will on 24 December 1492, and died within days thereafter.⁴⁹⁵ He had no surviving children either from his first wife, called Barbara, nor from the second, Elizabeth Pető of Gerse.⁴⁹⁶ Indeed, in his last years he may have taken the lower ecclesiastical orders, for the Stephen Csupor of Monoszló, *diaconus*, who in 1489 petitioned at Rome privileges for the monastery at Váralja cannot be other than he.⁴⁹⁷ His inheritance, the castle of Szarvaskő, the town and *castellum* of Monoszló and the dozens of villages belonging to them had accordingly been donated by Wladislaw II in advance to Thomas Bakócz, then bishop of Győr, and his relatives,⁴⁹⁸ and the grant was confirmed after the death of Stephen Csupor.⁴⁹⁹ In the last days of January 1493 the king's commissioner, Andrew Both of Bajna was already engaged in the occupation of the Csupor lands, in theory for the ruler, in practice for the all-influential chancellor.⁵⁰⁰ In 1494 the former possessions of the Csupor family were registered under the bishop of Eger, and were supposed to pay 286 florins, that is, they included some 572 inhabited tenant sessions.⁵⁰¹

2.2.9. Dersfi of Szerdahely

The Dersfi family descended from the Győr kindred, and took its name from the possession of Szerdahely, in the county of Somogy, which was acquired by their ancestor called Ders in 1245.⁵⁰² Nicholas Szerdahelyi, after he had divided his estates with his brother, Peter, in 1346, had eighteen villages in Somogy and some minor pieces of land in Baranya, by right of which he already counted among the wealthy nobility of his native county.⁵⁰³ The son of Nicholas, Ders was ispán of Ung in 1380-1381, and is attested as a knight of the queen's court for some years.⁵⁰⁴

⁴⁹³ DF 255911.

⁴⁹⁴ DF 255913.

⁴⁹⁵ Levéltári Közlemények 13 (1935) 253-257.

⁴⁹⁶ Engel, Középkori magyar genealógia, Monoszló nem Csupor.

⁴⁹⁷ Antal Beke, "Római emlékek a magyar egyház XV-ik századi történetéből"[Roman sources for the history of the Hungarian church in the 15th century], in Magyar Történelmi Társ 1900, 10.

⁴⁹⁸ DL 93616.

⁴⁹⁹ Erdődy 11121.

⁵⁰⁰ DL 46288.

⁵⁰¹ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 4.

⁵⁰² Karácsonyi, Magyar nemzetségek 555.

⁵⁰³ Ibidem.

⁵⁰⁴ Engel, Archontológia II. 230.

A much more remarkable career was that of his nephew, called Martin „Ders”, who established himself in Slavonia. He was brought up in the court of a powerful baron, Detre Bebek,⁵⁰⁵ and consequently became his *familiaris*. From 1389 to 1392 he was the viceban of his lord in Slavonia, then followed him as his deputy to the county of Temes. After a brief period in the service of Detre’s son, Nicholas, archbishop of Kalocsa, he returned to Slavonia as viceban for a second time. He remained Detre’s deputy even after the latter had been appointed as palatine by king Sigismund, and, with fine political judgement, left him right before the revolt of 1403.⁵⁰⁶ Thus he did not only save what he had accumulated so far, but also had the way paved before further acquisitions and a brief baronial career.

The first possession he obtained in the county of Körös was the estate of Rojcsa (Rovišće), with two market towns and a number of villages which constituted a district of conditional nobles.⁵⁰⁷ Five years later he also received from the king the neighbouring estate of Tapalóc (Topolovac), where the castle belonging to the royal castellany of Rojcsa had originally stood.⁵⁰⁸ The fortification itself, which was left unmentioned by the royal donation, but is referred to later as a *castellum*, was in all probability rebuilt by Martin Ders himself before 1409, when it is mentioned again for the first time.⁵⁰⁹ Early in 1403 he accompanied king Sigismund for his Bohemian campaign as one of the leaders of the royal army, and his services there were rewarded by further grants.⁵¹⁰ Besides some minor donations in the counties of Somogy and Baranya, his possessions in Slavonia were considerably extended: he received, in the immediate vicinity of Rojcsa, the two towns of Szentbenedek and Sztreza (Streza) with some other villages, which were said by the royal charter to amount to two hundred tenant sessions altogether.⁵¹¹

His adroit shift of allegiance before the revolt of 1403 resulted in a brief baronial career. Already in December 1403 he was member of the baronial group, led by bishop Eberhard of Zagreb, the duty of which was to restore the order in Slavonia,⁵¹² and in 1404 he became a baron himself when Sigismund appointed him as master of the table, and also *ispán* of Somogy.⁵¹³ Although he was removed from his office already in 1406, he continued to be reckoned among the barons and remained a member of the court of king Sigismund.⁵¹⁴ He was captured in Bosnia during the fatal

⁵⁰⁵ Árpád Nógrády, „A Szerdahelyiek és a rojcsai prediálisok” [The Szerdahelyi Family and the Prediales of Rojcsa], in *Történelmi Szemle* XLIII (2001) 1-2. 73.

⁵⁰⁶ On his career see Engel, *Archontológia* II. 230.

⁵⁰⁷ Smičiklas, *Codex diplomaticus* XVII. 513-515.

⁵⁰⁸ Engel, *Archontológia* I. 439.

⁵⁰⁹ Csánki, *Körösmegye* 17.

⁵¹⁰ *Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár* II/1. 2211, 2212.

⁵¹¹ *Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár* II/1. 2274.

⁵¹² Mályusz, *Zsigmond király* 56-57.

⁵¹³ Engel, *Archontológia* I. 47.

⁵¹⁴ *Ibidem* II. 230.

campaign against duke Hervoja in 1415, and died in captivity despite the extraordinary tax levied upon royal order.⁵¹⁵

From his wife, Anne Sági, who descended from the Ákos kindred, Martin had three sons, George, Ders and Peter.⁵¹⁶ Despite the fact that their father had merely been viceban of Slavonia, they were regularly called „sons of ban Martin” (*filiu quondam Martini bani*).⁵¹⁷ George seems to have died fairly young, Peter is impossible to grasp through the existing sources, and only the activities of Ders can be followed with some detail. For some time he and his mother were entirely engaged in their struggle with the tenants of Rojcsa over the dues of the latter.⁵¹⁸ In September 1439 he was listed among the leading nobility (*proceres*) who guaranteed the promise of king Albert to lead a campaign against the Ottomans in the coming year,⁵¹⁹ and in June 1440 he was again member of the same group when the estates confirmed the election of king Wladislaw at Buda.⁵²⁰ He was one of the leaders of the troops sent by Wladislaw to Slavonia, which were defeated by Jan Vitovec near Samobor.⁵²¹ In April 1444 he was for the third time enlisted in the group immediately following that of the barons among the representatives of the estates at the diet of Buda.⁵²²

The 1450s were apparently hard times for Ders. In 1453 his town of Rojcsa was occupied by Jan Vitovec,⁵²³ whereas in 1459 his *castellum* at Bat, in the county of Somogy, was taken and burnt by Nicholas Újlaki and his mercenaries, and Ders himself was thrown out.⁵²⁴ The affair was evidently connected to the disputed possession of the castle of Kaposújvár in the same county, which had been jointly donated in 1403 by king Sigismund to Martin Ders and John Tamási, and the part of the latter was later acquired by Nicholas Újlaki.⁵²⁵ Ders married at least twice; his first wife, of an unknown family, was called Catherine,⁵²⁶ whereas for the second time he married Sophie Töttös, the sister of chief-treasurer Ladislas.⁵²⁷ This second marriage seems to have played an important role in the career of Stephen, the only known son of Ders.

Although he failed to obtain any part of the considerable inheritance of Ladislas Töttös (died in 1468), it was evidently thanks to his connection with the new owners, the Várdai family, themselves

⁵¹⁵ Mályusz, Zsigmond király 134.

⁵¹⁶ Engel, Középkori magyar genealógia, Győr nem 2. Szerdahelyi-ág.

⁵¹⁷ „*Nobilium Georgii, Ders et Petri filiorum quondam Martini bani de Zerdahel*” (DI 11076, 1421); „*Georgii Ders et Petri filiorum quondam Martini bani de Thapalouch*” (DL 32843, 1426). Apparently the name Dersfi (at first in the form of filius Ders), first used by Stephen, son of Ders, referred to this latter Ders, son of Martin, and not to earlier members of the family.

⁵¹⁸ Nógrády, Szerdahelyiek 75-79.

⁵¹⁹ Georgius Bónis and Vera Bácskai eds., *Decreta Regni Hungariae. Gesetze und Verordnungen Ungarns 1301-1457* (Budapest, 1976) 306.

⁵²⁰ Mályusz, “Magyar rendi állam”, 76. n. 128.

⁵²¹ Pálosfalvi, „Cilleiek és Tallóciak” 57.

⁵²² *Decreta regni* 335.

⁵²³ With the justification that he intended to protect its inhabitants against Ders himself: DL 14681.

⁵²⁴ „*Ipsum Ders de dicto castello suo Bath tantum in uno pellicio eiecissent*”: DI 15419.

⁵²⁵ Engel, Archontológia I. 336.

⁵²⁶ DI 14429.

⁵²⁷ Engel, Középkori magyar genealógia, Győr nem 2. Szerdahelyi ág.

related by marriage to the Töttös, that Stephen Dersfi found his way to the royal court. Stephen Várdai, archbishop of Kalocsa and arch-chancellor, was one of the pillars of king Matthias' rule until his death in 1470,⁵²⁸ and his kinsmen continued to enjoy the royal favour thereafter, even if they did not hold baronial offices. Moreover, Stephen Dersfi was also connected via the Várdai to Ladislav Egervári, ban of Slavonia from 1476, whose mother was Barbara Várdai, and whose own career was in all probability launched by archbishop István.

The only charter which refers to Stephen as a *familiaris* of the royal court was issued on 17 March 1476 at Buda, and its date itself strongly supports the hypothesis that Stephen had previously taken part in the siege of Šabac.⁵²⁹ Two years later he was authorised by king Matthias, in return for services not detailed, to rebuild his *castellum* at Bat once demolished by Nicholas Újlaki.⁵³⁰ The fortification was indeed reconstructed somewhat later.⁵³¹ At the end of July 1479 we find him at Kutenya (Kutina) in the company of other local nobles, and his stay there seems to have been connected to the mobilisation of the Slavonian mobility against an Ottoman incursion.⁵³² Later on his time seems to have been absorbed by protracted litigation with Lawrence Újlaki over the castle of Kaposújvár and with his distant kinsman, Paul Dancs of Szerdahely over the common possessions in Somogy.⁵³³ He had more luck with the Várdai brothers, from whom he did at least receive the money due to him for the dower and the filial quarter of his grandmother and mother respectively after the Töttös lands.⁵³⁴

The hardest days of his life probably came after the death of king Matthias, however. Then all his lands in the county of Körös were temporarily occupied by the Ernuszt brothers, who taxed his tenants there and even set a castellan of their own in the *castellum* of Tapalóc.⁵³⁵ Although Stephen soon recovered his lands, the events were shocking enough for his son Nicholas to fear that the same would happen twenty six years later, after the death of Wladislaw II.⁵³⁶ Whether the incident was rooted in a political opposition between Stephen Dersfi and the Ernuszt brothers, or it was merely part of the general upheaval that followed the death of Matthias is impossible to decide. Bishop Sigismund was one of the chief partisans of duke Corvin,⁵³⁷ whereas Stephen Dersfi was

⁵²⁸ Kubinyi, Mátyás király 59, 63, 69, 71.

⁵²⁹ DL 17776. He seems to be staying at Buda three years earlier, in October 1473 as well: DL 32851.

⁵³⁰ Richárd Horváth, „Középkori kastélyépítési engedélyek Somogy megyéből” [Medieval Authorisations of Castle Building from the County of Somogy], in *Castrum. A Castrum Bene Egyesület hírlevele* 1, eds. István Feld, Gábor Szatlóczky and György Domokos (Budapest, 2005) 21-22. This charter seems to prove that he remained in contact with the court, even if he is not referred to as its knight any more.

⁵³¹ It is mentioned in 1501: Miklós Komjáthy, “A somogyi konvent II. Ulászló-kori oklevelei az Országos Levéltárban. 7. közlemény. In József Kanyar ed., *Somogy Megye Múltjából. Levéltári Évkönyv* 10 (1979) 76.

⁵³² DL 103843.

⁵³³ DL 18377, DL 70043, DL 70056.

⁵³⁴ DL 24576.

⁵³⁵ Somogy Megye Múltjából. Levéltári Évkönyv 4 (1973) 8; DL 21225; DF 261842.

⁵³⁶ DL 104283.

⁵³⁷ András Kubinyi, „Két sorsdöntő esztendő (1490-1491)” [Two Decisive Years (1490-1491)], in *Történelmi Szemle* XXXIII (1991) 1-2. 27. Tamás Fedeles, „Az 1494/95-ös királyi büntetőhadjárat előzményei” [The Precedents of the

present at the diet of Buda in June 1490,⁵³⁸ and took part in the battle of Csontmező on the side of Stephen Bátori and Paul Kinizsi.⁵³⁹

Stephen died sometime before 1493. From his wife called Catherine, the daughter of Nicholas Tuz of Lak,⁵⁴⁰ he had an underage son, Nicholas,⁵⁴¹ who was put under the tutelage of bishop Oswald of Zagreb.⁵⁴² The Tuz of Lak were originally also a noble family from the county of Somogy, and this neighbourhood, alongside kinship, accounts for the role of Oswald Tuz in this respect. As soon as he came to adulthood, that is, at the age of sixteen, in 1501, he pledged all his possessions in the counties of Körös and Somogy, to Emeric Török of Enying and his wife for the enormous sum of 6000 florins, and designated them as his heirs for the case of his dying childless.⁵⁴³ This measure may have been directed against the expansion of duke Lawrence Újlaki, who, for reasons unknown to us, wanted to put his hands upon all the Dersfi estates.⁵⁴⁴ Ambrose Török had obtained the portions of Nicholas Újlaki in the estate of Kaposújvár in 1476, and his son may thus have been a useful ally for Nicholas Dersfi against duke Lőrinc.

Miklós seems to have married very young, for already in 1501 his wife, Catherine, is mentioned.⁵⁴⁵ She was the daughter of James Bánfi of Alsólendva and Catherine Szécsi,⁵⁴⁶ and thus brought her husband into affinity with two of the most illustrious baronial families of contemporary Hungary. She died before 1507, however, and no children are known to have been born from this marriage. Nicholas remarried before 1509 with Perpetua, the daughter of Balthasar Batthyány,⁵⁴⁷ who bore him at least three daughters and two sons.⁵⁴⁸ Through his second marriage Nicholas became the brother-in-law of Francis Both of Bajna, whose uncle, Andrew was appointed as ban of Slavonia in 1505. It is no wonder, then, that in 1509 we meet him as a *familiaris* of the latter, at that time in open revolt against Wladislaw II.⁵⁴⁹

Royal Punitive Expedition of 1494/95], in *Aktualitások a magyar középkorkutatásban*, eds. Márta Font, Tamás Fedeles and Gergely Kiss (Pécs, 2010) 280.

⁵³⁸ DF 252107.

⁵³⁹ DL 37683. Interestingly, in 1491 Stephen Dersfi acknowledged that bishop Sigismund and John had merely occupied Tapalóc in order to prevent it from falling into the hands of the German troops, and, moreover, later returned it to him together with appurtenances „*melius quam acceperant reformatum et munitum*” (DL 19772, recorded in the MOL register under 1479); in view of the protest of two years later, it is evident that he was forced to declare so.

⁵⁴⁰ DL 23182.

⁵⁴¹ Thanks to an otherwise rare piece of information we know that he was born around 1485. DL 20079.

⁵⁴² DL 20729: „*reverendi domini Osvaldi episcopi ecclesie Zagrabiensis tutoris scilicet Nicolai filii quondam Stephani Dersffy de [...] Zerdahe!*”.

⁵⁴³ Somogy Megye Múltjából. Levéltári Évkönyv 10 (1979) 76.

⁵⁴⁴ DL 32875.

⁵⁴⁵ Somogy Megye Múltjából. Levéltári Évkönyv 10 (1979) 76.

⁵⁴⁶ DF 277175/186. Engel, *Középkori magyar genealógia*, Hahót nem 4. tábla, Bánfi (alsólendvai)

⁵⁴⁷ DF 252258.

⁵⁴⁸ DL 104464.; DL 24124.

⁵⁴⁹ In that year Nicholas Dersfi and Louis Pekri, together with other nobles, refused to hand over the tax collected from their own possessions. Since Louis Pekri was standing beyond doubt in the service of Andrew Both, it is reasonable to suppose that Nicholas was also. DL 25515.

In the early summer of 1512 we meet Nicholas as captain of Slavonia,⁵⁵⁰ although it is impossible to know what this office meant exactly. His appointment may have been connected to the campaign planned by ban Emeric Perényi against the Ottomans, but also to the political uncertainties surrounding the very appointment of Perényi and his slow takeover in Slavonia.⁵⁵¹ In the beginning in 1516 he was in the capital enjoying the royal favour,⁵⁵² but only two months later, a couple of days after the death of Wladislaw II, he was already begging Balthasar Batthyány to give him a house in the castle of Greben where he could deposit his charters and valuables, fearing an attack similar to that of 1490.⁵⁵³ Nothing happened, however, and in 1518 he was even appointed as Slavonian viceban by Peter Beriszló.

Backed by his lord's support, Nicholas felt strong enough to reclaim some of the Tuz inheritance in Slavonia,⁵⁵⁴ and also the part of the ageing duke Lawrence Újlaki in the estate of Kaposújvár.⁵⁵⁵ His efforts yielded no result, but in 1521 he received further possessions in the county of Körös from king Louis II.⁵⁵⁶ In July 1524 he was one of the envoys elected by the assembly of the nobility at Körös.⁵⁵⁷ In 1526 he revoked before the chapter of Csázma the treaty of mutual inheritance he had contracted with Emeric Török, for in the meantime his wife, Perpetua Batthyány, had borne to him two sons, Stephen and Wolfgang (Farkas),⁵⁵⁸ the former Cisdanubian captain, the latter captain of Szigetvár in the 1550s. Nicholas survived Mohács by several years.

2.2.10. Dombai

There were two families called Dombai (of *Dombo*) in medieval Hungary, of roughly the same wealth and the same social prestige.⁵⁵⁹ The one which obtained in the first years of the 15th century parts of the Gorbonoki lands, confiscated for infidelity,⁵⁶⁰ took its name from the Dombó which was situated in the southernmost part of Somogy county. The family likewise descended from the Győr kindred,⁵⁶¹ and possessed some thirty villages in the same county.⁵⁶² George, son of Peter seems to

⁵⁵⁰ DL 22310: „*egregii domini Nicolai Dersfy de Zerdahel capitanei regni Sclavonie*”

⁵⁵¹ On the events then in Slavonia see Tamás Pálosfalvi, “Bajnai Both András és a szlavón bánóság. Szlavónia, Európa és a törökök, 1504-1513” [Andrew Both of Bajna and the Banate of Slavonia. Slavonia, Europe and the Turks 1504-1513], in *Honoris causa. Tanulmányok Engel Pál tiszteletére*, eds. Tibor Neumann and György Rácz (Budapest-Piliscsaba 2009) 286-289.

⁵⁵² The king authorised him to construct a bridge on one of his possessions in the county of Somogy and exact toll from the passengers.

⁵⁵³ DL 104283.

⁵⁵⁴ DL 1014000: „*super districtu Thethwsewyna ac castello Razohathecz oppidisque, villis, possessionibus [...] ad dictum districtum et castellum spectantibus*”.

⁵⁵⁵ DL 23182, 23187, 23189; Miklós Komjáthy, “A somogyi konvent II. Lajos-kori oklevelei az Országos Levéltárban. 3. közlemény. In József Kanyar ed., *Somogy Megye Múltjából. Levéltári Évkönyv 3* (1972) 50.

⁵⁵⁶ DL 33848.

⁵⁵⁷ DL 102338.

⁵⁵⁸ DL 24265.

⁵⁵⁹ Kubinyi, „Kaposújvári uradalom” 26.

⁵⁶⁰ DF 288468.

⁵⁶¹ Karácsonyi, *Magyar nemzetségek 556-558*; Engel, *Középkori magyar genealógia*, Győr nem 3. Dombai.

have established his career with his marriage with Margaret Töttös, whose family remained prominent even after the accession of Sigismund. In 1406 he became ispán of Zagreb and administrator of the bishopric of Zagreb.⁵⁶³ Although his office-holding soon came to an end, he seems to have durably established the influence of his family in Slavonia. True, apart from a participation in an arbitration in 1424,⁵⁶⁴ and two commissions as a royal man, both connected to the estate of Verőce,⁵⁶⁵ nothing is known about the eventual activities of George himself south of the Drava, at the congregation of the Slavonian nobility held in March 1439 he was listed right after the Tallóci brothers and bishop Demetrius Csupor, which is a clear sign of his social prestige.

Although during the civil war which followed the death of king Albert two at least of his sons took sides with ban Matko Tallóci, and thus opposed the counts of Cilli, this incident by no means led to the disappearance of the family from Slavonia.⁵⁶⁶ The third son, Nicholas, seems to have started his career in the service of Nicholas Újlaki as *alispán* of Somogy, but he soon became viceban of Slavonia. His office-holding there was a brief intermezzo within the long *vicebanatus* of Jan Vitovec, and, although he was nominally the deputy of count Ulrich of Cilli, his appointment should rather be seen as the result of a compromise, which was explained by the uncertain political atmosphere caused by the coming accession of king Ladislav V.

Whatever the case, Nicholas left the office of viceban early in 1453, and reemerged as *alispán* of Baranya two years later.⁵⁶⁷ He did not give up his ambitions in Slavonia, however, and in the same year he took into pledge parts of the estate of Dobrakucsa together with Nicholas Kasztellánfi.⁵⁶⁸ Two years later he was one of the envoys sent by the Slavonian nobility to king Ladislav.⁵⁶⁹ The accession of king Matthias, and the temporary disgrace of his lord, Nicholas Újlaki, even brought for him the possibility of a brief baronial career. In 1459 he was appointed as one of the bans of Macsó, to which was later also added the castellany of Belgrade. In 1462 he became ban of Dalmatia and Croatia for some time.⁵⁷⁰

Later he seems definitively to have returned to the service of Nicholas Újlaki. In 1468 he was castellan of Atyina in the county of Körös; although the castle belonged to the Garai family, it was upon the joint order of Job Garai and Nicholas Újlaki, both his lords, that Nicholas Dombai committed an act of violent trespass.⁵⁷¹ In 1471 he was already governing the castle of Raholca for

⁵⁶² Csánki, *Történelmi földrajz* II. 669.

⁵⁶³ Engel, *Archontológia* I. 258.

⁵⁶⁴ DF 231981.

⁵⁶⁵ DL 33415, 33416.

⁵⁶⁶ DL 102091.

⁵⁶⁷ On his career see Kubinyi, „Kaposújvári uradalom” 27.

⁵⁶⁸ DL 102128.

⁵⁶⁹ DF 268080.

⁵⁷⁰ Kubinyi, „Kaposújvári uradalom” 27.

⁵⁷¹ DF 255801: „*ex speciali mandato magnificorum Nicolai de Wylak ac Job de Gara necnon domine Alexandrine relicte quondam Ladislai de dicta Gara matris eiusdem Job dominorum scilicet ipsius Nicolai de Dombo*”.

Újlaki, whence he returned to Slavonia as viceban for a second time in 1472-1473. In 1474 and again in 1478 he was listed first among the representatives of the Slavonian nobility, which shows that in that period he was regarded as its most respected member. Still in 1474 he was referred to as *alispán* of Somogy, then followed Újlaki, who in the meantime had become king Nicholas of Bosnia, to his new residence at Jajce and became his palatine there. In 1477 he was castellan of another Újlaki castle, that of Berzőce (Stara Brezovica), and in the same year he again travelled to the king upon the commission of the Slavonian nobility.⁵⁷²

Miklós married Ursula, the daughter of Ladislás Zákányi, and inherited with her hands the lands of his father-in-law in the county of Somogy, together with a *castellum* at Zákány itself.⁵⁷³ He had two sons, Francis and David. The latter seems to have been born quite late, for, according to his own words, he was brought up by duke Lawrence Újlaki.⁵⁷⁴ Francis seems a much less prominent figure than either his father or brother, although both sons, Francis and David, served for some time as *familiares* in the court of Matthias.⁵⁷⁵ Francis received together with his brother the lands of John Briga in Slavonia from king Matthias, but never seem to have effectively taken them.⁵⁷⁶ They also exchanged some of their estates in Verőce with Balthasar Batthyány and Ladislás Hermanfi for portions laying closer to Gorbonok.⁵⁷⁷ In 1487, however, Francis pledged all his estates, together with the *castellum* at Gorbonok, to his father-in-law, Peter Gudovci and his son for 820 florins, having been previously sentenced to capital punishment at the general assembly of Buda against Ladislás Marcali.⁵⁷⁸ A year before much of his possessions in the county of Somogy had been given upon royal orders to the victims of his many violent acts by right of pledge.⁵⁷⁹ He died heirless⁵⁸⁰ before 1490.

We know a lot more about his younger brother, David. In the critical period following the death of king Matthias he joined Maximilian of Habsburg, and his lands were consequently donated by king Wladislaw to Ladislás Egervári.⁵⁸¹ During the same period David suffered a further loss as well. A neighbouring lord, Michael Imrefi, had occupied his *castellum* at Zákány, which David besieged and took back shortly afterwards. Michael turned to the king, however, who ordered the troops of Somogy county to restore the *castellum* to the plaintiff. Yet the captain of these troops, having taken

⁵⁷² Kubinyi, „Kaposújvári uradalom” 27. Commissioned by the Slavonian nobility: Kukuljević, Jura regni I. 208-209.

⁵⁷³ Csánki, Történelmi földrajz II. 584.

⁵⁷⁴ Borsa Iván ed., A Balassa család levéltára 1193-1526 [The Archives of the Balassa family 1193-1526] (Budapest: Magyar Országos Levéltár, 1990) 171: „*illustri domino Laurentio duci de Wylak [...] qui me nutrit*”

⁵⁷⁵ DF 231744 (1482): “*fideles nostros egregios Franciscum et David de Dombo aule nostre regie familiares*”.

⁵⁷⁶ Stipišić – Šamšalović, Isprave nos. 2978 and 2979.

⁵⁷⁷ DL 101033.

⁵⁷⁸ DF 231787: „*in facto potencie pariterque in sententia capitali et amissione universorum possessionum [...] convictus*”

⁵⁷⁹ DL 19123.

⁵⁸⁰ DF 219071: „*condam Francisco de Dombo heredibus carenti*”.

⁵⁸¹ DL 19747.

the *castellum*, handed it over to judge royal Stephen Bátori together with its appurtenances.⁵⁸² In 1492 we find him in the company of two archdeacons as an arbitrator in a case involving count Peter of Zrin.⁵⁸³ Two years later he participated with duke Corvin and his allies in the devastation of the lands belonging to the bishopric of Zagreb.⁵⁸⁴ Consequently he followed his lord, duke Lawrence Újlaki into rebellion against the king; in February 1495 he was again accused of infidelity by Wladislaw II, and the lands of his own *familiares* granted away.⁵⁸⁵ It may have been as a compensation for his losses that he received from duke Lawrence the *castellum* of Kontovc, where his own castellan is mentioned in 1495.⁵⁸⁶ In 1496 he was castellan of the duke in his castellum of Berzőce.⁵⁸⁷ Later he recovered the Slavonian lands of his father, by reason of which he had a long conflict with Stephen Gudovci, to whom, as we have seen, the portions of his brother had been pledged.⁵⁸⁸ In May 1501 he was thought to have died, for his portions at Gorbonok were donated by king Wladislaw II to palatine Peter Geréb, who, however, apparently never took possession of them.⁵⁸⁹ The same is true of Moises Buzlai and John Podmanicki, master of the court and master of the chamber respectively, who received the lands of the late David Dombai in January 1504.⁵⁹⁰ David prepared his last will in 1504 at Gorbonok, and died heirless soon thereafter.⁵⁹¹ The death of David Dombai by no means meant the extinction of the family, however. Yet we know considerably less about the remaining members of it, and even their exact genealogy cannot be established. Ladislas Dombai, who married the daughter of Blaise Garázda of Istvándi,⁵⁹² may have been the son of either of the brothers of Nicholas; he died before 1478,⁵⁹³ and it is unknown what the relationship was between him and the Ladislas who emerges in 1491.⁵⁹⁴ Again, we do not know whose son Andrew Dombai was, but he evidently belonged to the Dombai family which concerns us here.⁵⁹⁵ In 1476 he was castellan of Job Garai in the latter's *castellum* of Sagavica in the county of Körös,⁵⁹⁶ but soon went over to the Ernuszt family, whom he seems to have served thereafter.⁵⁹⁷

⁵⁸² Somogy Megye Múltjából 4 (1973) 5.

⁵⁸³ DL 33200.

⁵⁸⁴ DL 104017.

⁵⁸⁵ DF 231953.

⁵⁸⁶ Levéltári Közlemények 3 (1925) 116-117.

⁵⁸⁷ DL 33432.

⁵⁸⁸ DL 102295.

⁵⁸⁹ DL 34125.

⁵⁹⁰ DL 21234. The royal letter of donation is dated 3 January 1504, which, in view of the fact that David prepared his last will in 1504, would suppose that he did so on the first day of the year and the news arrived to Buda only two days later, and found the two barons ready to petition for his inheritance.

⁵⁹¹ See above the note 571.

⁵⁹² DL 45385.

⁵⁹³ DL 101770.

⁵⁹⁴ DL 33454.

⁵⁹⁵ DL 17311.

⁵⁹⁶ DL 33891.

⁵⁹⁷ DF 262134, 262151.

He had four sons, Francis, Balthasar, Paul and Michael.⁵⁹⁸ Francis is referred to as a designated royal man in 1511 in Somogy, whereas Balthasar is recorded as possessing a small portion at Temerje in 1507.⁵⁹⁹ The only thing we know about Michael is that he married Sophie Kapitánfi of Desnice.⁶⁰⁰

After the death of David Dombai his lands in both Somogy and Slavonia were donated by Wladislaw II to Stephen Gorbonoki and John Bornemissza, castellan of Buda.⁶⁰¹ After Stephen himself had died heirless, the major part of his Slavonian lands, namely the estate of Gorbonok, came into the hands of John Tahi.⁶⁰² Some of them, however, most notably those in Verőce and in Somogy, were in fact appropriated by Josa Dombai. This Josa occupied these lands immediately after the death of David Dombai, although, at least according to the information of a royal charter, during the lifetime of David he had had no share in it, and the lands were accordingly regarded as having escheated to the Crown.⁶⁰³ Thus Josa Dombai, once mentioned as a royal man together with his kinsman Francis,⁶⁰⁴ was certainly neither the son nor the grandson of one of the brothers of Nicholas Dombai, for in this case no escheat would have been possible; his relationship to David was more distant, but its exact nature cannot be established. In 1514 he participated to an important arbitration,⁶⁰⁵ but otherwise he turns up merely as a neighbour.⁶⁰⁶

2.2.11. Ervencei

One of the families the origins of which raise problems for the solution of which not even probable hypotheses cannot be put forward. The oldest known member of the family is a certain Gregory, whose son Benedict is referred to in 1372.⁶⁰⁷ This Gregory, apparently called Idex,⁶⁰⁸ must have lived around the middle of the 14th century. The John, son of Gregory, who is mentioned in 1364 as of Ruenicha, may equally have been his son. The possession of Ervence itself turns up two years before, however, when Thomas and Peter, sons of Beke son of Zuylan gave one quarter of their land

⁵⁹⁸ Miklós Komjáthy, "A somogyi konvent II. Ulászló-kori oklevelei az Országos Levéltárban. 2. közlemény. In József Kanyar ed., *Somogy Megye Múltjából. Levéltári Évkönyv* 5 (1974) 17. = DL 20026.

⁵⁹⁹ DL 22235, Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 28.

⁶⁰⁰ DL 101481.

⁶⁰¹ DL 101385, with the list of all the possessions concerned.

⁶⁰² See the sections on the Gorbonoki and Tahi families.

⁶⁰³ DL 101388: „*nusquam vivente prefato quondam David de Dombo in dominio prescriptorum jurium possessionariorum eiusdem quondam David extitisset*”

⁶⁰⁴ DL 22235.

⁶⁰⁵ DF 252279.

⁶⁰⁶ DF 252259.; DL 22736: „*Jobagiones egregii Jose de Dombo in eadem porcione possessionaria in dicta possessione Dombo*”

⁶⁰⁷ Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus XIV. 475-476.

⁶⁰⁸ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár II/1. 2424.

called Ravenica to the husband of their sister, Philip son of Dominic.⁶⁰⁹ None of these persons can be linked to the future Ervencei, however. The possession from which they took their name lay amidst the possessions of the Tétény kindred, and does not occur in the sources before the second half of the 14th century. It seems originally to have been of considerable extension,⁶¹⁰ and other (probably related) families also held portions of it, among them Peter Sztolnokpekeri, viceban of Emeric Bebek in the critical period before the revolt of 1403.

No wonder, then, that they got involved in both revolts against king Sigismund, and whereas their joining the Horváti brothers had been pardoned by the king, in 1403 their estate of Ervence was donated to the sons of Lawrence Szentandrási, Paul and Stephen.⁶¹¹ Yet they somehow managed to hinder the introduction of the new owners, and they continued to possess or managed to recover very soon at least part of their lands. Nor was their disgrace definitive, for already in 1413 Nicholas, son of Ladislav was castellan of Dubica in the service of Paul Csupor, governor of the priory of Vrana.⁶¹² His colleague in the office, Peter Wrus, is almost certainly identical with the Peter Veres of Ervence who was ispán of Zagreb for ban Denis Marcali in 1419-1421.⁶¹³ He seems to have married into the Ervencei family. As for Nicholas, he was also appointed as ispán of Zagreb in 1417 by David Lack, whereas a year later he is referred to as castellan of Krupa together with Ladislav Szencsei senior.⁶¹⁴

In the next two decades members of the family only occur in the sources as designated royal men.⁶¹⁵ Things changed after 1435, when Stanislas, the son of Nicholas, became a *familiaris* of ban Matko Tallóci. In the late summer of 1439 he was present in the king's military camp at the Danube, and received two important charters there. One of them confirmed him together with his kinsmen in the possession of their inherited lands by the right of new donation,⁶¹⁶ whereas the other authorised them to build a fortification on any one of their possessions.⁶¹⁷ Both charters were referred to the chancellery by another Slavonian nobleman, namely John, canon of Zagreb and royal prothonotary, commonly known by posterity as John Vitéz, future bishop of Várad (Oradea, RO).

Until the early 1460s we again only have sporadic references to members of the family as royal men.⁶¹⁸ Then Ladislav, the son of Stanislas,⁶¹⁹ joined the entourage of ban Jan Vitovec,⁶²⁰ and thus

⁶⁰⁹ Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus XIII. 263. In the edition the name reads as Kaveyaucha, but in the original (DL 35223) it is certainly Raveynicha.

⁶¹⁰ „*possessionem Erwenche vocatam ad trecentos iobagiones se extendentem*” (from the charter cited in n. 605. above)

⁶¹¹ Ibidem.

⁶¹² Engel, Archontológia I. 82.

⁶¹³ Ibidem I. 259. Although I can do nothing with the possession of Gonisa after which he is named, except in the case it is identical to Gojnica in the county of Pozsega.

⁶¹⁴ Ibidem I. 259., 354.

⁶¹⁵ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár IX. 770; 1433: DL 103564.

⁶¹⁶ DF 231184: „*Stanislaus filius Nicolai filii Ladislai de Erwence familiaris fidelis noster magnifici Mathkonis de Tallowcz*”

⁶¹⁷ DF 231192.

⁶¹⁸ DL 74497 (1448); DL 100756 (1452). In both cases John Kyncheg of Ervence.

started a career which clearly elevated him and his brother, equally called Stanislas, above the other branches of his family. He continued to adhere to Vitovec even after the latter had been temporarily removed from the banate, and it was upon the request of his lord that Ladislas was donated some possessions in the county of Zagreb by king Matthias in 1466.⁶²¹ Moreover, after the death of his father George Vitovec gave him the estate of Szobocsina, together with the *castellum* of Szvibovc, which had been occupied in 1461 from its heiress, Elizabeth Szobocsinai.⁶²²

Although Elizabeth and her daughter, Dorothy, never resigned their rights concerning Szobocsina, they had no chances against one of the leading *familiares* of the Vitovec family. The situation changed in 1472, however. Sometime before, perhaps as early as 1469, Ladislas had shifted his allegiance and joined John, bishop of Pécs and ban of Slavonia, and became his castellan in his episcopal city. Consequently, he became involved in the conspiracy organised by John and his uncle, the archbishop of Esztergom against king Matthias in 1471. Although only his possession in the county of Tolna, which he had received from bishop John, was confiscated for infidelity,⁶²³ his position in Slavonia was also temporarily shaken. This seems to account for the fact that in April 1472 the husband of Dorothy Szobocsinai, called Michael Oresjai from the county of Verőce, whose brother of the same name was *custos* of Csázma, attacked and robbed the manor of the Ervencei brothers et Szobocsina.⁶²⁴

Yet Ladislas Ervencei soon found the way leading out of his difficulties. Sometime before April 1474 he joined Nicholas Újlaki, king of Bosnia, who appointed him as his castellan of Rahlca.⁶²⁵ Profiting from the influence of his lord, he pressured his opponents into a compromise. In May 1474 the two parties divided the appurtenances of Szobocsina; the *castellum* of Szvibovc remained in the hands of the Ervencei brothers, and the tenants of Dorothy and Michael Oresjai were given the right of taking refuge there in case of an Ottoman attack.⁶²⁶ A year later it was precisely upon that pretext that Dorothy and her husband occupied Szvibovc.⁶²⁷ The Ervencei brothers promptly took it back, however, with the help of their „lords and friends”, among them bishop Oswald of Zagreb, and Michael Oresjai died in the skirmish.⁶²⁸ Some months later another jury was convoked, which confirmed the division of 1474.⁶²⁹ This time it was one of the arbitrators, Ladislas Hermanfi, who occupied the fortification *more predonico*, and he not only went unpunished but also put his

⁶¹⁹ DL 100833.

⁶²⁰ DF 233405. Compare DF 233308, a different list, but Ladislas figures on both.

⁶²¹ DF 255620.

⁶²² DL 107011.

⁶²³ Csánki, *Történeti földrajz* III. 474.

⁶²⁴ DL 107013, DL 103754.

⁶²⁵ In the service of king Nicholas: DL 107019. Castellan of Rahlca: DL 33432.

⁶²⁶ DL 37175.

⁶²⁷ DL 103771.

⁶²⁸ DL 107022.

⁶²⁹ DL 100851.

hands upon the portions of Elizabeth and Dorothy Szobocsinai.⁶³⁰ His action was evidently facilitated by the fact that after the death of Nicholas Újlaki Ladislás Ervencei quarrelled with the son of his late lord, duke Lawrence, over his salary as castellan of Ráholca.⁶³¹ He also had a dispute with his own brother, Stanislas, caused by the division of their inheritance.⁶³²

Nevertheless, in the possession of Szvibovc, alongside which they also boasted a *castellum* at Ervence and another one at Atak,⁶³³ in the county of Zagreb, they continued to count as members of the leading nobility of the county, and Ladislás was accordingly listed among them both in 1474 and 1478, first together with Nicholas Ervencei, then in the company of his brother, Stanislas. Either Ladislás or Stanislas took part in the siege of Šabac as well.⁶³⁴ In 1481 Ladislás was proscribed for his participation in the revolt ten years before, but he was promptly granted pardon by the king.⁶³⁵ In the same year he appears as one of the royal men sent for the introduction of the Bánfi brothers into the estate of Szaplónca.⁶³⁶ Somewhat later we find Stanislas together with Nicholas Ervencei in the service of ban Ladislás Egervári.⁶³⁷ In 1486 Ladislás was member of a prestigious jury in the company of Stephen Csupor, Ladislás Roh and Peter Gudovci.⁶³⁸

Both Ladislás and Stanislas died before 1487.⁶³⁹ Ladislás, who had married Helen Sulyok, widow of Nicholas Gorbonoki,⁶⁴⁰ apparently died without surviving heirs, whereas Stanislas left a daughter called Barbara, who married an otherwise unknown local nobleman called Matthias Vecseszlavci (*de Vechezlawcz*).⁶⁴¹ She failed to retain Szvibovc and its appurtenances, however, which were at first donated by king Matthias to Peter Tárnok, captain of Zengg, who then sold them to Stephen Doroszlai.⁶⁴² It was from him that Benedict Battyányi bought the *castellum* in November 1491,⁶⁴³ notwithstanding the efforts of the counts of Zagorje, who likewise tried to assert their claims after the death of king Matthias.⁶⁴⁴

We are in a much more difficult situation as regards the other members of the family. The closest kinsman of Ladislás and Stanislas, possibly their uncle, was the Nicholas Ervencei mentioned above, who is referred to several times as a royal man in the 1460s and 1470s.⁶⁴⁵ On one occasion

⁶³⁰ DL 107030.

⁶³¹ DL 103883.

⁶³² DL 102205.

⁶³³ Ervence: DL 103949; Atak: DL 107078.

⁶³⁴ See the charter issued in the royal camp at Futak on 23 November 1475: DF 276827.

⁶³⁵ Tringli, Szlavóniai közgyűlés 305.

⁶³⁶ DL 33434.

⁶³⁷ DL 32833.

⁶³⁸ DL 107065.

⁶³⁹ DL 102233 (Stanislas); DL 101034 (Ladislás).

⁶⁴⁰ On this marriage see the section on the Gorbonoki family. In 1488, however, his widow is called Elizabeth, but her identity cannot be established. DL 103946.

⁶⁴¹ DL 101083.

⁶⁴² DL 103949.

⁶⁴³ DL 101129.

⁶⁴⁴ DL 34079.

⁶⁴⁵ 1465 (DL 106998), 1471 (DF 255825), 1479 (DL 103843), 1480 (DL 100941)

the *castellum* of Atak in the county of Zagreb is mentioned as his own,⁶⁴⁶ and once he is even called Nicholas Ervencei of Atak.⁶⁴⁷ Since both Ladislav and Stanislas died without male heirs, the John Ervencei who occurs in our sources from 1486 onwards may have been his son. Likewise frequently designated as a royal man,⁶⁴⁸ in 1508 he turns up in the service of George Kanizsai.⁶⁴⁹ In 1516 he is attested as *vicecomes* of the county of Körös, a position which in Slavonia seems to have been inferior even to that of the *szolgabírák*.⁶⁵⁰ From a charter issued in 1524 we learn that John pledged most of his possessions to several people,⁶⁵¹ one of which must have been Paul Čavlović, for in 1507 the greatest part of Ervence was in his hands.⁶⁵²

John seems to have had two sons, Akacius and Ladislav.⁶⁵³ Akacius was sent in September 1521 by Paul Kerecsényi, then captain of Slavonia, as one of his envoys to palatine Stephen Bátori.⁶⁵⁴ Somewhat more is known about his presumed brother. In 1520-1522 he was castellan of Greben in the service of Francis Battyányi,⁶⁵⁵ whereas in 1525 he acted as the *familiaris* of Louis Pekri at Buda.⁶⁵⁶ Yet he was evidently unable to make enough money by service to buy back his paternal lands, for it was a person called Ambrose Csallóközi who redeemed his portions in Ervence for 600 florins. In return Ladislav Ervencei pledged these same portions to Ambrose and made him his heir in case of his heirless death.⁶⁵⁷ It is surely this Ladislav who reappears in 1533 as a *familiaris* of Peter Keglević.⁶⁵⁸

It is probable that the Stephen Ervencei who is referred to as a *conprovincialis* in the course of an inquisition in 1493⁶⁵⁹ was also the son of Nicholas and thus the brother of John. All that is known about him is that he had two sons, Francis called „Sicula” and Gabriel.⁶⁶⁰ In August 1525 the latter, together with their kinsmen Akacius and Ladislav, received their ancestral lands from king Louis II by right of new donation.⁶⁶¹ In 1526 Gabriel united his own portions at Ervence with those of Josa Tersek of Gyuretinc (*Gywrethincz*), who was his uterine brother, and the parties completed the

⁶⁴⁶ DF 255849.

⁶⁴⁷ DF 255825.

⁶⁴⁸ 1492 (DF 231857), 1508 (DL 34323).

⁶⁴⁹ DL 25491.

⁶⁵⁰ DL 101507. In the 1517 tax list we see his widow mentioned: Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 97.

⁶⁵¹ DF 232671.

⁶⁵² Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 29.

⁶⁵³ In fact, only Ladislav was surely the son of John: DF 232671. Yet in 1525 both of them were told to be the *patruelis* brothers of Francis and Gabriel, which seems to indicate that they were indeed brothers. DF 232719.

⁶⁵⁴ DL 25624. He is referred to as *litteratus*.

⁶⁵⁵ Quittance issued by Francis Batthyány in favour of Ladislav Ervencei, who had restored his castle of Greben. DF 232576.

⁶⁵⁶ Vilmos Fraknói, „II. Lajos király számadási könyve 1525. január 12 – július 16” [The Account Book of King Louis II from 12 January to 16 July 1525], in *Magyar Történelmi Tár* 22 (1877) 163 (Erwenzky)

⁶⁵⁷ DF 232671.

⁶⁵⁸ Laszowski, *Monumenta Habsburgica* II. 163.

⁶⁵⁹ DF 233293.

⁶⁶⁰ DF 277175; DF 232719.

⁶⁶¹ DF 232719.

agreement with a treaty of mutual inheritance.⁶⁶² This Josa/Joseph was *provisor* of the castle of Sztenicsnyak in the service of Ladislas Kanizsai in 1518, and the castellan was John Dragisych of Brezowycza, from the county of Zagreb; the latter's kinsman, Ladislas, also possessed portions at Ervence.⁶⁶³ In 1524 Josa was already castellan of Vasmegyericse, also in the service of the Kanizsai family, and his colleague in the office was precisely Ambrose Csallóközi of Ervence.⁶⁶⁴

It is not known who the person called Ivan was who also held portions of Ervence, and by what right he was entitled to the tax of his lands in 1517.⁶⁶⁵ Nor is it possible to identify the Kasztellánfi whose widow is recorded as holding eleven sessions at Ervence in 1517.⁶⁶⁶ In 1496 a certain Luke Kemenowych of Ervence is mentioned as an abutter at Dubica, but nothing is known about his relationship to the rest of the family.⁶⁶⁷

2.2.12. Fáncs(i) of Gordova (Fanch od Grdevca, Fanch(y) de Gordowa)

One of the few families whose settlement in Slavonia can apparently be fixed with precision within the Árpád age; it was the sons of Fáncs, Benedict and Paul who received the estate of Gordova before 1248. The castle which stood there already in 1244 and may even have been erected by the family is a sure sign of their elevated social status. It is, however, still open to dispute whether they were indigenous in Slavonia or wandered there from somewhere else. The hypothesis set forth by Pál Engel, according to which their original settlement region was south of the lake Balaton, is surely wrong, for they acquired all their lands there in the course of the 14th century. Since, however, the family's coat-of-arms was identical with that of the Újlkai, and the ancestor of the latter was referred to as Tót, the common origins of the two families may indeed have to be searched for in Slavonia. If it was so, their separation must have occurred very early, for, apart from the common arms, there is absolutely no trace in the sources to show that the two families in fact descended from the same ancestor. The problem, unfortunately, is impossible to be settled with certainty, and will probably remain unresolved in the future.

Whatever the case, the Fáncs family was one of political importance in at least part of the Árpád age. Benedict was ispán of Moson, later that of Trencsén and finally of Vas, and parallelly *magister tavarnicorum* and then court judge to the queen under Bela IV,⁶⁶⁸ but nothing is known about their eventual political activity during the rest of the Árpád era. It was under Charles I that members of

⁶⁶² DF 277175.

⁶⁶³ DF 277042; Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 97.

⁶⁶⁴ DL 32872.

⁶⁶⁵ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 97: „*Ad rationem notarii idem Iwan pro se recepit*”. He is certainly not identical to John *vicecomes*, whose widow is listed in the line that immediately follows.

⁶⁶⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁶⁶⁷ DF 255561.

⁶⁶⁸ Mór Wertner, „Két Árpádkori országnagy családja” [The Families of Two Barons from the Árpád Age], in *Történelmi Társ* 1899. 78-84.

the family found again the way leading to the royal court. Fánics and his sons received from the first Angevin ruler the first possessions of the family in the county of Somogy, and all three sons: John, Ladislas and Paul became members of Louis I's court in the 1340s. In 1343 Ladislas and John were both already knights, whereas Paul was referred to as a court youth (*aule juvenis*).⁶⁶⁹ John died in Italy, and Paul became alispán of the distant county of Ung in the late 1340s.⁶⁷⁰

The first years of king Sigismund's reign proved decisive in the history of the family. The son of Paul, Stephen served Stephen Lackfi in Transylvania and eastern Hungary, than followed him to the distant county of Trencsén, and was consequently sentenced for infidelity after the fall of his lord in 1397. Although this time he was accorded royal pardon together with his brother, in 1403 they again chose the wrong side and lapsed anew into infidelity. Their possessions were donated to others, partly to their own kinsmen from the other branch of the family, and some of them at least were even forced to depart and settle in the county of Vas, where Paul had acquired possessions thanks to his marriage with the daughter of another *familiaris* of the Lackfi, Györe Unyani.⁶⁷¹

The beneficiary of these turbulent years was beyond doubt Ladislas, son of Ladislas, who followed his father in the court and remained faithful to Sigismund in the most critical days. Consequently, he was appointed first as master of the horse and then as ban of Croatia and Slavonia.⁶⁷² Although he was soon removed from the banate and held no other office until his death, it was he who considerably expanded the material wealth of the family and secured his descendants a place among the richest families in the region. Between 1403 and 1408 he received a great number of possessions confiscated for infidelity, mainly in the counties of Körös, Somogy and Tolna, and although not all of them could be definitively incorporated into the family patrimony, the size of the latter may well have passed 1000 tenant sessions.⁶⁷³

Among the sons of ban Ladislas, Bartholomew and John were equally members of the royal court and as such belonged to the broader political elite of the kingdom.⁶⁷⁴ Bartholomew was captivated in the ill-fated Bosnian campaign of 1415,⁶⁷⁵ and later his son, Stephen, equally knight of the court, accompanied together with his uncle Ladislas king Sigismund to Nürnberg in 1422,⁶⁷⁶ and then with his other uncle, John for the imperial coronation.⁶⁷⁷ They also received donations from the ruler, but Sigismund, increasingly parsimonious in his later years, seems to have limited himself to

⁶⁶⁹ Norbert C. Tóth, „Vingárti Geréb Péter országbíró ítéletlevele 1498-ból” [A Judgement by Judge Royal Peter Geréb of Vingárt from 1498], in *Levéltári Közlemények* 73 (2002) 1-2. 133.

⁶⁷⁰ On the early history of the family see: Engel, „Néhány erdélyi alvajda”, 156. C. Tóth, „Gordovai család”, 273-275.

⁶⁷¹ C. Tóth, „Gordovai család” 274-275.

⁶⁷² Engel, *Archontológia* II. 72.

⁶⁷³ C. Tóth, „Gordovai család” 274-275, 285.

⁶⁷⁴ Engel, *Archontológia* II. 72. The third brother, Emeric is titled *magnificus* in 1416: Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár V. 1920., and so is Bartholomew: Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár VI. 1130.

⁶⁷⁵ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár VI. 1046.

⁶⁷⁶ Renáta Skorka ed., *Eberhard Windecke emlékirata Zsigmond királyról és koráról [The Memoirs of Eberhard Windecke on King Sigismund and his Times]* (Budapest: MTA Történettudományi Intézete, 2008)124.

⁶⁷⁷ Csukovits, Nagy utazás 33.

confirming previous grants.⁶⁷⁸ In 1439, when King Albert engaged himself to lead a campaign against the Ottomans in the next year, Peter, son of Bartholomew was among the lords who confirmed the solemn charter with their own seals,⁶⁷⁹ and he was also present at the diet of April 1444.⁶⁸⁰

The years following the death of king Wladislaw were again critical and almost fatal for the family. The two sons of Bartholomew, Stephen and Peter entered after the death of king Albert the service of the Tallóci brothers and became their castellans in the important castle of Szentgyörgy. Consequently, when count Ulrich of Cilli led in the late autumn of 1445 a campaign to drive the three surviving Tallóci brothers out of Slavonia, Stephen and Peter faced as their castellans the redoubtable mercenary of count Ulrich, Jan Vitovec. We do not know what exactly happened then, but it seems probable that the family patrimony, Gordova was taken from them while they were engaged in the defence of Szentgyörgyvár. Some members of the family were captivated by another *familiaris* of count Ulrich, the Polish Juga, and certain possessions were occupied by Nicholas Újlaki. To make things more complicated, Peter Fáncs somehow put his hand upon another Cilli castle, Kővár, that he was later forced to hand over according to the peace treaty drafted in January 1447.⁶⁸¹

Strangely enough, Peter and Stephen Fáncs were sentenced as partisans of the counts of Cilli in 1446 and their possessions in the county of Komárom were donated away by governor John Hunyadi.⁶⁸² This unexpected turn of events may be accounted for by the fact that Peter had previously been a castellan of Zalavár, held by that branch of the Rozgonyi family which had remained faithful to young Ladislas V.⁶⁸³ Yet the social position and the wealth of the family were saved by their cousin, Frank son of Emeric. He joined palatine Ladislas Garai and became his castellan at Csesznek,⁶⁸⁴ and this choice opened for him the way to the king. At a time unknown to us he joined the court of king Ladislas and became his knight. In March 1455 he received from the ruler possessions in the county of Somogy,⁶⁸⁵ then in May he was confirmed together with all his

⁶⁷⁸ DL 12696.

⁶⁷⁹ Decreta regni 306.

⁶⁸⁰ Ibidem 336.

⁶⁸¹ „*item Gordwa assignabitur Petro filio Fanch cum pertinenciis suis, rursus idem Petrus Fanch vicissim castrum Kywar ad manus dominorum comitum Cilie assignet, et quod fratres eorundem (!) Fanch, quos idem Johannes Juga captivos detinet, extromittere libere debeat. Item dominus Johannes de Hwnyad possessiones Petri Fanch, quas dominus Nicolaus de Wylak minus iuste occupavit, ipsi Petro Fanch restituere teneatur*”. DL 37615. On the events see Pálosfalvi, Cilleiek és Tallóciak 80-84.

⁶⁸² DL 13933.

⁶⁸³ Engel, Archontológia I. 465. In 1512 Peter and Stephen were remembered to have given the castles of Szentgyörgy and Garics into the hands of the king's enemies. Miklós Komjáthy, „A somogyi konvent II. Ulászló-kori oklevelei az országos levéltárban. 6. közlemény” [The Charters of the Convent of Somogy from the Reign of Wladislaw II in the Hungarian National Archives. Sixth part], in József Kanyar ed., Somogy Megye Múltjából (Levéltári évkönyv) 9 (Kaposvár, 1978) 61.

⁶⁸⁴ Engel, Archontológia I. 294.

⁶⁸⁵ DL 44762. He services „*tam in regno nostro Bohemie quam etiam in partibus nostris Slesie [...] curiam nostram sequendo*”

kinsmen descended from ban Ladislas in all the family possessions in Hungary and Slavonia, the newly built *castellum* at Gordova included.⁶⁸⁶ The son of ban Ladislas, John was castellan of Velike in the service of the Maróti family in 1447.⁶⁸⁷

Although the possessions of the family do not seem to have diminished in the years preceding 1458, its political influence shrank definitively to a purely local level, and lost in intensity even within Slavonia. Whereas at the Slavonian congregation of 1439 Bartholomew was listed fourth, and in 1471 Frank was still fifth, three years later the son of Peter, Gaspar was but eleventh, and in 1478 Nicholas a mere eighteenth. It seems as if the „treasure” of influence accumulated by ban Ladislas and his sons had been exhausted by the death of Frank and could not be bequeathed upon the fourth generation. In 1467 Frank was one of the envoys of the Slavonian nobility sent to king Mathias in the case of the newly appointed prothonotary,⁶⁸⁸ but none of his sons, born from Dorothy Velikei,⁶⁸⁹ and grandsons seems to have played any role either locally or outside Slavonia. Gaspar was appointed as viceban by ban Ladislas Egervári after his return to Slavonia at the end of 1490, but seems to have died within less than a year after his appointment.

The case of Nicholas Fáncsi is especially revealing. The son of Stephen, he belonged to that branch of the family which had departed to the county of Vas, and returned to Slavonia later. Yet his social status was seemingly lower than that of his kinsmen. In May 1479 he was designated as a royal man among people of an evidently inferior rank,⁶⁹⁰ and the fact that later we find him among the noble jurors active in the county of Körös,⁶⁹¹ several of whom can be shown to have served as *szolgabíró* as well, points in the same direction. It is no surprise, then, that he was sometimes titled simply as *nobilis*. In 1495 he was listed as one of the arbitrators in the case between George Kasztellánfi and Francis Beriszló, apparently a sign of social esteem, but it should be remarked that on this occasion the judges were chosen from two clearly distinguishable strata within the nobility, and Nicholas apparently belonged to the lower one.⁶⁹²

Despite the evident decline of the family, the daughters of Gaspar were married into rich and influential families rooted outside Slavonia. Elizabeth married Francis Csaolyi, from the Káta kindred, the bulk of whose possessions lay in the county of Szatmár. The other daughter, Margaret, became the wife of Peter Butkai, from the Gutkeled kindred, who was ispán of Somogy and

⁶⁸⁶ DL 14952.

⁶⁸⁷ Engel, *Archontológia* I. 456.

⁶⁸⁸ DF 268085.

⁶⁸⁹ DL 88870.

⁶⁹⁰ DL 33135. Two years later he emerges again as such in the company of Ladislas Kopinci, Ladislas Ervencei and Gaspar Csernarekai. DL 33434.

⁶⁹¹ DL 102235., 102241.

⁶⁹² DF 231944.

acquired through this marriage a good part of the Fánacs lands both in Somogy and Slavonia.⁶⁹³ After the death of Peter these lands were for some time governed by Benedict Batthyány as guardian of the young Catherine (Apollonia) Butkai.⁶⁹⁴

Before proceeding further, we have to settle the problem of two, or even three, other persons who are called Fánacs and at least one of them has been associated with the Fánacs family, but apparently without reason.⁶⁹⁵ One of them is Emeric Fánacs, who emerges in the first decade of the 16th century. Since Emeric, son of Frank died beyond doubt before 1506,⁶⁹⁶ he was evidently a different person.⁶⁹⁷ In 1506 Benedict Batthyány, royal treasurer, shared with him the castle of Tamási and its appurtenances in return for services he had been performing for several years.⁶⁹⁸ In 1515 we find him among the *familiares* of ban Peter Beriszló,⁶⁹⁹ and in the same year he was an arbitrator together with noblemen from the county of Fejér and burghers of Fehérvár between the local chapter and the Hospitaller priory.⁷⁰⁰ It is surely this same Emeric who in 1517 acted as tax-collector in Slavonia together with Francis Battyányi.⁷⁰¹ Two years later he travelled in the company of Stephen Verbóci to Italy, together precisely with Paul Čavlović with whom he had been listed four years ago in the service of Beriszló.⁷⁰² He was also elected as noble *assessor* to the royal council from the county of Fejér.⁷⁰³ He was evidently esteemed enough to be treated by Gaspar Somi, son of the late *ispán* of Temes, as his equal.⁷⁰⁴ In 1525 we find him among the participants of the so-called “Kalandos” alliance.⁷⁰⁵ The very little we know about him seems to attest that he was not living in Slavonia, and, moreover, he did not even have a share in the Slavonian Fánacs lands.⁷⁰⁶ This evidently raises the question of whether at all he was a member of the Fánacs of Gordova family.

⁶⁹³ Engel, Középkori magyar genealógia, Fánacs(i) (gordovai); ibidem: Káta nem 7. Csaholyi; ibidem: Gútkeled nem 5. Sárvármonostori ág 4. Butkai (folyt.); Peter Butkai *tavernicus*, *ispán* of Somogy: Kubinyi, Bárók a királyi tanácsban 209. Royal cubicularius under Matthias: DL 57790. He is spelled as Bochkay in Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 7, an error apparently committed by contemporaries as well, such as in 1498: „*jobagiones egregii Petri Bochkay de Gordowa*” (DL 32803.). Since the Butkai and the Bocskai sprang from the same kindred, and bore very similar names, the confusion is not surprising.

⁶⁹⁴ DL 22518.

⁶⁹⁵ Engel, Középkori magyar genealógia, Fánacs(i) (gordovai). He only registered Urban Fánacs, as a fragment not attached to the genealogy of the Fánacs of Gordova, but, as I will try to demonstrate below, he and Emeric Fánacs were probably related, it seemed reasonable to treat them together.

⁶⁹⁶ DL 46747.

⁶⁹⁷ We know that both George and Gaspar died without male heir, and we find no son called Emeric among the sons of John and Emeric. Nor do we find anyone called Emeric on the branch which descended from Paul.

⁶⁹⁸ DL 46774.

⁶⁹⁹ DI 104635.

⁷⁰⁰ DL 106744.

⁷⁰¹ Thallóczy – Horváth, Jajcza 262.

⁷⁰² Történelmi Tár 1882. 85.

⁷⁰³ Kubinyi, „Közneemesi ülnökök” 263.

⁷⁰⁴ DL 47044.

⁷⁰⁵ DL 82712.

⁷⁰⁶ He is never listed as an owner of any portion of the Fánacs lands in Slavonia in the tax registers in the first two decades of the 16th century.

We face the same problem in the case of his kinsman (?), Urban Fáncsi, who in 1517 is referred to as administrator of the salt chamber at Szolnok.⁷⁰⁷ He is even more difficult to grasp than Emeric, but his two marriages show that he must have been an influential figure. His first wife was Catherine Horváth, the niece of the late Damianus Horváth, ban of Slavonia. The second, called Helen, seems to have belonged to the Nagylucsei family, and was thus related to bishop Urban and his nephew, Francis Dóci, a person of authority in the Jagello period.⁷⁰⁸ By his first marriage Urban acquired portions in the castle of Litva and its belongings in the county of Hont, which, however, he sold in 1511 to archbishop Bakócz and his kinsmen.⁷⁰⁹ It was evidently due to his second marriage that around 1520 he owned part of the estate of Szuhamlaka in the county of Körös.⁷¹⁰ Since the second wife of Balthasar Batthyány the elder was also a member of the Dóci family, and in the late 1480s it was a certain nobleman called Anthony Fáncsi who had prepared a missal at Kőszeg for this same Balthasar,⁷¹¹ a closer link is very probable between the two families from the same county; this hypothesis is further reinforced by the relationship between Emeric Fáncsi and Benedict Batthyány. Since Urban can neither be found among the owners of the Fáncs lands in Slavonia, and he is in fact never called of Gordova, nor is Emeric, it is almost certain that both of them belonged to a different family and had nothing to do with the Fáncs of Gordova.⁷¹² It was from Urban that the Fáncsi family which flourished in Upper Hungary after Mohács descended. The third person called Fáncsi (Fanchy) is John, who turns up in the account-books of treasurer Sigismund Ernuszt from 1494-1495. Once he is mentioned as a tax-collector in the county of Zemplén,⁷¹³ then he is sent by the treasurer to Asszonypataka to levy a tax there,⁷¹⁴ and finally he is referred to as a *parvulus* of the treasurer, dispatched, again in the matter of taxpaying, to the tax-collector in the county of Vas.⁷¹⁵ In all three references he clearly emerges as a man of the treasurer, and the missions he accomplished clearly show that he cannot be identical with John Fáncs(i) of Gordova, who, as we will see below, was *alispán* of Somogy in 1493. To make things complicated,

⁷⁰⁷ Thallóczy – Horváth, Jajcza 261.

⁷⁰⁸ Engel, *Középkori magyar genealógia*, Fáncs(i) (gordovai).

⁷⁰⁹ István Bakács, *Hont vármegye Mohács előtt [The County of Hont before Mohács]* (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1971) 48, 286.

⁷¹⁰ DF 282508.

⁷¹¹ Elemér Mályusz, *Egyházi társadalom a középkori Magyarországon [Ecclesiastical Society in Medieval Hungary]* (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1971) 323.

⁷¹² The village called Fáncs in the county of Fejér was jointly owned by the bishopric of Veszprém and a local noble family named accordingly. These were people of apparently Besenyő origins, and never played any role outside their native region. There can thus be no other underlying reason behind their somewhat unexpected social rise than the support of the neighbouring Batthyány family. It is, unfortunately, impossible to tell what the relationship between Anthony Fáncsi, a literate in the service of the Batthyány, and Emeric and Urban may have been. It should be remarked, moreover, that in 1509 Imre Fáncsi is attested as possessing part of the village of Ság in the county of Fejér, which again is a sign of his belonging to the local Fáncsi family. On the Fáncsi family see also Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár IV. 1221.; VII. 1618.; VIII. 666.; IX. 142.; X. 715.; DF 249212.; DL 46952.

⁷¹³ Engel, *Geschichte*, 22.

⁷¹⁴ *Ibid.* 79.

⁷¹⁵ *Ibid.* 178.

in the same text we find another Fáncsi, whose Christian name is not given, who stood in 1495 in the service of Josa Somi, *ispán* of Temes.⁷¹⁶ This latter Fáncsi may have been the father of Emeric Fáncsi, which would at least account for the cordial relationship attested later between Gaspar Somi and Emeric Fáncsi later, and would also explain the transfer of Emeric to Slavonia, for Josa Somi held the castle of Atyina in the first decade of the 16th century. It is, however, impossible to tell whether all these persons were attached to the Fáncsi family in the county of Fejér, and were thus related to each other, nor is it possible to explain the reasons for their evident social rise; what is certain is that they had nothing to do with the Fáncs of Gordova family which concerns us here.

Unfortunately, we are not considerably better informed about those persons who surely belonged to the Fáncs of Gordova. The problem is, moreover, complicated by the fact that we have two persons called John and two called Francis simultaneously, and the distinction is not always easy. One of the two Johns was surely the son of Nicholas, and he is sometimes referred to as Janko.⁷¹⁷ He had a brother called Francis. The other John seems to have been the son of Frank, whose portions were in the hands of his son called Bartholomew by 1520.⁷¹⁸ It was apparently this John who was *alispán* of Somogy in 1493,⁷¹⁹ and represented the same county at the diet of 1505.⁷²⁰ As regards the other Francis, he was the son of Benedict,⁷²¹ and must have lived into a fairly old age. Two other members of the family equally turn up in the sources before Mohács: one of them is Lawrence, son of John,⁷²² presumably the nephew of Francis, son of Nicholas, and Peter, the son of Emeric was also alive in 1520.⁷²³ After 1526 we see John, Peter and Francis, whose lands were petitioned by Louis Pekri in 1529.⁷²⁴

Among all these persons Francis, the son of Nicholas is the only one about whose activities we have some information. In 1523 his kinsmen had to protest because Francis wanted to donate his portions in the family property to the Dominicans of Verőce. His act of generosity must have been linked to his liberation from Ottoman captivity, which had cost him some of his lands in the county of Pozsega as well.⁷²⁵ He married the daughter of Sophie, daughter of Francis Megyericsei, whose father was in all probability a member of the Kamarcai family. For in 1527 Francis and his wife,

⁷¹⁶ Ibid. 112.: „*Fanchy famulo domini Jose*”

⁷¹⁷ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 62. The Briccius Ispan who is referred to as his sororius here is evidently identical to the Briccius of Remeteudvar who was the husband of the daughter of Nicholas, called Elizabeth: Levéltári Közlemények 3 (1925) 119.

⁷¹⁸ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 132.

⁷¹⁹ Tibor Neumann, „Bátori István politikai szerepe II. Ulászló uralkodása alatt” [The Political Role of Stephen Bátori during the Reign of Wladislaw II], in Szabolcs-Szatmár-Beregi Szemle XLII (2009) 1. 116. n. 226.

⁷²⁰ DL 22559.

⁷²¹ DF 277175/86-87.

⁷²² Ibidem

⁷²³ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 132.

⁷²⁴ Laszovski, Monumenta Habsburgica I. 229-230.

⁷²⁵ DF 277175/86-87.; DF 277175/226-227.

called Catherine, had portions in all the lands which are otherwise attested in the possession of the various branches of the Kamarcai family.⁷²⁶

2.2.13. Gereci (de Gerech/Gerecz)

There were two villages called Gerec in the medieval county of Körös.⁷²⁷ This Gereci family, whose estate lay somewhere along the border of the county of Körös with that of Verőce, descended from Mojs (Majos), who was palatine under king Andrew II.⁷²⁸ One of his sons, equally called Mojs, belonged to the narrow political elite of the kingdom from 1251 until his death in 1280. He was even appointed as ban of Slavonia in 1272, and he possessed for some time the estate of Izdenc.⁷²⁹ He died without offspring, however, and the descendants of his brother, Alexander, later only possessed the estate of Gerec in the county of Körös, as well as some villages in that of Tolna, and the village of Kaposfő in Somogy, where a Premonstratensian priory had been founded in the middle of the 13th century.⁷³⁰

The son and grandsons of Alexander seem to have inherited nothing of the authority of their forbears. In 1323 Alexander, son of Mojs was fighting in Croatia in the service of ban Nicholas Gutkeled, whereas his brother Michael was then serving judge royal Lampert.⁷³¹ The son of Alexander, also called Mojs, was deputy of Akacius Mikcsfi as *ispán* of Verőce in the 1370s.⁷³² In the next generation Nicholas Gereci⁷³³ accompanied king Sigismund for his Bohemian campaign, and in return for his services there he was confirmed together with his kinsmen in his paternal possessions.⁷³⁴ A year later, however, parts of their possessions in the counties of Tolna and Somogy were given to Nicholas Bocskai and his wife, after they had been sentenced to capital punishment at the banal court.⁷³⁵ Other portions were pledged to the same Nicholas, presumably also in connection with the banal judgement.⁷³⁶ Their influence in the county of Somogy seems to have shrunk together with the size of their estates there, whereas in Slavonia they continued to

⁷²⁶ Ibidem 322-323.

⁷²⁷ For the references see below under the Kristallóci (2) family.

⁷²⁸ Engel, *Középkori magyar genealógia*, Majos rokonsága 1.

⁷²⁹ Ibidem with the note on Majos, which briefly summarises his career.

⁷³⁰ Romhányi, *Kolostorok* 35. The Benedictine monastery of Bakva, in the county of Verőce, was also founded by the kindred; for the „rich man called Salomon” who established it (see Romhányi, *Kolostorok*, 10.) cannot be other but the grandson of Nicholas, brother of palatine Mojs, from whom the Majos of Dáró family descended. The possessions are listed in *Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár VIII.* 507.

⁷³¹ *Zichy család okmánytára*, I. 238-239.

⁷³² Engel, *Archontológia I.* 230.

⁷³³ In the charter of donation this Nicholas is referred to as the son of Nicholas, son of Mojs, and his only brother is called Sigismund. Yet in all contemporary documents the sons of Nicholas, son of Mojs are called *Michael* and Sigismund, so the isolated reference of the royal charter should be attributed to a misunderstanding on the part of the chancellery. The genealogical tree prepared by Pál Engel on the basis of the royal donation should be modified accordingly.

⁷³⁴ *Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár VIII.* 507.

⁷³⁵ *Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár IX.* 696. The lands in Körös had been estimated for the same purpose four years before: *Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár VI.* 1465.

⁷³⁶ *Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár IX.* 299.

count among the local elite. In 1439 four members of the family, both Nicholas, John and Mojs (Majos) were listed among the leading Slavonian nobility. In 1448 this same Mojs left with governor John Hunyadi for the expedition which was to end with disaster on the fateful plain of Kosovo, and in return for the weapons which he borrowed from a local nobleman, he was forced to pledge parcels of the family lands in Körös.⁷³⁷

None of the three brothers of Mojs seems to have played any role worthy of mention in the region.⁷³⁸ A certain Martin Gereci, who received as a court *familiaris* the possession called Csicsal in the county of Somogy from king Matthias in 1469, most probably belonged to the same family, although he cannot be attached to any of its branches.⁷³⁹ Yet the most outstanding member of the family was Anthony, son of Sandrin, from the other branch of the family. He entered the royal court as a simple notary, and after several decades of service there he rose to become prothonotary first of the judge royal, then of the palatine.⁷⁴⁰ It seems to have been this Anthony who as early as 1465 provided for a confirmation of the family's tax-exemption in Slavonia,⁷⁴¹ whereas in 1492 he was confirmed together with his kinsmen in the possession of the monastery of Szentbenedek.⁷⁴² Parallel to his service in the court of the judge royal he also seems to have participated in the working of the banal court.⁷⁴³ Although mostly residing in the court of Buda, he sometimes travelled back to his Slavonian possessions, where he issued charters both in his own name and in the name of his lords.⁷⁴⁴ He was prestigious enough to act as an arbitrator between Nicholas Bánfi, *magister tavarnicorum*, and the Bátori family in 1496.⁷⁴⁵ In the same year he headed another jury between the same Nicholas and duke Lawrence Újlaki, and his kinsman, Peter, was one of the arbitrators elected by the duke.⁷⁴⁶ He was still alive in 1507, when he received together with his six sons and his other kinsmen the family's remaining possessions in the county of Somogy by right of new donation.⁷⁴⁷ It is not surprising that his brother, Mark, was twice listed among the representatives of the Slavonian nobility, and is once attested as a *familiaris* of the Ernuszt family, and so is Anthony,

⁷³⁷ Balassa család oklevéltára 324.

⁷³⁸ George Gereci was designated as a royal man in 1465: Levéltári Közlemények 12 (1934) 139.

⁷³⁹ DL 49340. The charter has survived in the archives of the Mérey family, which was connected by marriage to the Gereci of Körös/Somogy. See DL 49357.

⁷⁴⁰ On his career see György Bónis, *A jogtudó értelmiség a Mohács előtti Magyarországon [The Juristic Elite in Hungary before 1526]* (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1971), 367-368, although he falsely attaches the family to the village called Gerec in the county of Somogy.

⁷⁴¹ Stipišić – Šamšalović, *Isprave* 2555. I was unable to find this charter, for with the dating given in the abstract there is no such document in the archives.

⁷⁴² DL 46201. The charter was issued upon the relation of a Slavonian-based magnate, Nicholas Bánfi, master of the doorkeepers.

⁷⁴³ In February 1493 he appears as „*de sede nostra banali ad id specialiter transmissus homo banalis*”: DL 68716.

⁷⁴⁴ February 1496 (DF 257027): letter from Gerec to bishop Oswald of Zagreb; July 1498 (DL 94292): charter issued at Gerec in the name of Peter Geréb, judge royal.

⁷⁴⁵ DL 107480.

⁷⁴⁶ DL 33432.

⁷⁴⁷ DL 46792. The *relator* of the charter was Moises Buzlai, *magister curie*.

son of Sigismund from the other branch.⁷⁴⁸ The daughter of master Anthony was married to Christopher Šubić of Pernya, a nobleman from the county of Zagreb, who also started his career as a notary in the chancery.⁷⁴⁹ Peter Gereci, son of John or of Gregory, was in all probability *alispán* of Zagreb in 1481,⁷⁵⁰ and it must have been the same Peter who was listed among the Slavonian nobility at Buda in 1492, although a mere third from the end of the list.⁷⁵¹

Among the six sons of master Anthony,⁷⁵² born from his wife called Magdalena,⁷⁵³ Andrew is the only one about whom we have some information: he served John Bánfi of Lendva (Lendava, SLO), who in 1520 apparently appointed him as his castellan of Alsólendva in the county of Zala.⁷⁵⁴ He also served in the chancellery for some time,⁷⁵⁵ and so did his cousin, Emeric, the son of Mark, who became a notary in the chancery;⁷⁵⁶ none of the two seems to have proved able to make a career similar to that of Anthony in the court, however. In 1519 Emeric emerges together with his brother, Urban, as a designated royal man in the county of Körös.⁷⁵⁷ His distant kinsman, Peter, son of Gregory, was at the same time a *familiaris* of the Bátori family in Slavonia, perhaps their *provisor* of the castellany of Zdenc.⁷⁵⁸ The relationship which linked him to the magnate Bátori must have been quite strong, for his son, Sigismund, was educated by George Bátori himself.⁷⁵⁹ In 1499 this Peter and his brother, Nicholas, had received from Wladislaw II by right of new donation the family possessions in Tolna.⁷⁶⁰ In 1518 all members of the family then alive were convicted of infidelity because they bullied one of their kin in the cemetery of their parish church. Their possessions escheated to the Crown, and were consequently donated by the king to John Raveni for his services.⁷⁶¹ It should be noted, however, that this John was the husband of Dorothy, daughter of Peter Gereci, and so the judgement is very unlikely to have been carried out.⁷⁶² Her brother,

⁷⁴⁸ DF 262134 (Mark); DF 262151 (Anthony).

⁷⁴⁹ DF 257027.

⁷⁵⁰ He in fact turns up as comes in the charter of proscription issued in February 1481 (Thallóczy-Barabás, Blagay oklevéltár 388). Since, however, both before and after this day it is Peter Bocskai who is attested as *ispán* of Zagreb, Gereci seems to have been a mere *alispán*.

⁷⁵¹ Uncertainty lays in the fact that Gregory, son of Sigismund also had a son called Peter: DL 46201.

⁷⁵² DL 46792.

⁷⁵³ DF 277175/165.

⁷⁵⁴ DL 36389: „*Misimus illuc hunc egregium Andream de Gerecz familiarem nostrum presencium ostensorem pro occupando castro nostro Alsolyndwa*”. Among the other sons of master Anthony, Gaspar and Sandrin turn up in 1519 with regard to Kaposfő in Somogy (DL 67890), whereas Bernard emerges in 1520, when he contradicts the statution of a land in Tolna (DL 30283).

⁷⁵⁵ Bónis, Jogtudó értelmiség 406.

⁷⁵⁶ *Ibidem* 404.

⁷⁵⁷ DF 274994.

⁷⁵⁸ See his letter from Zdenc to Balthasar Batthyány in 1514 (DL 104316): he had the right to command the people of Mártonpataka, which, together with Zdenc itself, was at that time in the possession of the Bátori family. Nevertheless, he signed the charter without any title.

⁷⁵⁹ DL 25628: „*eundem nos educavimus*”

⁷⁶⁰ DL 46476.

⁷⁶¹ DF 232489. Interestingly, Sylvester Gereci, the one who suffered „lethal wounds” at the hands of his brothers, was apparently still alive in 1526, when his brother, Andrew engaged himself to respect a deal with Francis Batthyány, ban of Slavonia, once agreed to by Sylvester. DL 101601.

⁷⁶² DF 277175/276.

Sigismund, married a daughter of Stephen Prasovci, administrator of the estates of the bishopric of Zagreb.⁷⁶³

2.2.14. The descendants of Belus (Beloš)

14/a. Gorbonoki (de Gorbonok, Kloštar Podravski)

The family descended from the famous Serbian Belus, ban and palatine, who played such an important role in the political life of Hungary in the middle of the 12th century.⁷⁶⁴ We do not know how he acquired his possessions in Slavonia, but in view of his origins royal donation is the only possible solution. Nor do we know what the original extension of his Slavonian lands was. By the time we can grasp the Gorbonoki lands in the sources they are already limited to Gorbonok itself and its appurtenances, but it is certain that originally they were more extensive, especially if we add the possessions later owned by the Kerhen and Budor families to be treated below. Besides the title of *comes*, the fact that one of the wives of the Belus, who lived around the middle of the 13th century, was the daughter of ban Apay from the Gutkeled kindred indicates the family's high social status.⁷⁶⁵

The descendants of Belus soon split up into three different branches, only one of which came to play a role of importance in the county of Körös.⁷⁶⁶ Beke, the son of Stephen was probably count of Körös during the banate of Stephen Babonić.⁷⁶⁷ His son, Stephen was *ispán* of Veróce in the service of duke Stephen and later tax collector of his widow.⁷⁶⁸ Stephen, son of Beke who was *alispán* of Veszprém in 1358 may also be identified with him, although we do not know how he came into contact with the Kölcsei brothers who were then counts of Veszprém.⁷⁶⁹

⁷⁶³ Ibidem.

⁷⁶⁴ Mór Wertner, *A magyar nemzetségek a XIV. század közepéig* I. (Temesvár, 1891) 101-102. Although there is almost a century between ban Belus and the István, *son of ban Belus*, who is surely the ancestor of the Gorbonoki family, the name Belus is so characteristic that there is no room for doubt. Moreover, the possession called Lapathk, which was ordered by the king to be restored to István, son of Belus and his brothers in 1280, was still in the possession of the Gorbonoki in the 15th century as Lopathkowo (DF 231687). It is interesting that neither Mór Wertner, who collected all the relevant information, nor Pál Engel, who prepared the family tree of the Gorbonoki, had the idea of connecting to each other the persons called Belus.

⁷⁶⁵ Borsa, „Belosovci Kerhen család” 6.

⁷⁶⁶ All members of the Gorbonoki family who played some role in the 14th to the early 16th century descended from Stephen, son of Beke, and their descent can be reconstructed fairly well. Yet we find throughout the period persons who evidently belonged to the Gorbonoki family, but enjoyed much less prestige and by no means belonged to the noble elite. These persons are listed, mainly upon the basis of the Balassa archives, in Borsa, „Belosovci Kerhen család”. Among them, the Garab of Gorbonok family surely descended from Garab, son of Nicholas, who is attested in 1372 (Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus XIV. 416-417).

⁷⁶⁷ Engel, Archontológia I. 252.

⁷⁶⁸ Ibidem I. 230.; „*collector marturinarum domine nostre ducisse*”: Smiciklas, Codex diplomaticus XII. No. 198.

⁷⁶⁹ Engel, Archontológia I. 232. It should be remarked that the ancestors of the neighbouring family of the Budor of Budrovc also called themselves of Gorbonok, and later remembered to have originally come from the county of Veszprém. See Pálffy, Budróci Budor család 929. See the chapter on the Budor family below.

The son of Stephen, Ladislas joined Stephen Lackfi of Csáktornya, and was named among his leading supporters in the charter of palatine Nicholas Garai in 1385.⁷⁷⁰ During the short reign of Charles II he was member of his court,⁷⁷¹ then returned to Lackfi and became his *ispán* of Varasd.⁷⁷² Yet the fall of Lackfi did not prove disastrous to him, for his son was among the nobles of Körös county who guaranteed that Stephen Fáncs, sentenced to capital punishment for having supported Lackfi, would remain faithful to king Sigismund thereafter.⁷⁷³ This second Ladislas was not so lucky, however; he was involved in the revolt against Sigismund and his possessions were accordingly confiscated and donated to George Dombai of the Győr kindred. Although later he managed to acquire a letter of pardon from the king, at the congregation of 1408 it was declared void with reference to the fact that Ladislas had ignored the royal decree of amnesty in 1403.⁷⁷⁴ Thus the Dombai family obtained portions of the Gorbonoki estates which they held until their extinction early in the 16th century.

Despite the infidelity of Ladislas his brothers, Michael and John later regained the royal favour.⁷⁷⁵ In return for their otherwise unknown services in July 1430 their orphans, Nicholas and Briccius were confirmed in their family properties in the county of Körös.⁷⁷⁶ The son of Michael, Nicholas was *ispán* of Zagreb in the service of ban Matko Tallóci in 1444. This is the only known instance of their „public career” in the 15th century, which is definitely not in keeping with their past services and their landed wealth. The son of John, Briccius was already of age in 1437,⁷⁷⁷ and died before 1466.⁷⁷⁸ The decrees issued by ban Matko Tallóci and the Slavonian nobility in 1439 were signed by Briccius Gorbonoki,⁷⁷⁹ which may indicate that he was a member of the banal chancellery, although there is no trace of him there later. His son, Nicholas seems to have died relatively young

⁷⁷⁰ Szilárd Süttő, *Anjou-Magyarország alkonya. Magyarország politikai története Nagy Lajostól Zsigmondig, az 1384-1387. évi belviszályok okmánytárával I-II. [The Waning of Angevin Hungary. The Political History of Hungary from Louis the Great to Sigismund, with the Charters relating to the Internal Strife in 1384-1387]* (Szeged: Belvedere Meridionale, 2003) I. 88.

⁷⁷¹ Elemér Varjú and Béla Iványi eds., *Oklevéltár Tomaj nemzetségbeli losonczy Bánffy család történetéhez I-II* (Budapest, 1908-1928) I. 378.

⁷⁷² Engel, *Archontológia* I. 224.

⁷⁷³ *Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár* I. 5355

⁷⁷⁴ DF 288468.

⁷⁷⁵ That the Gorbonoki faced serious difficulties after 1408 is proved by a curious draft preserved in the Balassa archives (Borsa, Balassa család oklevéltára 256), the interpretation of which seems an extremely complicated task.

⁷⁷⁶ DF 231687. Since both sons were still minors, they evidently had someone to intervene for them, but, in the lack of the original charter, we do not know who he was. Michael died before 11 December 1416 (*Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár* V. 2504), presumably in the Bosnian campaign.

⁷⁷⁷ „*jam tunc legitime etatis*”: DF 231687.

⁷⁷⁸ DL 102161: „*Nicolaus filius quondam Bricii de Gorbonok*”.

⁷⁷⁹ Falsely read as Brunus by Kukuljević, *Jura regni* II. 20. The original: DF 268079.

before 1478, for he left two underage sons, Stephen and Thomas.⁷⁸⁰ Nicholas is referred to as an arbitrator in 1469.⁷⁸¹

The great comeback was the work of Stephen, son of Nicholas. His mother was Helen, daughter of George Sulyok of Lekcse, viceban of Macsó.⁷⁸² The beginnings of his career are impossible to reconstruct, but we have reasons to suppose that it was not a smooth start. By 1481 both his parents were dead, for then, still underage, he was represented by his grandmother before the chapter of Csázma.⁷⁸³ The problems sprang from the joint lordship with the Dombai family at Gorbonok. As we have seen above, one of the sons of Nicholas Dombai, Francis, had married the daughter of Peter Gudovci, viceprothonotary of Slavonia, and pledged his portion together with the *castellum* of Gorbonok to his father-in-law for 820 florins. Stephen Gorbonoki turned to the ban of Slavonia, Ladislás Egervári, whose family had possessed some land in the neighbourhood since the middle of the 14th century.⁷⁸⁴ After the death of king Matthias Egervári captivated Peter Gudovci and forced him to hand over the *castellum* and its appurtenances, „officially” in exchange for the same sum, but practically without paying anything.⁷⁸⁵ But Egervári had his own axe to grind, and, having restored Gorbonok to Stephen, in 1494 he contracted with the latter a treaty of mutual inheritance.⁷⁸⁶ It must have been connected to this affair that the two *castella* at Gorbonok and Racsicaszentistván were taken and burnt by David Dombai sometime before 1495, for the charters kept there were said to have been taken to Egervári’s castle of Velike.⁷⁸⁷ In March 1492 Stephen Gorbonoki was certainly a member of the ban’s entourage, although for some reason we do not find him among those Slavonian noblemen who sealed the document acknowledging the Habsburg inheritance on this occasion.⁷⁸⁸

Stephen Gorbonoki married the widow of John Both of Bajna, Apollonia Csapi.⁷⁸⁹ With his marriage he acquired considerable estates outside Slavonia, and another fortification, that of

⁷⁸⁰ DF 231687. I do not know whose son Emeric Gorbonoki was who was mentioned sometime in the 1470s together with Nicholas. DF 255817. His father was probably the Nicholas, son of Egidius parvus of Gorbonok, who appears in 1404. DL 8901.

⁷⁸¹ DL 16793.

⁷⁸² The father-in-law of Nicholas Gorbonoki is George Sulyok: DF 255817. She is called Helen, who married after the death of her first husband Ladislás Ervencei: DL 103879.

⁷⁸³ DL 100959.

⁷⁸⁴ DL 4376.

⁷⁸⁵ See the chapter on the Gudovci family.

⁷⁸⁶ Miklós Komjáthy, „A somogyi konvent II. Ulászló-kori oklevelei az országos levéltárban. 11. közlemény” [The Charters of the Convent of Somogy from the Reign of Wladislaw II in the Hungarian National Archives. Eleventh part], in József Kanyar ed., Somogy Megye Múltjából (Levéltári évkönyv) 14 (Kaposvár, 1983) 70. The huge estate of Velike was of course excepted from the contract; Egervári pledged his other possessions in the county of Körös and some of the appurtenances of the castle of Szenticsnyak.

⁷⁸⁷ DL 33899.

⁷⁸⁸ DL 38645. This document is a payroll of those Slavonian and Croatian noblemen who belonged to the entourage of ban Egervári at Buda in February-March 1492.

⁷⁸⁹ DL 75733. He married the widow of John Both of Bajna.

(Bagolya)Szentgyörgy.⁷⁹⁰ In 1495 and 1507 he is also attested as having a considerable part of the Szencsei lands, namely at Szencseszentmihály, although it is not known by what right.⁷⁹¹ In 1503 he became member of the court (*aulicus*), and a year later ban of Jajce.⁷⁹² His career in the court may have been initiated by John Bornemissza, treasurer from 1500 and castellan of Buda after 1506. Bornemissza was the third wife of Helen Csapi, sister of Apollonia. Stephen Gorbonoki and Bornemissza were jointly given the estates of David Dombai after the heirless death of the latter around 1504.⁷⁹³ Moreover, a third daughter, Elizabeth Csapi, was the wife of Albert Lónyai, captain of Zengg in the first years of the 16th century. The political importance of Stephen Gorbonoki is shown by the fact that when early in 1509 his estates were devastated by George Bátori, the palatine, Emeric Perényi himself mediated in the affair.⁷⁹⁴

Yet in the meantime the portions of David Dombai had passed into the hands of Bartholomew Beriszló, prior of Vrana.⁷⁹⁵ It was for this reason that Stephen Gorbonoki and John Bornemissza contracted a treaty with Balthasar Battyányi in order to regain the prior's portions, but the effort seems to have remained futile.⁷⁹⁶ At the time of the heirless death of Stephen sometime before 1512 parts of Gorbonok were still in the hands of Beriszló, and in that year all the [escheated] possessions of Stephen Gorbonoki and David Dombai were donated to John Tahi, the prior's nephew by his sister.⁷⁹⁷

14/b. Kerhen of Belosovc

The Kerhen family had a common origin with the Gorbonoki; they were separated perhaps as early as the late 13th century.⁷⁹⁸ The possession of Belosovc itself, after which they were named, evidently preserves the memory of Belos/Belus, although we do not know of which among the persons bearing this name. Yet, judging from their "family" name, they seem to have also founded the possession of Kerhevina in the region of Fejérkő, to which the Gorbonoki never had any right. Moreover, the Kerhen also split into two branches, only one of which played an important role in the history of Slavonia. The exact relationship between them is not known, however.

There existed throughout the 15th and early 16th centuries a family whose members were constantly called Kerhen/Kerhenfy/Kerhnewych and always bore the name of the possession of

⁷⁹⁰ DF 279486, DL 75732.

⁷⁹¹ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 10, 30.

⁷⁹² Thallóczy – Horváth, Jajcza 174; Ibidem CCLXXIII.

⁷⁹³ DL 101385.

⁷⁹⁴ DL 25503 (palatine Perényi to George Kanizsai): „*dominus Georgius de Bathor sua bona depopulari fecit et pro concordia disponenda ad nos vocare possumus*”

⁷⁹⁵ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 34.

⁷⁹⁶ DL 101385.

⁷⁹⁷ DF 268266.

⁷⁹⁸ Borsa, Belosovci Kerhen család.

Kerhevina.⁷⁹⁹ They were frequently designated as royal men, and in 1491 Anthony and Ladislas Kerhnyewych were even castellans of Glogonca in the service of Bartholomew, prior of Vrana.⁸⁰⁰ Yet they were never titled *egregius* and do not even seem to have had portions elsewhere. Their settlement around Fejérkő may have somehow been connected to the events referred to in a strange document drafted after 1415, mentioned above,⁸⁰¹ although it is far from sure. The distance between them and the other branch of the Kerhen family must have been considerable, anyway.⁸⁰² We do not know what the origins of the sobriquet Kerhen, first applied in 1436 to the ancestor of the family who seems to have lived in the last third of the 14th century, and subsequently turned into a family name, were.⁸⁰³

In any case, the latter did not play any role worthy of mention in the Angevin era either. Before 1429 Stephen, son of Nicholas and his kinsmen went on a pilgrimage to an unknown destination,⁸⁰⁴ and four years later the same Stephen was member of king Sigismund's entourage in Italy.⁸⁰⁵ How he joined the court is not known, however, and none of his relatives followed in his footsteps. It may have been due to the support of his more influential kinsmen from the Gorbonoki branch, although there is no source to underpin this hypothesis. What seems certain is that the consequent career of his nephew, Michael Kerhen, was in all probability the outcome of his talents and was by no means predicted by the previous history of the family.

He is first mentioned in 1461 together with his brothers, Valentine and Peter, sons of George.⁸⁰⁶ He started his career as a *familiaris* of Nicholas Dombai, castellan of Atyina, himself in the joint service of Ladislas Garai and Nicholas Újlaki.⁸⁰⁷ Nicholas Dombai was the son of George who had acquired portions in the Gorbonoki estates in the first years of the 15th century. Yet Michael did not follow Dombai to his new posts assigned to him by his „perpetual” lord, Nicholas Újlaki, but joined another local lord, George Forster, castellan of Szentgyörgy.⁸⁰⁸ His first two lords as well as the persons in the company of whom he served them make it clear that in these years Michael still belonged to the second rank of the local nobility, the horizon of which rarely rose above the neighbouring castle.

⁷⁹⁹ 1469 (DF 255808): Mathias et Benedictus de Kerhnyewyna; 1475 (DF 276827): Nicolaus Kerhen de Kerhnewyna (he also figures on the list of 1474); 1483 (LK 3 [1925] 155-156.): Benedictus seu Nicolaus Kerhenfy de Kerhnewyna; 1493 (DF 231881): Benedictus et Ladislaus Kerhnewych de Krehnewyna (!); 1508 (DL 34323): Ladislao Kerhen de Kernyewyna.

⁸⁰⁰ DF 255911: „*Anthonius et Ladislaus Kerhnyewych castellani [...] venerabilis et magnifici Bartholomei prioris Aurane in castello suo Golgonczenst*”

⁸⁰¹ Borsa, Balassa család levéltára 256.

⁸⁰² Some at least among them may have descended from the Blaise *de Kerhenyoucz*, whose son, Martin is mentioned in 1412. Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár III. 2796.

⁸⁰³ Borsa, Belosovci Kerhen család 7.

⁸⁰⁴ Borsa, Balassa család oklevéltára 286.

⁸⁰⁵ Csukovits, „Nagy utazás” 33.

⁸⁰⁶ DL 33882.

⁸⁰⁷ DF 255801.

⁸⁰⁸ DL 103765.

In 1477, however, we already see him in the immediate service of a magnate family; he became castellan of Kapronca for Sigismund Ernuszt, bishop of Pécs.⁸⁰⁹ Six years later he joined the new ban of Slavonia, Blaise Magyar, who appointed him as one of his vicebans of Croatia, and thus he even left his homeland for a time.⁸¹⁰ Upon the removal of Blaise Magyar from the banate he became a *familiaris* of his successor, Matthias Geréb of Vingárt, whom he served as viceban of Slavonia for almost five years, one of the longest terms in this office ever. Interestingly enough, he remained castellan of Kapronca during his service as viceban, which means that his allegiance was not altogether transferred to the ban.⁸¹¹ Late in 1486 he was one of the representatives of the Slavonian nobility at Buda,⁸¹² and in July 1488 acted again as one of the envoys sent by the nobility of the counties of Körös and Zagreb to King Matthias, then in Vienna.⁸¹³ As a proof of his ascending influence, in April 1490 he was one of the delegated judges in the case between Oswald, bishop of Zagreb and Stephen Csupor at Buda.⁸¹⁴ Two years later, in March 1492 he was 8th among the envoys of Croatia and Slavonia at the assembly of Buda, 5th if the Slavonians are counted alone.⁸¹⁵ In 1493 he briefly returned to the office of viceban in the service of ban Ladislas Egervári. A year later, however, he was already in the service of bishop Oswald as his castellan at Garics.⁸¹⁶ Strangely enough, later he seems again to have returned to the Dombai family, this time to David, the son of Nicholas.⁸¹⁷ The situation was apparently the same as twenty five years before, for the lord whom David himself served was duke Lawrence Újlaki. Yet now Michael was by no means a common *familiaris*, for he was designated together with Balthasar Battyányi as executor of David's last will, and even received from him a great sword together with a shield.⁸¹⁸ It was probably after the death of Dombai that Michael joined duke Lawrence and became his castellan of Racsá for several years.⁸¹⁹ In 1513 he was already dead.⁸²⁰

Michael married the widow of John Vitéz of Kamarca, whose family is unknown to us, and acquired with her hands portions in the Kamarcai lands.⁸²¹ He also put his hands upon some of the Tulbert lands in Körös and Verőce,⁸²² presumably by the marriage of his son. Nicholas Kerhen married the daughter of another *egregius*, Nicholas Tulbertfi, and with the hands of Ursula Tulbert he not only acquired the castle of Berstyanovc, but also a third of all the possessions of his father-

⁸⁰⁹ DF 262134.

⁸¹⁰ DL 33897.

⁸¹¹ DF 262151.

⁸¹² DF 268110.

⁸¹³ DF 268111.

⁸¹⁴ DL 102244.

⁸¹⁵ He is also on the list of noble followers paid by ban Ladislas Egervári: DL 38645.

⁸¹⁶ DL 101196.

⁸¹⁷ Thallóczy – Horváth, Jajcza 193.

⁸¹⁸ Borsa, Balassa család oklevéltára 471.

⁸¹⁹ DL 101393 (1504); DL 101438 (1511).

⁸²⁰ DL 33908.

⁸²¹ DL 86434. His portion at Kernyn is mentioned in 1512: DF 274915.

⁸²² DL 101437 (Körös); DF 252251 (Verőce).

in-law. The rest of them passed upon the husbands of Sophie and Catherine Tulbert, Nicholas Kasztellánfi and Francis Petó of Gerse respectively.⁸²³ Together first with his father, and then with his uncle, Peter Kerhen, he also tried to put his hands on the Gorbonoki heritage after the death of Stephen Gorbonoki, but to no avail.⁸²⁴ Although Nicholas is not known to have held any office either in Slavonia or outside, he evidently inherited the social position of his father: he was constantly titled *egregius*, and such a lord as Benedict Batthyány, castellan of Buda called him his friend.⁸²⁵ He also remained in contact with the court, as two royal letters of protection issued in his favour in 1518 show.⁸²⁶ He died before 1520, certainly leaving several children,⁸²⁷ among whom a son, Gaspar, and two daughters can be identified.⁸²⁸

As we have seen, Michael Kerhen had two brothers, Peter and Valentine. Valentine Kerhen, had served ban Ladislav Egervári at the time when the latter had possessed the castle of Kemlék.⁸²⁹ As for Peter, we have no information about his activities (he is once listed among the representatives of the Slavonian nobility in 1478), which is in sharp contrast with what is known about Michael. Peter had at least a son called John, who then fathered a son, Francis, and a daughter, Christine.⁸³⁰ Yet in the years before Mohács we also see a Christopher Kerhen who, unlike John, is titled *egregius*, so it would only be reasonable to regard him as the son of Nicholas, grandson of Michael; the thing is far from evident, however.⁸³¹ What we do know for sure is that the widow of Nicholas Kerhen, Ursula Tulbert, married after the death of her husband John Tardafalvi, an otherwise unknown nobleman from the neighbouring county of Valkó, yet titled as *egregius*.⁸³²

14/aaa. Budor of Budrovc (Budor od Budrovca, Budor de Budrowch)

The Budor family is unique among our sample of families in that their post-1526 history has been thoroughly explored,⁸³³ and its medieval past also briefly summarised.⁸³⁴ The Budor lands, although much less extensive, lay among those of the Gorbonoki and the Kerhen, in the north-eastern part of the county of Körös. The family seems to have maintained the memory of its descent from the

⁸²³ DF 254528. See below the chapter on the Tulbert family.

⁸²⁴ DL 33905; Borsa, Belosovci Kerhen család 510.

⁸²⁵ Borsa, Balassa család oklevéltára 516.

⁸²⁶ DL 33910, 33911, both in oppido Kewy.

⁸²⁷ „*Prolium [...] sew orphanorum prefati quondam Nicolai Kerhen*”: DL 66039 (abstract: Borsa, Balassa család oklevéltára 533.)

⁸²⁸ DL 104538.

⁸²⁹ DF 233293: „*ipse in servicio magnifici Ladislai de Egerwara bani constitutus fuisset in castro dum scilicet idem castrum Kemlek apud manus ipsius bani fuisset et ipse Valentinus Kerhen castro in eodem de voluntate ipsius bani per certa tempora permansisset*”

⁸³⁰ Borsa, Balassa család oklevéltára 533; DF 277175/60-61.

⁸³¹ DF 277175/252-253. He does not call Ursula Tulbert, the widow of Nicholas, his mother. He may have been born from another woman, of course.

⁸³² DF 277175/219-220.

⁸³³ Pálffy, „Budróci Budor család”.

⁸³⁴ Buturac, „Feudalna gospostija”.

Gorbonoki well beyond the end of the middle ages,⁸³⁵ which, however, can certainly be proved for the 14th century; in 1370 the grandson of Bodor of Gorbonok, the ancestor of the Budor, turns up together with Ladislav Gorbonoki, son of Beke of the *same* Gorbonok.⁸³⁶ It should be added, moreover, that the name Budor (Bodor), evidently the root of Budrovc, together with Garab (Grab), which turns up in the Gorbonoki family, none of them very common, was used among the Tibold kindred in the 13th century. This certainly hints at an early marriage alliance between the descendants of ban Belus and the Tibold, which, unfortunately, leads us back to the undocumented past of the region. Yet there is one, albeit very late, but unquestionable reference to the fact that the Gorbonoki, the Kerhen and the Budor (and the Progovci, for that matter) indeed descended from a common ancestor: in 1509 Andrew Budor, when protesting before the chapter of Csázma in the name of his nephews, of Michael and Peter Kerhen, and of Blaise Progovci, called the late Stephen Gorbonoki the generational and condivisional kinsman of all of them, and thus laid claim to his inheritance.⁸³⁷

The early history of the Budor family is as obscure as that of the Kerhen. Until the late 15th century only bits and pieces of various land transactions have come down to us, which make an even fragmentary reconstruction impossible.⁸³⁸ The first person to call our attention is Blaise, son of Adam, who was born sometime before 1448. Like his very distant kinsman, Michael Kerhen, he also turns up first in the service of Nicholas Dombai, castellan of Atyina.⁸³⁹ This connection was surely not accidental, moreover, for six years later we again see him together with Michael Kerhen among the *familiares* of George Forster.⁸⁴⁰ It is thus no surprise that in 1482 ban Blaise Magyar took them both as his deputies to Croatia.⁸⁴¹ Although the office of Croatian viceban is the last known phase of his career, his growing local prestige manifested itself in the fact that he was twice (1478, 1490) listed among the representatives of the Slavonian nobility, and also in that he constructed a *castellum* at his portion of Budrovc.⁸⁴² Alongside Budrovc, he also had parts of Temerje and Popovc, and also some tenant sessions at Kristallóc, which may indicate that he already served Balthasar Batthyány as did his nephew later.

The authority of Blaise was apparently inherited by his nephew, Andrew, who was certainly literate. At first a *familiaris* of Balthasar Batthyány, ban of Jajce, in the early years of the 16th century he was already in the service of bishop Luke of Zagreb, referred to as *egregius magister* by the chapter

⁸³⁵ Pálffy, Budróci Budor család 973.

⁸³⁶ Smiciklas, Codex diplomaticus XIV. 227: „Georgius filius Stephani filii Bodor de Gorbonuk, Ladislaus filius Stephani filii Beke de eadem”

⁸³⁷ DF 232277: „fratris ipsorum protestancium generacionalis et condivisionalis”

⁸³⁸ Pálffy, „Budróci Budor család” 929.

⁸³⁹ DF 255801.

⁸⁴⁰ DL 103765.

⁸⁴¹ DL 33897.

⁸⁴² DF 231928 (1495): „in sortem alterius sessionis super quam dictus quondam Blasius Budor quoddam castellum edificasset”

of Zagreb, a sure sign of esteem. Later on he went over to the widow of George Kanizsai, whereas in the 1510s he frequently turns up as royal man, once even as a special delegate from the banal seat.⁸⁴³ Later still, he represented archbishop Thomas Bakóc (who governed the bishopric of Zagreb),⁸⁴⁴ and, before 1524, he also served duke Lawrence Újlaki for some time.⁸⁴⁵ We know of no further land acquisitions, with the exception of a small portion at Bliznafő (*Bliznafew*), yet the authority of Andrew seems to have been great: he was at least occasionally titled *egregius*,⁸⁴⁶ had a *castellum* of his own (or, what is more probable, possessed that of his uncle) at Budrovc,⁸⁴⁷ and in a case of family dispute one of his arbitrators was viceban Balthasar Batthyány himself.⁸⁴⁸ Shortly before Mohács his son, Sixtus, received a royal grant at Buda, whereas Andrew himself wanted to acquire the Egervári lands in the neighbourhood of the family possessions. This may probably have been the promising debut of a further rise, yet the life of the family continued among radically transformed circumstances after 1526.

2.2.15. Grebeni/Batthyány (Grebenski, de Greben/Gereben)

The first known members of the family, a person called Gárdony (Gordon) and Mark of the Gárdony kindred (*de genere Gordon*) occur among the „sufficiently noble” (*satis nobiles*) witnesses enumerated in the renowned charter of the *Zala servientes* from 1232.⁸⁴⁹ Gárdony is enlisted immediately after ban Buzád from the Hahót kindred and his brother, Mihály. Nevertheless, the Gárdony kindred, of which this is the earliest trace, does not seem to have belonged to the most illustrious *genera* of the early medieval Hungarian realm. Attila Zsoldos maintained that they may have been royal servants,⁸⁵⁰ whereas János Karácsonyi referred, upon the basis of the names used, to their possible Slav origins.⁸⁵¹

The first known possessions of the kindred lay in the counties of Zala and Varasd, that is, outside Slavonia.⁸⁵² Gárdony had four sons: Gárdony, Ulkoszló, Béla and Kisemburd. The latter is only once mentioned in 1257, whereas Béla was one of the *fideiussores* of ispán Mihály from the Buzád kindred who appeared before king Béla IV at Vaska (Vaška) in April 1248.⁸⁵³ A lot more is known about the remaining two brothers, from whom the late medieval Grebeni family descended. In 1277

⁸⁴³ Pálffy, „Budróci Budor család” 929-932; DF 252232; DF 252232; DL 37948.

⁸⁴⁴ Pálffy, „Budróci Budor család” 932.; DL 37582.

⁸⁴⁵ DF 277175/168-169.

⁸⁴⁶ DF 252232, DF 232277, DF 256008.

⁸⁴⁷ DF 256008, DF 232710.

⁸⁴⁸ DF 219285.

⁸⁴⁹ Karácsonyi, *Magyar nemzetségek* 452.

⁸⁵⁰ Attila Zsoldos, *Az Árpádok és alattvalóik. Magyarország története 1301-ig [The Árpáds and their Subjects. A History of Hungary until 1301]* (Debrecen: Csokonai, 1997) 153.

⁸⁵¹ Karácsonyi, *Magyar nemzetségek* 452.

⁸⁵² *Ibidem*. 1226: The border of the land (terra) called Bagata in the county of Zala „*procedens iuxta vineam Gordon*” Wenzel, *Árpádok Új Okmánytár* 6. 433.

⁸⁵³ Karácsonyi, *Magyar nemzetségek* 452; 1248: Szentpéteri - Borsa 877.

they bought a piece of land at the source of the river Lónya „with a castle standing on the same land”,⁸⁵⁴ the latter is certainly to be identified with the castle of Greben, which was accordingly not erected by the Gárdony kindred.⁸⁵⁵ Gárdony II also received the estate of Hrascsina, which constituted a small *várispánság*,⁸⁵⁶ and later was integrated into the appurtenances of Greben castle. During the agitated reign of Ladislas IV the two brothers joined the Babonić kindred in their struggle against the Gutkeled and Héder kindreds for dominance over Slavonia. It seems to have been as *familiares* of ban Radoslo that Gárdony and Ulkoszló became castellans of Medvevár and Kemlék respectively. After the accession of king Andrew III their star rose further for some time; both of them ceded the castles of which they were the guardians to the new ruler without resistance, in which they merely followed the example of their lord, ban Radoslo, who at first also supported Andrew III. Moreover, Gárdony II was „among the first” to join the king at Buda, who immediately sent him back to Zagreb „in order to defend the marches of his realm”, and consequently seems to have put him back at the head of the castle of Medve as a royal castellan. Thanks to his services he was confirmed in the possession of Hrascsina, and his Slavonian lands were exempted from all taxes due to the king and the ban. At the same time the two brothers preserved their confidential status within the entourage of Radoslo, whom they represented in 1292 among other commissaries sent by the ban for the settlement of his dispute with the bishop of Zagreb. Consequently they both disappear from our sources, although Gárdony II was still castellan of Medvevár in 1302.⁸⁵⁷

Nor do we know anything about the history of the family during the first two decades of the Angevin period. It is certain, however, that the following years proved almost disastrous for the descendants of Gárdony. In 1321 one of the sons of Ulkoszló, Hektor became *ispán* of Körös, presumably in the service of ban John Babonić.⁸⁵⁸ In the same year he and his brother, Punik had their tax-exemption confirmed by king Charles I.⁸⁵⁹ In December of the next year Hektor once again occurs in the king’s court at Temesvár.⁸⁶⁰ Moreover, Punik joined Mikcs of the Ákos kindred, immediately after the latter’s appointment as ban of Slavonia in 1325, and became his *ispán* of Zagreb.⁸⁶¹ Not even this judicious shift of allegiance could save them during the revolt of Stephen Babonić, however. The following events are not clear. Almost sixty years later Peter, the son of Punik maintained that his uncle, Hektor had quarrelled with his father, and consequently gave his

⁸⁵⁴ „*terram [...] in capite fluvii Lona existentem, cum castro in eadem terra existentī*”: Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus VI. 221.

⁸⁵⁵ Pál Engel thought that the future castle of Greben was in fact built by Farkas Zagoriai; he was authorised by king Béla IV to finish his castle in 1247, and the royal permission was transcribed in 1322 upon the request of Punik and Hektor from the Gárdony kindred. Engel, Archontológia I. 322.

⁸⁵⁶ Karácsonyi, Magyar nemzetségek 453; Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus XI. 268.

⁸⁵⁷ On the early history of the family see in general Karácsonyi, Magyar nemzetségek 453-454; Szentpéteri – Borsa, no. 733.; Engel, Archontológia I. 366.

⁸⁵⁸ Engel, Archontológia I. 252.

⁸⁵⁹ Anjou-kori Oklevéltár VI. 863.

⁸⁶⁰ Karácsonyi, Magyar nemzetségek 454.

⁸⁶¹ Engel, Archontológia I. 257.

portion in Greben to ban Mikcs. Upon thus entering the castle, Mikcs occupied the half owned by Punik by force.⁸⁶² A strife between the brothers seems probable, for, as we have seen, whereas Hektor remained faithful to the Babonić kindred, Punik went over to the new „strong man” of king Charles in Slavonia, ban Mikcs. The revolt of Stephen Babonić and his sons was suppressed by Mikcs before November 1326,⁸⁶³ but it surely did not affect Punik, for he continued to act as *ispán* of Zagreb in the first half of 1327. Yet later Mikcs was rewarded by the king for taking back the castle of Greben from Punik in a battle in which the ban’s son was wounded.⁸⁶⁴

Whatever happened, the Grebeni lost their castle for some thirty years. During this period it was governed by castellans appointed by the ban,⁸⁶⁵ but we do not know where the members of the Grebeni family lived. Nor it is known how they joined the court of king Louis I in the middle of the 14th century. Their appearance there would be easier to account for if we could identify Peter with the person bearing the same name who is attested in 1350 as a court youth (*aule iuvenis*) of duke Stephen,⁸⁶⁶ but this hypothesis cannot be proved. All that we know is that in the late 1350s both brothers became court youth of king Louis I, and Peter later served his ruler as a court knight for more than twenty years.⁸⁶⁷ It seems that Lorand joined the royal court later and left it quite early, presumably in order to govern the family estates. In 1357 it was with reference to the many faithful services of Peter in several military actions, and especially in the Italian campaign at Treviso, that king Louis restored to the brothers the possession of Zamlachya (Zamlače) in the county of Varasd to be owned by the same right as their castle of Greben,⁸⁶⁸ the latter had therefore been given back to them somewhat earlier, thanks to the many efforts and fatigues of Peter, as his brother himself admitted in 1360.⁸⁶⁹ It was also Peter who obtained the *jus gladii* for his family,⁸⁷⁰ and whose services during the siege of Zara were rewarded by Louis I by confirming the tax-exemption of their estates.⁸⁷¹ The king also confirmed the charter in which Peter’s nephew, Paul Zajezdai of Varasd county designated him as his heir in case of his heirless death,⁸⁷² and in 1381 annulled all the

⁸⁶² DL 100093: „olim Ictor frater uterinus dicti Pwnyk [...] unacum eodem Pwnyk [...] diabolica suggestione ad magnam discordiam devenisset in tantum, ut etiam ipse Ictor pro huiusmodi odii fomite portionem suam in dicto castro habitam magnifico domino quondam Mykch bano regni Sclavonie contulisset”

⁸⁶³ *Magyarország történeti kronológiája I. A kezdetektől 1526-ig [The Historical Chronology of Hungary I. From the Beginning to 1526]*, ed. László Solymosi (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1981) 199.

⁸⁶⁴ Péter Tóth ed., *A Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén Megyei Levéltár Miskolcon őrzött középkori oklevelei* (Miskolc, 1990) 30/26.

⁸⁶⁵ Engel, *Archontológia* I. 322.

⁸⁶⁶ Smičiklas, *Codex diplomaticus* XI. 607.

⁸⁶⁷ The data are collected by Engel, *Archontológia* I. 481, 482.

⁸⁶⁸ Smičiklas XII. 402-403.

⁸⁶⁹ „per non modicas sui sanguinis effusiones plurimasque expensas et labores non paucos a regia maiestate reoptinuisset seu reinvenisset”: Smičiklas, *Codex diplomaticus* XIII. 28-29.

⁸⁷⁰ DL 100093.

⁸⁷¹ Smičiklas, *Codex diplomaticus* XIII. 15-16.

⁸⁷² Smičiklas, *Codex diplomaticus* XIV. 50.

charters which had been issued to the detriment of the Grebeni family with reference to the infidelity of Punik.⁸⁷³

Master Peter was apparently a man of great influence right until his death sometime after 1381; moreover, he contracted an illustrious marriage by getting the hand of Clara Siklósi from the Kán kindred, daughter of Peter, ispán of Baranya.⁸⁷⁴ It is all the more curious that his sons sank into complete obscurity; we do not know what role in this was played by the fact that their maternal kin was sentenced to loss of property in 1387.⁸⁷⁵ Whatever the case, the political influence of Peter was inherited by his nephew, Herman son of Lorand. At first we follow the history of this branch, before returning to that, much more obscure, of the descendants of Peter.

He started his career in the service of the counts of Cilli, first as their castellan of Nagykemlék, and later as *ispán* of Varasd.⁸⁷⁶ He took part in the fateful Bosnian campaign of 1415, and was rewarded by king Sigismund with an authorisation to build a fortification.⁸⁷⁷ In the 1410s he gradually acquired the portions of his nephew, Valentine, in the estate of Greben.⁸⁷⁸ Later he is attested as the tax-collector of ban Denis Marcali.⁸⁷⁹ In the spring of 1429 he was present with the king at Pressburg,⁸⁸⁰ and so did he in the autumn of 1435, after Sigismund had returned to Hungary; this time he received a tax exemption for some of his estates as a *strenuus miles*, which may show that he was a court knight and thus probably accompanied the king for some of his European journeys.⁸⁸¹ After the death of count Herman he went over to the Tallóci brothers and became *ispán* of Körös in the service of ban Matko Tallóci. He was probably removed from his office in March 1440, when his lord was deprived of all his dignities by queen Elizabeth. In the ensuing civil war he remained faithful to the Tallóci brothers, and was even appointed as „titular” *ispán* of Varasd in 1443.⁸⁸² His fidelity resulted in the loss of the family castle of Greben.

It was in 1445 that Jan Vitovec, then mercenary captain of the counts of Cilli, occupied the castle of Greben from its owners.⁸⁸³ Although after the return of peace to Slavonia governor John Hunyadi intervened at the counts of Cilli on behalf of Herman Grebeni, the castle and its estate remained in the possession of Jan Vitovec and his sons until 1489. It is probable that after the loss of his castle Herman Grebeni moved to the portions of his wife, Helen Orbonai, at Berivojszentiván. The latter

⁸⁷³ DL 100093.

⁸⁷⁴ Engel, *Középkori magyar genealógia*, Gárdonyi nem.

⁸⁷⁵ Békefi Remig, *A pásztói apátság története 1190-1702 [The History of the Abbey of Pásztó]* (Budapest, 1898) 266.

⁸⁷⁶ Engel, *Archontológia II.* 88.

⁸⁷⁷ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár VI. 800.

⁸⁷⁸ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár VI. 4, 2425, VII. 1935.

⁸⁷⁹ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár IX. 110, 516.

⁸⁸⁰ DL 100460.

⁸⁸¹ DL 100507.

⁸⁸² Pálosfalvi, „Cilleiek és Tallóciak” 54 and n. 46; 62 n. 98.

⁸⁸³ On these events and their background see *ibid.* 80-84.

was the daughter of James „the Italian”, presumably a nephew of John, archbishop of Esztergom.⁸⁸⁴ From this marriage five sons were born, three of whom died prior to 1445, however. The fourth one, called Stephen, died before 1453, and only the fifth, Ladislás, continued the family.⁸⁸⁵

In 1456 Vitovec forced him to resign his rights concerning the estate of Greben, in return for which he conceded to Ladislás that of Újudvar and the possession of Herisinc. The estate of Újudvar (*Wyudwar*), with a dozen villages and a weekly market pertaining to it, was of a considerable size, and Ladislás Hermanfi accordingly seemed for some time to have acquiesced in his new situation. Very soon, however, he embarked on an expansion which seems unparalleled not only because of the number of sources which have survived. Before 1460 he married Anne Raveni, the daughter of the late Michael, and thus became tutor and stepfather of her son, Michael Latk. In 1468 the latter mortgaged to Ladislás the whole estate of Latkovina/Mogor together with the castellum there for the case of his dying heirless. Although not without further challenges to meet, the estate was in fact finally acquired by Hermanfi.

Another notable acquisition was the neighbouring estate of Kristallóc. In 1456 it had been confiscated from its owners, Josa Török and Simon Nagy of Szentmárton, by king Ladislás V in the course of a politically heavily biased process, and donated to Jan Vitovec.⁸⁸⁶ After the death of the latter in 1468, the son of Josa Török, Ladislás, initiated a lawsuit against the late ban's sons, and reobtained Kristallóc. The expenses of the process were met by Ladislás Hermanfi, however, and in return the son of Josa conferred upon him his rights concerning the estate of Kristallóc. In 1481 George and William, counts of Zagorje, also resigned their claims to the estate, which thus became definitively the property of Hermanfi. With three *castella* at Kristallóc, Mogor (Latkovina) and Újudvar, which he rebuilt sometime before 1490, Ladislás grew again to become one of the major landowners of the county. Moreover, in 1467 he revoked all the legal declarations he had previously made regarding the estate of Greben, and thus maintained his claims to the paternal lands.

His political career was as agitated and successful as his acquisition of landed wealth. In 1464 he was one of the collectors of the one-florin tax in the county of Zagreb. A year later he and his brother-in-law, Nicholas Kasztellánfi, presented the liberties of the Slavonian nobility to the king for confirmation. In August 1466 he was member of the delegation of the Slavonian nobility which negotiated with bishop Oswald in the presence of the king at Zagreb. In 1467 he received a common donation with Nicholas Csupor, knight of the royal court, at Nagyszombat; on this occasion he was titled as deputy master of the horse, that is, he followed his lord, Mátyus Maróti, to the court for some time. On 20 March 1467 he was appointed as Slavonian viceban by ban John Tuz of Lak, the

⁸⁸⁴ Engel, *Középkori magyar genealógia*, Lipoveci (de Surdis)

⁸⁸⁵ Pálosfalvi, „Grebenei Hermanfi” I. 845. Since in this study and its second part (Pálosfalvi, „Grebenei Hermanfi” II 267-313) I have analysed in detail both the life and the political activities of Ladislás Hermanfi, and all the references can be found there, no notes are attached to this brief outline, unless relevant new information is added.

⁸⁸⁶ Pálosfalvi, „Vitovec János” 436-439.

only such document that has come down to us from the period before Mohács. In May 1468 he was one of the Slavonian delegates who were authorised by their peers to appoint the nobles who would then accompany the episcopal tax-collectors. He left from the office of viceban together with his lord in the beginning of 1470. After the suppression of the conspiracy of John Vitéz, in September 1471 he was rewarded by king Matthias as one of the „notable” nobles of Slavonia for having prompted his fellow nobles to remain faithful to the ruler.

In 1472 he reappeared as a tax-collector, this time in the county of Körös, and in the next year he was appointed for a second time as viceban by John Ernuszt. He left (or was removed) from his office during the summer of 1475 for reasons unknown to us. In 1477 he received from king Matthias a general confirmation of all land acquisitions already completed or to be made in the future. In October of the same year he was member of the Slavonian delegation which complained to the king at Korneuburg about the devastating effects of Ottoman incursions. After John Tuz had returned to the royal favour and been appointed as *tárnokmester* by Matthias, Ladislás Hermanfi joined him again as his deputy in that office. In 1481 he was one of the elected jurors at the congregation held by king Matthias for the Slavonian nobility at Zagreb. In 1485 he again was involved in the negotiations with bishop Oswald about the intricate problem of paying the tithe, and sometime at the end of the year he was appointed by the newly installed palatine, Emeric Szapolyai, as his deputy. In the autumn of 1486 he was again involved on behalf of the Slavonian nobility in the quarrel with the bishop of Zagreb, and at the general assembly held in April 1489 he alone acted as their representative. He prepared his last will in September 1490 and died soon afterwards.⁸⁸⁷

All the landed wealth accumulated by Ladislás Hermanfi devolved upon his adopted son, Balthasar Batthyány, who married his daughter, Catherine.⁸⁸⁸ She was presumably born from his first wife, Anne Raveni, and not from the second, Ursula Fánics, who is first mentioned as Ladislás's wife in the late 1470s. Balthasar Batthyány came from a wealthy noble family in the county of Fejér, and was not a newcomer either in Slavonia or in the Grebeni family.⁸⁸⁹ In the beginning of the 15th century the Batthyány had possessed for some time the estate of Szentjakab in the county of Körös,

⁸⁸⁷ For the detailed references concerning the political career of Ladislás Hermanfi see Pálosfalvi, „Grebeni Hermanfi” II *passim*. Two charters which remained unknown to me at that time are DF 262120, which proves beyond doubt that he indeed served Maróti for some time, and DF 270513, the only charter issued by Ladislás as *magister vicethavarnicorum regalium*.

⁸⁸⁸ Previously I thought, as did Pál Engel, that the first wife of Balthasar Batthyány, that is, the daughter of Ladislás Hermanfi, was called Helen. The source of the error was the fact that in the 1480s Balthasar is referred to as the son-in-law (*gener*) of Hermanfi, and when his wife turns up in 1485 she is called Helen. Helen, however, is never called the daughter of Ladislás Hermanfi either before or after the death of the latter. Since in January 1491 Helen had already borne three daughters to Balthasar, namely Balthasar junior, George and a daughter called Agnes, and we know from later sources that the mother of Balthasar the younger was Helen Dóci (see below), it is almost certain that the Helen mentioned in 1485 can be identified with her. The only daughter of Ladislás Hermanfi who emerges from the sources is called Catherine, still a *puella* in 1478; she must have been betrothed with Balthasar but presumably died already before or shortly after their marriage, if it took place at all. See, among others, DL 103841, DL 100896, DL 101123.

⁸⁸⁹ On the early history of the Batthyány family see Rác, „Egy főnemesi család eredete”

whereas the aunt of Balthasar, Margaret, had married Stephen Grebeni.⁸⁹⁰ Balthasar himself first appears as a member of the royal court in the mid-1470s, and soon emerged to become member of the tiny court elite upon which the government of king Matthias was increasingly based in the last decade of his reign. In 1479 he was tax-collector in Transylvania, two years later assumed the same function in Slavonia, then became castellan of Medvevár, whence he later went over to administer the equally important castle of Kőszeg, and also acted as *ispán* of the county of Vas for some time. It was as castellan of Kőszeg that he made an oath of fidelity to duke John Corvin, the designated heir of Matthias. In the meantime, however, he remained close to the ruler, and accomplished various missions on his behalf, especially in connection with the Austrian wars.⁸⁹¹

After the death of king Matthias James Székely, who had conquered the castles of the Vitovec brothers upon the late king's orders, restored the castle of Greben to Balthasar Batthyány. This may have played a role in Balthasar's being accused of having taken sides with Maximilian of Habsburg in 1491, Székely being one of the main partisans of the king of the Romans.⁸⁹² He was soon acquitted, however, and in 1492 he was already acting as a tax-collector in Slavonia together with Peter Bocskai.⁸⁹³ A year later he was appointed as ban of Jajce and remained in office for two years.⁸⁹⁴ This banate was no more regarded then as a baronial post, yet Balthasar was frequently titled *magnificus* both during and for some years after his office-holding.⁸⁹⁵ It was also Balthasar who definitively acquired the estate of Garignica with the *castellum* there.⁸⁹⁶

In 1498 he was sent as a royal ambassador to the court of the Polish king John Albert,⁸⁹⁷ and in the beginning of the new century he returned to office as ban of Jajce.⁸⁹⁸ In 1505 he made a contract with John Ernuszt, by the terms of which he became for the period of one year the general administrator of all the Ernuszt lands belonging to the three fortifications of Szentgyörgyvár, Prodaviz and Kapronca.⁸⁹⁹ After the expiry of the contract he again emerged as a tax-collector in Slavonia,⁹⁰⁰ and was parallelly elected as a noble *assessor* of the royal council.⁹⁰¹ Late in 1508 he was appointed as one of the Slavonian vicebans of George Kanizsai and John Ernuszt. He reassumed the same office in 1512 for Emeric Perényi, and played a key role in establishing a

⁸⁹⁰ Engel, Középkori magyar genealógia, Battyáni (Batthyány)

⁸⁹¹ On the early career of Balthasar Batthyány see Pálosfalvi, „Grebeni Hermanfi” II 303-304. It is highly probable that the person called Balthasar who in 1476 figures as royal chamberlain (*cubicularius*) on a charter of king Matthias can also be identified with him. DL 45666. Tax-collector in Transylvania: DL 101772.

⁸⁹² DL 19718. Compare DF 255911.

⁸⁹³ Šišić, Rukovet 337-338.

⁸⁹⁴ Thallóczy – Horváth, Jajcza CCLXXIII.

⁸⁹⁵ E.g. DL 106868, 107100, 103620, 104008, 106876, 46406.

⁸⁹⁶ DL 101123.

⁸⁹⁷ DL 101792.

⁸⁹⁸ Thallóczy – Horváth, Jajcza CCLXXIII.

⁸⁹⁹ DL 102307.

⁹⁰⁰ DL 107946.

⁹⁰¹ Kubinyi, „Közneemesi ülnökök” 261.

compromise between Perényi himself and the widow of the late ban, Andrew Both.⁹⁰² Although he was dismissed upon the appointment of Peter Beriszló as ban of Slavonia, in the course of 1515 he returned for the third time alongside Balthasar Alapi, in the service precisely of Beriszló. Although he was at that time already in his sixties, in 1518 he was appointed by duke Lawrence Újlaki as deputy judge royal and remained in that office until his death in 1520.⁹⁰³

Balthasar married twice, or perhaps three times in the course of his long life.⁹⁰⁴ The two sons who came to adulthood, Balthasar junior and Francis, were born not from the first wife, Catherine Grebeni, but from the second, Helen Nagylucsei.⁹⁰⁵ Another son, George, died in infancy, and another boy, Bartholomew, also died young.⁹⁰⁶ He also had two daughters, one of whom, called Agnes, married Francis Both of Bajna, whereas the other, Perpetua, became the wife of Nicholas Dersfi of Szerdahely.⁹⁰⁷

The two surviving sons of the elder Balthasar both became members of the royal court; indeed, Francis was brought up together with young Louis II, a relationship which founded his confidential position within the royal entourage in the years preceding 1526. The younger Balthasar was the less prominent among the two brothers. In 1517 he assisted his brother Francis as tax-collector in Slavonia.⁹⁰⁸ Three years later he was alone in charge of the collection of the Slavonian tax, however.⁹⁰⁹ In 1524 and 1525 he is attested as a royal chamberlain (*cubicularius*),⁹¹⁰ and as such he was one of the elected Slavonian envoys sent to Buda in 1524.⁹¹¹ In 1509 he betrothed Catherine, the niece of bishop Luke of Zagreb.⁹¹² He died before 31 August 1525, when it was his brother, Francis, who provided for the betrothal of his underage son called Christopher with Magdalena, the daughter of Ladislas Kanizsai.⁹¹³

As for Francis himself, he started his career as royal chamberlain and master of the cupbearers in the separate court of young Louis II as heir to the throne. After the accession of Louis he assumed the same office in the royal court, and was elected among the so-called *decempersone*, that is, those non-magnates who were allowed to set up troops of their own. After the death of ban Peter Beriszló in 1520 it was Francis who occupied his castles and estates in Slavonia for the king. In 1520 he was

⁹⁰² On these events see Pálosfalvi, „Bajnai Both András”

⁹⁰³ Bónis, *Jogtudó értelmiség* 358.

⁹⁰⁴ In fact, Borbála Kállai, referred to in 1514 as once the consort of Balthasar Batthyány (*alias consortis egregii Balthasaris de Batthyan*, DL 89045), may also have been the wife of the younger Balthasar. Whatever the case, in 1510 she was still the wife of Andrew Szaniszlófi of Bátor (DL 88998), so the marriage with either of the two Balthasar should be put after this year.

⁹⁰⁵ DL 101432 (Balthasar); DL 23358 (Francis).

⁹⁰⁶ George is mentioned early in 1491 (DL 101123), but disappeared by August 1492 (DL 103988).

⁹⁰⁷ DL 24307.

⁹⁰⁸ DL 104312.

⁹⁰⁹ DL 104369, 104375, 104389.

⁹¹⁰ József Főgel, *II. Lajos udvartartása 1516-1526 [The Court of Louis II 1516-1526]* (Budapest, 1917) 52.

⁹¹¹ DL 102338.

⁹¹² DF 252258.

⁹¹³ DL 24183.

also governing the bishopric of Eger. In March 1525 he was appointed as ban of Croatia and Slavonia together with John Tahi, but the office of the master of the cupbearers was also reserved for him in case he would be unable to take over effectively the banate. Indeed, as we will see later, none of the two bans was in fact regarded as „regular” locally, and they did not even appoint vicebans of their own. After the death of duke Lawrence Újlaki Francis received from the king the castle of Némétújvár and the huge estate that belonged to it in the county of Vas. He participated to the relief of Jajce, and, having led the Slavonian troops to the fateful field at Mohács, he commanded in the battle one of the wings of the Hungarian army. He survived the defeat by several decades, and his political star continued to rise in the service of Ferdinand I. He had married a lady-in-waiting of queen Mary, but the couple had no surviving offspring either before or after 1526.⁹¹⁴

We know infinitely less about the other members of the Grebeni family, who do not fall into the orbit of the Batthyány archives. In 1429 as many as nine male members of the family were enumerated, not counting Herman Grebeni and his sons, as condivisional brothers.⁹¹⁵ Their exact descent throughout the 15th century is very problematic, and in most cases the attribution of the individual persons to the various branches is purely hypothetical. The problem is aggravated by the fact that the occupation of the family patrimony of Greben by Jan Vitovec in 1445 seems to have broken all family ties between the different branches, and subsequently only very limited contacts can be reconstructed.

Basically, it seems that the various members of the Grebeni family, with the exception of Herman and his sons, can be ordered into three branches. Stephen, son of John, who appears in 1470 together with his son, George, apparently also descended from Lorand, although this piece of information is problematic.⁹¹⁶ It seems to have been the same Stephen who was a *familiaris* of Jan Vitovec before 1463, which shows that he had somehow found a *modus vivendi* with the family’s archenemy.⁹¹⁷ The fact that he could retain the estate of Hum, which seems previously to have been one of the appurtenances of Greben castle in the county of Zagreb, points in the same direction. In 1470 he was involved in the administration of the tax, for 3000 florins were robbed from him, previously collected for the royal tax. Stephen presumably had another son as well, called Ladislav, who became parish priest of Kemlék.⁹¹⁸ Both Stephen and George died prior to 1475, when the

⁹¹⁴ The pre-Mohács career of Francis Batthyány is summarised by Zsolt Simon, „A zágrábi pénzverde 1525. évi számadása” [The Accounts of the Mint of Zagreb from 1525], in *Századok* 144 (2010) 450, n. 85, with detailed references.

⁹¹⁵ DL 100457.

⁹¹⁶ DL 106840 (1470): „*Stephani filii Johannis filii Lorandi de Greben ac Georgii filii eiusdem Stephani de eadem Greben*”. The problem is that we know no son of Lorand called John.

⁹¹⁷ DF 233405.

⁹¹⁸ DF 219375.

former's widow, Dorothy, pledged the estates of her late husband in the counties of Körös and Zagreb.⁹¹⁹

Another branch descended from George, in all probability a grandson of Peter. This George had two sons, Stephen and Ladislás. Absolutely nothing is known about their activities, not even about the possessions where they lived. All we know is that the son of Stephen, called John, was later called of Miketinc, and was a learned man.⁹²⁰ It is thus very probable that this John was the John, son of Stephen, for whose education Ladislás Hermanfi ordered 100 florins to be paid in his last will.⁹²¹ In 1497 and 1502 we meet him as a designated royal man,⁹²² whereas in 1506 and 1507 he appears as one of the *szolgabírák* in the county of Körös.⁹²³ He was also active as a lawyer of bishop Luke of Zagreb.⁹²⁴ John married from the Ráskai of Sztubica family, in the county of Zagreb, and had a son called Balthasar.⁹²⁵

The third branch seems also to have descended from Peter. John, son of Nicholas had three sons, Stephen, Ladislás and Paul. In 1452 Stephen and Ladislás as well as their father resigned their rights in the estate of Greben in favour of Jan Vitovec,⁹²⁶ which the third brother, Paul, was apparently unwilling to do before 1466.⁹²⁷ It is this Paul about whom we have at least some information. At first he married the daughter of Matthias Kustyer, and had a daughter borne to him, who was cared for by her grandfather but died young.⁹²⁸ Next he married the widow of Tulbert of Berstyanóc, called Barbara;⁹²⁹ both his marriages show that he was closest among his kin to Ladislás Hermanfi in terms of local prestige, and they also seem to have been at least sporadically in contact,⁹³⁰ but even he was separated from him by a real social abyss. We know from the last will of Ladislás Hermanfi that Paul likewise had a son called John, but he is completely lost from our eyes.

2.2.16. Gudovci (od Gudovca, de Gudowch)

Of all the prothonotaries and deputy-prothonotaries of Slavonia⁹³¹ it is Peter Gudovci who started from the lowest and ended up highest on the social ladder, which is a clear proof of his ambitions and talent. His career demonstrates sufficiently what is otherwise known through a number of less perfectly highlighted cases, namely that the ways of upward social mobility leading to the ranks of

⁹¹⁹ DF 231629.

⁹²⁰ DF 232179: „magister Johannes Grebenschyak de Mykethyncz”.

⁹²¹ DL 107608: „Item Johanni de Greben filio Stephani de eadem Greben pro studio suo continuando lego centum florenos”.

⁹²² DF 255939, DF 255509.

⁹²³ DL 37783, DL 35767.

⁹²⁴ DF 252228.

⁹²⁵ DF 276804.

⁹²⁶ Csánki, Körösmegye 10.

⁹²⁷ DL 100758.

⁹²⁸ DF 274949.

⁹²⁹ DF 231576; DL 104564, here falsely called Benigna.

⁹³⁰ DL 100942, DL 107608.

⁹³¹ That is, among those who were indigeneous in Slavonia. Later on I will return to the question.

the regional elite were at least occasionally open to the most talented members of the lowest layers of the nobility, and even to not full-right nobles. Ambition, literacy, a good selection of lords and plenty of good luck were the necessary preconditions of social rise, and the lack of any of these elements could become an insurmountable obstacle.

The father of Peter Gudovci, Thomas of Chernkovc, was a *predialis* of Rojcsa.⁹³² He is not known to have done anything memorable, but surely had both his sons, Peter and Matthias, educated. Probably the first important step in the career of Peter was to get acquainted with Anthony Gudovci, notary of the counts of Cilli.⁹³³ The exact nature of this relationship is not known, but Peter surely married a female relative of Anthony, called Margaret.⁹³⁴ It was evidently master Anthony who took the young Peter to the court of count Ulrich, where he also became notary.⁹³⁵ Moreover, after the childless death of Anthony he inherited the possessions of his late relative, before all the possession of Gudovc; behind the royal grant it is impossible not to see the intercession of count Ulrich. Peter's brother, Matthias, entered the church, and became canon in a number of churches, and later archdeacon of Esztergom and Nógrád, and also notary in the royal chancellery.⁹³⁶ It is worth remarking that Peter's close connection to the counts of Cilli caused no break in his career after the young Matthias Hunyadi ascended the Hungarian throne.

Most probably after the assassination of count Ulrich master Peter joined the rising star of the day, Jan Vitovec. In fact, he had no other choice, for the former mercenary captain of the counts of Cilli was the only person in Slavonia who could guarantee, in return for faithful services, of course, the relative security of a person of Peter's social status. This situation involved evident risks, for Vitovec was for some years a declared enemy of king Matthias. Yet in May 1463 Peter received royal pardon together with his lord and his fellow *familiares*.⁹³⁷

⁹³² Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus XVII. 348: Petri et Benedicti filiorum Dyonisii de Chernkovch *prediales* of Rojcsa. Peter Gudovci is the son of quondam Thome de Roycha alias de Chernkowcz: DF 231374. On the *prediales* of Rojcsa see Nógrádi, „Szerdahelyiek” *passim*.

⁹³³ Notary: DF 231204. In 1452 his possessions Gwdowcz and Bwthchynch are exempted, upon the petition of the counts of Cilli, by governor John Hunyadi from all tax-paying. DF 231303.

⁹³⁴ She was the daughter of Catherine, daughter of Nicholas, son of Gud. DF 231837. Catherine was also the mother of Lazar Botka of Széplak, that is, the wife of Benedek Botka, from the county of Zala. Lazar and Margaret may have been born from the same father as well, but it is not stated in the charter. Nicholas son of Gud of Klokocsovc is attested as a designated royal man several times (Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus XVII 408.; Lukinović, Povijesni spomenici V. 241. [here falsely as *filius Seruth!*], 305.) It is not known whether this Gud descended from the Gud whose sons participated in the conflict between king Béla IV and his son, István, in the 1260s. See Attila Zsoldos, *Családi ügy. IV. Béla és István ifjabb király viszálya az 1260-as években [Family affair. The Conflict of King Bela IV and Stephen the Young King in the 1260s]* (Budapest: MTA Történettudományi Intézete, 2007) 61.

⁹³⁵ 1456: „*Petro filio quondam Thome de Roycha alias de Chernkowcz notario bani Ulrici*” (DF 231374). 1457: „*Magister Petrus literatus de Gudowcz successor condam magistri Anthonii literati de dicta Gudowcz*” (Tkalčić, Monumenta VII. 133.

⁹³⁶ „*magister Mathias de Roycha eiusdem Jauriensis ac Vaciensis et Quinqueecclesiensis ecclesiarum canonicus notariusque specialis cancellarie regie*”: DF 283625; „*notarius cancellarie Hungarice et archidiaconus Neugradiensis et Strigoniensis*”. DF 231374. The Matthias Rojcsai who is still in the chancellery in 1482 (Bónis, Jogtudó értelmiség 299.) seems to be the same person, although Bónis regards him as probably the nephew of the Matthias who turns up in the 1450s.

⁹³⁷ DF 233405.

The service of count Ulrich and then of Jan Vitovec paid off well, for master Peter was evidently in no lack of money in the early sixties. Having acquired eight peasant sessions sometime during 1460,⁹³⁸ in March 1461 he paid 140 florins for the possessions of Alsó and Felső Oresya,⁹³⁹ and a year later a further sum of 80 florins for another portion of land.⁹⁴⁰ In September 1462 the possession of Plavnicaszentbenedek was mortgaged to him and Blaise Briga of Jakószerdahely, another *familiaris* of Vitovec, by Anthony Koreni, for 315 florins.⁹⁴¹ No wonder, then, that already in 1461 Peter was referred to as *egregius*, and the title was never denied to him thereafter during his long career. His rapid rise, however, resulted in a peculiar situation, which must have caused some embarrassment to contemporaries as well; for as late as 1471 Peter's mother was still living in the town of Rojcsa, formally as a tenant of the Dersfi family, but evidently enjoying a treatment in keeping with the growing authority of her son.⁹⁴²

Despite the fact that Vitovec was pardoned by king Matthias, and only temporarily lost the banate of Slavonia, master Peter seems to have left him and disappears from the sources for some years. When we meet him again, in 1466, he is already in the service of another dominant local power, bishop Oswald of Zagreb, as *vicarius temporalis*.⁹⁴³ The bishop was one of the leading politicians in the court of king Matthias, together with his kinsman, John Tuz, who was at the same time master of the janitors and ban of Slavonia. In view of the fact that the bishop of Zagreb was the richest landowner in Slavonia, the lay governor of his estates was an important person, and the position was always fulfilled by illustrious local noblemen. Besides administering the immense episcopal lands, the *vicarius* also acted as judge over the people living there, and played a leading role in gathering the tithes.⁹⁴⁴ These were evidently inexhaustible sources of revenue, as the further enrichment of master Peter during his long career proves beyond doubt.

The results of the process can be measured by a charter issued by the chapter of Csázma in 1479, when master Peter was upon a royal order introduced into all the possessions he had thus far anyhow acquired. The possessions concerned were the portions of George Briga in Hrenno, Paulowcz et Palchepolye, that of Anthony Horzovai in Oresya, the possession of Ilyncz, a part of Bedovelc, upper Klokocsovc with its appurtenances, portions in the neighbouring villages, and the possessions of Tamasovc and Krajetin.⁹⁴⁵ Most of these lands belonged to master Peter „*vigore*

⁹³⁸ Stipišić – Šamšalović, *Isprave* 2439.

⁹³⁹ DF 231446.

⁹⁴⁰ DF 231455.

⁹⁴¹ DF 231462.

⁹⁴² In 1471 two servants „*providae domine matris magistri Petri de Gwdovcz in dicto oppido Roycha commorantis*” are beaten up: DL 17204. The term *providus* was generally applied to mere peasants.

⁹⁴³ DF 231516.

⁹⁴⁴ DF 257069, 268084.

⁹⁴⁵ DF 218987: „*villarum, possessionum porcionumque possessionariarum primo videlicet quondam Georgii Briga de Milethincz in possessionibus Hrenno, Paulowcz et Palchepolye habitarium ipsum magistrum Petrum de Gudowcz vigore certi contractus ut dicitur concernencium, deinde totalis porcionis Oresya vocate per quondam Anthonium filium*

contractus”, that is, he bought them for money. The price is not known, but we are informed by another charter that for a further portion of Klokocsovc Peter paid 275 florins to Stephen Hásságyi.⁹⁴⁶ Moreover, the list obviously does not contain the lands mortgaged to Peter, such as Kadalowcz, for which he paid 50 florins.⁹⁴⁷ All of the new acquisitions seem to have laid in the immediate vicinity of Gudovc, which clearly points at a preconceived plan of estate-building in the central region of the county of Körös.

As an episcopal *vicarius* and well-to-do landowner master Peter soon became an esteemed member of the local noble community. Already in November 1470,⁹⁴⁸ and then in March 1478 we find him at Buda,⁹⁴⁹ possibly as one of the envoys sent by the county of Körös to the diet. On both occasions his fellow-envoy was Ladislav Hermanfi of Greben, one of the politically most active members of the Slavonian nobility. Three times (1471, 1474, 1478) he is enlisted among the representatives of the Slavonian noble university. His involvement in the matter of tax-paying is especially interesting in view of the fact that he was at the same time in the bishop’s service. This double role was not a rare phenomenon among the Slavonian nobility, who were regarded before all, and without respect to their other engagements, as belonging to local noble community and bound by their common interests.

Besides his presence at the diet, and his involvement in the negotiations with the bishop concerning the tithe, one of the most solid proofs of master Peter’s confidential position among the Slavonian nobility is his relatively frequent occurrence as an arbitrator already before his election as vice-prothonotary. We have at least three such instances before 1479, and in one case the jury was even held at the residence of Peter at Gudovc.⁹⁵⁰ Effective arbitration in cases of disputed property, frequently accompanied by serious acts of violence, required legal knowledge, authority and sensitivity, and the fact that master Peter was frequently invited to settle such cases shows that he was able to meet these expectations. And his successes further increased his authority, opening new fields for his ambitions.

Jacobi de Horzowa et nobilem dominam Elizabeth vocatam filiam quondam Lacze de Laczowelcz consortem eiusdem Anthonii, deinde similiter totalis possessionis Ily(nc)z alio nomine Wykarusowcz nuncupate per magistros Stephanum Zeld de Ozthopan et Cristoforum de Elyewelgh, deinde totalis porcionis possessionarie in possessione Bedovelcz existentis per nobilem dominam Brigidam relictam quondam Petri Spanych de (...)asnycza alias ipsi magistro Petro de Gudowcz venditarum, deinde possessionis Klokochowcz superioris ac villarum Gorniawez, Podbrezthye, Wragowcz ac porcionis possessionarie in villa Mykulincz ad eandem possessionem superioris Klokochowcz spectantium, deinde totalium porcionum possessionariarum quondam Martini filii olim Emerici Wanczek filii Johannis de Klokochowcz in possessionibus Klokochowczenthmiklos, Olywercz et Plavnycza vocatis habitarum per Emericum filium quondam Johannis Z(az) de Thamasowcz dicto magistro Petro de Gudowcz traditarum et assignatarum, deinde possessionum Thamasowcz predicte et Krayeth(in) vocatarum jamfati Emerici Zaz similiter vigore certi contractus dictum magistrum Petrum de Gudowcz concernencium, omnino in predicto regno Sclavonie et comitatu Crisiensi existentium”.

⁹⁴⁶ DF 231680.

⁹⁴⁷ DF 231619.

⁹⁴⁸ DL 102176.

⁹⁴⁹ DF 231680.

⁹⁵⁰ DL 16793; Levéltári Közlemények 13 (1935) 238; DL 100851.

Sometime during 1478 he was elected by his fellow nobles as vice-prothonotary of Slavonia.⁹⁵¹ From this time on until his death in the mid-nineties his possession of Gudovc functioned as a third administrative capital of Slavonia besides Körös and Zagreb, where litigants and other clients processed in great numbers for documents dressed by master Peter in the name of the ban.⁹⁵² For some years, however, he also remained episcopal *vicarius*. It was upon the intercession of his lord, bishop Oswald that he received a general confirmation of estates from king Matthias in Olmütz in June 1479.⁹⁵³ He is last referred to as *vicarius temporalis* in February 1481;⁹⁵⁴ his leave from the bishop's service may have been due to the overwhelming administrative burden of his new office, but also to the waning luck of the Tuz family after the congregation of Zagreb. In fact, John Tuz was then forced to exile, and bishop Oswald lost the political influence he had hitherto enjoyed. Whatever the reason, master Peter's rise in authority remained unbroken after 1481. Still in 1481, for instance, he was named in the company of the royal attorney, three former vicebans, and Stephen Csupor, one of the richest Slavonian noblemen, as special royal commissioner in the important case of bordering the estates of the bishopric of Zagreb from the royal castellany of Medve.⁹⁵⁵ Later on he mediated between the chapter of Zagreb and George Turóci, and it was to master Peter that the latter sent the royal charter which allowed him to alienate or bequeath his lands to whoever he wanted.⁹⁵⁶

Master Peter continued the acquisition of land as intensely as before. In 1482 John, the son of Blaise Briga designated him as heir to his possessions,⁹⁵⁷ and, although king Matthias donated these estates to David and Francis Dombai,⁹⁵⁸ Peter finally prevailed, apparently by marrying one of his daughters, Catherine, to Francis Dombai. Moreover, in 1487 Dombai, who, as mentioned above, had been sentenced to loss of property, asked the immense sum of 820 florins from his father-in-law, and pledged in return his portions in Gorbonok to him.⁹⁵⁹ Master Peter also spent considerable sums of money on buying and leasing land, and contracted some exchanges as well.⁹⁶⁰ In September 1483 at Buda he received another general confirmation of his estates from king Matthias, who this time referred to the consent of queen Beatrice also, and donated the royal right as well in all the pieces of property concerned.⁹⁶¹

⁹⁵¹ DL 102205 (18 Sept. 1478)

⁹⁵² On the function of the Slavonian prothonotaries see below p. 335.

⁹⁵³ DF 218977.

⁹⁵⁴ DF 256576: "*vicepalatinus (!!)* regni *Sclavonie vicariusque tocius episcopatus Zagrabiensis in temporalibus generalis*".

⁹⁵⁵ DL 37582.

⁹⁵⁶ DF 255848; 256912.

⁹⁵⁷ DF 231741.

⁹⁵⁸ DF 231744.

⁹⁵⁹ See the section on the Dombai above.

⁹⁶⁰ DF 231745; DF 231769; DF 255892; DF 231789.

⁹⁶¹ DF 219002.

Yet by the late 1480s his spectacular rise and apparently unlimited ambition must have seemed irritating enough to provoke resistance. Before all, his appearance at Gorbonok raised the anger of ban Ladislav Egervári, who had his own ambitions of expansion in that region. In the midst of the upheaval which followed the death of king Matthias, Egervári captivated the influential deputy-prothonotary, took him to his castle of Velike, and forced him to give him the castle of Gorbonok together with its appurtenances for the same sum for which Peter had received it from Francis Dombai, but without paying a single florin.⁹⁶² It may also have been the ban who accused Gudovci, together with Balthasar Batthyányi and Peter Bocskai, to have joined Maximilian of Habsburg and taken part in the occupation of the castles belonging to the bishopric of Zagreb.⁹⁶³ Although they finally managed to prove their fidelity to king Wladislaw II, it was apparently for reasons of safety that in 1492 master Peter had Peter Bocskai introduced into his own possessions.⁹⁶⁴

Despite these difficulties, Peter Gudovci remained one of the key figures of the local nobility. In 1490 he was listed third among the Slavonian nobility negotiating with bishop Oswald, whereas in March 1492 he came 11th on the common list of the Croatian and Slavonian nobles confirming the Habsburg succession. Having been a member of the Slavonian delegation which bargained with bishop Oswald at Dombró in July 1485,⁹⁶⁵ he also participated to the general assemblies held in December 1485 and in June 1490, after the death of king Matthias;⁹⁶⁶ we find him in the capital in January 1487,⁹⁶⁷ and he was a member of the jury mediating between bishop Oswald and Stephen Csupor in April 1490, likewise at Buda.⁹⁶⁸ He also engaged in the financial administration of Slavonia, evidently profiting from his experiences as an episcopal *vicarius*. In 1492 Stephen Csupor sent him 50 florins „for the defence of the realm”,⁹⁶⁹ and in 1495 he was rewarded by the treasurer for the efforts he had made among the Slavonian nobility in order to facilitate the collection of the tax.⁹⁷⁰ Sometime before 1488 he was tax collector himself in Slavonia together with Balthasar Batthyány.⁹⁷¹ In March 1494 the king confirmed „according to the old custom” of Slavonia the exemption of the prothonotary from all military duties.⁹⁷² In March 1495 at the assembly of Verőce

⁹⁶² DF 231834.

⁹⁶³ DL 19718.

⁹⁶⁴ DF 231844.

⁹⁶⁵ DF 268111.

⁹⁶⁶ 1485: DL 103911 (charter of ban Matthias Geréb with the seals of the vicebans, a clear indication of master Peter's presence in the capital); 1490: DF 252107.

⁹⁶⁷ DF 268110.

⁹⁶⁸ DL 102244.

⁹⁶⁹ „*Pro tutela regni*”: Levéltári Közlemények 13 (1935) 253-257.

⁹⁷⁰ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 7: „*Ex commissione regie maiestatis bona Petri de Gwdowch propter fatigas quas continue habet inter regnicolas in facto contribucionis sunt relaxata que faciunt flor. 100*”.

⁹⁷¹ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 16., dated as „around 1500”; yet the possession of Rakonok by duke Viktorin (here rendered as Vutorinus!, but see the original, DL 104641 for Victorinus) Podjebrad clearly puts it to before 1488, when the duke was deprived of his lands in Slavonia.

⁹⁷² Kukuljević, Jura regni 228-229.

he received further possessions from king Wladislaw, whose former owners either died heirless or lapsed into infidelity.⁹⁷³

When in May 1495, shortly before his death, master Peter appeared before the chapter of Csázma, he could look back upon an exceptionally successful career. The former *predialis* was then the respected owner of two *castella* and some two hundred tenant sessions. It was with evident pride that he referred to the two thousands florins which he had gathered in the „service and courts of princes and magnates” from his youth until then, and which he had all spent upon the acquisition of land. Lest the fruits of so „tiring and dangerous services” come to nought, he betrothed his son, Stephen with Potenciana, the daughter of Peter Bocskai, who had previously given him a lot of help, and for the case of Stephen’s dying heirless, he pledged all his lands for the said sum to Potenciana Bocskai.⁹⁷⁴

This measure may have had a preventive edge. For only four month later, master Peter and his son contracted another treaty of inheritance, this time designating chancellor Thomas Bakócz and his relatives as their heirs in the case of both of them dying without heirs of either sex. In the event of Potenciana surviving her husband, she would have thus remained in the possession of all the Gudovci lands by virtue of the charter of pledge. What lay in the background of the disposition made in favour of the omnipotent chancellor and his kin, is impossible to tell; although the prothonotary referred to the many favours made to him by the chancellor, pressure coming from the latter can by no means be excluded.⁹⁷⁵

We do not know which family the second wife of master Peter, called Hedvig, came from,⁹⁷⁶ nor can it be established from whom his children were born. We have seen that one of his daughters, Catherine married Francis Dombai, and the other, Lucia contracted an equally good marriage: her husband became Peter, son of James Megyericsei, after whose death master Peter was for some time tutor of his underage sons. Master Peter’s only son, Stephen, is a much more obscure figure than his father. Inheriting as he did the possessions and authority of his father, he was constantly titled *egregius*, but was either unwilling or unable to make a similar career. He was present in the king’s campaign late in 1494, and received a small royal grant at Bács,⁹⁷⁷ but subsequently we only hear of him in cases of trivial local disputes and acts of violence committed by or against him.⁹⁷⁸ One such case almost proved disastrous for him, for in June 1518 king Louis II donated all his

⁹⁷³ DF 231953.

⁹⁷⁴ DF 219077: „*duo milia florenorum auri, que a juventutis sue tempore usque senectutis sue etatem in serviciis et curiis principum et magnatum proficiscendo acquisivisset*”.

⁹⁷⁵ DL 84577.

⁹⁷⁶ It is possible that she descended on the maternal line from the Szencsei family, however, for in 1495 Elizabeth, the daughter of Peter, son of Mihalc is called the *prothawa* of Stephen Gudovci, a relationship which is only possible on the side of his mother, of course. DF 244487. See also DF 231904.

⁹⁷⁷ DF 219071.

⁹⁷⁸ Eg. DF 231186, DF 231992, DL 102295.

possessions to Benedict Batthyány and Péter Lacovich of Butinc by reason of Stephen's infidelity, which he had committed by making his retainers kill a kinsman of the said Peter during the general assembly held on St George at Buda.⁹⁷⁹ Apparently Stephen Gudovci lost none of his possessions, which thus passed onto his son-in-law, John Pekri.⁹⁸⁰ The latter married his only daughter, Elizabeth, who was born either from Potenciana Bocskai or from Stephen's second wife, called Barbara. She belonged to the Laki Kacor family,⁹⁸¹ a rich noble family from the county of Zala. Her sister, Susan married George Kerecsényi, and her brother, Nicholas Kacor, was castellan of Velike in 1512. Stephen Gudovci died shortly before 21 March 1521.⁹⁸²

It is worth remarking that in the 1490s we find a canon of Csázma called Nicholas Gudovci, but it is impossible to tell whether he belonged to the noble Gudovci family or was simply born at Gudovc, apparently a populous settlement at that time, and called simply by his birthplace.

2.2.17. Hássági (Hašagi, de Hashagh, Hassagh)

The Hássági was a noble family of modest wealth in the county of Zala. In 1513 they were recorded in the county of Zala with 48 tenant sessions in seven villages, although we do not know which part of them was possessed already before the family's rise began in the second half of the 15th century.⁹⁸³ Their record until the third decade of the 15th century does not seem to have been a remarkable one; this is at least what can be concluded from their appearance merely as royal men in the charters. Change came with Michael, son of Paul, who rose in the service of the Pető family to become their deputy at the head of the county of Zala and also their castellan at Tátika.⁹⁸⁴ The Pető of Gerse, although favoured by king Sigismund, held no baronial office during his reign, which again seems to attest the quite modest origins of the Hássági family. His kinsman, Denis, served for his part the magnate Szécsi family, and likewise functioned as the deputy of John Szécsi in the county of Zala. It is this Denis who laid the foundations for the family's expansion in Slavonia.

He married the daughter of Vitko of Urbanovc (Vrbanovec) in the neighbouring county of Varasd, and obtained thereby the inheritance of his father-in-law.⁹⁸⁵ Urbanovc was listed with 25 tenant sessions in 1513, and another estate of similar size, that of Martinyanc (Martijanec), was also registered as owned by the Hássági then.⁹⁸⁶ Denis had four sons from his wife, one of whom,

⁹⁷⁹ Szabó, Országgyűlések 130-131.

⁹⁸⁰ DL 25625.

⁹⁸¹ DL 47328.

⁹⁸² DL 25625 (John Pekri to Ladislav Kanizsai): „*quousque in serviciis eiusdem m. vestre illic apud eandem Bude fuisset, egregius quondam Stephanus de Gwdowcz socer meus ab hac vita discessit*”

⁹⁸³ Csánki, Történelmi földrajz III. 152.

⁹⁸⁴ Engel, Archontológia II. 96. To be sure, I did not find in the sources cited by Engel the name of his father.

⁹⁸⁵ DF 255816.

⁹⁸⁶ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 68. Martinanc was listed six years before with as many as 75 tenant sessions (Ibidem 36.), and, although the figure in the original reads indeed LXXV (DL 104188), it is surely an error and should be understood as XXV.

master Stephen, joined the court as a simple notary in the 1460s, and, appointed as prothonotary of the judge royal by John Rozgonyi, held the office until his violent death in 1493. In the course of his long career he obtained some minor pieces of land in his native county, but a much more important yet only temporary acquisition was the market town of Vasvár (Vas c.) which he held in pledge for some time in the 1470s.⁹⁸⁷ From his second wife, Catherine Somogyi of Endréd, he had two sons, Bernard and Emeric; yet it was the son of his brother Michael,⁹⁸⁸ equally called Emeric, who followed in the footsteps of master Stephen as prothonotary and definitively linked the history of his family with that of Slavonia.⁹⁸⁹

How the Hásságyi acquired their first possessions in the county of Körös is unknown. In 1495 Emeric already possessed Karlovc and Szobotica in the region of Herbortya/Raszinya, the latter together with the Pogány family. This may hint at the existence of a marriage relationship between the two families, which, in view of the fact that the Pogány originally also came from Zala, would be far from surprising. Yet Emeric Hásságyi also held by 1495 the estate of Kupinno in the region of Cirkvena, which had been donated by king Matthias to Gregory Dersanóci and Peter Gudovci in 1468.⁹⁹⁰ Before 1488 Kupinno had been acquired by master Stephen,⁹⁹¹ who had begun his career under Gregory Dersanóci, also prothonotary of the judge royal. Although in 1495 king Wladislaw granted the portion of Kupinno previously held by master Stephen to Peter Gudovci, in 1513 Kupinno was nevertheless listed as being held by the “lords of Hásságy”, and Karlovc in the hands of John, son of Michael, which, on the other hand, shows that the nephews of master Stephen shared the lands in Körös.

Whatever the case, in 1492 Emeric Hásságyi was already considered as belonging to the nobility of Slavonia, and appeared as such on the common list of the Croatian and Slavonian nobility in March of that year. In 1499 he was one of the arbitrators between the chapter of Csázma and John Eruszt, and in 1505 he was already one of the Slavonian envoys sent to the king;⁹⁹² then titled prothonotary (of Slavonia), he may have been elected a year before. He remained in this office until December 1509 at least, although perhaps not without an interruption due to the revolt of Andrew Both.⁹⁹³ Before 1509 he obtained together with his brothers the estate of Bradna together with the *castellum* there from Michael Paksi, as a result of which the bulk of their landed wealth surely lay in the

⁹⁸⁷ The career and acquisitions of master Stephen are summarised by Bónis, *Jogtudó értelmiség* 275-276. and n. 44.

⁹⁸⁸ This Michael, *alispán* of Zala in 1464, also died a violent death before 1482. DL 67853.

⁹⁸⁹ Bónis, *Jogtudó értelmiség* 373. was already of the opinion that the Slavonian prothonotary was not the son of master Stephen, yet he gives no evidence in favour of this statement. In 1495 master Stephen is said to have died without heirs: DF 231953.

⁹⁹⁰ DF 231633.

⁹⁹¹ Adamček – Kampuš, *Popisi* 16, for the dating see note 968. above (Gudovci).

⁹⁹² Kukuljević, *Iura regni* 254-259.

⁹⁹³ Bónis, *Jogtudó értelmiség* 373, for 1504 and 1507. That he remained in (or returned to) office in 1509 is proved by the banal charters issued at Bradna (DF 255974., 219175., 232279., 255613.), which had been acquired by Emeric in the meantime. See the next note. See also Adamček – Kampuš, *Popisi* 44, 46.

county of Körös, and in general they certainly owned much more in Slavonia than in their native county of Zala. Emeric disappears from our sources after 1509, but his brothers remained firmly rooted in Slavonia; in 1521 John appears as an arbitrator in the case of the castle of Nagytábor (Varasd c.) for instance. Denis surely survived Mohács, for he is mentioned in 1531 among the participants of the assembly of Bélavár.⁹⁹⁴

2.2.18. Balthasar Hobetić

Balthasar Hobetić of Dobovc was an episcopal *predialis* in the diocese of Zagreb, about whose origins we know nothing. The *predium* after which he was named lay in the province of Ivanics, and Balthasar shared it with at least one brother called George.⁹⁹⁵ In 1507 it was listed with altogether 13 tenant sessions, 3 of which was held by Balthasar himself.⁹⁹⁶ In 1512 a certain master Stephen Hobetić was also listed in the same province, as it seems, and he may have been attached to the chapter of Zagreb; we do not know whether he was related to Balthasar.⁹⁹⁷ Anyway, the starting position of the latter was thus at least as unpromising as that of Peter Gudovci, yet in his case we do not know what the initial momentum was that set him on his ascending course. In 1499 he was still referred to as a simple *nobilis*, although at that time he certainly was no more a simple *predialis*, for a case before the governors of the bishopric was launched by a letter of citation issued among others by Balthasar Hobetić.⁹⁹⁸ In 1513, however, he was already *provisor curie* of Csázma, as such titled *egregius*, and his wife was then the daughter of Nicholas Bevenyöd.

It is impossible to tell what lay behind this marriage. The Bevenyöd family had become extinct by 1504, and its inheritance comprised a castle and a *castellum* in the county of Zagreb. In 1517 Balthasar Hobetić received from king Louis II the royal right in the two fortifications and three adjacent possessions, although it is not known whether he in fact took possessions of them or not.⁹⁹⁹ In 1515 he was already *administrator proventuum* of the bishopric of Zagreb, but he also retained his office as *provisor curie* of Csázma. By that year he had acquired portions of Mecsenice, together with George Diakói (Dyakoy, de Dyakowelge), who had married the widow of Nicholas Bevenyöd, the mother-in-law of Balthasar.¹⁰⁰⁰ This acquisition was surely connected to the appearance of George Diakói in the estate of Berivojszentiván; perhaps his wife, the widow of Nicholas, belonged

⁹⁹⁴ Šišić, Acta comitialia I. 280., here as Hashazy.

⁹⁹⁵ DL 36099.

⁹⁹⁶ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 23.

⁹⁹⁷ Ibidem 50.

⁹⁹⁸ DF 252217.

⁹⁹⁹ DF 274934.

¹⁰⁰⁰ DL 101486. George Diakói is castellan of Rahlca (DF 219225) and of Szentersébet (DF 252236), both owned by duke Lawrence Újlaki. He seems to have begun his career in the service of Job Garai, however, who had given him two villages on the appurtenances of Atyina *pro suis fidelibus serviciis* (DL 88855).

to the Berivojszentiváni family.¹⁰⁰¹ Indeed, the village of Mecsenice seems to have become the residence of Balthasar,¹⁰⁰² and he also possessed seven tenant sessions at Szlatina (Zlathyna) in the same county of Körös.¹⁰⁰³ Interestingly, unlike in the case of Stephen Prasovci, who followed him as *administrator proventuum* at Zagreb, we do not see him buying and taking into pledge several pieces of land, although he remained in office until at least 1520.¹⁰⁰⁴ His authority continued to grow nevertheless, and, having served Peter Erdódi as castellan of Okić for some time,¹⁰⁰⁵ before September 1523 he was elected as deputy prothonotary of Slavonia.¹⁰⁰⁶ He remained in the office for some time after August 1526, then rejoined bishop Simon of Zagreb and became *vicarius temporalis* for the see of Zagreb in the 1530s.¹⁰⁰⁷ Alongside two daughters he had at least three sons, Andrew, Bartholomew and Nicholas, about about the fate of whom I know nothing; at least none of them ever appears in the post-Mohács tax-lists.¹⁰⁰⁸

2.2.19. The descendants of Isaac

Four important late medieval families seem to have descended (two on the male line, one on the female one, and a fourth in a more uncertain way) from a person called Isaac, who lived around the turn of the 12th and 13th centuries.¹⁰⁰⁹ Isaac was in all probability a *várjobbágy* belonging to the castle of Körös, and a member of the same kin-group to which the famous, albeit quite obscure *comes* Hudina belonged.¹⁰¹⁰ It is highly probable that the man called Jaxa who was exempted by duke Bela together with Hudina from subjection to the castle of Körös in 1225 was the son of Isaak, and the absence of his brother Junk from the charter is explained by his young age at that time. After the departure of Bela they managed to stay close to duke Coloman, who followed his brother in the government of Slavonia in 1226, and Junk son of Isaac received from him the possessions of Zlonyn and Verbovc (Vrbovec) sometime before 1241.¹⁰¹¹ In 1244 Jaxa was viceban of Slavonia,¹⁰¹² and his office-holding then seems to account for the fact that he was later sometimes

¹⁰⁰¹ It would not be surprising, since John Bevenyőd also married from the region, his wife being Anne Roh of Dégse.

¹⁰⁰² In September 1523 he issues a banal charter at Mecsenice. DL 34333.

¹⁰⁰³ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 55.

¹⁰⁰⁴ DF 219319.

¹⁰⁰⁵ DF 233324.

¹⁰⁰⁶ DF 267600.

¹⁰⁰⁷ Šišić, Acta comitalis 114., 118.

¹⁰⁰⁸ DF 277175. p. 281-282.

¹⁰⁰⁹ This filiation was already remarked by Mór Wertner, „Az Árpád kori bánok. Meghatározások és helyreigazítások” [The Bans in the Árpád age. Definitions and Corrections], in Századok 43 (1909) 398, although his reconstruction is in need of correction.

¹⁰¹⁰ Szentpéteri – Borsa 574. The charter is of dubious authenticity. Whatever the status of Hudina, it is certainly indicative of his prestige that in 1262 king Bela IV dated a charter *apud domum Hudina* (Szentpéteri – Borsa 1284). Megyericse was two hundred thirty years later still remembered to have once belonged to Hudina, for in 1496 the *universitas* of the Slavonian nobility dated their charter at *Megyerechye Hwdine*: DL 104051.

¹⁰¹¹ Szentpéteri – Borsa 762.

¹⁰¹² Szentpéteri – Borsa 769.

referred to as ban. His brother Junk was in his turn *ispán* of Körös in 1260.¹⁰¹³ In 1265 he was one of the three Slavonian noblemen whom king Bela IV designated as partner judges for the counts of Rojcsa, and without whose presence the latter were not allowed to sit in judgement over the local *prediales*.¹⁰¹⁴ Both brothers served king Bela in his western wars: Junk was captivated in Styria, whereas Jaxa died in the battle fought with the duke of Austria. As a reward Junk and his nephew, Peter son of Jaxa received lands pertaining to the castle of Körös in 1266.¹⁰¹⁵ In 1280 comes Junk and his son John were confirmed by king Ladislas IV in the possession of the estates of Zlonyn and Vrbovc, which had previously been temporarily confiscated by the wife of Bela IV.¹⁰¹⁶ In 1281 comes Junk and his son were referred as belonging to the kindred of Isaan, and this latter name may have been a corrupted form of Isaac.¹⁰¹⁷ In 1282 John was *ispán* of Gerzence (Gračenica) in the service of queen Elizabeth.¹⁰¹⁸ He later joined king Andrew III and was rewarded for his faithful services, especially in the king's Austrian war, with the exemption of his Slavonian tenants from tax-paying.¹⁰¹⁹

19/a. Borotva of Vrbovc/Tersztenice (Britvić od Vrbovca/Trstenica, Borothwa de Thersteniche)

In the Angevin period John, son of John was counted among the most illustrious noblemen of Slavonia. In 1327 it was in the company of members of the Ludbregi, Bocskai, Szencsei, Csupor, Blagay and Atyinai families that he refused to pay the tithe to the bishop of Zagreb, going as far as to seal their opposition with an oath.¹⁰²⁰ Constantly titled (*nobilis*) *magister*,¹⁰²¹ in 1353 he acted as an arbitrator together with James, provost of Zagreb and archdeacon John.¹⁰²² In 1359 he obtained confirmation of the charter of king Charles I, who in his turn approved the donation of his predecessor Ladislas IV concerning the possessions of Zlonyn and Verbovc, by Louis the Great at Visegrád.¹⁰²³ In 1370 he is referred to as of Dobovc (*de Doboucz*) together with his sons, Emeric and Denis.¹⁰²⁴ Among his sons Emeric seems to have stayed in the 1370s in the service of Charles of Durazzo, duke of Dalmatia and Croatia.¹⁰²⁵ In 1377 it was his brother, Denis who in the name of the entire nobility of Slavonia had the charter of Louis I about the judicial privileges of the

¹⁰¹³ Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus V. 163: *Junk comes Kyrisiensis*

¹⁰¹⁴ Szentpéteri – Borsa 1432.

¹⁰¹⁵ Szentpéteri – Borsa 1511.

¹⁰¹⁶ Szentpéteri – Borsa 3056.

¹⁰¹⁷ Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus VI. 400: „Comes Junk et Johannes filius eiusdem de genere Isaan (!)”

¹⁰¹⁸ Attila Zsoldos, *Az Árpádok és asszonyaik. A királynéi intézmény az Árpádok korában [The Árpáds and their Women. The Institution of Queenship in the Age of the Árpáds]* (Budapest: MTA Történettudományi Intézete, 2005) 167.

¹⁰¹⁹ Szentpéteri – Borsa 3929.

¹⁰²⁰ Anjoukori Oklevéltár XI. 485.

¹⁰²¹ Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus XI. 297., 480., 485., XII. 565.

¹⁰²² Ibidem XII. 210-211.

¹⁰²³ Ibidem XII. 565.

¹⁰²⁴ Ibidem XIV. 250-251.

¹⁰²⁵ Ibidem XV. 108., Emeric also titled “*vir nobilis magister*”.

Slavonian nobility transcribed at Visegrád.¹⁰²⁶ Before 1394 king Sigismund ordered Denis in the company of such leading noblemen as Ladislav and Adam Kasztellánfi, Nelepec Dobrakucsai, Paul Szencsei, Nicholas Kapitánfi and Peter Bocskai to confess under oath what they knew about the role of Philip Csernarekai in the revolt of the Horváti brothers.¹⁰²⁷ In 1398 Emeric was one of the arbitrators in a dispute between Paul of Zrin and Stephen Blagay.¹⁰²⁸

The next time we meet the sons of John is in 1405, when it appears that they had participated in the revolt against king Sigismund, joined Ladislav of Naples, and their possessions were consequently granted away.¹⁰²⁹ In the light of the fact that Emeric had served Charles of Durazzo before, their joining the Neapolitan pretender is easy to understand, although it is conspicuous that shortly before the revolt, in 1402, Emeric received together with his sons lands for his faithful services from bishop Eberhard of Zagreb.¹⁰³⁰ Yet there are two more pieces of information in the charter which need to be explained somehow. On the one hand, John son of John is referred to as *Borothwa*, a sobriquet which turns up for the first time in 1398,¹⁰³¹ and seems to have become a family name later. Unless this was an ironic allusion to his evident longevity, quite rare among the lay nobility in this age,¹⁰³² there is no reasonable explanation for the sudden emergence of his nickname. On the other hand, alongside the two sons who had been mentioned in the sources since the late 1350s, namely Denis and Emeric, a third son of John is referred to by the charter of 1405, called Nicholas, who first turns up in 1402.¹⁰³³ He was evidently much younger than his two brothers, for whereas Denis and Emeric are listed together with their sons, one of whom, Andrew, was surely already of age in 1402,¹⁰³⁴ the sons of Nicholas are not mentioned in 1405, and were still minors in 1419.¹⁰³⁵ Whatever the case, the sons of John seem finally to have retained both their lands around Vrbovc and, further off in the region of Fejérvölgy, the possession of Tersztenice, which they had obtained from Nicholas Pekri through judicial procedure.¹⁰³⁶ At Tersztenice a *castellum* is mentioned around the middle of the 15th century.¹⁰³⁷ They did lose the predium of Fodorovc, however, which Emeric and his sons had received from bishop Eberhard prior to the revolt.¹⁰³⁸ The two elder brothers, Denis and Emeric are not mentioned after 1405, whereas Nicholas joined the service of Paul Csupor and became first his *vicecomes* of Körös county, then, after the appointment of Csupor as ban of

¹⁰²⁶ Ibidem XV. 259.

¹⁰²⁷ Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus XVII. 584.

¹⁰²⁸ Ibidem XVIII. 374. 1402: „*strenuus miles magister*”: Andrija Lukinović ed., Povijesni spomenici Zagrebačke biskupije V. 1395-1420 (Zagreb, 1992) 157.

¹⁰²⁹ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár II/1. 3657.

¹⁰³⁰ Lukinović, Povijesni spomenici V. 157.

¹⁰³¹ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár I. 5308.

¹⁰³² Borotva being an allusion to his long beard.

¹⁰³³ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár II/1. 1452.

¹⁰³⁴ Lukinović, Povijesni spomenici V. 164.

¹⁰³⁵ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár VII. 23.

¹⁰³⁶ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár II/1. 1452.

¹⁰³⁷ DF 255731.

¹⁰³⁸ Lukinović, Povijesni spomenici V. 341-342.

Slavonia in 1412, his viceban.¹⁰³⁹ In all probability he followed his lord to the Bosnian war in 1415 and was captivated together with him. He seems to have been still in captivity in 1419, when his two sons were under the tutelage of their kinsman, Peter Borotva of Tersztenice.¹⁰⁴⁰ Later he returned to Slavonia, however, for he seems to be identical to the master Nicholas Borotva of Verbovc who is referred to as a royal man in 1424,¹⁰⁴¹ and as a notary in the court of the judge royal in the same year.¹⁰⁴²

Among the sons of Emeric Andrew is attested as an *officialis* of Albert Nagymihályi, prior of Vrana in 1421.¹⁰⁴³ His nephews, the sons of Ladislav, Barnaby and Michael were accorded a common coat of arms together with Josa the Turk (*Turcus*) of Kristallóc in 1431.¹⁰⁴⁴ Josa was a knight of the court and count of the Cumans at that time, and Barnaby and Michael were referred to as his friends in the charter of king Sigismund. Barnaby and Michael turn up as *prediales* of Zagreb in 1432,¹⁰⁴⁵ and later as designated royal men. Among the sons of Barnaby only Nicholas is more than a name to the historian. Yet again, we are facing an extremely difficult problem when trying to distinguish between him and his namesake, the son of George. It was probably the son of Barnaby who in 1468 is attested in the service of Nicholas Dombai, then castellan of Atyina;¹⁰⁴⁶ in 1476 he may have stood in the service of despot Vuk, owner of the neighbouring estate of Fejérkő.¹⁰⁴⁷ He is completely lost from sight thereafter, although he was still alive in 1492, when he was designated as a royal man.¹⁰⁴⁸ His son, Anthony, and his nephew, Nicholas, were also called of Mocsila (*Mochyla*), in the same county of Körös.¹⁰⁴⁹ Anthony married the sister of Marcinko, captain and later viceban of duke Corvin.¹⁰⁵⁰

The descendants of Andrew, son of Emeric are almost as difficult to grasp through the fragmentary sources we have. Three sons of Andrew emerge in a prohibition from 1450,¹⁰⁵¹ and two of them, together with their kinsmen, turn up as designated royal men in 1467.¹⁰⁵² Indeed, this kind of task seems to have remained the top of their ambitions in the period of king Matthias, an impression

¹⁰³⁹ Engel, *Archontológia* I. 20.

¹⁰⁴⁰ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár VII. 23.

¹⁰⁴¹ Levéltári Közlemények 7 (1929) 287-288.

¹⁰⁴² Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár XI. 867.

¹⁰⁴³ *Ibidem* VIII. 777.

¹⁰⁴⁴ Albert Nyáry br., "Krisztallóci Tarkasis Józsa (sic) címere" [The Coat-of-arms of Józsa Turk of Kristallóc], in *Turul* 2 (1884) 156-158.

¹⁰⁴⁵ DF 252421: "*Michael et Barnabas filii Ladislai dicti Borothwa prediales de villa beate Marie virginis prope Warosd*"

¹⁰⁴⁶ DF 255801.

¹⁰⁴⁷ DL 74528.

¹⁰⁴⁸ DF 231857.

¹⁰⁴⁹ DF 232660 (1523); DF 231928 (1495).

¹⁰⁵⁰ DF 232533.

¹⁰⁵¹ DF 219051 (1450): "*Ladislavus, Dyonisius et Janko filii quondam Andree Brythwycz*". This seems to be the first appearance of the Slavic form of their name.

¹⁰⁵² 256910 (1467): "*Michael, Dyonisius, Andreas vel Janko dicti Borothwa de Wrbovcz*"

reinforced by the appearance of Denis Borotva as elected noble juror of Zagreb county in 1486.¹⁰⁵³ Some minor changes can only be observed after 1490. Sigismund, son of Denis somehow acquired in the early 16th century a portion of the estate of Felsősztubica in the county of Zagreb and was consequently named after it.¹⁰⁵⁴ Already in 1495 he pledged, together with his kinsmen Stephen, Nicholas, Andrew and George, their ancient lands at Sabnica and Kopinno, to Nicholas Mikcsec for the considerable sum of 700 florins.¹⁰⁵⁵ In 1516 he was mentioned among the *familiares* of margrave George of Brandenburg.¹⁰⁵⁶ We do not know whose son was the Paul Borotva of Felsősztubica who served Peter Beriszló and received from him a *predium* on the appurtenances of Bozsjákó (Božjakovina) in 1516.¹⁰⁵⁷ Somewhat more is known about John, son of John. In 1512 he was castellan of Szentlőrinc in the service of Ladislás Várdai and Louis Pekri, who then governed the estates of the young Farkas (Wolfgang) Szencsei.¹⁰⁵⁸ Somewhat later he shifted his allegiance and joined margrave George who appointed him as his castellan of Lukavec.¹⁰⁵⁹ For the rest, all members of the family were regularly designated as royal (or banal) men, but this surely cannot be regarded as a mark of an elevated social position.

As for the branch of viceban Nicholas, it seems to have disappeared in the second half of the 15th century. One of his sons, George was tax collector in Slavonia in 1443,¹⁰⁶⁰ and was designated as a lawyer four years later,¹⁰⁶¹ and as a royal man in 1449, but no further information is available about his career. In 1446 he is attested together with his brother Ladislás as holding in pledge the possession of Mecsenice in the vicinity of Tersztenice.¹⁰⁶² This Ladislás also obtained parts of Mindszent, likewise in the county of Körös, through his marriage with the daughter of Thomas Mindszenti.¹⁰⁶³ Yet when in 1465 the family received from king Matthias a confirmation of their estates, only Michael, son of Ladislás, the sons of Barnaby: Nicholas, Emeric and Andrew, and the sons of the other Andrew: Denis, Ladislás and another Ladislás were listed in the charter. We do know, however, that George also had a son called Nicholas. Since the estate of Tersztenice, with the castellum there, was in the hands of the descendants of viceban Nicholas to the exclusion of the other branches of the family, and they seem consequently to have enjoyed more authority locally, it is with some probability that we attach to this Nicholas, son of George, those pieces of information

¹⁰⁵³ DL 35720.

¹⁰⁵⁴ DL 104011: „*Sigismundus Borothwa de Vrboucz et de Zthobycza*”. In fact, it should have been his father, Denis, who acquired parts of Sztubica, which would account for his election as noble juror in Zagreb county. Accordingly, the Janko whose widow also holds parts of Sztubica in 1507 seems to be the brother of Denis, also called Janko in our sources. Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 17.

¹⁰⁵⁵ DF 231943.

¹⁰⁵⁶ DL 37580.

¹⁰⁵⁷ DF 219282.

¹⁰⁵⁸ DF 255568.

¹⁰⁵⁹ DL 37580.

¹⁰⁶⁰ Zichy család okmánytára IX. 59.

¹⁰⁶¹ DL 103605.

¹⁰⁶² DF 218776.

¹⁰⁶³ DL 94202. This Thomas, son of Nicholas, was *szolgabíró* of Körös in 1411(Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár III. 235.)

which indeed reflect this prominence. In 1473 he is attested as an arbitrator in the company of such leading figures of the local nobility as Ladislav Hermanfi and Ladislav Ervencei,¹⁰⁶⁴ and on two occasions (1474, 1478) we find him among the representatives of the Slavonian nobility. He may have been still alive in 1495.¹⁰⁶⁵ Apparently both this Nicholas and his uncle, Ladislav, died without offspring. In 1507 the estate of Tersztenice was listed in the hands of a certain Nicholas, and in 1517 in those of Ladislav,¹⁰⁶⁶ probably from the other branches of the family which had inherited the estate in the meantime.

19/b. Raveni (Ravenski, de Rawen)

The descent of the late medieval Raveni family, to which the famous prothonotary Michael belonged, is one of the most intricate problems and can only be partially solved. The persons bearing the name Raveni are exceptionally numerous, and, although the affinity between the various branches of the family and their lands is, as we will see later, evident, its exact nature cannot always be established. The first member of the family to call himself of Raven was Paul, son of James, and great-grandson of Jaxa „ban”.¹⁰⁶⁷ In the 1370s he was suing Nicholas, son of Paul and great-grandson of Junk for the possession of Zlonyn which had been given to their ancestors by duke Coloman.¹⁰⁶⁸ Paul had five sons: John, Michael, Peter, Denis and Nicholas.¹⁰⁶⁹ Peter and Denis seem to have disappeared by 1367, whereas Michael died before 1374. The remaining two, John and Nicholas had no children of either sex in 1376,¹⁰⁷⁰ but later on both of them fathered sons.¹⁰⁷¹ Paul also had a daughter, Margaret, who married John, son of Fabian of Sydynna, who later also called himself of Raven, and became the notary of ban Nicholas Szécsi. In 1408 the two great-grandsons of James, paid the filial quarter to the sons of John Adamovci, otherwise also called of Raven, from their possessions called Raven, Mokrica and Szentlászló.¹⁰⁷² It would be tempting to identify this Michael with the future master Michael, prothonotary of the seat of Körös, but this identification is excluded by a charter of 1425.¹⁰⁷³ It is equally impossible to identify master Michael with two further persons bearing the same name and belonging to the same kin-group: one of them, Michael son of John called Kazmer of Adamovc and Raven, who was *szolgabíró* of Körös

¹⁰⁶⁴ Levéltári Közlemények 13 (1935) 238.

¹⁰⁶⁵ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 10.

¹⁰⁶⁶ Ibidem 30, 98.

¹⁰⁶⁷ Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus XIV. 42-43; Ibidem XV. 10-12: Paulus filius Jacobi filii Petri filii condam Jaxa bani.

¹⁰⁶⁸ Ibidem XV. 10-12.

¹⁰⁶⁹ Ibidem XI. 583-584. John, Michael, Peter and Denis prohibit their father from the alienation of the land called Takachfeulde; Ibidem XIV. 42-43: Nicholas, John and Michael.

¹⁰⁷⁰ Ibidem XV. 224:” *Johannes et Nicolaus filii Pauli filii Jacobi de Raven prolibus utriusque sexus [...] destituti*”

¹⁰⁷¹ Pongrác Sörös, “A Pannonhalmán őrzött Guary-levéltár Mátyás-kori kiadatlan iratai” [The Unpublished Charters of the Guary Archives from the Age of Matthias], in Magyar Történelmi Tár 1910, 415. [1408]; DF 231054: „*Petri filii Johannis filii Pauli ac Michaelis et Ladislai filiorum Nicolai filii dicti Pauli de eadem*” (Raven) [1425]

¹⁰⁷² Sörös, “Guary levéltár” 415.

¹⁰⁷³ In 1425 master Michael receives from the king the lands of Michael, son of Nicholas as well. DF 231054.

county in 1418; the other, Michael son of Fabian called Kengel of the same Raven.¹⁰⁷⁴ The core of the problem lays in the fact that the name of the father of the future prothonotary is never mentioned in the surviving charters, so the identification is bound to remain uncertain. It is nevertheless possible and even probable that master Michael was a newcomer in Slavonia, as were the members of the Selypi of Raven family, who, as we will see below, came from a village in Abaúj county sometime during the Angevin era.

Another approach seems more promising, however. The Stefanovci family equally descended from Jaxa, and was occasionally also called Cirkvenai.¹⁰⁷⁵ In 1404 Nicholas Stefanovci, whose son Fabian had been killed allegedly by Mikcsec son of John,¹⁰⁷⁶ bequeathed his portions to the sons of Emeric Szentpéteri, Stephen and John. The latter two were then *prediales* of the bishopric of Zagreb, and were consequently also called of Stefanovc and Raven.¹⁰⁷⁷ The possession whence they took their name, Orehovcszentpéter (Orehovec), also belonged to the kin-group descended from Isaac, yet their descent from either of his sons cannot be proved. Nevertheless, the Szentpéteri family was beyond doubt part of the Isaac kin-group.¹⁰⁷⁸ It is thus probable that it was thanks to his marriage with one of the daughters of Lawrence Szentpéteri that Stephen and his brother acquired portions in Raven and the neighbouring possessions. The other daughter of Lawrence, called Helen, became the wife of master Michael, prothonotary of the seat of Körös, and in 1417 Stephen and John handed over the fourth part of all their estates to Michael. This act seems to be the origin of master Michael's land ownership in Raven.¹⁰⁷⁹ In fact, all the persons called Raveni who played a role worthy of mention in the late middle ages descended from Stephen, son of Emeric and from master Michael.

As soon as he had installed himself in Raven, master Michael set to rounding out his possessions there. In February 1418 he took into pledge a portion of an estate in the middle of lands belonging to conditional nobles,¹⁰⁸⁰ whereas two months later he was confirmed together with the sons of Peter Zádori in the portions of Dominic son of Beke in the possessions of Dobovc and Sabnica.¹⁰⁸¹ Still in the same year he and his brothers-in-law, Stephen and John Raveni tried to occupy the portions of Nicholas and Paul Cirkvenai as well, but the latter seem to have intervened with

¹⁰⁷⁴ Master Michael never bears any of these names (Kazmer or Kengel), nor do his offspring. The memory of the family lives on in the name of the village Kengyelovc/Kendelovec.

¹⁰⁷⁵ Stipišić – Šamšalović, *Isprave* 1236. (=1401).

¹⁰⁷⁶ *Ibidem* 1239, 1243, 1250.

¹⁰⁷⁷ DF 231474.

¹⁰⁷⁸ Smičiklas, *Codex diplomaticus XVII*. 190-191. The Stefanovci and the Szentpéteri divide the possessions of Gesztenovc and Szentpéter.

¹⁰⁷⁹ Sörös, *Guary levéltár* 418. It appears, in fact, that master Michael received the quarter of his wife in land, in which case he may not even have been of noble birth.

¹⁰⁸⁰ *Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár* VI. 1451.

¹⁰⁸¹ *Ibidem* 1733. The four sons of Peter of Zádorfalva received their portions at Dobovc and Sabnica in November 1403: DF 230835.

success.¹⁰⁸² Prothonotary of the seat of Körös since 1417,¹⁰⁸³ sometime before 1420 he joined the court of king Sigismund as a notary¹⁰⁸⁴ and remained a member thereof until his death. In March 1421 he received a coat-of-arms from the king in the Moravian town of Znaim,¹⁰⁸⁵ whereas in July in Pozsony he was given the royal right in two possessions in Körös county which had devolved upon the crown for infidelity.¹⁰⁸⁶ In 1423 at Kassa he asked king Sigismund to confirm him and all members of the Raveni family¹⁰⁸⁷ in the possession of Ravenszentlászló, and in the same year he obtained confirmation of the tax exemption of his lands.¹⁰⁸⁸

His influence and thus the possibilities of land acquisition further grew after he had become a royal attorney (*procurator regius*) sometime before 1425.¹⁰⁸⁹ In that year at Nagyszombat he was donated by king Sigismund the very portions of his relatives, Nicholas Selypi of Raven and his son George, as well as those of Peter, Michael and Ladislas, grandsons of Paul son of James, who had all lapsed into infidelity.¹⁰⁹⁰ At the same time he also received a piece of land which had previously belonged to a *várjobbágy* of Gerzence.¹⁰⁹¹ Four years later he obtained from the king an authorisation to hold on his possession of Sabnica/Bablyak a weekly market on each Monday and two annual fairs on the festivities on Saints George and Peter in Chains.¹⁰⁹² In 1430 he once again petitioned and received a land laying among those of the castle nobility of Körös. He was careful enough, however, to have his lands which had been so far subjected to the conditional services due to the king and the ban of Slavonia exempted from these burdens.¹⁰⁹³ Moreover, it was upon the request of John Ostfi of Herbortya and master Michael that Sigismund exempted the lands of the castle nobility belonging to the castle of Kemlék from their hereditary services and adopted them among the full-right nobility.¹⁰⁹⁴ Nevertheless, despite his influence at court, his material resources seem to have remained limited; for in order to secure for himself the lands of the Selypi family outside Slavonia, namely in the counties of Nógrád and Heves, he had to ally himself with a „colleague”, master Clement Tapán of Haraszt, who would later become his successor as prothonotary of the seat of

¹⁰⁸² Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár VI. 1949.

¹⁰⁸³ On 10 July 1417 he is already prothonotary: *ibidem* 664.

¹⁰⁸⁴ Bónis, Jogtudó értelmiség 133.

¹⁰⁸⁵ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár VIII. 339.

¹⁰⁸⁶ *Ibidem* 810: Ramachawelge et Precoversye, in the district of Gerzence.

¹⁰⁸⁷ The sons of Emeric Szentpéteri: Stephen and John, the son of Nicholas Selypi: George, the two surviving grandsons of Paul Raveni and Paul, the son of Fabian Stefanovci. Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár X. 710.

¹⁰⁸⁸ *Ibidem* 862.

¹⁰⁸⁹ On his career as a royal attorney see Bónis, Jogtudó értelmiség *ibidem*.

¹⁰⁹⁰ DF 231053; DF 231054.

¹⁰⁹¹ DF 231058.

¹⁰⁹² DF 231089. In 1518 a fair is mentioned at Sabnicaszentiván, but on the festivity of John, patron saint of the local parish church. DL 105675.

¹⁰⁹³ DF 231098.

¹⁰⁹⁴ DF 233120: „*consideratis... fidelitatibus et fidelium serviciorum gratuitis meritis et acceptis complacenciis fidelium suorum nobilium Johannis filii Ost de Herborthya et magistri Michaelis de Raven causarum suarum procuratoris et sedis Crisiensis prothonotarii... supplicacionibusque eorundem per ipsos culmini suo in personis et nobilium nominibus universorum castri Maioris Kemlek devote oblatis exauditis et admissis*”

Körös, and who engaged himself to get real possession of the lands concerned at his own expenses in return for an eventual partition of them.¹⁰⁹⁵

After 1430 we do not hear of further acquisitions, although the political authority of master Michael by no means diminished. Quite to the contrary, he seems to have become a close collaborator of Stephen Aranyi, one of the key figures of the government of emperor Sigismund in the last years of his reign, whom he assisted in cases of prime political importance.¹⁰⁹⁶ His removal from the seat of Körös was probably linked to the death of ban Hermann of Cilli in October 1435 and the consequent takeover of the Tallóci brothers in Slavonia.¹⁰⁹⁷ Yet he remained in royal service even after the death of emperor Sigismund, under his two successors Albert and Wladislaw I. He died sometime after 1441.

By the time of his death the estate of Raven, with some 40 inhabited tenant sessions on its belongings,¹⁰⁹⁸ was in the exclusive possession of his two sons, Stephen and Emeric and in those of Martin, son of the other Stephen. Yet, as far as it can be reconstructed from later tax registers, the latter possessed a considerably bigger portion than the children of master Michael, and, strangely enough, the social prestige of his descendants likewise outweighed that of the sons and grandson of the influential prothonotary.

Both Martin, the only son of Stephen, and Stephen, the son of master Michael inherited some of the legal authority enjoyed by the latter. In 1452 the sons of Michael, Stephen and Emeric were designated royal men,¹⁰⁹⁹ whereas in December 1457 Martin was one of the special judges elected by the Slavonian nobility.¹¹⁰⁰ In 1459 Martin and Stephen Raveni were entrusted by ban Vitovec with a special legal mission.¹¹⁰¹ In 1461 Martin was one of the arbitrators in the case between Ladislav Hermanfi and the Raveni brothers themselves.¹¹⁰² Stephen was elected at least three times as *szolgabíró* of the county of Körös between 1464 and 1477.¹¹⁰³ In 1474 all three were listed among the representatives of the Slavonian nobility, interestingly enough, Martin and Emeric together, and Stephen separately. In 1467 Martin acted as a royal man at the introduction of the

¹⁰⁹⁵ DF 230548.

¹⁰⁹⁶ Bónis, Jogtudó értelmiség 133.

¹⁰⁹⁷ He was sometimes called the notary of count Hermann of Cilli, although this of course does not necessarily mean personal dependence. In 1439, however, the nobility of Slavonia complained to their new ban, Matko Tallóci, that his predecessors, encroaching upon their privilege of electing freely their prothonotary, appointed the latter without any consultation. This complaint evidently concerned Hermann of Cilli and, consequently, master Michael Raveni. Kukuljević, Jura regni 199-200.

¹⁰⁹⁸ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 15.

¹⁰⁹⁹ DL 103627: „*Stephanus et Emericus de alia Rawen*”, so as to distinguish their possession from that of Miklós Kengel of Raven.

¹¹⁰⁰ DL 15201: „*Martinus filius Stephani litterati de Rawen et Demetrius litteratus de Nemes necnon Nicolaus Michech de Chirkvena iudex nobilium comitatus Crisiensis iudices scilicet ad infrascriptam novam dispositionem pridem per universitatem nobilium regni Sclavonie deputati et electi*”

¹¹⁰¹ DL 103664.

¹¹⁰² DF 231474.

¹¹⁰³ 1464 (DL 35646., 35098.); 1469-1470 (DF 256696, DL 107008.); 1474-1477 (DL 103765, DL 107029.). I only indicate the charters with the first and last mention for each period.

duke of Saint Sava into the castellany of the two Kemlék,¹¹⁰⁴ whereas in 1481 he was elected as one of the noble jurors for the county of Körös.¹¹⁰⁵

Among the sons of Martin, Ladislav entered the church and became parish priest of the church of Saint Ladislav at Raven itself. His brother, Michael, was killed by John Tuz and his adherents for reasons unknown to us.¹¹⁰⁶ His other brother, Francis, likewise seems to have remained within the boundaries of his native region, but he was nevertheless sometimes accorded the *egregius* title.¹¹⁰⁷ All we know about him is that in the 1490s he was occasionally designated as a royal man.¹¹⁰⁸ He married the daughter of Valentine Pálfi of Szentmihály, called Veronica,¹¹⁰⁹ who bore him three sons, Joseph, John and Michael. In 1503 the three brothers received from king Wladislaw II, for services unspecified, the (*jus gladii*) for their possessions.¹¹¹⁰ In 1518 the services of John Raveni were rewarded by the king with some of the possessions of the Gereci family, confiscated for infidelity.¹¹¹¹ In the early 1520s John was special notary and secretary of ban John Korbáviai, and proceeded together with viceban Paul Kerecsényi in the important matter of the planned purchase by the ban of some castles in Varasd from margrave George of Brandenburg.¹¹¹² He married Dorothy, daughter of Peter Gereci.¹¹¹³ His younger brother, Michael, likewise started his career as a notary of the ban,¹¹¹⁴ to become, several years after Mohács, prothonotary of Slavonia and of the judge royal.¹¹¹⁵ Joseph died before 1523, leaving a son called Francis, tutored by his stepfather, George Fintics, who also called himself of Raven.¹¹¹⁶

As for the sons of master Michael, Stephen seems to have died without offspring sometime after 1493.¹¹¹⁷ Emeric had a son called Paul, who seems to have moved to the possession of Ramocsavölgye, whence he was named.¹¹¹⁸ Before 1492 he served Stephen Csupor of Monoszló,¹¹¹⁹ then joined Balthasar Batthyány.¹¹²⁰ His widow, Helen, was mentioned as late as

¹¹⁰⁴ DF 233461.

¹¹⁰⁵ Tringli, Szlavóniai közgyűlés 314.

¹¹⁰⁶ DF 255855: „*discretus Ladislaus filius Martini de Rawen plebanus ecclesie beati Ladislai de eadem*”; quittance for John Tuz.

¹¹⁰⁷ Sörös, Guary levéltár 411.

¹¹⁰⁸ DF 255533.

¹¹⁰⁹ DF 232021.

¹¹¹⁰ DF 232116.

¹¹¹¹ DF 232489.

¹¹¹² „*Johannes de Raven notarius spectabilis et magnifici domini Johannis Torquati comitis Corbavie bani Croacie*” (DF 267606); „*Johannes de Raven secretarius domini bani Croacie*” (DF 267607); DF 267612, 267614.

¹¹¹³ DF 277175/276.

¹¹¹⁴ DF 277175/5. (1522): „*unacum nobili Michaelae de Rawen curie magnificencie vestre notario*”

¹¹¹⁵ Ferdo Šišić ed., *Acta comitialia Regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae II* (Zagreb: JAZU, 1915) 10: royal attorney (director causarum); Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 137-138. (Slavonian prothonotary); *Középkori leveleink* 162. (prothonotary of the judge royal).

¹¹¹⁶ DF 277175/ 82-83.

¹¹¹⁷ DF 231879.

¹¹¹⁸ 1494: Paulo Rawenzky de Romachawelge (DL 104011)

¹¹¹⁹ DF 231847.

¹¹²⁰ Paulo Rawenzky de Romachawelge: DL 104011.

1525.¹¹²¹ Paul had a sister as well, equally called Helen (Ilka), who married John Čavlović, and thus presumably became the mother of viceban Paul Čavlović (in case John and Paul were not brothers, as we have seen above). Another female member of the family, namely Anne, the daughter of master Michael, married first Michael Latk, then Ladislav Hermanfi, and her daughter from the latter later married Balthasar Batthyány.¹¹²²

19/c. Cirkvenai (od Crkvena, de Cirkvena, Cirquena)

The Cirkvenai family descended from the other son of Isaac, called Jaxa „ban”. The great-grandson of Jaxa, Peter was first called of Cirkvena.¹¹²³ He had two sons, Nicholas and John, and it was from the latter that the late medieval Cirkvenai family descended.¹¹²⁴ They do not seem to have done anything memorable until the second decade of the 15th century, when Ladislav, son of John became *ispán* of Zagreb in the service of ban Paul Csupor.¹¹²⁵ His appointment was certainly not unrelated to the fact that his distant kinsman, Nicholas Borotva was at the same time viceban and count of Körös. It may also have been a consequence of the fact that his brother, Nicholas, unlike some of their kin, remained faithful to Sigismund in the critical period around 1400.¹¹²⁶ However, what could have become the promising debut of a long career, turned out to be its end at the same time, for Ladislav followed his lord to the Bosnian campaign in 1415, was captivated by the Ottomans and seems never to have returned to his homeland.¹¹²⁷

Ladislav probably left no surviving offspring, whereas his brother, Nicholas, also called Mikcsec (*Mikchecz*), which subsequently became a family name, had two sons, Paul and Nicholas. Their

¹¹²¹ DF 277175/ 209.

¹¹²² It is to be remarked, however, that other persons and whole family groups equally called of Raven also turn up in our sources, yet they cannot be linked to the Raveni who have been treated in this chapter. Before all, the master Gregory son of Paul *de Rawen*, who is ennobled together with his numerous kin by queen Mary in 1389. [Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus XVII. 70-71.]. In 1412 this Gregory is already canon of Zagreb, archdeacon of Bekcsény [Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár III. 2779.]. In 1384 emerge the sons of Miklós, son of Myke of Raven [Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus XVI. 489.]. The boundaries of the land held by the former make it obvious that it lay equally among the lands belonging to the castle of Körös, as names like *terra pristaldorum Crisiensium* and *nobilium castrensiuum de Repynch* indicate (DF 255686). Repinc lay in the vicinity of the late medieval possession of Raven, and so did Miketinc, in which I see the name of Myke mentioned above (Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 15.). In the same way, Beketinc apparently preserved the name of Beke, son of Junk [Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus XV. 13-14.] As for the *terra pristaldorum*, it seems to have survived in the form of Pristawcz, in the same region (ibidem). All these people seem to have belonged to the castle of Körös, and gradually emerged as members of the local petty nobility as the castle structure dissolved in the course of the 14th century. See also the section on the Prasovci and Horzovai families, which likewise seem to have belonged to the castle nobility of Körös.

¹¹²³ 1369: Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus XIV. 207: „Petrus filius Jacobi de Cirkvena”. Szentpéteri – Borsa 1511 (1266): Peter, son of Jaxa. Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus VII. 282 (1297): James, son of Peter pledges „*quandam particulam terre sue hereditarie de Cirkvena*”

¹¹²⁴ Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus XV. 156-160.

¹¹²⁵ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár IV. 1126. It is possible that his colleague, *magister Michael literatus*, is identical to the future prothonotary, Mihály Raveni.

¹¹²⁶ DF 230844. His services at that time are recorded by a charter wrongly dated by Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus XVIII. 408-409. to around 1398; the palatine who issued the letter is certainly Nicholas Garai the younger, whereas the addressee, master Emeric son of ban Ladislav is Emeric Fánecs, which proves that the correct date is around 1403. He had already participated to the Bosnian expedition at the very end of the previous century: ibidem 368-369, 412.

¹¹²⁷ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár V. 2512.

mother was the daughter of master Peter, son of Gregory Grebennai (*de Grebenna*), who was in all probability a notary in one of the chancelleries.¹¹²⁸ Since Nicholas also died soon thereafter, his underage sons were put under the tutelage of John Grebennai, their maternal uncle. Nevertheless, the members of the Raveni family immediately occupied some of the orphans' estates, and the widow of the late Ladislav, probably belonging to the Toka of Kopacsovc family, also tried to usurp their rights.¹¹²⁹ Some years later Paul and Nicholas, already of age, had to defend themselves against the efforts of the influential master Michael, prothonotary of Körös county, at vindicating their lands for himself.¹¹³⁰

In 1434 Paul obtained a coat of arms for himself and his brother Nicholas from emperor Sigismund at Regensburg, a sign that he may have accompanied the ruler for his journeys as a member of his court.¹¹³¹ Sometime before May 1438 Paul was elected as a *szolgabíró* of Körös county, and he is frequently mentioned as such in the next twelve years.¹¹³² Parallel to his service as *szolgabíró* he also acted for some time as *comes terrestris* of Kemlék.¹¹³³ After his leave from office he became prothonotary of the seat of Körös, and held this post until sometime before August 1456.¹¹³⁴ We do not know why he was then temporarily removed from the office of prothonotary, nor do we know who followed him; in any case he returned to his office before April 1460 and remained there for more than five years.¹¹³⁵ In one single case he was even called as prothonotary of the realm of Slavonia.¹¹³⁶ For some time he also functioned as *vicarius temporalis* of the bishopric of Zagreb, evidently in the service of bishop Demetrius Csupor.¹¹³⁷ In August 1466 we find him among the representatives of the Slavonian nobility, negotiating with bishop Oswald of Zagreb.¹¹³⁸ Perhaps thanks to the support of the counts of Cilli, then bans of Slavonia, perhaps through other ways, Paul and his brother Nicholas came sufficiently close to the court of young king Ladislav V to obtain the privilege of *jus gladii* in 1453 and a royal confirmation of their estates two years later.¹¹³⁹ As for Nicholas, he was also *szolgabíró* of Körös county for several years.¹¹⁴⁰ Yet even these years of

¹¹²⁸ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár VI. 2576. Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus XVII. 585: „*Petri filii Gregorii de Grebenna hominis nostri (sc. regis) ad id specialiter deputati*”, twice titled magister.

¹¹²⁹ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár VII. 515, 754.

¹¹³⁰ DF 231115.

¹¹³¹ DF 286305.

¹¹³² 1438 (DF 286465); 1441 (Levéltári Közlemények 6 [1928] 129.); 1445 (DF 231225, Levéltári Közlemények 6 [1928] 131.); 1447 DF 231226, 231232); 1448 (DF 231241); 1450 (Levéltári Közlemények 6 [1928] 133.)

¹¹³³ DF 233345: „*Georgii Pyers et Pauli filii Mykchecz de Czyrkwena [...] capitaneorum et comitum terrestrium de Maiori Kemlyek*”

¹¹³⁴ First mention: 25 May 1453 (DF 231225); last: 16 July 1455 (DF 231362); August 1456: alias sedis [...] Crisiensis prothonotarius (DF 231372).

¹¹³⁵ DF 231434 (26 April 1460); DF 231508 (19 July 1465).

¹¹³⁶ Bónis, Jogtudó értelmiség 277.

¹¹³⁷ DF 231434.

¹¹³⁸ DF 252046.

¹¹³⁹ DF 231325, 231362.

¹¹⁴⁰ 1455 (DF 275930); 1456 (DL 102131); 1457 (DL 15201); 1458 (DL 35985); 1459 (DF 288153); 1460 (DF 218870); 1461 (DF 231445); 1462 (Levéltári Közlemények 6 [1928] 148.).

prosperity were not free of all setbacks: before 1450 Jan Vitovec devastated and burnt the family lands,¹¹⁴¹ whereas in 1457 the two brothers had to counter the claims of Thomas Oldi, castellan of Cserög (Čerević, SRB), who vindicated their estates for unknown reasons.¹¹⁴²

Among the sons of master Paul, Nicholas the younger followed in the footsteps of his father and was a *szolgabíró* of Körös for almost five years.¹¹⁴³ Nothing is known about another son called Ladislav, whereas two of their brothers made a career in the church. Peter became a canon of Csázma, and was even *custos* and *locumtenens* for some years.¹¹⁴⁴ His brother, John also entered the church, and, presumably after the death of Peter likewise became a canon at Csázma. Besides his canonry he also held the important parish church of the Holy Cross at Körös, where most of the oaths judged at the banal seat took place.¹¹⁴⁵ None of the two lay brothers seem to have left children, and all four sons of master Paul disappeared by the early 1470s.

Consequently, all the lands held by the family came into the hands of Peter, son of Nicholas the elder.¹¹⁴⁶ One of his sisters, Barbara was taken away during the great Ottoman incursion of 1476.¹¹⁴⁷ Upon the career of Peter himself very little is known. In 1481 he was castellan of Szarvaskő in the service of Stephen Csupor,¹¹⁴⁸ whereas later he acted as elected noble juror of Körös county, a post normally held by members of families which otherwise furnished the *szolgabírák*.¹¹⁴⁹ He was nevertheless regularly titled *egregius*,¹¹⁵⁰ and his daughter, Dorothy made an advantageous marriage. Before 4 May 1498 she was betrothed with Paul, the son of George Kerecsényi, *vicarius temporalis* of the bishopric of Zagreb, and all the lands of Peter were to devolve upon the young couple after his death.¹¹⁵¹ Paul Kerecsényi, the future viceban of John Korbáviai (Ivan Krbavski), did consequently inherit the Cirkvenai estates, although it is not sure whether the *castellum* which is first recorded at Cirkvena in 1505 was the work of his father, George, or it had already been erected by his father-in-law Peter.¹¹⁵² The latter is mentioned for the last time in November 1498 and died soon afterwards, whereas his only known son, John, disappeared several years before his father's death.¹¹⁵³ The wife of Peter Mikcsec, Martha, was the

¹¹⁴¹ DF 231262.

¹¹⁴² DF 231386; Engel, *Archontológia* I. 294.

¹¹⁴³ 1465 (*Levéltári Közlemények* 8 [1930] 96.); 1466 (DF 262037, Nicholas son of Paul); 1468 (*Levéltári Közlemények* 3 [1925] 150); 1470 (DL 32848); 1471 (DF 231582).

¹¹⁴⁴ DF 282432: „*magister Petrus Mykchecz custos canonicus et locumtenens ecclesie Chasmensis*”; DF 231434.

¹¹⁴⁵ 1468 (DL 94233): „*Johannes Mykchecz canonicus ecclesie Chasmensis ac plebanus Sancte Crucis de Crisio*” 1471 (DF 231581): „*honorabilis vir dominus Johannes plebanus Crisiensis*”

¹¹⁴⁶ DF 231757: „*Petrus filius quondam Nicolai filii Nicolai Mykchecz dicti de Cirquena*”

¹¹⁴⁷ DF 231758.

¹¹⁴⁸ DL 45876.

¹¹⁴⁹ *Levéltári Közlemények* 8 (1930) 98.

¹¹⁵⁰ Eg. DF 231850, DF 231860, DF 231943, DF 232004.

¹¹⁵¹ DF 219099.

¹¹⁵² DF 232179: „*Benedicto castellano [...] in Czirquena constituto*”

¹¹⁵³ DF 231846 (1492); he is not mentioned thereafter.

daughter of Nicholas Gilétfi, member of a rich and illustrious noble family which possessed a castle, a *castellum* and some thirty villages in the neighbouring county of Pozsega.¹¹⁵⁴

19/d. Kustyer of Szenternye (Kwscher de Zentherne, Zenthernye)

Master Nicholas, son of Peter of Szenternye (*Zenthernye*) appears somewhat unexpectedly in 1370 as the son-in-law of John son of John, grandson of Junk.¹¹⁵⁵ Both possessions mentioned on this occasion, namely Szenternye and Orehovc, originally belonged to the kin of Isaac, that is, the castle of Körös.¹¹⁵⁶ As it appears later, they were donated, together with other lands pertaining to the castle of Körös, before 1370 by king Louis I to master Nicholas.¹¹⁵⁷ It is impossible to know what kind of services justified the royal donation, and it is at least probable that it was John son of John, grandson of Junk who helped his son-in-law to have access to the king. In 1411 the son of Nicholas, Thomas is referred to as a castle noble (*nobilis castri*) of Diankovc (Dijankovec),¹¹⁵⁸ another possession belonging to the castle of Körös, and two years later we see him suing, in the name of his brothers, Andrew and Ladislav Borotva, another nobleman of Diankovc for a parcel of land there.¹¹⁵⁹ It would therefore be logical to suppose that Nicholas originally was member of the conditional noble group living at Diankovc¹¹⁶⁰ and owned his consequent rise and master title, as well as his possessions, to his marriage with the daughter of John. Yet things are more complicated than would seem at first sight.

Sometime before 1371 king Louis I donated some portions of the possession called Selyp in the county of Nógrád, namely those of Nicholas son of Francis, Paul, son of Peter called Kövér, and Nicholas son of Michael, to the five sons of Peter Sári, Nicholas, John, Thomas, Stephen and George. In 1371 Nicholas and George, acting in the name of the two sons of their brother John as well, sold *their* possession of Selyp together with its appurtenances in the counties of Nógrád and Heves, for 400 florins to the illustrious Cudar family, whose possession called Lőrinci lay in the immediate vicinity. Other members of the Selypi family protested repeatedly, and in 1394 at the assembly of the counties of Nógrád and Hont the elected noble jurors confirmed upon the request of John son of Nicholas Selypi and his sons that their portion of Selyp was indeed unlawfully occupied by the Cudar. The latter claimed that Nicholas son of Peter, from whom they had purchased the

¹¹⁵⁴ DF 232505: „*nobili domina Dorothea consorte egregii Pauli de Kerechen filia videlicet egregii condam Petri Mykchecz de Czyrkvena ex nobili condam domina Martha filia olim Nicolai Geledffy alio nomine Wythez dicti de Gelethyncz [procreata]*”; here also the lands of the family listed.

¹¹⁵⁵ Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus XIV. 250-251: „*Magister Nicolaus filius Petri de Scencherney*”

¹¹⁵⁶ Szenternye: Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus XII. 401. It borders upon the town of Újkörös: Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár IX. 50. On Orehovc(szentpéter) see above.

¹¹⁵⁷ Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus XVIII. 194-195. On Gesztenovc see ibidem XV. 22.

¹¹⁵⁸ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár III. 663.

¹¹⁵⁹ Ibidem IV. 574.

¹¹⁶⁰ The namegiver seems to have been the Dianco son of Martin, castle noble of Körös, who is mentioned in 1344. Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus XI. 124.

possession was still alive, and asked him to be cited accordingly; indeed, the person cited was then called Nicholas, son of Peter of Szenternye. Then the case dragged on for several years through repeated postponements, and it was finally Thomas, son of Nicholas of Szenternye who appeared before the palatine, and immediately abstained himself from the case, claiming that all documents concerning the possession of Selyp had been handed over to the Cudar, in none of which was any mention of the seller's obligation to defend the buyers before the law.¹¹⁶¹

Since we have no knowledge of any other Szenternye in the medieval kingdom of Hungary owned by nobles, and in any case the sequence of Thomas son of Nicholas son of Peter of Szenternye is unlikely to occur twice in the same period, it can be safely stated that the father of Nicholas, Peter is identical with the Peter Sári whose sons received Selyp from the king. The only problem is to define which Sár we are dealing with? The obvious solution is Gibártsár in the county of Heves, and the John Sári mentioned above seems to be identified with the deputy of *ispán* Simon Szécsényi in the county of Borsod, referred to in 1404.¹¹⁶² Their move to Slavonia may have been connected to the banate of Peter Cudar, and that of the Selypi as well, who later turn up in the Slavonian sources as Selypi of Raven.¹¹⁶³

Both sons of Nicholas, Michael and Thomas took part in the disastrous expedition to Nicopolis, and Thomas was even seriously wounded there. In return they were confirmed by king Sigismund in the possession of Szenternye and five other villages „under the titles of true and sincere nobility and of our new donation”,¹¹⁶⁴ a further proof of the previous conditional status of these lands. The charter referred to their participation in other, non-specified campaigns, but this may be no more than a traditional formula of the chancellery. Consequently they almost completely disappear from our sources, however. Michael may have died, whereas Thomas is mentioned as a royal man in 1412¹¹⁶⁵ and as a lawyer at the banal seat in 1420.¹¹⁶⁶ It is thus somewhat surprising that in 1439 we find both Matthias, son of Thomas and his kinsman, John Kustyer among the representatives of the Slavonian nobility at the assembly of Körös, where all the other participants listed seem to have belonged to more illustrious families of the region.

The obvious growth in influence of Matthias Kustyer in the following years may have been due partly at least to his marriage with Clara, the daughter of Ladislav Goricaí (*de Gorycha*) from Zagreb county. Very little is known about the Goricaí family, but it apparently belonged to the

¹¹⁶¹ All the charters cited are transcribed in DF 230548.

¹¹⁶² Engel, *Archontológia* II. 210. Peter, son of Stephen Selypi is *alispán* of Nógrád in 1395-1397: *ibidem* 212.

¹¹⁶³ It has to be admitted, however, that it is in 1366 that both Nicholas, son of Peter Selypi, and Nicholas, son of Michael Sári turn up in Slavonia for the first time (Smičiklas, *Codex diplomaticus* XIII. 512-513), that is, two years before the appointment of Peter Cudar as ban of Slavonia, and the former is referred to three years later as the *familiaris* of John Kanizsai, bishop of Zagreb (*Ibidem* XIV. 208-209.).

¹¹⁶⁴ “*sub vero et sincero nobilitatis noveque nostre donationis titulis*”: Smičiklas, *Codex diplomaticus* XVIII. 194-195.

¹¹⁶⁵ *Levéltári Közlemények* 8 (1930) 89-90.

¹¹⁶⁶ *Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár* VII. 2077.

noble elite of the county. Ladislas's son, Martin was a *familiaris* of the counts of Cilli, and trusted enough to be able to borrow the enormous sum of two thousand florins from his lords in 1445.¹¹⁶⁷

As we will see below, he married the daughter of Ladislas Pekri called Susan. The family was somehow related to the Tót of Szomszédvár, for in 1449 Martin Goricaí tried together with his sisters, among whom Clara was already the wife of Matthias Kustyer, to obtain the castle of Szomszédvár from Dorothy Tót and her husband, but to no avail.¹¹⁶⁸

Following his marriage with Susan Pekri, Martin Goricaí took into pledge portions of the estate of Garignica, and the money needed was partly supplied by his brother-in-law, Matthias Kustyer. Since Martin had no children from his wife, he bequeathed his parts in the estate upon his brother, Nicholas, and his sisters, Clara and Margaret until their redemption. Moreover, he handed over the letters of pledge concerning Garignica to Matthias Kustyer until his money was repaid by Susan. This act led to protracted litigation with Susan Pekri and her new husband, Christoph Paschingar, which will be treated in detail below.¹¹⁶⁹

In 1453 Matthias Kustyer was designated royal man at the introduction of Jan Vitovec (into Kristallóc), and entered his service after his appointment as ban. In 1461 he acted in a case as a „judge and commissary” delegated by the ban, which certainly proves that he belonged to the judicial apparatus of Vitovec.¹¹⁷⁰ He retained his authority even after Vitovec made peace with the king, for in August 1466 he was elected into the committee which negotiated with bishop Oswald,¹¹⁷¹ whereas two years later he was one of the *probi homines* who were authorised to elect the persons who would accompany the episcopal tax-collectors.¹¹⁷² He was regularly called *egregius*,¹¹⁷³ and it was apparently he who erected on his estate the *castellum* which later bore his name. He certainly spent a lot of money on enlarging his estate of Szenternye/Kustyerolc, which in 1476 amounted to almost a hundred inhabited tenant sessions.¹¹⁷⁴ The only surviving child of Matthias was a daughter called Margaret, whom he married to Paul Grebeni; it is no wonder, then, that the devolution of his considerable landed wealth raised much attention in the region. In 1467 king Matthias allowed, upon the petition of Nicholas Csupor, then knight of the court, to Matthias to dispose freely of his estates for the case of his death.¹¹⁷⁵ This measure obviously favoured Nicholas himself, to whom the king promised all his possessions in advance. Yet they never in fact

¹¹⁶⁷ DL 106973. In 1438 Martin was a *familiaris* of the counts of Cilli, and took part as such in an attack upon the city of Zagreb. Tkalčić, Monumenta II. 137-138.

¹¹⁶⁸ DF 274979.

¹¹⁶⁹ See the section on the Pekri family.

¹¹⁷⁰ Levéltári Közlemények 8 (1930) 93: “*Mathey Kuscher de Zenth Jerney iudex et commissarius per magnificum dominum Jan Zagorie comitem, necnon regni Sclavonie banum in hac parte deputatus*”

¹¹⁷¹ DF 252046.

¹¹⁷² DF 252047.

¹¹⁷³ DL 103668, 45278, 102157, DF 274949.

¹¹⁷⁴ Balassa család oklevéltára 411.

¹¹⁷⁵ DL 33355.

seem to have been owned by Nicholas Csupor. In November of the same year Matthias adopted the Korotnai brothers, John, prothonotary of the palatine, and Gregory, as his brothers, and conferred all his lands upon them for the case of his heirless death.¹¹⁷⁶ In 1469 Nicholas Csupor protested at the king, stating that Matthias had already promised his inheritance to him in return for sustenance until his death, which he in fact provided.¹¹⁷⁷ Whatever the case, the omnipotent Csupor apparently failed to prevail against the prothonotary, for the Kustyer lands did devolve upon the Korotnai brothers after the death of Matthias.¹¹⁷⁸ Later on, however, the *castellum* and its appurtenances came into the possession of ban Damian Horváth and his brother, to devolve ultimately upon Louis Pekri after 1490.¹¹⁷⁹

2.2.20. Jakószerdahelyi (od Sredica, de Jakozerdahel)

We will see below that the Kamarcai family owed at least parts of Jakószerdahely (Sredica), its members were even sometimes named after it, which raises the possibility that the possession itself may have owed its name to Jako, son of Blagonya, who was beyond doubt a member of the Kamarcai family. Indeed, Jakószerdahely was once stated to lay within Kamarca itself,¹¹⁸⁰ and was important enough to host an assembly as early as 1349. Yet it is impossible to establish with any certainty the descent of the late medieval Jakószerdahelyi family from any known member of the Kamarcai family, nor it is possible to make a genealogy comprising all the known members of the family. Again, as in the case of the Kamarcai, an unusually great number of persons are called of Jakószerdahely in our sources, which is certainly a sign of a very early settlement in the region.

What seems certain is that the Jakószerdahelyi who played some role in the late medieval county of Körös descended from a certain Egidius, son of Peter, who seems identical to the person bearing the same name who is listed among the neighbours of Prodaviz and Kamarca in 1366.¹¹⁸¹ In 1370 this Egidius divided his lands in and around Jakószerdahely with his kinsmen.¹¹⁸² The sons of Egidius, James and Martin fought in the service of bishop Eberhard of Zagreb against the Ottomans and their Bosnian allies, and later took part with ban Denis Marcali in the Italian expedition as well as in that

¹¹⁷⁶ DL 17118.

¹¹⁷⁷ DL 25363, the king's letter to Matthias: "*te cum suis expensis a multis temporibus elapsis usquemodo nutritisset*"

¹¹⁷⁸ DL 103737 (1472): "*in possessione Kwschyerocz vocata [...] domo videlicet et curia eiusdem magistri Johannis in eadem habita*"

¹¹⁷⁹ Later, after the heirless death of Matthias Kustyer, we see Thomas and George Kustyer, both called of Palicsna, turning up as neighbours and (the latter) as designated banal man (DL 100901, DL 100908, DF 231857). They may have been the descendants of John Kustyer, who was mentioned together with Matthias in 1439, but there is no information to support this.

¹¹⁸⁰ Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus XI. 526, 1349: "*ad locum in Kamarcha qui vocatur Jakowzereดาห์el*"

¹¹⁸¹ Ibidem XIII. 559.

¹¹⁸² Ibidem XIV. 262-263.

against the Hussites in Bohemia. As a reward they were confirmed in 1423 by king Sigismund in their possession of Jakószerdahely and its appurtenances.¹¹⁸³

The text of the donation mentioned their kinsman, Dominic son of Gregory, who seems to have been the brother of James, son of Gregory of Jakószerdahely, who became canon of Zagreb. He was not the only cleric in the family, however. In 1414 a certain Denis, son of Valentine of Jakószerdahely, canon of Bács is referred to as the special chaplain of king Sigismund, and he certainly was a member of the family which concerns us here, although I was unable to link him to the branch of Egidius. Nor can his place be found among the descendants of Luke, who are also said to be the kinsmen of archdeacon James in 1435.¹¹⁸⁴

It would be easy to regard Blaise Briga, the most outstanding member of the family, as the son of James Jakószerdahelyi, since his father was indeed called James. Yet the sobriquet „Briga” does not seem to have been used in the Jakószerdahelyi family, and when he first appears in the sources he is called of Sasomberg,¹¹⁸⁵ which lay in the county of Zagreb.¹¹⁸⁶ Later, however, he is constantly called Jakószerdahelyi, with two exceptions, when he is referred to as Plavnicamelléki¹¹⁸⁷ and Plavnicaszentbenedeki¹¹⁸⁸ respectively. Thus it cannot be stated with absolute certainty that he and his two brothers, Matthias and Thomas were in fact the sons of James Jakószerdahelyi, although this would most obviously account for the fact that they inherited the estate of Jakószerdahely.

Somewhat before 1458 Blaise Briga entered the service of Jan Vitovec, who appointed him as his viceban in 1458. Although he spent no more than a few months in this office, he remained in the service of the ban thereafter and was accordingly pardoned among his *familiares* in 1463.¹¹⁸⁹ It was apparently as a *familiaris* of Vitovec that he acquainted himself with Peter Gudovci, with whom he acquired some lands in the county of Körös, and even received a royal grant.¹¹⁹⁰ Later on he joined bishop John of Pécs, at least it was for participation in the latter's revolt that he was proscribed in 1481.¹¹⁹¹ In 1475, however, he was already in the service of bishop Oswald of Zagreb.¹¹⁹² In the 1470s, notwithstanding his involvement in the conspiracy of 1471, he was a nobleman of respect in his native county, as his participation in arbitrations, his role of royal man in cases of importance, his being occasionally titled *egregius*, and his listing among the representatives of the Slavonian

¹¹⁸³ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár X. 1531. The John, son of Egidius of Jakószerdahely, who is referred to as rector of the church of the Holy Cross at Szobocsina in 1414 (ibidem IV. 2861.) may also have been their brother.

¹¹⁸⁴ In 1472 the grandson of Peter, son of Luke was parish priest at Jakószerdahely.

¹¹⁸⁵ DF 255746: “*Blasius et Mathias filii Jacobi Briga de Sermosbergh*”. In the draft of the chapter's report the village is spelled Sasombergh.

¹¹⁸⁶ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 18.

¹¹⁸⁷ DL 15250, 1458: “*Blasius filius quondam Jacobi de Plavniczamelleky*”

¹¹⁸⁸ DF 218978, 1479: “*Blasio Briga de Jakozerdahel et de Plavniczazenthbenedek*”

¹¹⁸⁹ DF 233405.

¹¹⁹⁰ DF 231888.

¹¹⁹¹ Tringli, Szlavóniai közgyűlés 315.; Blagay-család oklevéltára 388.

¹¹⁹² DF 261839.

nobility show.¹¹⁹³ The John Briga, who died heirless before 1495 may have been the son of Balázs; in any case, he is the last person who turns up in the sources with this name.¹¹⁹⁴

We know even less about the kinsmen of Blaise Briga. Alongside Blaise himself and his brother, Thomas, Peter and a certain Valentine the „great” (*magnus*) turn up in our sources, who were also *familiares* of ban Vitovec. Moreover, some at least of the persons who appear at Jakószerdahely may also be attached to the neighbouring Miletinc, which, together with the sobriquet Briga, also used by the Miletinci family, raise the possibility of a close relationship (or the common origin) of the two families.¹¹⁹⁵ It should also be added that not even the whole of Jakószerdahely was owned by the Jakószerdahelyi family: alongside their kinsmen, the Kamarcai, Peter Gudovci, Philip Businci and Blaise Progovci also acquired, or inherited portions of it. Indeed, the Bontusovci, who were surely related to the Businci, later appear in the sources as Jakószerdahelyi, such as George Bontusovci, who was *szolgabíró* of Körös in the early 16th century.¹¹⁹⁶

2.2.21. Kamarcai (od Komarnica, de Kamarcha)

The origins of the Kamarcai family, which gave two vicebans to Slavonia, and a bishop to the church, are lost in the mist densely covering the early history of Slavonia. Many traces show that originally it had been one of the richest landowners of Körös county, who owned a wide stretch of lands along the Kamarca river and down to Jakószerdahely and Orbona deep in the heart of the county, covering almost the whole territory of the archdeaconry of Kamarca.¹¹⁹⁷ Yet the many persons referred to as „of Kamarca” throughout the charters cannot be all linked to each other, and the most important question of whether they were indigenous in Slavonia or newcomers in the 11th or 12th centuries cannot be answered. However, the mere fact that so many persons are mentioned as belonging to the kin-group in the 13th and 14th centuries hints at an early settlement in the

¹¹⁹³ DL 100851., DF 276827., DL 34926., DF 231656., DF 231669.

¹¹⁹⁴ DF 231953.

¹¹⁹⁵ Indeed, among the possessions which bishop Oswald petitioned from the king both Jakószerdahely and Miletinc were mentioned.

¹¹⁹⁶ See above the chapter on Elias Bosnyák.

¹¹⁹⁷ Of course, as usual with the Slavonian villages, very few of the Kamarcai lands can be localised with any certainty. What is sure, however, is that Kamarca itself lay along the river of the same name, and bordered upon the estate of Prodaviz (Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus V. 561-566. It is in the same region that Molve lays, mentioned in the possession of the Kamarcai in the middle of the 14th century. (ibidem XIII. 553.). Among the parishes of the archdeanery of Kamarca, after Prodaviz and Szentgyörgy, a Saint Martin parish church is listed, which I identify with the village later known as Kernin- and Nova szentmárton, one of the chief possessions of the Kamarcai family, and after which its members were sometimes called (Csánki: Körösmegye 67.). In view of the fact that the church of the neighbouring Prodaviz was likewise dedicated to Saint Martin, it is possible that originally the two had constituted one single estate. Plavnicaszentbenedek and Jakószerdahely were located further southwards, in the middle of the county (they still exist today as Plavnice and Velike Sredice); Koren (Veliko és Malo Korenovo), which also belonged to the Kamarcai kindred, is also situated in this region. Yet the fact that, as mentioned above, Jakószerdahely was once stated in the Angevin period to lay in Kamarca itself, shows that originally the whole region may have been called Kamarca. In any case, since Kamarca gave its name to one of the archdeaneries of the bishopric of Zagreb, its early importance seems beyond doubt.

region. As early as the middle of the 13th century they were widespread and well-known enough to be referred to simply as „the nobles of Kamarca”¹¹⁹⁸ or „those of Kamarca”.¹¹⁹⁹

There existed a „Kamarca kindred”, which János Karácsonyi enumerated among the Slavonian („*tótországi*”) kindreds.¹²⁰⁰ Some of the persons referred to as Kamarcai later can indeed be linked to this kindred. For example, the Petk(o) son of Wlchk of the Kamarca kindred, who in 1244 assisted at the introduction of ban Denis into Orbona, was surely identical to the Petk whose son Martin was mentioned in 1289;¹²⁰¹ the son of the latter, Peter Kamarcai referred in 1304 to James son of Blagonya as his kinsman.¹²⁰² In 1268 a certain comes Elias Kamarcai is mentioned,¹²⁰³ whereas in 1277 Blagonya son of Zaria emerges at Kernin,¹²⁰⁴ which, alongside Kamarca, can be regarded as one of the most ancient properties of the Kamarcai family; indeed, it is, like Jakószerdahely, sometimes referred to as laying within Kamarca itself.¹²⁰⁵ The son of Pribislaus, Cosmas is likewise called Kamarcai in 1269;¹²⁰⁶ his father, Pribislaus is surely identical to the son of Stephen who occurs in 1246 as the possessor of Zdenc,¹²⁰⁷ whereas Cosmas himself was excommunicated by the bishop of Zagreb together with Farkas son of Tolomerius and Stephen, son of Belus, ancestor of the Gorbonoki family, both members of the leading Slavonian nobility in the second half of the 13th century.¹²⁰⁸ The *gener* of this Pribislaus *comes* was Alexander, son of Cosmas of the Tibold kindred,¹²⁰⁹ and in 1324 the sons of James, son of Blagonya equally called Paul son of Mihalc of the Tibold kindred their kinsman.¹²¹⁰ Whatever the origin of this relationship,¹²¹¹ it proves beyond doubt, together with the comital title constantly attributed to them and the persons in the company of whom they turn up in the sources, that during the 13th century members of the Kamarcai family were counted among the noble elite of Slavonia. Some at least of the names used among them are obviously Slavic, which may be interpreted as a sign of their being indigeneous in the region.

The history of the family and its exact descent in the 14th century is as obscure as before. Alongside the descendants of the two sons of Blagonya, James and Jako¹²¹² *comites*,¹²¹³ a great number of

¹¹⁹⁸ terram [...] nobilium de Kamarcha: Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus V. 230.

¹¹⁹⁹ Kamarcensium (1270), limitation of the borders of Prodaviz: Ibidem 563.

¹²⁰⁰ Karácsonyi, Magyar nemzetségek 1112.

¹²⁰¹ Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus VI. 681. See also ibidem IV. 170: “*Blagona, Acha comitibus, Farkasio de Zagoria et Petk de Camarcha presentibus*”

¹²⁰² Anjou-kori Oklevéltár I. 628.

¹²⁰³ Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus V. 482.

¹²⁰⁴ Ibidem VI. 214.

¹²⁰⁵ Ibidem X. 578-579.

¹²⁰⁶ Ibidem V. 487.

¹²⁰⁷ Ibidem IV. 40-41.

¹²⁰⁸ Ibidem V. 487.

¹²⁰⁹ Klačić, Plemići Svetački 9.

¹²¹⁰ Anjou-kori Oklevéltár VIII. 265.

¹²¹¹ It is certainly worth remarking that some of the names used among the Kamarcai kindred, such as Cosmas, Zaria and Alexander, turn up equally among the Tibold kindred in the same period.

¹²¹² In this Jako I suspect the namegiver of Jakószerdahely, as already mentioned above.

other persons are equally called of Kamarca, whose identification is impossible.¹²¹⁴ Most of these persons are referred to as *comes*, and later distinguished with the master title, but not even elements of their careers can be reconstructed. The person from whom the late medieval Kamarcai family, among them the two vicebans, descended, was master Stephen, son of Andrew, who in 1363 divided his possessions with his brother, Pasa.¹²¹⁵ The father of this Stephen was probably identical to the *comes* Andrew, son of Farkas (perhaps the son of Tolomerius), who was a close kinsman of Blagonya.¹²¹⁶ In 1363 he had portions in the possessions of Jakószerdahely, Ugrunouch, Plavnica (*Plawnycha*), Kernin (*Kernyn*), Kamarca and Pothna, which all turn up later in the hands of the Kamarcai family.¹²¹⁷ Stephen seems to have had three sons, Peter, Ladislas and Nicholas, whom Ladislas son of Luke of Jakószerdahely prohibited in 1377 from the occupation of his portion at Ugrunouch.¹²¹⁸ In 1398 Peter, son of Stephen was among those who were designated as substitute arbitrators for the settlement of the dispute between the Zrinski and Blagay families.¹²¹⁹ In 1403 Peter and two of his sons, Andrew and Stephen, were sentenced for infidelity,¹²²⁰ as was their kinsman, Jako son of Blagonya, who had joined John, archbishop of Kalocsa.¹²²¹ On this occasion the father of Peter, Stephen is first mentioned as Vitéz (*Wytez*), which later became a constant element of the family's name. Yet the disgrace of the family was neither definitive nor complete.¹²²² It seems that the third son of Peter, Michael,¹²²³ was left unpunished because he had already joined bishop Eberhard; for he is surely identical to the Michael Vitéz, son of Peter, who in 1406-1408 was castellan of the Albeni family in their castles of Pölöske and Tátika.¹²²⁴ As mentioned above, soon another potential supporter of the family was present in the royal court: Denis, son of Valentine of Jakószerdahely, canon of Bács and special royal chaplain.¹²²⁵ Moreover,

¹²¹³ Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus VIII. 424-426.

¹²¹⁴ In 1366 no less than 21 persons are enumerated as nobles of Kamarca (Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus XIII. 552-561.), and the list seems still far from complete. Since no other so numerous kindred is known from Slavonia, whose members were called by the same possession, this unusual phenomenon certainly calls for some kind of explanation. It may have something to do with an early social organisation which, however, does not seem to have been attached to any castle.

¹²¹⁵ Somogy Megye Múltjából 14 (1983) 14-15. Pasa was the royal man introducing the Cudar family (in the county of Zagreb) in 1364 Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus XIII. 590-591. It is certainly him whose name survived in the late medieval village of Pasinc, likewise attested in the possession of the Kamarcai family: DF 255587.

¹²¹⁶ Anjou-kori Oklevéltár XV. 133.

¹²¹⁷ Somogy Megye Múltjából 14 (1983) 14-15.

¹²¹⁸ Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus XV. 336.

¹²¹⁹ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár I. 5308.

¹²²⁰ Ibidem II/1. 3657.

¹²²¹ DF 230834.

¹²²² In 1431 the lawsuit started by the contradiction of the Kamarcai and their fellows was still going on: DL 103552.

¹²²³ Unlike in the charter of sentence, in 1408 all three sons are listed: "*Petrum filium Stephani de [...] Kamarcha [...] ac Michaellem, Andream et Stephanum filios eiusdem*". Lukinović V. 315.

¹²²⁴ Engel, Archontológia II. 259. Engel does not regard him as member of the Kamarcai family.

¹²²⁵ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár IX. 992. It should be remarked that Anthony Koreni, who is referred to as a special royal man, that is, also a member of the court, in 1429, also belonged to the Kamarcai family. Michael, son of Barnaby Koreni was frater uterinus of Stephen, son of John of Plavnicaszentbenedek. In 1462 Ladislas, son of Anthony Koreni pledged his portions at Plavnicaszentbenedek. In 1521 Thomas Koreni was still having parts of Kamarca: DF 277175/31-32.

another Peter Vitéz, most probably the son of Michael, son of Peter,¹²²⁶ married the sister of John Megyericsei, who also joined the court of king Sigismund in the 1430s.¹²²⁷ Stephen son of Peter thus first acted as the tax collector of ban Denis Marcali,¹²²⁸ then seems to have joined together with his brother, Andrew, the bishop of Zagreb.¹²²⁹ In 1423 he was appointed by the new ban, count Herman of Cilli, as one of his vicebans, and functioned as such, although perhaps with an interruption, until early in 1427. The third brother, Andrew, was involved in the settlement of the quarrel between the city of Zagreb and the local bishop in the company of persons such as the bishop of Knin, Peter Kasztellánfi, Michael Raveni, the prothonotary of Körös, and John Tóth of Szomszédvár.¹²³⁰ In 1424 Andrew and Stephen acted as arbitrators together with Bartholomew Fáncs and George Dombai.¹²³¹ Their father, Peter also remained a man of influence in Körös: in 1417 he was elected as arbitrator together with John Roh and John Szencsei,¹²³² and may have also accompanied Sigismund to Constance.¹²³³

Although our sources get more numerous during the 15th century, the reconstruction of the individual careers is hindered by the existence of several contemporary persons bearing the same name.¹²³⁴ Thus, in the middle of the 15th century there are two persons called John, two called Andrew and two called Ladislás within the Kamarcai Vitéz family existing simultaneously, and whenever the name of their father is not given, distinction between them is far from sure. The problem is further complicated by the fact that members of the family turn up under a great variety of names, again, a highly unusual phenomenon in this late section of the Hungarian middle ages.

To start with, the Ladislás who was named among the representatives of the Slavonian nobility in August 1466 at Zagreb,¹²³⁵ then elected as one of the four *probi viri* in 1468, who had the right to elect the persons who would then assist the episcopal tax collectors,¹²³⁶ seems to have been the son of viceban Stephen rather than that of Nicholas Kamarcai. There is a charter surviving which he issued under his own seal in June 1461¹²³⁷, and he was certainly titled *egregius*.¹²³⁸ A much more important figure of the family is John Vitéz (commonly called John Vitéz junior), canon and later

¹²²⁶ DL 103558 (1433).

¹²²⁷ See below the chapter on the Megyericsei family.

¹²²⁸ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár VII. 2275, 2401-2402.

¹²²⁹ Ibidem VIII. 1135.

¹²³⁰ Lukinović, Povijesni spomenici VI. 460-461.

¹²³¹ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár XI. 564.

¹²³² Ibidem VI. 664, 803.

¹²³³ Ibidem V. 95.

¹²³⁴ And things are even more complicated by those persons, likewise called Kamarcai, who did not belong to the Vitéz branch of the kindred, and will be treated separately below.

¹²³⁵ DF 252046.

¹²³⁶ DF 252047.

¹²³⁷ Levéltári Közlemények 6 (1928) 143.

¹²³⁸ DL 34896.

provost of Várad, then bishop of Szerém (Srijem) and Veszprém.¹²³⁹ That he was a member of the Kamarcai Vitéz family is made evident by a charter from 1475, when it was upon the instigation of master John Vitéz of Kamarca, provost of Várad, that George Forster, castellan of Szentgyörgyvár, sent his own *familiars* upon the estate of Garignica, then in the possession of viceban Nicholas Pozsegai.¹²⁴⁰ He was probably the son of Peter Kamarcai who is mentioned in 1433, and thus the grandson of Michael; in this case his mother was a member of the Megyericsei family. His church career was apparently prepared by John Vitéz, bishop of Várad who, however, was certainly not his uncle.¹²⁴¹ Also member of the Vitéz of Kamarca family was another ecclesiastic, namely Michael, son of Peter Vitéz. Like John, he had studied in Italy, and died as as provost of Zagreb in 1499. If our identification of bishop John with the John, son of Peter, who turns up in 1465 is correct, then he and Michael may have been brothers.¹²⁴² Another man of letters from the same family was Nicholas Kamarcai, son of Ladislás.¹²⁴³ Since the father of this Ladislás was called Nicholas,¹²⁴⁴ he was evidently not identical with the son of viceban Stephen; he could be the son of either Nicholas son of Stephen, or rather that of Nicholas son of Michael.¹²⁴⁵ Between 1464 and 1481 he is frequently attested as a notary of the royal court, and in 1478 he is referred to as the deputy (*vicesgerens*) of the famous prothonotary of the palatine, John Korotnai.¹²⁴⁶ He also acted as a royal man as well as a special deputy in Slavonia,¹²⁴⁷ and took part in arbitrations.¹²⁴⁸ In May 1474 he was listed among the representatives of the Slavonian nobility. As late as 1487 we still find him in the company of the judge royal, Stephen Bátori, then staying in Transylvania.¹²⁴⁹

¹²³⁹ His career was reconstructed by Vilmos Fraknói, “Mátyás király magyar diplomatái XIV. Ifjabb Vitéz János” [The Hungarian Diplomats of King Matthias. John Vitéz the Younger], in *Századok* 33 (1899) 291-309 (he regards him as the son of the elder John’s brother). More recently: Gergely Sonnevend, “Ifjabb Vitéz János veszprémi püspök” [Bishop John Vitéz the Younger], In László Kilián and Pál Rainer eds., *Veszprém reneszánsza 2008*. Veszprém, 2008. 121. He also regards the “elder” Vitéz as his paternal uncle.

¹²⁴⁰ DL 103765: “*de consilio et voluntate honorabilis magistri Johannis Wythez de Kamarcza prepositi Waradiensis*”

¹²⁴¹ The Zrednai belonged to a different, poorer stratum of the local nobility. Indeed, it can be put forward as a probable hypothesis that the name Vitéz, which was not used in the elder Vitéz’s lifetime, shifted in fact from the younger John to the elder, as the former’s prestige grew and he ascended the ecclesiastical hierarchy.

¹²⁴² Bishop John and provost Michael are regarded as the brothers of Janus Pannonius by Hroje Petrić, who accordingly proposed that the great poet should be called of Kamarca. See Hroje Petrić, Was Janus Pannonius (1434-1372) actually born in Komarnica, Podravina? In *Podravina – časopis za multidisciplinarna istraživanja*, vol. I. br. 1., Koprivnica 2002, 75-82. The proposal is rather absurd and certainly wrong. Let it suffice to remark here that the brother of Janus, called Michael, died already before 1458. On the other hand, he did have a cousin equally called Michael, the son of Peter; his mother was also called Barbara, who, however, cannot be confused with the mother of Janus, for, whereas the latter had died already in 1463, the other Barbara was still alive in 1481. Moreover, both sons of Peter Csezmicsei remained in the world.

¹²⁴³ In fact, he is never called Vitéz, but certainly belonged to the same kindred.

¹²⁴⁴ DL 34311.

¹²⁴⁵ The son of Michael, Nicholas, is mentioned in 1411 as a familiaris of Martin Ders. Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár III. 1083.

¹²⁴⁶ See Bónis, *Jogtudó értelmiség* 296. (n. 16.)

¹²⁴⁷ DL 103789 (1476), DL 103834 (1479).

¹²⁴⁸ *Levéltári Közlemények* 13 (1935) 238. (1473); DL 100851 (1475).

¹²⁴⁹ *Somogy Megye Múltjából* 14 (1983) 69.

Among the other members of the family in the second half of the 15th century, Andrew, Thomas and John occur frequently in the sources, mostly as *familiares* and neighbours. Andrew and Thomas were surely brothers,¹²⁵⁰ but it is not known who their father was; all three are sometimes referred to as the „sons of Vitéz”, such as in 1478 on the list of the Slavonian nobility. In 1469 Andrew Vitéz of Novaszentmárton is mentioned in connection with the anti-Ottoman mobilisation of the Slavonian nobility,¹²⁵¹ whereas in 1476 John and Thomas Vitéz, likewise called of Novaszentmárton, are listed among the *familiares* of George Forster, castellan of Szentgyörgyvár,¹²⁵² but later they may have subjected themselves immediately to the Ernuszt family, as had John Kamarcai.¹²⁵³ Ladislav Kamarcai was designated as a royal man in 1481.¹²⁵⁴ In the same year at the congregation of Zagreb, alongside the wife of John Vitéz of Kernin, who was proscribed for concubinage with the parish priest of Mindszent, Ladislav Tulovai was also put on the list for homicide.¹²⁵⁵ At Tulova John Vitéz had a *castellum* in 1490, which is mentioned in the description of a violent assault launched by the Ernuszt brothers against the Szerdahelyi family.¹²⁵⁶ Whether this John is identical with the master John Kamarcai who appears in 1489 as a notary of the royal court,¹²⁵⁷ and is later frequently attested as a special man sent from the banal seat,¹²⁵⁸ and then turns up several times in different missions in the accounts of treasurer Sigismund Ernuszt,¹²⁵⁹ is not sure; what is beyond doubt is that the fact that in 1479 and 1480 some banal charters, confirmed with the seal of the *ispán* of Zagreb, are issued at Tulova, should be connected to either Nicholas or John Kamarcai.¹²⁶⁰ The daughter of John (or of one of the two, if they are not identical), called Veronica, married Francis Ostfi of Asszonyfalva, a well-to-do nobleman from the county of Vas, who was *alispán* of the county of Sopron, and king Wladislaw II appointed him as *ispán* of the same county in 1506.¹²⁶¹ With this marriage Francis also obtained portions at Kernin,¹²⁶² although he was obliged to quarrel with John Ernuszt and Michael Kerhen for them; the latter occupied some of the Kamarcai lands after marrying the widow of John Vitéz.

¹²⁵⁰ DF 276827 (1475): “*Andrea Wythezfy, Thoma fratre eiusdem, Johanne Wythezfy de Kernyn alias de dicta Jakozerdahel*”

¹²⁵¹ DL 17204: “*Andreas Vitez de Novazenthmarthon unacum suis peditibus et equitibus*”

¹²⁵² DL 103785, 103786.

¹²⁵³ DF 262134. In 1488 he is still in the service of the Ernuszt family: DF 262151. Novaszentmárton is certainly identical to the Kerninszentmárton mentioned in 1431 (DL 103552), and is called Plavnicaszentmárton in 1524 (DF 277175/137-140).

¹²⁵⁴ DL 34311.

¹²⁵⁵ Tringli, Szlavóniai közgyűlés 316.

¹²⁵⁶ Somogy Megye Múltjából 4 (1973) 8.

¹²⁵⁷ Iván Borsa ed., A Justh család levéltára 1274-1525 (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1991) 370.

¹²⁵⁸ DL 68716 (1493), DF 231904 (1495).

¹²⁵⁹ Engel, Geschichte 47., 48., 49., 140 (here as tax-collector in the county of Abaúj).

¹²⁶⁰ DF 275078.

¹²⁶¹ DL 86434. See also in chapter 2.2.51. below.

¹²⁶² Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 28.

The son of John, Michael Vitéz, brother of Veronica, entered the church, and in 1502 was already canon and archdeacon in the bishopric of Veszprém.¹²⁶³ In 1504 he pledged all his portions in the Kamarcai lands to his sister and her husband for a thousand florins.¹²⁶⁴ He is generally thought to have been the nephew of bishop John Vitéz the younger, which sufficiently accounts for his ecclesiastical career and his appearance in the church of Veszprém. Indeed, he seems to have gone there together with his uncle, for previously he had been canon at Várad, presumably in connection with the provostship of John Vitéz the younger. Archdeacon of Buda from at least 1498, then emerges as Hungarian confessor of the Saint Peter cathedral at Rome.¹²⁶⁵ After his return he also becomes archdeacon of Szabolcs and canon of Eger. In 1524 he was already provost of the Saint Nicholas collegiate chapter at Székesfehérvár.¹²⁶⁶

In 1502 among those in the name of whom provost Michael put forward his protest was Vitus Garázda of Kamarca, his *frater*, who seems to have been the most outstanding member of the family around the turn of the century. In 1502 he is called the son of Peter, and is co-possessing the village of Palicsnaszentpéter (Severin/Polična) together with other members of the Kamarcai family. In 1465 two Peters are mentioned, yet their sons then are called John and Andrew respectively;¹²⁶⁷ consequently, Vitus cannot be linked to any of the branches of the family,¹²⁶⁸ nor it is known whence his sobriquet Garázda, never used by his kinsmen, came. All we know is that in 1495 the greatest part of the Kamarcai lands was registered in his possession.¹²⁶⁹ It was not only the major part of the family possessions that he held in his hands, moreover: before 1495 he had married the daughter of John Kéméndi of the Győr kindred, and obtained with her hands portions in at least ten villages in the county of Baranya.¹²⁷⁰

In 1495 he was already one of the chief *familiares* of bishop Sigismund of Pécs.¹²⁷¹ Presumably after the fall of the bishop from the royal grace he joined duke John Corvin, whose castellan at

¹²⁶³ DL 86427. The charter is damaged, so the exact title of Michael cannot be read, but it can be reconstructed from the charter cited in the next note.

¹²⁶⁴ DL 46668. In this charter he is called Wythez de Kamaria, which is surely an error. There existed a Slavonian family called Vitéz of Kamarja, which, however, had nothing to do with the Kamarcai.

¹²⁶⁵ Bálint Lakatos, “Kálnai Imre főesperesi és királyi titkári kinevezése (1523-1525). Adalékok a pápaság magyar személyi politikájához Mohács előtt” [The Appointment of Emeric Kálnai as Archdeacon and Royal Secretary. On the Personal Politics of the Papacy in Hungary before 1526], in *Századok* 144 (2010) 415. and n. 23. On the career of Mihály see József Köblös, *Az egyházi középréteg Mátyás és a Jagellók korában [The Ecclesiastical Middle Class in the Age of Matthias and the Jagellonians]* (Budapest: MTA Történettudományi Intézete, 1994) 376-377., who, however, also treats him as belonging to the Zrednai family.

¹²⁶⁶ DF 229763. Both John Vitéz the younger and Michael Vitéz were famous humanists, educated in Italy, but an exposition of their literary activities cannot, of course, make part of the present dissertation.

¹²⁶⁷ DF 255587.

¹²⁶⁸ Of course, he may have been born after 1465, or still a minor at that time.

¹²⁶⁹ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 13, under the heading of Nowazenthmarthon.

¹²⁷⁰ DF 260410: “*generum generose domine relicte Johannis Kemendi*”; DF 260155: she is called Susan, the villages enumerated. On the origins of the family see Engel, *Középkori magyar genealógia*, Győr nem I. Óvári ág I. tábla.

¹²⁷¹ DF 260410: “*egregium dominum Vitalem Garazda de Kamarcza [...] familiarem eiusdem domini nostri (sc. episcopi) specialem*”, who “*in continuis serviciis ipsius domini nostri occupari debet*”

Rakonok he was in 1498.¹²⁷² In 1502 he was still in ducal or royal service, for at that time he commanded 200 cavalry, with whom he descended upon the estates of bishop Luke of Zagreb.¹²⁷³ Early in 1506 he was appointed by bans Andrew Both and Mark Horvát as one of their Slavonian vicebans, but his service was cut short by his death sometime after 20 April in the same year. He seems to have died fairly young, or (re)married very late, for his son was a mere 8 years old, and each of his four daughters was younger.¹²⁷⁴ Akacius, who was sometimes titled *egregius*,¹²⁷⁵ married the daughter of George Kerecsényi, episcopal *vicarius* of Zagreb, and thus became the brother-in-law of viceban Paul Kerecsényi.¹²⁷⁶ In 1526 he was still recorded as having portions in seven villages, and a noble house at Podbrezje.¹²⁷⁷ He had a son called Francis and a daughter, Christine. His sister, Elisabeth, married Coloman Huszár of Debrék (from the county of Somogy).¹²⁷⁸

Of course, other members of the Kamarcai family also remained active before and after the turn of the century. The sons of John Kamarcai, Andrew and Nicholas turn up here and there in the sources, but they remain no more than names to us;¹²⁷⁹ prior to 1498 Andrew was subjected to ecclesiastical punishment upon petition by the parish priest of Mindszent.¹²⁸⁰ In 1513 John Vitézfi is mentioned together with his sons, Louis and David, and Nicholas Vitézfi with his own called Gaspar.¹²⁸¹ Michael Kamarcai, who in 1493 is mentioned as a *familiaris* of Sigismund and John Ernusz, ¹²⁸² may have been the brother of master Nicholas, but nothing is known about him thereafter. The same holds for the Francis of Tulova (*Thulowa*), who turns up once in the course of an inquisition in 1493, and surely belongs to the Kamarcai family.¹²⁸³ One Nicholas Vitéz, also identified as Kamarcai, was present with ban Egervári at Buda in March 1492, although his name, together with those of some of his companions, is missing from the charter of the Slavonian and Croatian estates.¹²⁸⁴

Other members of the family also figure in our sources, but their identification is even more uncertain. Alongside Akacius Garázda, the sons of Ladislas Kamarcai, John, Nicholas and Martin also turn up here and there in the 1520s.¹²⁸⁵ This Nicholas, *egregius*, had a noble manor at Kamarca

¹²⁷² DF 232986.

¹²⁷³ DF 252223.

¹²⁷⁴ DL 104160. In 1507 his widow had 19 tenant sessions at Minglech.

¹²⁷⁵ Eg. DL 33909.

¹²⁷⁶ DF 277175/ 25-26.

¹²⁷⁷ DF 277175/298-300.

¹²⁷⁸ DF 277175/137-140. Stephen Huszár of Debrék is in the service of the Bátori family in 1522: DL 25647.

¹²⁷⁹ DF 233293; DL 33899.

¹²⁸⁰ DL 86422.

¹²⁸¹ DL 47056.

¹²⁸² DF 255915.

¹²⁸³ “*Franciscus nobilis de Thulowa*”, DF 233293.

¹²⁸⁴ DL 38645.

¹²⁸⁵ DF 277175/ 31-32: “*Ladislaus de Kamarcza ac Johannes, Nicolaus et Martinus filii eiusdem*”

in 1524.¹²⁸⁶ It may have been either his father, Ladislav, or his namesake nicknamed „Kyzelica”,¹²⁸⁷ who was castellan of Szentgyörgyvár in the service of the Ernuszt family in 1523.¹²⁸⁸ John son of Ladislav entered the church,¹²⁸⁹ and (after Mohács, as it seems) became the chaplain of bishop Simon of Zagreb.¹²⁹⁰ In 1527 he was having portions at Alsó and Felsőkamarcza, Zdelja and Tulova, which he then pledged to his own brother Nicholas.¹²⁹¹

2.2.22. Kapitánfi of Desnice (Kapitanić od Dišnika, Capithanfy de Desniche)

The oldest known male ancestor of the Kapitánfi family was apparently a certain Rodinus (Rodin, Raden) who seems to have lived around the turn of the 13th and 14th centuries.¹²⁹² Unfortunately, it is impossible to identify him with any of the not too numerous persons bearing the name Rodin in the same period. The only possible exception is perhaps the *comes* Rodinus, who in 1289 sold some land to James, son of Blagonya before the chapter of Csázma.¹²⁹³ It seems that originally the family was named after the possession of Podgorja, where the Kasztellánfi of Szentlélek also had some portions, and they sometimes bore its name even in the 15th century.¹²⁹⁴ The possession of Desnice itself, however, was in the hands of people whose eventual relationship to Rodinus and his descendants cannot be established.¹²⁹⁵ In the middle of the 14th century we see Bartholomew,¹²⁹⁶ son of Matthew „Cseh” and his own son, Paul, and Lökös, son of Radek and his sons, Lawrence, Michael and John, likewise owning at Desnice, and the relationship of at least the latter to Rodinus can be demonstrated.¹²⁹⁷ In fact, in a charter certainly issued in the 1350s, which survives in a transcription from 1488, master Lökös, son of Rodik is called of Desnice, and somewhat later our Rodin is said to be his uterine brother.¹²⁹⁸ It is nevertheless conspicuous that Rodinus, whose son,

¹²⁸⁶ DL 23932.

¹²⁸⁷ DF 232673:” *nobiles Ladislaum Kyzelycza de Kamarcza et Joseph filium suum*”

¹²⁸⁸ DF 232656.

¹²⁸⁹ DF 277175/294-95 (1526): *presbiter*

¹²⁹⁰ DF 277175/333:” *Honorabilis et nobilis dominus Johannes de Kamarcza capellanus reverendissimi domini Simonis episcopi ecclesie Zagrabiensis*”

¹²⁹¹ DF 277175/333.

¹²⁹² Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus XI. 619:” *nobilis vir magister Dominicus filius Rodini*”

¹²⁹³ Ibidem VI. 681.

¹²⁹⁴ Ibidem XIII. 300:” *Dominicus filius Raden de possessione sua de eadem Podgoria*”; Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár IV. 1039. (1413), where the name Rodynus returns once more; as late as 1436:” *Stephano filio Blasii dicti Capitan de Podgorya*” (DL 100516).

¹²⁹⁵ 10 November 1256 (Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus V. 27.):” *Petri, Gregorii, Martini, Bartholomei, Johannis et Dominici filiorum Berizlay [...], item prima meta tercie terre predictorum filiorum Berizlay que Disnicha vocatur*”; 11 November 1256 [ibidem 38.]:” *ad tres metas, quarum una est Johannis, altera filiorum Berizlai [...], tercia Georgii Berivoy*”; 1257 [ibid. 74.]:” *terras Desniche, Bursonouch, Pukur et Lunheta nuncupatas invenit per Martinum comitem filium Tusk jobagionem dicti castri [sc. Gerzenche] ab antiquo pacifice possideri*”. This last charter seems to attest that these people were originally *várjobbágyok*, like their neighbours the Berivojszentváni.

¹²⁹⁶ Royal (ducal) man in 1353 (Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus XI. 196.)

¹²⁹⁷ Ibidem XIII. 300. 1373:” *Demetrio filio Dominici filii Roden de Podgorya et fratribus suis carnalibus ac Laurencio, Mychaele et Johanne filiis Bekus [recte: Lekus!] filii Radyk* (Ibidem XIV. 534-535.)

¹²⁹⁸ DL 101049:” *magister Leukeus filius Rodyk de Desnyche [...]* predicto magistro Leukus et Rodyno fratri suo uterino”. DL 107004 (1380):” *possessionem Rypna alio nomine Myhalfelde vocatam apud manus filiorum Leukus filii Radyk de Desnycze*”

Dominic, was beyond doubt a man of authority in the region, never turns up in the sources. What is certain, however, is that none of the names Rodin, Rodik and Lökös is very common in the region, but their eventual provenance should be left to be determined by further investigations.

In 1350 it was upon the request of Dominic, son of Rodinus, titled as *nobilis vir magister*, that the chapter of Csázma transcribed the decree of ban Matthew from 1273.¹²⁹⁹ Further information also seem to prove that Dominic already belonged to the noble elite of the region. In a lawsuit against the Beriojszentiváni brothers in 1353 he was represented by Majos, son of Alexander, a member of the kin descended from palatine Majos.¹³⁰⁰ The arbitrators elected in the same case by Dominic were James, provost of Zagreb, John, archdeacon of Gercse, and master John, son of John from the kin of Isaac.¹³⁰¹ In 1354 Dominic himself was appointed as an arbitrator in the company of George, ducal prothonotary, Cosmas, his colleague in the service of the ban, and master John Hosszúbácsi from the Dorozsma kindred.¹³⁰²

In 1394 Nicholas, son of Dominic was commissioned together with members of the Kasztellánfi, Szencsei and Nelepec families to testify in the case of the infidelity of Blaise Csernarekai.¹³⁰³ One of his brothers, Paul was sentenced to capital punishment in 1404 for having joined the prior of Vrana, and his possessions were donated by king Sigismund to the sons of the third brother, Demetrius, who are for the first time called „sons of captain” (*filiu capitani*). Since initially this name was apparently only used by the sons of Demetrius, it seems reasonable to suppose that it was Demetrius who acquired the sobriquet, although it is impossible to tell how.¹³⁰⁴ Paul was granted pardon some months later, however, and his possessions given back to him.¹³⁰⁵ Consequently he disappears from Slavonia, to be followed by the sons of Nicholas in the 1440s,¹³⁰⁶ and only the descendants of Demetrius can be followed without any break into the 16th century.

Among his four sons, Stephen and Andrew married Elisabeth and Margaret respectively, both daughters of Dominic Podversai (Podvrško) from the neighbouring county of Pozsega.¹³⁰⁷ Andrew seems indeed to have moved to the possessions of his wife, for some years he was called of

¹²⁹⁹ Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus XI. 619.

¹³⁰⁰ Ibidem XII. 209-210.

¹³⁰¹ Ibidem XII. 210-211.

¹³⁰² Ibidem XII. 229, the name falsely read as Radou.

¹³⁰³ Ibidem XVII. 584.

¹³⁰⁴ In 1380 the sons of Dominic, son of Rodin are called of Desnicha (DL 100174); in 1394 one of them, namely Nicholas, is still simply referred to as of Podgorja (Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus XVII. 584.). It is to be noted, however, that Demetrius does not occur in our sources, so it is possible that he was in fact absent from Slavonia for some time, and returned there with the name of capitanus, which he had somewhere with services unknown to us. This, of course, is no more than a hypothesis.

¹³⁰⁵ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár II. 5970.

¹³⁰⁶ In October 1413 the two sons of Nicholas: Nicholas and Rodinus occur in the sources, the latter for the last time (Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár IV. 1039.). Nicholas son of Nicholas is still alive in 1441 (Levéltári Közlemények 11 (1933) 81.).

¹³⁰⁷ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár III. 2906.

Kopanch/Kupanch, one of the villages belonging to the castle of Podversa,¹³⁰⁸ and in one case he was even referred to as Podversai.¹³⁰⁹ In 1411 he went together with his father-in-law to the Venetian war among the troops of bishop Eberhard,¹³¹⁰ and in 1415 participated to the catastrophic campaign launched by Sigismund to Bosnia.¹³¹¹ In the meantime he was viceban of Croatia in the service of Petermann Albeni.¹³¹² His brother Blaise was *alispán* of Valkó for the Újlaki brothers in 1415-1416.¹³¹³ A certain Emeric, who married their cousin, the daughter of Paul, son of Dominic, and thus acquired portions in the estate of Desnice, was castellan of ban John Maróti, although it is not known in which of his castles.¹³¹⁴

The daughter of Blaise, Helen (Ilko) was the wife of the Croatian Domsa, viceban of Croatia in the 1420s and 1430s.¹³¹⁵ Nothing is known about her brother, Stephen, who was the father of three sons, all of whom were esteemed members of the Slavonian nobility in the second half of the 15th century. All we know is that he was present together with his kinsman, Nicholas son of Nicholas, at the assembly held by ban Matko Tallóci in 1439. Nor do we know how he had acquired the possessions in the county of Zala which in 1446 he gave to Clement Tapán.¹³¹⁶

His sons, Andrew, Stephen and George, who owned together the estate of Desnice and the *castellum* there, were sentenced to loss of property against Matthew Maróti at the banal court in 1467, but seem this time to have survived the affair unharmed.¹³¹⁷ In 1474 Andrew was one of the envoys sent by the Slavonian nobility to king Matthias.¹³¹⁸ At that time he may already have stayed in the service of bishop Oswald of Zagreb, where he is attested a year later.¹³¹⁹ Sometime before 10 January 1477 he was appointed by Ladislas Egervári as his viceban of Slavonia. He held the office first together with Ladislas Szencsei, and later with Peter Bocskai. His fate was sealed, however, when he married the widow of Nicholas Pozsegai, and moved to her *castellum* of Garignica.¹³²⁰ For king Matthias decided to donate the estate to an Italian follower of his wife, called Sabatellus Viola, and accordingly ordered Andrew Kapitánfi to hand it over immediately to the royal commissioner. Andrew made desperate efforts in order to save his new acquisition, going to Buda in the first days

¹³⁰⁸ “*In villa Kupanch vocata residens*” (DF 230948, abstract: Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár V. 1064.); Ibidem VI. 202.

¹³⁰⁹ Ibidem VI. 108.

¹³¹⁰ Ibidem III. 727.

¹³¹¹ Ibidem IX. 664: “*in serviciis nostris regalibus videlicet in exercituali expeditione in anno 1415 preterito contra Hervoyam ducem instaurata existens*”

¹³¹² Engel, Archontológia I. 25.

¹³¹³ Ibidem I. 222. (not identified as Desnicei).

¹³¹⁴ DL 43775. The charter mentions his *familiares* and *jobagiones* at John Maróti’s possession of Peker, but no fortification is known to have stood then at Peker.

¹³¹⁵ Lajos Thallóczy and Samu Barabás eds., A Frangepán család oklevéltára I 1133-1453 (Budapest: MTA, 1910) 337. Engel, Archontológia I. 26.

¹³¹⁶ Csánki, Történelmi földrajz III. 158. I was unable to find the original document.

¹³¹⁷ DL 106998.

¹³¹⁸ Kukuljević, Jura regni 211-212.

¹³¹⁹ DF 261839.

¹³²⁰ DL 103890.

of March 1482, then, having left emptyhanded, turned to his lord, ban Egervári for help. All was in vain, however, and finally Balthasar Batthyány occupied the castle of Garignica upon royal orders, and he also received from Matthias the portions of Andrew at Desnice, confiscated for infidelity. András, at least according to his own version of the story, was even compelled to leave Hungary together with his son for some time.

Although Andrew Kapitánfi was granted royal pardon in December 1483, and was allowed to try to reobtain his family possessions through legal procedure, he had no time to bring the case to completion. It was his son, Matthias, who finally made an agreement with Batthyány and his father-in-law, Ladislav Hermanfi: he was given back some of the portions of his father at Desnice, and contracted in return a treaty of mutual inheritance with his opponents. The treaty became valid when John, the son of Matthias Kapitánfi died heirless, although Balthasar Batthyány did have then some difficulties in securing his lawful inheritance.¹³²¹

Not counting the unwanted „cohabitation” at Desnice with Batthány and Hermanfi, the political misfortune of Andrew Kapitánfi did not have disastrous consequences for his two brothers. At the very time of the affair George Kapitánfi was staying at Bihács likewise in the service of ban Ladislav Egervári.¹³²² In January 1487 we find him at Buda as one of the commissioners authorised by the Slavonian nobility to negotiate with bishop Oswald.¹³²³ One and a half year later, in July 1488 he is again busy with the same matter, this time at Vienna, the new capital of king Matthias.¹³²⁴ In March 1494 he was sent, together with George Szencsei, by the Slavonian nobility to king Wladislaw,¹³²⁵ and in 1496 he was likewise member of the delegation sent to the king to petition the renovation of the coat-of-arms of Slavonia.¹³²⁶ In the meantime he had been member of the group of arbitrators mediating between George Kasztellánfi and Francis Beriszló at Körös.¹³²⁷ In a letter from 1494 he called George Kanizsai his lord, and four years later he still seems to have stayed in his service.¹³²⁸ Much less is known about the third brother, Stephen: in August 1479 he was leading the troops of count Charles Korbáviai, presumably in connection with the great Ottoman raid of that year.¹³²⁹ On one occasion, in 1484, he even turns up as a royal man in a case

¹³²¹ On the whole case, with all the references, see Pálosfalvi, “Grebeni Hermanfi” I. 857-863.

¹³²² DL 102216.

¹³²³ DF 268110.

¹³²⁴ DF 268111.

¹³²⁵ Kukuljević, *Iura regni* 228-229.

¹³²⁶ *Ibidem* 234.

¹³²⁷ DF 231944.

¹³²⁸ DL 102281: asks Balthasar Batthyány “*quod nobis a domino nostro videlicet magnifico domino Georgio de Kanisa sanitati eius et ibi nunc est ad noticiam dare velitis*”. DL 108324: in his letter to György Kasztellánfi he refers to *dominus noster et vester*, which makes clear that it cannot be other than György Kanizsai, whose deputy Kasztellánfi was at that time.

¹³²⁹ DL 102201: (around 15 August 1479) “*egregius Stephanus Capitanfy de Desnycze [...] quasdam gentes exercitiales homines videlicet magnifici domini Karoli groff dicti de Korbawya [...] conduxisset*”

concerning Stephen Csupor.¹³³⁰ One of the two surviving brothers seems to have served ban Ladislas Egervári in 1492, but it is impossible to know which of them.¹³³¹

George Kapitánfi married Dorothy Kakas of Sokló, daughter of Paul, from the county of Somogy.¹³³² No children born from this marriage seem to have come to adulthood, if there were any. In 1521 Dorothy declared before the monastery of Somogy her intention to join the Dominican nunnery on the Island of Rabbits.¹³³³ The marriage of Stephen with Margaret Roh of Décse¹³³⁴ was much more prolific: at least three sons: Thomas, Gaspar and Sylvester,¹³³⁵ and three daughters were born to them. About the sons we know almost nothing, except that they all seem to have died fairly young.¹³³⁶ Sylvester, whose widow, Catherine Bevenyöd married John Szencsei, also had a son equally called Sylvester, who, however, died before 1519.¹³³⁷ Among the daughters, Catherine married Peter Simonfi of Tapolcaszentgyörgy, a neighbouring nobleman of modest wealth, Sophie became the wife of Michael Dombai of the Győr kindred, whereas Potenciana married Ladislas Becsevölgyi, member of an exceptionally widespread noble family from the county of Zala, who had somehow acquired portions in the estate of Berivojszentiván.¹³³⁸

The line of Andrew Kapitánfi equally died out before Mohács. The only known son of Andrew himself, called Matthias, married a woman of unknown origin, named Catherine, and had a son called John, who must have died young.¹³³⁹ This means that the whole branch descended from Demetrius disappeared by the early 16th century, and was only continued on the female line by the three daughters of Stephen Kapitánfi and their children in case they had any.

The entire Kapitánfi family was not extinct, however. It is quite unexpectedly that a certain Paul Kapitánfi appears in the 1480s, not in Slavonia, it is true, but in the county of Bács. In 1480 he was *officialis* of the nuns of the Island of Rabbits at the important market town of Szond.¹³⁴⁰ He owned a portion of Jakabfalwa in the county of Bács, and in 1488 he is recorded to have held some land in

¹³³⁰ DF 255889.

¹³³¹ DL 38645.

¹³³² DL 50352 (1464): daughter of Paul Kakas of Sokló. DL 24033: Paulo Kakas de Soklo aliter de Ewrs. DL 23588 (1521): “*Domina Dorothea relicta quondam Georgii Kapythanffy de Desnycze filia videlicet olim Pauli Kakas de dicta Soklyo*”. Her first husband was Albert Nagy, captain of Belgrade, who may have been called of Őrs (Ewrs) precisely because of his marriage with Dorothy. DL 101549.

¹³³³ See the last charter cited in the previous note.

¹³³⁴ DL 103787, the daughter of Ladislas Roh.

¹³³⁵ DL 107065 (1486).

¹³³⁶ Thomas and Sylvester were still alive in 1512 (DL 101440), when they made an accord with Balthasar Batthyány before the chapter of Csázma with regard to the portions of the late Andrew Kapitánfi in the estate of Desnice. By 1515, however, both had died without offspring, for then their portions at Desnice were donated by king Wladislaw II to Michael Pálóci and Ladislas Kanizsai. DL 101481. In 1524 the widow of Thomas Kapitánfi tried to alienate her dower to Balthasar Batthyány the younger: DF 277175/118-119.

¹³³⁷ DL 101531. On John Szencsei see section on the Szencsei family.

¹³³⁸ DL 101481.

¹³³⁹ DI 101077. 101531.

¹³⁴⁰ DL 18438: “*Paulus Kapithanfy officialis [...] in opido ipsarum (sc. sanctimonialium) Zond vocato*”

the county of Csanád as well.¹³⁴¹ His wife was a local noblewoman called Justine Fürfalvi.¹³⁴² Thirty years later we meet Vitus Kapitánfi of Desnice among the neighbours of the possessions of Louis Sulyok of Lekcse in the county of Bács.¹³⁴³ In the next year this same Vitus Kapitánfi appears as of Dóka (*de Doka*), and the possession of Kiszető in the county of Temes is identified as his place of residence.¹³⁴⁴ In 1519 it is revealed that this Vitus was in fact the son of Paul Kapitánfi,¹³⁴⁵ and they owned portions in a handful of villages in the three neighbouring counties of Bács, Csanád and Temes. But how did they get there? There is no answer to this question, but the relationship between them and the Slavonian Kapitánfi is certain, for when the latter became extinct by 1520, Vitus Kapitánfi appeared together with his two sons, Stephen and George, in Slavonia and claimed their share in the estate of Desnice. In 1525 they were still quarelling with Balthasar Batthyány in this matter.¹³⁴⁶ It is surely this Stephen, son of Vitus, who married after Mohács Barbara Szencsei.¹³⁴⁷ It is in fact very probable that this branch of the family descended from the Paul who was sentenced for infidelity in 1404, but there is no way to prove it for the time being.

2.2.23. Kasztellánfi of Szentlélek (Kaštelanović od Svetog Duha, Castellanfy, Kastellanffy de Zenthlelek)¹³⁴⁸

The ancestor of the family, the Italian Peter, came to Slavonia from Seravalle in Italy¹³⁴⁹ sometime before 1320. He married Anne, the daughter of Paul Pekri of the Tétény kindred, and thus obtained portions of the extensive Pekri lands, namely the possession of Szentlélek and that of Dimicskfölde. Peter, who for some time was *ispán* of the „county” of Csázma,¹³⁵⁰ soon acquired other lands, such as Kiskutenica and Podgorja in the district of Gerzence.¹³⁵¹ Although Peter was later remembered to have been of non noble birth,¹³⁵² in the 1340s he was titled both noble and master,¹³⁵³ it is open to question what role in this and in the further rise of his descendants was played by his marriage with a woman belonging to one of the most illustrious and richest kindreds of Slavonia.

¹³⁴¹ Arnold Ipolyi, Imre Nagy and Dezső Véghely eds., *Hazai Okmánytár* (Codex diplomaticus patrius Hung.) V (Győr, 1873) 366-368.

¹³⁴² Lawrence Fürfalvi was *alispán* of Bodrog in the early 1390s: Engel, *Archontológia* I. 115.

¹³⁴³ DL 23220 (1519).

¹³⁴⁴ DL 23437: “*possessionem Kyzethew predictam consequenterque domum et habitacionem annotati Viti Kapythan*”

¹³⁴⁵ DL 101538.

¹³⁴⁶ DL 101590.

¹³⁴⁷ Klaić, *Plemici Svetački* 46.

¹³⁴⁸ See most recently Maček – Jurković, *Rodoslov plemića*. This excellent book suffers from two basic weaknesses. First, it relies almost exclusively on charters which are currently preserved in Croatian archives. Second, it adopts somewhat uncritically information from old and dated Croatian works. I will reflect on the consequences of these weaknesses in the footnotes.

¹³⁴⁹ Today Vittorio Veneto.

¹³⁵⁰ Engel, *Archontológia* II. 125.

¹³⁵¹ Smičiklas, *Codex diplomaticus* XI. 505-506.

¹³⁵² “*Petro dicto Castellan [...] homini utputa ignobili et impossessionato*” DL 11606, 1424.

¹³⁵³ *Ibidem* XI. 505: “*nobilis vir magister Petrus dictus Castellan*”

One of his sons, Ladislav, who married from the Bosnian Hrvatinić family, probably acquainted himself with Nicholas Szécsi during the latter's banate in Slavonia, and later followed him to Hungary and became his *alispán* of Pressburg.¹³⁵⁴ In 1384 he was still staying in Hungary, for in that year he made an accord before the chapter of Fehérvár with another *familiaris* of Nicholas Szécsi, master John Besenyő, according to which they would divide between each other all their lands already possessed and those to be acquired later in the county of Gerzence.¹³⁵⁵ Both master Ladislav and his brothers joined king Sigismund right in the beginning of his reign, and although their lands were consequently devastated by the king's opponents, their decision paid off abundantly later. First they were accorded as a compensation by king Sigismund the right to hold a fair on their possession of Dimicskfölde.¹³⁵⁶ Somewhat later, before 1390, they received the possession of Rosecsnik Roždanik), confiscated from a member of the Tibold kindred for infidelity.¹³⁵⁷ They were also granted further lands in the counties of Dubica and Gerzence, which they exchanged in 1391 with Denis, archdeacon of Kamarca.¹³⁵⁸ Among Ladislav's brothers, Emeric joined the church and became canon first of Óbuda then of Zagreb.¹³⁵⁹ Nicholas as a member of the royal court was among those nobles who confirmed the treaty of inheritance which king Sigismund contracted with duke Albert of Habsburg in 1402 at Pressburg.¹³⁶⁰ The fourth brother, Adam (Stephen) joined Nicholas Garai and became his castellan of Knin, then was viceban of Slavonia during the banate of Paul Pécsi, a kinsman of the wife of Adam's brother, Ladislav, in 1404-1405.¹³⁶¹

Their unbroken fidelity during the crisis of 1403 naturally resulted in further land acquisitions. The most important among them was the confiscated wealth of John Szencsei, which, however, proved too big to digest immediately. Szencsei was soon pardoned by king Sigismund, and his estates given back to him. As a result of compromise, the Szencsei could retain Szencse itself and the castle of Fejérvő, whereas the Kasztellánfi brothers remained in the possession of Szircs (Sirač) and of the *castellum* there, and received two further possessions from the king as a compensation.¹³⁶² In 1423 Ladislav, the son of John Szencsei, and Gaspar, the son of Ladislav, who had been minors at the time of the original agreement, confirmed it before the chapter of Csázma.¹³⁶³ It was also lands

¹³⁵⁴ Engel, *Archontológia* I. 168.

¹³⁵⁵ DL 34673.

¹³⁵⁶ Smičklas, *Codex diplomaticus XVII*. 143.

¹³⁵⁷ *Ibidem XVII*. 278-280.

¹³⁵⁸ *Ibidem XVII*. 402-404.

¹³⁵⁹ Maček – Jurković, *Rodoslov plemića* 68-71.

¹³⁶⁰ Pál Lővei, "Az ország nagyjainak és előkelőinek 1402. évi oklevelén függő pecsétek" [The Seals Attached to the Charter of the Hungarian Barons and Nobles Issued in 1402], in *Honoris causa. Tanulmányok Engel Pál tiszteletére*, eds. Tibor Neumann and György Rác (Budapest-Piliscsaba: MTA Történettudományi Intézete – Pázmány Péter Katolikus Egyetem Bölcsészettudományi Kara, 2009) 168.

¹³⁶¹ Engel, *Archontológia* II. 125.

¹³⁶² Klaić, *Plemići Svetački* 24-25. See below the section on the Szencsei family.

¹³⁶³ *Ibidem* 26.

confiscated for infidelity which Peter son of Adam was granted on the appurtenances of Kristallóc, but he never seems to have really put his hands upon them.¹³⁶⁴

In the next generation land accumulation gave way to strife within the family and even some losses were on the accounts. From the portion of Nicholas, who had no male heir, filial quarter was given to Peter Füziesdi, husband of his only daughter, Elisabeth.¹³⁶⁵ From 1416 we have the first trace of members of the two remaining branches, Sigismund and Gaspar, sons of Ladislav on the one hand, and Peter son of Adam on the other, quarrelling over the family property, a problem which became acute thereafter.¹³⁶⁶ Nevertheless, they persevered in the service of king Sigismund, in some cases together. Thus, whereas in 1417 Peter, son of Adam was castellan of Orbász (Vrbaški grad, BH) in the service of the Albeni family,¹³⁶⁷ in 1421 all three went, among the troops of Pipo Ozorai, to the war against the Hussites.¹³⁶⁸ This shift of allegiance is explained by the fact that Peter had started his career as episcopal *vicarius* of bishop Andrew Scolari of Zagreb.¹³⁶⁹

Sigismund married one of the daughters of James the „Italian” of Orbona, but, together with his brother-in-law, Herman Grebeni, proved unable to obtain the Orbonai inheritance, which king Sigismund wanted to give to John Maróti. Instead, they received together the portions of Thomas Cigány in the estates of Berivojszentiván and Mecsenice.¹³⁷⁰ Despite this failure, Sigismund also made an attempt to get portions from the ancient Pekri lands, which in the meantime had gone to John Maróti, by right of filial quarter; his efforts of course yielded no result.¹³⁷¹ Peter married Helen Atyinai, daughter of Nicholas Atyinai from the Aba kindred, and thus temporarily acquired portions in the Atyinai lands, among them on the appurtenances of Atyina itself.¹³⁷² After the death of Pipo Ozorai he returned to bishop John of Zagreb and functioned as his *vicarius* until 1433.¹³⁷³ In 1432 Peter, three years later his cousin, Gaspar launched a new campaign in order to obtain all the Szencsei lands, but none of them succeeded.¹³⁷⁴ In April 1430 at Sempte (Šintava, SL) Gaspar received from king Sigismund the right to erect a fortification on his estate of Szircs.¹³⁷⁵

When the Tallóci brothers gradually took over the government of Slavonia after 1433, all three male members of the Kasztellánfi family joined them and even became their main supporters there. Soon after his appointment as ban Matko Tallóci made Peter Kasztellánfi his viceban, a post he shared

¹³⁶⁴ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár II/1. 4831.

¹³⁶⁵ Ibidem VI. 664.

¹³⁶⁶ Ibidem V. 2501.

¹³⁶⁷ Engel, Archontológia I. 381.

¹³⁶⁸ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár VIII. 887. In 1419 they may also have taken part in the Venetian war, because their suit against the monks of Garics was then prorogated upon royal order. Ibidem VII. 425.

¹³⁶⁹ Engel, Archontológia I. 80.

¹³⁷⁰ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár IX. 755.

¹³⁷¹ DL 11606.

¹³⁷² DL 88052: five villages „*ad sexaginta jobagiones extendentes*”. It remained in the family’s possession until its extinction: DF 282508: „*Hum: relicte Akaczii cessit Benedicti de Bathyan ad Athynam et nullam habet dicam*”

¹³⁷³ Engel, Archontológia I. 80.

¹³⁷⁴ DL 74485, 74492.

¹³⁷⁵ DF 231096.

apparently from the beginning of 1439 with Herman Grebeni. He also appears as member of the immediate entourage of ban Matko.¹³⁷⁶ Gaspar was one of the collectors of the „fiftieth” tax in 1436,¹³⁷⁷ whereas his brother, Sigismund was castellan of Béla (Bijela) in the service of Matko Tallóci.¹³⁷⁸ During the civil strife which followed the double royal election in 1440, they all remained faithful to Tallóci and consequently to Wladislaw I. In the first critical months of the new king’s reign Gaspar played a leading role in keeping and strengthening the Slavonian nobility in its fidelity towards Wladislaw I,¹³⁷⁹ and took part at the head of his own troops in the king’s Transdanubian campaign in the early spring of 1441. In return, his lands were exempted lifelong from taxpaying by Wladislaw. In March 1442 he was captured together with Frank Tallóci while provisioning the Bosnian castle of Szrebernik (Srebrenik, BH), then sieged by the Ottomans.¹³⁸⁰ After his liberation he returned to Buda and was soon sent back by the king and his council to the Ottoman emperor on a diplomatic mission. His brother, Sigismund was still alive then, but seems to have died soon thereafter, just like their cousin, Peter.¹³⁸¹

Despite the material and personal sacrifices he had undertaken in the service of the Tallóci brothers, in 1447 Gaspar became the Slavonian viceban of the counts of Cilli, who had played a dominant role in the disappearance of the surviving Tallóci brothers after 1445. He married Jacoma, the sister of the Italian Tulbert of Prata, from whom he had but a daughter called Helen.¹³⁸² In 1459 king Matthias allowed him to dispose freely of his lands in the county of Pozsega,¹³⁸³ but shortly before his death, in 1465 he was sentenced to loss of property against Gregory Dersanóci, prothonotary of the judge royal. The reason seems to have been that he had been unable to protect Gregory in some pieces of land that he had ceded to him in Körös, but his heirs, Ladislas and Nicholas, sons of Sigismund, nevertheless had to content the prothonotary by conferring upon him and his heirs all their rights in their possessions in Pozsega.¹³⁸⁴

Very little is known about the two sons of Sigismund who only seem to have come to adulthood. As for Ladislas, all we know is that he married Anne, the daughter of John Provcsai (Provča) (and of Katalin Podversai),¹³⁸⁵ who in the early 1450s was *alispán* in Pozsega for John Korógyi.¹³⁸⁶ His

¹³⁷⁶ DL 44302: *Relatio Petri Ade* (1 October 1440, Grubesnic).

¹³⁷⁷ Levéltári Közlemények 3 (1925) 139.

¹³⁷⁸ DL 44302.

¹³⁷⁹ DF 252397.

¹³⁸⁰ On the date see Pálosfalvi, Cilleiek és Tallóciak 61. and n. 94.

¹³⁸¹ Maček – Jurković, Rodoslov plemića 87, 99. Yet in the charter referred to by the authors here Péter is not called viceban (Petro filio Ade de Zenthlelek, DL 13616).

¹³⁸² Jacoma was in fact his second wife: it is unknown to which family the first, called Helen, belonged to. Maček – Jurković, Rodoslov plemića 93-95.

¹³⁸³ Stipišić – Šamšalović, Isprave 2425. I was unable to find the original of this charter.

¹³⁸⁴ DF 231507.

¹³⁸⁵ Maček – Jurković, Rodoslov plemića 110. Engel, Középkori magyar genealógia, Borics nem 1. Podversai. This László was surely not viceban either in 1449 (Maček – Jurković, Rodoslov plemića 108), when the office was held by his kinsman, Gáspár, and Benedek Turóci, or later.

¹³⁸⁶ Engel, Archontológia I. 165.

brother, Nicholas served for some time Nicholas Újlaki,¹³⁸⁷ and it may have been him, and not the son of Peter in the other branch, who acted as one of the representatives of the Slavonian nobility in February 1457 at Buda.¹³⁸⁸ Still in the same year he received together with his brother Nicholas and their uncle Gaspar a new donation concerning all the Kasztellánfi lands, against which Nicholas, son of Peter protested immediately before the chapter of Zagreb.¹³⁸⁹ Nicholas married Anne, the sister and heiress of Peter Bikszádi, whose possessions thus devolved upon their son, George Kasztellánfi.¹³⁹⁰

We are much better informed about the descendants of Adam, whose story we will now follow until their extinction before returning to the other branch, which survived 1526. The only known son of Peter and Helen Atyinai, Nicholas, followed in the footsteps of his father and became viceban of Slavonia sometime before 10 March 1458. His lord was ban Jan Vitovec, whom he continued to serve until early in 1461, that is, even after the ban went into open rebellion against king Matthias. Nevertheless, his name was not added to the list of leading *familares* of Vitovec whom the king pardoned in 1463. In May 1465 he was sent together with Ladislav Hermanfi by the Slavonian nobility to king Matthias in order to have their privileges confirmed.¹³⁹¹ In 1466 he returned again to the office of viceban in the service of Vitovec,¹³⁹² and in August of that year he was member of the committee delegated by the Slavonian nobility for the negotiations with bishop Oswald.¹³⁹³ He died soon afterwards, however, but his place was immediately taken by his son, Akacius, whose mother was Helen, daughter of Herman Grebeni.¹³⁹⁴ He also served ban Vitovec, whereas his fellow-viceban was his own uncle, Ladislav Hermanfi. After the death of Vitovec Akacius left as a matter of fact his office, but seems to have remained close to the court: in April and August 1472 we find him at Buda, on the second occasion in the company of other Slavonian noblemen,¹³⁹⁵ and

¹³⁸⁷ “*Relatio Nicolai filii Castellani de Zenthlelek*”: Levéltári Közlemények 3 (1925) 107 (April 1451).

¹³⁸⁸ DF 268080: Nicolaus de Zenthlylek

¹³⁸⁹ DF 231395. Following the abstract published in Stipišić – Šamšalović, *Isprave (2359.) a castellum called Vrana* was listed among the castella of medieval Hungary (Tibor Koppány, *A középkori Magyarország kastélyai*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1999. 245.). The charter says, however „*castrum in predicta Zyrch et Wrane castellum in pertinentiis dicte possessionis Zenthlylek habita*”, which means that the latter was identical with the *castellum* otherwise referred to as Szentlélek.

¹³⁹⁰ Maček – Jurković, *Rodoslov plemića 113-116*. See above chapter on the Bikszádi family.

¹³⁹¹ DF 268083.

¹³⁹² The charter, according to which he was viceban in 1456 (DL 103640), is indeed dated to that year, but was in fact issued in 1466. Nicholas Szentléleki and John Macedóniai figure as vicebans on 14 June 1466 as well (DL 45213), and the *szolgabíró* who appears in the charter, Paul Tersek of Gatalovc, held his office from 1466 on. The false piece of information, cited by Engel, *Archontológia I. 22*, is taken over by Maček – Jurković, *Rodoslov plemića 122* as well.

¹³⁹³ DF 252046.

¹³⁹⁴ DF 231687.

¹³⁹⁵ DL 103736 (Pledges land to Ladislav Hermanfi); DL 17355.

he died sometime after December 1478¹³⁹⁶ in royal service in the castle of Novi, perhaps in connection with the campaign of king Matthias against the Frangepán.¹³⁹⁷

At the time of his father's death Nicholas, son of Akacius was still a minor, and his tutor became Albert Lónyai, who married his mother, Elisabeth Csapi.¹³⁹⁸ With this marriage Lónyai obtained much of the Kasztellánfi lands, and he apparently possessed them quietly until the mid-1490s, when his stepson seems to have come to adulthood and demanded the paternal estates. Lónyai, who was then castellan of the important castle of Pekrec (Pakrac) in the service of Bartholomew Drágfi, at first opposed, but then returned the Kasztellánfi lands to his stepson.¹³⁹⁹ Nicholas entered the service of the Kanizsai family: in 1512, and apparently in 1515 as well, he was castellan of Vasmegyericse for Clara Rozgonyi, widow of George.¹⁴⁰⁰ From his marriage with Sophie Tulbertfi¹⁴⁰¹ no children survived, which seems to account for the fact that before December 1506 he alienated all his possessions to his brother-in-law, Benedict Batthyány, husband of his sister, Margaret.¹⁴⁰²

A more important figure than Nicholas seems to have been his kinsman from the other branch of the family, George son of Nicholas. Although he retained portions of the ancient Kasztellánfi lands, he was frequently called after his new possession of Bikszád.¹⁴⁰³ He probably started his career in the service of duke Lawrence Újlaki, whose castellan at Kontovc he was in 1493 and 1494.¹⁴⁰⁴ However, he left his lord before the revolt of the latter, and thus managed to retain the royal favour. In the course of the year 1494 he was probably already in the king's entourage, as two royal charters, issued on his behalf at Tokaj and Pétervárad (Petrovaradin, SRB) respectively, show.¹⁴⁰⁵ Somewhat later George joined the family of duke John Corvin, however, and this decision may have contributed to the temporary loss of his possessions.¹⁴⁰⁶ As a matter of fact, as we will see below, in 1496 he was sentenced together with his kinsman, Nicholas, and with members of the Pekri family for having molested the royal tax-collectors, although it is not known whether the

¹³⁹⁶ This is the last time he is attested alive: DF 231687. In July 1483 his widow is mentioned.

¹³⁹⁷ DL 104051: "*egregius Nicolaus Akacii Ade de Zenthlylek, cuius genitor in fidelibus famulatibus felicitis reminiscencie quondam Mathie regis in castro finitimo Novi appellato vita excessit*"

¹³⁹⁸ And not Istvánfi. See the section on Albert Lónyai.

¹³⁹⁹ Ibidem.

¹⁴⁰⁰ DL 25544 (1512); Maček – Jurković, Rodoslov plemića 176. (1515).

¹⁴⁰¹ Ibidem 176.

¹⁴⁰² Somogy Megye Múltjából 14 (1983) 75.

¹⁴⁰³ Only one example among many: DL 104858. George also called himself of Bikszád sometimes: Somogy Megye Múltjából 14 (1983) 78. (DF 268184). See also Maček – Jurković, Rodoslov plemića 132.

¹⁴⁰⁴ DL 20035, 108322. It is certain that this George was not viceban in 1492 (Maček – Jurković, Rodoslov plemića 131.). At that time the ban was Ladislav Egervári, his deputy Oswald Polányi, joined early in 1493 by Michael Kerhen of Belosovc. Nor was he viceban in 1496 (ibidem 132.); the section in Vjekoslav Klaić, *Povijest Hrvata [The History of Croatia]* 4 (Zagreb: MH, 1974) 251. referred to there belongs in fact to the year 1512.

¹⁴⁰⁵ DF 231895, 231899.

¹⁴⁰⁶ DL 46337: Duke Corvin's letter to *egregio Georgio Byxady fideli nostro nobis sincere dilecto*, ordering him to help to recover the lands of another ducal *familiaris*, Marcinko of Predriho. In the summer of the same year 1496 he represented, together with Peter Derencsényi, the duke before the chapter of Buda: DL 37708.

incident was at all related to the person of the duke. He was surely back in the royal favour in March 1498, when he was appointed by ban George Kanizsai as one of his vicebans. In September of the same year he was commissioned by the king in the company of two prothonotaries to settle the differences between two local magnates, his former lord, duke Lawrence Újlaki, and Nicholas Bánfi, master of the janitors.¹⁴⁰⁷

In the first decade of the 16th century George turns up constantly in a great number of documents, concerning various legal disputes, but these offer no help for the reconstruction of his career.¹⁴⁰⁸ Some hints, however, at least indicate that he remained close to the court: first of all, his marriage, to be treated below, with a *cubicularia* of queen Beatrice; then the fact that in 1506 cardinal Bakócz urged him to repay three hundred golden florins which he had previously sent by a Jew from Esztergom and were for some reason given to the men of George Kasztellánfi.¹⁴⁰⁹ In 1505 he was certainly in the service of the archbishop,¹⁴¹⁰ and late in 1511 he was among the followers of the cardinal when he left for Rome.¹⁴¹¹ He returned from the Eternal City sometime during 1512, and soon took part in a delicate mission, when, in September 1512, he negotiated, together with Balthasar Batthyány, with the widow of the late ban Andrew Both, who refused to open the banal castles until the salary of her husband was paid.¹⁴¹² Consequently he was commissioned by the Slavonian nobility to take part in the collection of the royal tax, and it was in the course of this work that he died at Buda in February 1513 and was buried there.¹⁴¹³

George contracted a highly (and somewhat unexpectedly) illustrious marriage by taking Helen, the daughter of count Charles Korbáviai as his wife.¹⁴¹⁴ The grandmother of the bride was Nicholas Újlaki, king of Bosnia. With her hand George Kasztellánfi inherited the town of Mezőkövesd in the distant county of Borsod,¹⁴¹⁵ which had been given to Helen by queen Beatrice.¹⁴¹⁶ Although his social capital was certainly enhanced by this marriage, after the death of his first wife George chose a consort from the lower ranks of the nobility by marrying Euphrosyne Ostfi, the widow of George

¹⁴⁰⁷ Somogy Megye Múltjából 14 (1983) 71/148.

¹⁴⁰⁸ Among others: DL 107136, 107141.

¹⁴⁰⁹ DL 108332: “*quos videlicet florenos auri famuli vestri per vos Budam missi acceperunt ad visionem plurimorum hominum*”

¹⁴¹⁰ DL 104149: “*domino Georgio Castalanfy de Bykzaad homini nostro*”

¹⁴¹¹ See his own letter from Ancona (Anchonia), 5 January 1512: DL 108330. The date of the letter can indeed be read as 1502, and it was registered as such in the Hungarian National Archives. Yet his reference to his *dominus reverendissimus*, and the political events in Italy he reports on (the pope and the king of Spain allied and fighting against the French and Bologna) evidently place the letter to 1512. In any case, George Kasztellánfi is at Körös on 20 January 1502 (Somogy Megye Múltjából 14 (1983) 77.), which obviously excludes his presence at Ancona a fortnight before. Moreover, in another letter written in September 1512 to his wife, he mentioned a letter of remittance (*litteras absolucionales*) taken from Rome (ex Urbe). Ibidem 14 (1983) 78.

¹⁴¹² DL 22345 (1512): “*feria quinta proxime preterita (23 Sept) [...] redierunt domini Balthasar de Bathyan ac Georgius Castellany a domina banissa*”

¹⁴¹³ On all this see Pálosfalvi, Bajnai Both András pp. 290-295.

¹⁴¹⁴ Maček – Jurković, Rodoslov plemića 134-136.

¹⁴¹⁵ DL 67488.

¹⁴¹⁶ DL 86433. George himself had the charter transcribed at Buda in 1507.

Ősi.¹⁴¹⁷ From a letter written by George Kasztellánfi himself we know that he cherished marriage plans for his daughters as ambitious as his own. One of them was betrothed with a certain Ladislás Bátor (Bathor), who, however, could not be a member of the baronial Bátori (ecsedí) family, who at that time did not have a member bearing this name.¹⁴¹⁸ The other bride, called Blaise, then captain of the troops of the archbishop of Esztergom, who had a nice heritage „amounting to five hundred tenant sessions”, cannot be other than Blaise Sági from the county of Nógrád; this marriage, however, apparently never took place.¹⁴¹⁹

George Kasztellánfi had seven sons from his two marriages, one of whom died in infancy, and only two seem to have survived Mohács.¹⁴²⁰ The main difficulty facing them after the death of their father apparently sprang from two sources: the dispute between the sons from the two consecutive marriages, and the extinction of the other branch of the family. We have seen that George had to

¹⁴¹⁷ Maček – Jurković, Rodoslov plemića 136-138. identify the second wife of George Kasztellánfi as Euphrosyne (Eufrozina) Ostfi of Asszonyfalva on the basis of a later genealogy, and rightly, as it seems. It would in any case be useful to summarise what can be known about the family of Euphrosyne’s first husband. In 1473 a certain Ladislás Ősi took into pledge lands in the county of Körös (DL 100832). In the same year he is mentioned together with his sons, Francis, Nicholas, George and Ladislás (DL 103742). This Ladislás Ősi is surely identical to the Ladislás of Ewsy who was the provisor of John, bishop of Pécs, at Mohács in 1463 (DL 15874), and who in 1481 was proscribed as a familiaris of the late bishop of Pécs (Tringli, Szlavóniai közgyűlés 316: “Ladislau Ewsy de Buthkafewlde [...] famulum episcopi Quinqueecclesiensis). This connection, moreover, accounts for his acquisition of land in Slavonia. It is surely his sons, George and Ladislás, who turn up as *egregii* in Körös in 1500 (DL 102290), and who appear as Újvásári (de Wyvasar) two years before. George Ősi was lay administrator of the bishopric of Eger from 1493 to 1497, and then of the archbishopric of Esztergom until 1506, that is, a *familiaris* of Thomas Bakóc. (DF 229064, 229124, 250043, 250048) That this George is identical to the one possessing in Slavonia is made evident by a protestation made before the chapter of Csázma in 1499 by *honorabilis magister Gregorius canonicus de monte sancti Thome Strigoniensis nominibus et in personis egregiorum Georgii administratoris Strigoniensis et Ladislai fratris eiusdem Georgii de Ews* (DF 282463). Now, we know that George Ősi married Euphrosyne Ostfi de Asszonyfalva (DL 86425), who can thus be identified as the second wife of George Kasztellánfi. Yet, interestingly, two letters seem to prove that she in fact belonged to the Buzlai family. In 1514 Moises Buzlai, master of the court, calls Euphrosyne, widow of George Kasztellánfi, his sister (*domine sororis nostre relicte quondam Georgii Castelanfy*, DF 288097). In 1519 it is Euphrosyne herself who calls Catherine Buzlai, wife of George Bátor, her sister (*domine Katherine consorti magnifici domini Georgii Bathori domine et sorori nostre*, DF 288101). I was unable to find any affinity between the Ostfi and Buzlai families, but there must have been some. In any case, this supposed connection with the Bátori via the Buzlai would also help to explain the marriage of Ladislás Bátori with the stepdaughter of George, mentioned in the next note.

¹⁴¹⁸ Somogy Megye Múltjából 14 (1983) 78. On the ecsedi Bátori family see Norbert C. Tóth, “Ki kicsoda az ecsedi Bátori családban? A Bátori család ecsedi ágának tagjai 1377-1541” [Who is who in the Bátori of Ecsed család? The Members of the Bátori Family from the Ecsedi Brancs 1377-1541], in *Szabolcs-Szatmár-Beregi Szemle* (2009/1) 5-32. The somlyói Bátori family did have at that time a member called Ladislás, who can indeed have been the bride in question (Engel, Középkori magyar genealógia, Gútkeled nem 1. Rakamazi ág 5. tábla: Bátori (somlyói, folyt.), but the two Bátori families had been separated early in the 14th century, and those of Somlyó did not as yet share the dominant political influence of their distant kinsmen. Ladislás Bátori is titled merely *egregius* as late as 1539: Laszovski, Monumenta Habsburgica II. 436.

¹⁴¹⁹ The wife of Blaise Sági in 1517 was the widow of Andrew Orros of Semjén. Blaise previously had betrothed the widow of Valentine Erdődi, brother of archbishop Bakócz. There were two close relatives of the prelate bearing the same name: one of them, his cousin, married Catherine Várdai, whereas the other, his nephew, had Marguerite Henning as his wife. Zsuzsa Hermann, “Miképp került Divény vára a Balassák kezére?” [How did the Castle of Divény Get into the Hands of the Balassa Family?], in *Levéltári Közlemények*, 63 (1992) 1-2. 61. n. 4. Engel, Középkori magyar genealógia, Erdődy (Bakócz)

¹⁴²⁰ These seven sons are not the same as those enumerated by Maček – Jurković, Rodoslov plemića 161-173, however, who, moreover, list as many as eight sons. I left out of consideration Stephen and John the Younger, who are only known from later genealogical reconstructions, and there is no trace of them in contemporary sources. (I see no reason to suppose a younger John on the basis of DF 283653, where only one John is mentioned.) There is, on the other hand, another boy called Gaspar, the third of the Biblical three kings, as it seems (DL 22746.). See the genealogical tree in the Appendix.

protest even before the death of his heirless kinsman, Nicholas Szentléleki, against the alienation of his lands. It was all in vain, however, for in 1516 the king donated the whole heritage of Nicholas, regarded as having devolved upon the crown, to the all-powerful castellan of Buda, John Bornemissza.¹⁴²¹ John protested immediately, and so did all the heirs on the female line, among them some of the most influential local families. The latter, moreover, sued for these same lands before the judge royal, and won their case. Thus, whereas John Bornemissza seems never to have held a single parcel of the Kasztellánfi lands, members of the Pekri, Bocskai, Čavlović and Batthyány families did acquire parts of at least Szentlélek in the 1520s.¹⁴²²

We know considerably less about the disputes among the sons of George Kasztellánfi. The core of the problem seems to have been that John, the only surviving son of Helen Korbáviai, wanted to retain the entire heritage of his father for himself. What is certain is that in 1523 they finally came to an agreement: Euphrosyne and her only surviving son, Melchior were allowed to retain the castle of Szircs with some of its appurtenances, whereas John received the castle of Zselnyak and the *castellum* of Bikszád, with the stipulation that the castellans were bound to make an oath of mutual fidelity. Szentlélek was left unmentioned, which shows that it had gone lost by this time.¹⁴²³

John, this time together with his brothers, also had to defend themselves against the aspirations of George Szatmári, bishop of Pécs, who wanted to put his hands upon the town of Mezőkövesd.¹⁴²⁴

There were some gains on the account as well. In 1521 John and his half-brother, Melchior received from the king the lands of Gregory Ósi, which had devolved upon the crown precisely because Gregory had previously attacked and robbed the castle of the Kasztellánfi brothers at Zselnyak, killing some of their *familiars*.¹⁴²⁵ Interestingly enough, three years before these same possessions had been donated by the ruler to margrave George of Brandenburg; Gregory then had been found guilty of having captivated and robbed Euphrosyne, the widow of George Kasztellánfi, in the otherwise unknown *castellum* of Zaylaka.¹⁴²⁶ It seems as if Gregory had a special reason to be angry with the Kasztellánfi, and it manifested itself in acts of an exceptionally violent character. The case is all the more interesting since, as we have just seen, the second wife of George Kasztellánfi, mother of Melchior and stepmother of John, had previously been married to George Ósi, and the wife of John himself, called Barbara, also belonged to the Ósi family. This was surely

¹⁴²¹ DF 288099.

¹⁴²² See the chapters concerning the individual families and the references there.

¹⁴²³ DF 232650.

¹⁴²⁴ DF 232551; DL 106083/551.

¹⁴²⁵ DF 232587. It is with reference to this charter that Maček – Jurković, *Rodoslov plemića 159-160* maintain that the lawsuit concerning the filial quarter between the Kasztellánfi and Ósi families was terminated in favour of the former. However, there is nothing of the sort in this document, nor, as a matter of fact, in the other sources referred to by the authors.

¹⁴²⁶ DL 23095.

not the Ósi (Betlen) family from the county of Doboka;¹⁴²⁷ indeed, it is very probable that John married from the family of his stepmother, perhaps the very daughter of George Ósi and Euphrosyne Ostfi, although it is impossible to prove. Nor it is known what the eventual link between George and Gregory Ósi was, and whether at all they belonged to the same family, what, however, is probable.¹⁴²⁸

The longer part of the political career of John, son of George Kasztellánfi and Helen Korbáviai, took place in the eventful years following Mohács. In 1520 he is attested as a court *familiaris*,¹⁴²⁹ and later he joined the light cavalry attached directly to the royal court.¹⁴³⁰ It was as such that he was active in the marches of Croatia in 1524,¹⁴³¹ and took part in the expedition organised for the provision of Jajce a year later.¹⁴³² He frequently turns up as royal *aulicus* before Mohács.¹⁴³³ In 1525 he is also mentioned among the *familiares* of ban John Tahi.¹⁴³⁴ His half-brother, Melchior, the only one to survive Mohács, seems to have remained in the shadow of John both before and after 1526.

2.2.24. Kecser of Radvány (Kecser od Radovana, Kecher de Radwan)

The Kecser family originated from the Aba kindred.¹⁴³⁵ Like the descendants of other great kindreds, they possessed lands in three distant corners of the kingdom, namely in the counties of Sáros, Zaránd and Baranya. It seems that all branches of the kindred, whose exact relationship to each other cannot be established with certainty, had shares in all three major blocks of land.¹⁴³⁶ Nicholas, son of Alexander (Sandrin) was *alispán* of the county of Baranya in the last decade of the 14th century.¹⁴³⁷ It was apparently from this Nicholas that Francis, the first member of the family to set

¹⁴²⁷ As Maček – Jurković, Rodoslov plemića 159 maintain. In fact, none of the sources cited there makes any allusion to the descent of Barbara.

¹⁴²⁸ In 1521 it was the possession called Lelesz in the county of Baranya from which the relatives of Gregory Ósi contradicted to the introduction of the Kasztellánfi brothers; namely, the three daughters of Emeric Ósi, all married to well-known noblemen, one of them John Gétyei, deputy-palatine (DF 232587). This Emeric is probably the one who followed Ladislas Ósi as provisor of Mohács in 1466 (DL 16299), and in 1475 he was one of the *alispánok* of Baranya (DF 260119). What is certain is that in the second decade of the 16th century this Ósi family was prestigious enough to furnish a consort for John Kasztellánfi.

¹⁴²⁹ DF 232540.

¹⁴³⁰ Fraknoi, Számadáskönyvek 162.

¹⁴³¹ “*aulici nostri levis armature*”: DF 232667.

¹⁴³² DF 232717.

¹⁴³³ DF 232716, 232717, 232725.

¹⁴³⁴ DF 277175.

¹⁴³⁵ Engel, Középkori magyar genealógia, Aba nem 8. Lipóci-ág 2. tábla Kecser.

¹⁴³⁶ On the ancient lands of the kindred, with regard to the Lipóci branch see Karácsonyi, Magyar nemzetségek 72-76. The Kecser who came to Slavonia in the late 15th century still seem to have had portions in all the three groups of property. DF 231976 (Zaránd); DL 93831 (Zaránd, Baranya); DL 39868, 57922 (Sáros); Balassa család oklevéltára 555. (Zaránd).

¹⁴³⁷ Engel, Archontológia I. 103.

roots in Slavonia, descended.¹⁴³⁸ Prior to the very end of the 15th century the Kecer family had no social relationships extending south of the Drava, outside Baranya, as it seems. As late as 1471 Ladislas and Francis Kecer were designated royal men in the county of Sáros, which seems to show that they still resided in that distant corner of the kingdom.¹⁴³⁹ It was apparently this Ladislas who in 1454 was called from his possession of Peklen in Sáros.¹⁴⁴⁰ We do not know how they finally made their way to Slavonia, although the fact that their southern estates were close to the province certainly offer some explanation. Yet it seems that more precisely it was thanks to the service of bishop Oswald of Zagreb that Francis Kecer arrived to Slavonia. In 1495 he represented, together with George Kerecsényi, the bishop of Zagreb at the banal seat as a special *familiaris*,¹⁴⁴¹ and in 1499 the bishop designated him as one of the executors of his last will, which certainly presupposes a long period of cooperation between them. Indeed, after the death of bishop Oswald it was Francis Kecer who, again together with George Kerecsényi, occupied the lands of the late prelate.¹⁴⁴² It is to be added that the cousin of Francis, Anthony son of Frank, made a parallel career in the court; at least in the same year of 1495 he is attested as a royal courtier (*aulicus*), when he receives a royal grant together with the provisor of Buda castle.¹⁴⁴³ It is, however, impossible to tell which of the two played a role in the advancement of the other, if that was the case at all.

Before 1502 Francis married Dorottya, the daughter of Nicholas Bocskai the elder and Barbara Pogány, the sister of Peter Pogány, and thus acquired portions in the estate of Raszinya.¹⁴⁴⁴ In 1507 he may have been in royal service, for his portion in the estate of Raszinya was then exempted with reference to it.¹⁴⁴⁵ He then joined the service of Thomas Bakóc, archbishop of Esztergom,¹⁴⁴⁶ and became his *officialis* at his Slavonian estate of Monoszló.¹⁴⁴⁷ Between 1511 and 1516, when archbishop Bakóc governed the bishopric of Zagreb, Francis Kecer was his administrator there.¹⁴⁴⁸ As such not only did he govern the episcopal estates but also led the bishop's troops,¹⁴⁴⁹ and took part in the defence of the southern marches in general.¹⁴⁵⁰ In the spring of 1514 he was present in

¹⁴³⁸ That Alexander was the son of Nicholas is merely presumed by Engel. Alexander had two sons, Frank and Ladislas, who fathered Anthony and Emeric respectively (DL 20610). Since this Emeric is said twice the *carnalis* brother of Francis (DF 231976, 232436), it is evident that the latter was also the son of Ladislas.

¹⁴³⁹ DL 69044.

¹⁴⁴⁰ DL 90009. On this occasion his wife is named, Elisabeth, the daughter of George Fuló of Kécs, who thus may have been the mother of at least Imre.

¹⁴⁴¹ DF 252207, as *Franciscus de Radowan*.

¹⁴⁴² DF 277019.

¹⁴⁴³ DL 64490. In January of the same year he is sent to the ispán of Temes with an order of mobilisation: Engel, *Geschichte* 65.

¹⁴⁴⁴ On this marriage see above the chapter on the Bocskai family.

¹⁴⁴⁵ DL 107946: "*pro serviciis suis in factis sue maiestatis*"

¹⁴⁴⁶ DL 25437, 1504.

¹⁴⁴⁷ DL 104211.

¹⁴⁴⁸ DF 277034, 252279, 276907.

¹⁴⁴⁹ Thallóczy – Horváth, *Jajcza* 233-34.

¹⁴⁵⁰ In 1516 it was *medio Francisci Kecher* that the footmen of Jajce received 400 florins: Adamček – Kampuš, *Popisi* 77.

the royal court, and it was presumably upon this occasion that he received, together with his four sons, a coat-of-arms and the (*ius gladii*) from king Wladislaw II.¹⁴⁵¹ As co-possessor at Raszinyakeresztúr he had a lot of conflicts with Louis Pekri, which could only be settled after the death of the latter in 1516.¹⁴⁵² Alongside Raszinya, Francis acquired other possessions in the county of Körös, some of them apparently from his lord, archbishop Thomas.¹⁴⁵³ He put his hands on the Berekszói lands in Körös, although we do not know by what right.¹⁴⁵⁴ His acquisitions were not restricted to Slavonia, however: in 1504 he redeemed the portions of his kinsman, Frank, in the estate of Székudvar for 350 florins,¹⁴⁵⁵ whereas in 1514 he took into pledge, together with Ambrose Kecser, the ancient family fortification at of Lipóc (Lipovec, SL) for 2150 florins from palatine Emeric Perényi.¹⁴⁵⁶ He died before 1517, when already his widow is attested.¹⁴⁵⁷ He had at least four sons from her, Gaspar, John, Stephen and George, the first two of them surely survived Mohács.¹⁴⁵⁸

Francis seems to have left his widow and heirs in excellent financial conditions, for Dorothy was able to lend in 1521 two thousand florins to John Bánfi in 1521 for the redemption of his castles of Fejérkő and Újvár,¹⁴⁵⁹ whereas four years later she took the estate of Lóbor into pledge from Peter Keglević for 1500 florins.¹⁴⁶⁰ We do not know what the exact relationship was between Francis and Ambrose Kecser, with whom he acquired the castle of Lipóc in 1514;¹⁴⁶¹ most probably Ambrose was the son of Anthony. In the late 1510s he still seems to have been active in the county of Sáros,¹⁴⁶² but by 1520 he had already obtained at least some of the Kecser lands in Slavonia.¹⁴⁶³ Moreover, at that time these lands of his were exempted from the local tax, which means that he was in some kind of royal service.¹⁴⁶⁴ Indeed, three years later the royal treasurer, Paul Várdai expressly referred to these services,¹⁴⁶⁵ and shortly before the battle of Mohács Ambrose turns up as a court *familiaris* and an envoy sent by king Louis II to the ban of Slavonia.¹⁴⁶⁶ After the battle,

¹⁴⁵¹ DF 277034; DL 50247.

¹⁴⁵² Eg. DF 276873, 276907.

¹⁴⁵³ Poljana (Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 23.), and certainly Ivanc (Ibidem 34.), which belonged to the bishopric of Zagreb.

¹⁴⁵⁴ DL 60025; Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 59, 127, where *relicta Francisci Facher* is to be read *Kecser*, of course. In 1525 these lands are said to concern them half *jure hereditario*, half *titulo pignoris*: DF 276919.

¹⁴⁵⁵ DL 38734.

¹⁴⁵⁶ DL 105766.

¹⁴⁵⁷ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 94.

¹⁴⁵⁸ DF 288099.

¹⁴⁵⁹ DL 34189.

¹⁴⁶⁰ Stipišić – Šamšalović, *Isprave* 4662.

¹⁴⁶¹ Engel (*Középkori magyar genealógia*, *Aba nem* 8. *Lipóci-ág* 2. *tábla Kecser*.) supposed that he was the brother of Francis. It is, however, more probable that he was the son of Anthony Kecser.

¹⁴⁶² DL 39868, 39869, 57922, always called of *Peklen*.

¹⁴⁶³ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 127, 130.

¹⁴⁶⁴ DL 104367.

¹⁴⁶⁵ DL 104422: “*non solum regie maiestati verum eciam nobis semper paratus fuit servire et multa eciam servivit*”

¹⁴⁶⁶ *Levéltári Közlemények* IV. (1927) 84.

in September 1526, he was one of the envoys the Slavonian nobility dispatched to Ferdinand, archduke of Austria.¹⁴⁶⁷

2.2.25. Kerecsényi (Kerečenji, de Kerechen)

The Kerecsényi family seems to have descended from the Gyovad kindred, a not very outstanding *genus* whose lands lay in south-eastern Transdanubia.¹⁴⁶⁸ Very little is known about the original wealth of Kemény, the ancestor of the family. It was Peter, son of Kemény who acquired the possession of Bagolya, in the county of Zala, part of which was pledged by his descendants in 1468 together with the predium called *Othy*.¹⁴⁶⁹ The family was exceptionally prolific, to judge by the number of persons called Kerecsényi who turn up in our sources in the 15th century.¹⁴⁷⁰ Yet almost nothing is known about their activities until well beyond the middle of the century. The sons of Paul Kerecsényi, Lawrence and Michael, occur as designated royal men in 1422,¹⁴⁷¹ and it is surely this Lawrence from whom the Slavonian branch of the family descended. Another Michael, son of Nicholas, a literate person, is referred to at the same time as a royal man specially sent from the royal court.¹⁴⁷²

However, it was another member of the family, Ladislás, son of Thomas, whose relationship to Lawrence cannot be established, who first broke out from the obscure life of the petty nobility. In 1464 he was castellan of Alsólindva in the service of the Bánfi family,¹⁴⁷³ and it seems to have been this Ladislás who acquired the possession of Kányafölde from which the family was called later. It is, unfortunately, impossible to tell what role this Ladislás played in the social ascent of George, grandson of Lawrence, who laid the foundations for the family's rise before and after Mohács. Since the Bánfi also had possessions in Slavonia, the territorial shift was only natural, anyway.

¹⁴⁶⁷ Šišić, *Acta comitalia* I. 9.

¹⁴⁶⁸ DL 49462: "*Petrus filius quondam Laurencii de Kereczen necnon Georgius et Michael filii eiusdem Petri [...] de genere seu progenia (!) similiter quondam alterius Petri filii Kemyn de Guad procreati*". Karácsonyi (Magyar nemzetségek 545.) mentions the possible belonging of the Kerecsényi to the kindred with reference to Imre Nagy, but does not treat them as such. Nor are they joined to the Gyovad kindred by Engel (*Középkori magyar genealógia, Gyovad nem 2.*).

¹⁴⁶⁹ See the charter cited in the previous note. On the acquisition see Karácsonyi, *Magyar nemzetségek* 544.

¹⁴⁷⁰ The villages of Alsó and Felső Kerecsény were mostly inhabited by one-session nobles in the early 16th century: Csánki, *Történelmi földrajz* III. 69. In 1488 there are mentioned as neighbours *Elias de Kerechen, Johannes Kwthy dictus, Gregorius Zabad ac Michael de eadem Kerechen, Johannes Byk dictus, Thomas Parvus, Benedictus filius Valentini, Thomas Zekel, alter Thomas Kerecheny, Franciscus Parvus, Johannes Magnus, nobilis domina Agatha, consors Pauli Varga de sepefata Kerechen*. DL 19368.

¹⁴⁷¹ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár IX. 259.

¹⁴⁷² Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár X. 1295. The two Michael cannot be identical, for the latter Michael, *litteratus*, is said in 1424 to be the son of Nicholas. *Ibidem* XI. 306.

¹⁴⁷³ DL 16004. In 1439 this Thomas was royal man together with Michael Kerecsényi, perhaps the one mentioned in 1422. Imre Nagy, *Dezső Véghely and Gyula Nagy, Zala vármegye története*. Oklevéltár II 1364-1498 (Budapest, 1890) 498-499.

When he emerges for the first time during the civil war which followed the death of king Matthias, he was serving another local magnate, Nicholas Szécsi of Felsőlindva (Grad, SLO).¹⁴⁷⁴ He shifted his allegiance soon thereafter, however, and joined bishop Oswald of Zagreb,¹⁴⁷⁵ who appointed him as *vicarius temporalis* of his bishopric.¹⁴⁷⁶ At the time of the bishop's death in 1499 George was governing his castle of Gomnec.¹⁴⁷⁷ As in the case of Peter Gudovci before, and Stephen Prasovci later, this post, or rather the revenues accruing from it, allowed George to accumulate landed wealth which would otherwise have been impossible for a person of his standing. In his native county of Zala he took into pledge portions of the villages owned by the Rajki family,¹⁴⁷⁸ whereas in that of Vas he did the same with some lands belonging to the Pető of Gerse family.¹⁴⁷⁹ He also took into pledge the village of Szentkozmadamján from Sigismund Bezerédi, likewise in Zala.¹⁴⁸⁰ Sometime before 1500 he had the financial means to lend 500 golden florins to Peter Butkai and John Podmanicki, governors of the bishopric of Zagreb.¹⁴⁸¹ It was in all probability George who erected a *castellum* on his possession of Kányafölde.¹⁴⁸²

He also laid the foundations for expansion in Slavonia. He betrothed his son, Paul, with the daughter of Peter Mikcsec of Cirkvena, and thus acquired the whole inheritance of the latter, together with the *castellum* at Cirkvena itself.¹⁴⁸³ It may not have been entirely accidental that he chose the estate of Cirkvena for acquisition: for he had married Susan Kacor, and thus become the brother-in-law of Stephen Gudovci, whose possessions lay in the neighbourhood.¹⁴⁸⁴ Although he was consequently sued by the kinsmen of the late Peter Mikcsec, and had to buy out some of them,¹⁴⁸⁵ in 1504 at the latest his castellan was residing in Cirkvena.¹⁴⁸⁶ He does not seem to have left his native land for all, however, for in 1505 he was one of the envoys sent by the county of Zala to the diet of Rákos.¹⁴⁸⁷ A year before he is attested as castellan of Monyorókerék in the county of Vas, that is, in the meantime he had entered the service of archbishop Thomas Bakócz.¹⁴⁸⁸ By 1507 at the latest he had been elected among the noble *assessore*s of the royal council, an evident sign of

¹⁴⁷⁴ Ibidem II. 633.

¹⁴⁷⁵ Already in August 1491 he represented John Tuz of Lak and his sons before the chapter of Csázma in the case of the castle of Medve and its appurtenances. DL 37651.

¹⁴⁷⁶ In 1494 a violent trespass that George committed with the familiares of bishop Oswald four years before is mentioned, yet it is uncertain whether his title as *vicarius temporalis episcopatus Zagrabiensis* refers to the time when the act itself was committed or to the time when the charter was issued. DL 107097.

¹⁴⁷⁷ DF 232015.

¹⁴⁷⁸ DL 102686, 67649.

¹⁴⁷⁹ DL 94297, 67870.

¹⁴⁸⁰ DL 71732.

¹⁴⁸¹ DL 67156.

¹⁴⁸² Koppány, Kastélyok 162.; DF 277175/ 25-26.

¹⁴⁸³ See the chapter on the Cirkvenai with the charters cited there.

¹⁴⁸⁴ DL 47328.

¹⁴⁸⁵ DF 282471.

¹⁴⁸⁶ DF 232179.

¹⁴⁸⁷ DL 39335. In 1502 he dated a letter from Kányafölde. DL 67648.

¹⁴⁸⁸ DF 232166.

his growing wealth and prestige.¹⁴⁸⁹ He does not seem to have left the service of Bakócz, however, for sometime before 1510 the prelate entrusted to him the administration of the archbishopric of Esztergom, the richest see in late medieval Hungary.¹⁴⁹⁰

George, who died sometime before 1516,¹⁴⁹¹ had two sons, Paul and George, but we know next to nothing about the latter.¹⁴⁹² Paul, on the other hand, who had married Dorothy Mikcsec, emerges already in 1516 as the leader of the noble elite in the county of Zala in a violent trespass committed against the Bánfi of Alsólindva;¹⁴⁹³ it is certainly indicative that the jury which settled the matter somewhat later comprised, alongside four of the richest local noblemen, bishop Briccius of Knin and the magnate Thomas Szécsi.¹⁴⁹⁴ Then he disappears for some time, to return in 1521 already as the captain of Slavonia appointed by the king.¹⁴⁹⁵ As there had been no ban appointed since the death of Peter Beriszló in May 1520, Pál certainly assumed the ban's military functions upon royal order, at least for the time of the great mobilisation caused by the Ottoman siege and capture of Belgrade.

Some months later he already functioned as the deputy of the new ban of Slavonia, John Korbáviai, and remained in this office until the removal of his lord from the banate. Indeed, he seems to have gradually become the chief supporter of count John in Slavonia. In 1523 he acted, together with John Raveni, as the ban's commissioner in the affair of the acquisition by the latter of the castles of margrave George of Brandenburg, and remained faithful to his lord after 1524 as well, which, in 1525 at least, turned him against the supporters of the new ban, John Tahí.¹⁴⁹⁶ His authority in Slavonia was great, proof of which is that in the early 1520s we see him as arbitrator on at least three occasions.¹⁴⁹⁷ It is possible that he wanted to move definitively to Slavonia, for in 1522 he considered the alienation of his castle of Kányafölde to Denis Hássági,¹⁴⁹⁸ and later, possibly already after 1526, he acquired that of Zelina in the county of Zagreb.¹⁴⁹⁹ He survived Mohács, as did his two sons, Michael and Ladislav, the former of whom later also became viceban, whereas the latter died as captain of Gyula in 1566.

¹⁴⁸⁹ In that year he receives two hundred florins as a salary (*ad rationem sallarii sui ratione huiusmodi assessoratus*) from the Slavonian tax. DL 107946/11. Kubinyi, *Közneemesi ülnökök* 263. In 1508 his Slavonian lands were exempted, and he received 300 florins, perhaps for the same reason. Adamček – Kampuš, *Popisi* 45.

¹⁴⁹⁰ DL 67657 (1510): *administrator proventuum archiepiscopatus Strigoniensis*

¹⁴⁹¹ DL 94325.

¹⁴⁹² He is mentioned in 1523: DF 232617.

¹⁴⁹³ DL 64802.

¹⁴⁹⁴ DL 94325.

¹⁴⁹⁵ Lajos Thallóczy and Antal Hodinka eds., *Magyarország melléktartományainak oklevéltára I. A horvát véghegyek oklevéltára I. 1490-1527* (Budapest: MTA, 1903) 31; DL 25624.

¹⁴⁹⁶ DF 277175. (1525).

¹⁴⁹⁷ DF 255609, DF 232669, DL 106793.

¹⁴⁹⁸ DF 277175/ 25-26.

¹⁴⁹⁹ Antun Mayer et al. eds., "Regesti isprava 16 stoljeća iz Arhiva Hrvatske Akademije Znanosti i Umjetnosti 1538-1545", in *Zbornik odsjeka za povijesne znanosti* 27 (2009) 342. Adamček – Kampuš, *Popisi* 143.

2.2.26. Kopinci (de Kopynch, Kwpyncz, Kopynczky)

Kopinc (Kwpincz) seems originally to have belonged to the estate of Dobrakucsa, although it is impossible to know how and when it was detached from it.¹⁵⁰⁰ It is even possible that part of it remained independent of it and was possessed by noblemen who bore its name. Unfortunately, the only name known to us from the 14th century is that of Nicholas, son of Nicholas of Copynch, who was designated royal man in 1367.¹⁵⁰¹ He is almost certainly identical to the Nicholas son of Nicholas who four years before acquired Kopinc (*Kopynch*) from his wife, sister of Peter Bresztolci.¹⁵⁰² Then it is almost a century later that we meet George Kopinci, son of Blaise, among the neighbours of Peker,¹⁵⁰³ and Benedict Kopinci, who is attested as a lawyer in 1449.¹⁵⁰⁴ A year later it is Anthony Kopinci who is referred to as a royal man,¹⁵⁰⁵ and in 1453 he was already serving John and Paul Nelepec.¹⁵⁰⁶ He was the son of Benedict,¹⁵⁰⁷ but we do not know what kind of relationship existed between them and their kinsman, Elias Kopinci, who was castellan of Orbász in 1429, and that of Szombathely in 1442, in both cases in the service of the Szencsei family.¹⁵⁰⁸ In any case, in 1460 it was the portion of Elias at Kopinc that Anthony took into pledge together with his three sons.¹⁵⁰⁹ By that time the possession of Kretin had also been pledged to him by Emeric Szász of Tamasovc.¹⁵¹⁰ In that period he was one of the leading *familiares* of ban Vitovec, among whom he was pardoned by the king in 1463.¹⁵¹¹ He married the sister of Peter Szehánharasztjai, called Anne, with whose hands he acquired the possessions of Szehánharasztja (*Zeyanahrazthya*)¹⁵¹² and Gradiska (*Gradyscha*).¹⁵¹³ About the family of his wife we know nothing, except that his brother-in-law was twice Slavonian envoy at Buda in the 1440s. Anthony also obtained, or inherited, it is impossible to tell, the possession of Gregorovc, from which he was named sometimes.¹⁵¹⁴ If we add to all this that he also had other portions in pledge, such as the one on the appurtenances of Megyericse,¹⁵¹⁵ some of the portions of George Fánacs on the appurtenances

¹⁵⁰⁰ Kupinc or Kupinchegeye (Kwpinczhege), from which the Kopinci family seems to have been called, is still listed among the appurtenances of Dobrakucsa in 1477 (DL 102200). In 1468 Anthony Kopinci owns some vineyards *in tenutis possessionis Dobrakuchya videlicet in Koppinczhege* (DF 255801).

¹⁵⁰¹ Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus XIV. 14.

¹⁵⁰² DL 5240.

¹⁵⁰³ DL 106969.

¹⁵⁰⁴ DL 103615.

¹⁵⁰⁵ DF 231261.

¹⁵⁰⁶ DL 106833.

¹⁵⁰⁷ DF 233417.

¹⁵⁰⁸ Engel, Archontológia I. 381, 434.

¹⁵⁰⁹ DL 15448.

¹⁵¹⁰ DF 231441.

¹⁵¹¹ DF 233405.

¹⁵¹² The name is rendered as Szénaharasztja by Engel (Archontológia II. 225.), but it seems in fact to have derived from a name like Zehanus.

¹⁵¹³ DF 231613, 231614.

¹⁵¹⁴ DF 276827: “*Anthonius de Kopyncz alias de Gregoryowcz*”

¹⁵¹⁵ DF 231565.

of Gordova before 1467,¹⁵¹⁶ and seems also to have had some lands in the county of Verőce,¹⁵¹⁷ it is evident that in the 1470s he possessed certainly more than 50 inhabited peasant sessions, which at least partly accounts for his regularly being titled *egregius*.¹⁵¹⁸ In September 1470 he was one of the two noblemen to ask ban Blaise Magyar to transcribe a charter in the name of the Slavonian nobility.¹⁵¹⁹ He was listed at all three congregations of the Slavonian nobility held in the 1470s. In the same period he was elected at least three times as arbitrator in cases involving local noblemen, and in 1477 he was one of those who intervened in the name of Ladislav Hermanfi of Greben at bishop Oswald and made an agreement in the matter of tithe-paying.¹⁵²⁰ In the same year he emerges as a figure of even greater authority, when we see him as an arbitrator between Nicholas Újlaki, king of Bosnia, and the Bánfi brothers, alongside the king's attorney and the leading *familiars* of king Nicholas.¹⁵²¹ In 1481 he was proscribed at the congregation of Zagreb for forging charters, where, however, he also acted as one of the elected noble jurors of Verőce.¹⁵²² He died soon afterwards, and probably only one of his sons, called Ladislav, survived him.¹⁵²³

The latter apparently inherited none of his father's "public" authority, although he inherited most of his lands. In 1481,¹⁵²⁴ and then in 1485, he was designated royal man,¹⁵²⁵ and in the first occasion he is called *litteratus*. Somewhat later he turns up as castellan of Szaplunca in the service of the Bánfi family, as such titled *egregius*.¹⁵²⁶ It is possible that he died shortly thereafter, for he completely disappears from our sources. It should be noted that in 1495 the possessions which had previously been owned by Anthony Kopinci, and were to be owned by John Kopinci later, were listed in the hands of George More, whose wife was Catherine, the widow of Blaise Budor of Budrovc.¹⁵²⁷ This George seems to be identical to the person who led the prior of Vrana's troops in 1495, and who was castellan of Velike in 1522.¹⁵²⁸ With John Kopinci, who turns up in the early 16th century, and may have been the son of Ladislav, the tide seems to have been turned. He reobtained most of the paternal lands, and was thus again occasionally accorded the *egregius* title,¹⁵²⁹ although he is but once attested as a royal man.¹⁵³⁰ In 1518 and 1521, however, he was

¹⁵¹⁶ DF 233417.

¹⁵¹⁷ Levéltári Közlemények 7 (1929) 301-02.

¹⁵¹⁸ DF 231565, DF 231613, DL 33488, DL 103842, DL 100980.

¹⁵¹⁹ DF 268072.

¹⁵²⁰ Levéltári Közlemények 13 (1935) 238; DL 101766; DL 100851 (in this latter case it was before him that the oath had to be taken); DF 252063.

¹⁵²¹ DL 33432.

¹⁵²² Tringli, Szlavóniai közgyűlés 314.

¹⁵²³ DL 100980.

¹⁵²⁴ DL 33434.

¹⁵²⁵ DL 19054.

¹⁵²⁶ DL 94547.

¹⁵²⁷ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 7, 11, 13. Stipišić – Šamšalović, Isprave 3575. (I was unable to find the original charter.)

¹⁵²⁸ DL 104017 (1494): "Georgio dicto More capitaneo gencium venerabilis et magnifici Bartholomei prioris Aurane". DL 25657 (castellan).

¹⁵²⁹ DL 34167, DF 277175/75.

already one of the castellans of Lawrence Újlaki at Kontovc,¹⁵³¹ and in the 1520s we likewise find him in the service of the duke.¹⁵³² At the same time he also turns up as arbitrator between Stephen Désházi, royal councillor, and Francis Battyányi.¹⁵³³ After Mohács he was elected as *szolgabíró* in the county of Körös.¹⁵³⁴

2.2.27. Kristallóci 1, 2 (od Kreštelovca, de Cristhalowch)

The first Kristallóci family died out early in the 15th century, yet I included them into the analysis because they offer an interesting parallel for the kin of Isaac/Hudina, as the descendants of a *várjobbágy* who became integrated into the noble elite with a considerable amount of land. The family seems to have descended from the Cristol *comes*, who is mentioned in 1200 among the leading members of the entourage of duke Andrew. The descendants of this Cristol were in the 14th century sometimes referred to as *de genere Cristol*,¹⁵³⁵ but these charters tell nothing about his origins. It is surely this Cristol who gave his name to the land originally called Toplica, later known as Kristallóc.¹⁵³⁶ Toplica, however, originally belonged to the county of Somogy, and was given by king Bela to a certain Drugan, son of Bayleta in exchange for his land of Verőce.¹⁵³⁷ It should also be added that the Nicholas, son of Stephen, who is likewise called Kristallóci in the 14th century, was in fact raised by king Louis I to the nobility from among the *várjobbágyok* in 1363.¹⁵³⁸ He descended on the female line from Drugan.¹⁵³⁹ Since his father, Stephen Arthow, was referred to as belonging to the kindred of Cristol,¹⁵⁴⁰ it is probable that the two families became connected via the marriage of this Stephen with a woman who had descended from Drugan. This would of course mean that Cristol *comes*, like Hudina, and presumably Isaac, was originally a *várjobbágy*. The case is not absolutely clear, but it is very likely that the three branches of the family which divided among themselves the estate of Kristallóc in 1351 had descended in fact from different ancestors. What is certain is that this Cristol must have been an important figure in his age, for a century later his descendants maintained that the market held at Kristallóc/Toplica had originally been accorded to him by the king, a fact which presupposes some closeness to the ruler.¹⁵⁴¹ His position, thus, resembles again very much that of *comes* Hudina. The lands he had bequeathed upon his descendants were extensive enough to arouse the greed of their neighbour, Paul Pekri, who tried

¹⁵³⁰ DF 256033.

¹⁵³¹ DL 23000, DL 94864.

¹⁵³² DF 277175/75.

¹⁵³³ DL 106793.

¹⁵³⁴ Šišić, Acta comitialia I. 267.

¹⁵³⁵ DL 100042.

¹⁵³⁶ Eg. DL 100065: “*Thopolcha seu Crustholouch*”

¹⁵³⁷ “*quandam terram castris Symigiensis nomine Toplicham in Garis*”

¹⁵³⁸ Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus XIII. 272-273.

¹⁵³⁹ Ibidem 320: “*ipse per dominam matrem suam ex linea predicti condam Drugani naturaliter extitisset propagatus*”

¹⁵⁴⁰ DL 100042.

¹⁵⁴¹ DL 100133: “*forum adhuc per Cristol protavum ipsorum a regia maiestate evidentem extitisset*”

around the middle of the 14th to take them by force.¹⁵⁴² This is all that we know about the family until the very beginning of the 15th century.

In the critical period around 1400, however, Ladislás Kristallóci, the son of Nicholas, joined the camp of king Sigismund, perhaps because the family's ancient enemies, the Pekri, had joined the opposite side. Whatever the case, in 1403 Ladislás was rewarded for his services with the possessions of some neighbouring noblemen, and those of his own relatives (?) at Kristallóc itself. Other portions of Kristallóc were donated to Peter Kasztellánfi, and Ladislás promised to buy these back at his own expenses. He was thus in no lack of money, and even had the financial means to buy further portions in the estates of Csezmice and Csernareka. To judge by the later extension of Kristallóc, his acquisitions must have been considerable. It is therefore with good reason that we suppose that it was this Ladislás who erected the *castellum* at Kristallóc, which is first attested after his death. Ladislás was accordingly titled master,¹⁵⁴³ even though he was the only one among his kin to get the title. Ladislás had a son called Thomas, and four daughters, one of whom was married into the Grebeni family, another sign of regional esteem.

Thomas died without male heir, however,¹⁵⁴⁴ and his possessions, together with the *castellum* at Kristallóc, were donated by king Sigismund to Nicholas Szerecsen and Josa the Turk in 1428. Nicholas came from the village of Gerec, in the county of Körös, which is certainly not identical with the other Gerec treated above.¹⁵⁴⁵ His ancestors had originally arrived from the distant county of Szatmár, more exactly the village of Nábrád, sometime during the 14th century.¹⁵⁴⁶ Accordingly, members of the family were also called as of Nábrád or simply Nábrád in Slavonia, and they seem to have given their name to the village of Nabradovc in the county of Körös, where, alongside

¹⁵⁴² DL 100133.

¹⁵⁴³ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár IV. 987.

¹⁵⁴⁴ Ibidem VI. 266. It is to be noted, however, that not all the kin descended from either Drugan or Cristol disappeared with the heirless death of Thomas. In 1422 there turns up a person called Nicholas, son of Ugrin, of Kristallóc, who certainly belonged to the first Kristallóci family, although we do not know exactly how; presumably he descended from one of the four sons of Valentine, son of Samson. His descendants, commonly referred to as Ugrinfi (*Ugrini*), turn up frequently as royal men in the course of the 15th century, and merely owned a couple of tenant sessions on the appurtenances of Kristallóc. Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár IX. 1045; DF 255785; DF 268097; DL 103795; DL 106868; DL 107119; Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 11. Also belonging to the first Kristallóci family was Peter Kristallóci, literatus, whose portions in the market town of Kristallóc and in the villages belonging to it were donated in 1471 by king Matthias to Ladislás Hermanfi. DL 100816.

¹⁵⁴⁵ In 1501 it is listed among the parishes within the archdeaconry of Csázma. Even Csánki was confused by the existence of two possessions called Gerec in Körös, however, and supposed that this latter Gerec was in fact a misspelling for Gradec. Csánki, Körösmegye 76. The other Gerec lay in the district of Gvestye, subordinated to the provosty of Csázma. There was no family relationship between the two families (see Engel, Archontológia II who, however, supposes such a relationship). Elemér Mályusz also confuses the two families: Zsigmond király 81.

¹⁵⁴⁶ On the Nábrádi family see Péter Németh, *A középkori Szatmár megye települései a XV. század elejéig [The Settlements of Szatmár County until the Beginning of the 15th Century]*, Nyíregyháza, 2008. 192-194. Even Németh maintains, presumably influenced by Engel, that the two Gereci families were connected, and the Nábrádi came to Körös thanks to Alexander, nephew of palatine Majos, from whom, as we have seen above, the other Gereci descended. Ibidem 193.

Gerec, they possessed Dragenovc and part of Kutunya.¹⁵⁴⁷ The sons of John Nábrádi turn up frequently in the last third of the 14th century, as royal men but also in an arbitration in which one of the parties concerned was the chapter of Csázma. The family would certainly have continued to live the uneventful life of the petty nobility, however, had Nicholas, the son of Philip, son of John, not become a member of the royal court. In his case the origins of the court career are exceptionally clear: he had been taken captive in the battle of Nicopolis, and could only return to Hungary after more than a decade of Ottoman captivity. It was thus evidently the experience gained there which signalled him out for the tasks later entrusted to him by king Sigismund. In the 1420s and 1430s he accomplished several missions to different powers of the East, which earned him the sobriquet *Saracenus*.¹⁵⁴⁸ In the meantime he was also briefly ispán of Verőce, a knight of the court and, finally, judge of the Cumans. His brother, Denis, entered the church, and became *custos* in the chapter of Fehérvár.

From one of his journeys he returned home in the company of a Turk, who later accompanied him for his journeys to the East. Known in Hungary as Josa the Turk (*Josa Turcus*), he converted to Christianity, and also became a knight of the court, and later judge of the Cumans. Shortly before the death of Sigismund, ban Matko Tallóci confiscated in the name of the king all their joint properties in Slavonia, but this time they somehow managed to get them back.

Their children were no so lucky twenty years later, however. Both Nicholas Szerecsen and Josa had a son, called John and Ladislás respectively. John for some reason adopted Simon Nagy of Szentmárton as his brother, and gave him the half of his own portion of the estate of Kristallóc. Consequently, the whole estate was confiscated and donated to Jan Vitovec in 1456, after Simon had been convicted of infidelity for evident political reasons, and together with him his „accomplices”, John Szerecsen and Ladislás Kristallóci. John seems to have died heirless soon thereafter,¹⁵⁴⁹ whereas Ladislás, who survived Jan Vitovec, after having served him for some time in the early 1460s,¹⁵⁵⁰ managed to win back almost the entire estate of Kristallóc before the judge royal in 1469-70. Yet the money needed to pursue the case was furnished by his neighbour, Ladislás Hermanfi, in return for which he gradually put his hand upon the whole estate.¹⁵⁵¹

Although Ladislás Józsafi (Josafy) managed to retain a tiny portion of Kristallóc, he and his offspring sank into complete obscurity after 1456. Ladislás himself lived into a fairly old age, but is

¹⁵⁴⁷ Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus X. 290: Johannes de Nabrad; ibidem XIII. 300: Johannes filius Matheus dictus Naabrad, here also their possessions.

¹⁵⁴⁸ On his career and missions to the east see Mályusz, Zsigmond király 81-82.

¹⁵⁴⁹ Nicholas Szerecsen had a cousin called John, son of Valentine Nábrádi. This John seems to have returned temporarily to Szatmár, after in 1416 he had reobtained part of the family lands there. In 1435, however, he was proscribed for having forged charters, whereupon he again went back to Slavonia. There he owned at Kristallóc together with Nicholas Szerecsen, and even turns up among the arbitrators in the case of Ludbreg in 1452. He is mentioned for the last time in 1454 as Johannes litteratus de Nabrad alias de Cristaloucz, and died soon thereafter without offspring.

¹⁵⁵⁰ DL 103812.

¹⁵⁵¹ On the whole affair of Kristallóc see Pálosfalvi, “Grebni Hermanfi” I. 851-853.

only attested as designated royal man.¹⁵⁵² On one single occasion, in 1493, he is accorded the *egregius* title, when he acts as one of the arbitrators of Balthasar Batthyány.¹⁵⁵³ Two sons of his are known, one of whom, called Thomas, seems to have died shortly after 1471, when he is mentioned for the last time.¹⁵⁵⁴ The other son, George, who definitively resigned his claims to Kristallóc in favour of Ladislás Hermanfi in 1489, entered the church and died as a priest.¹⁵⁵⁵ Yet Ladislás also had two daughters, one of them called Catherine, who married a certain Anthony Tarko, and another whose name is unknown, who became the wife of a certain George Horváth.¹⁵⁵⁶ The former turns up first in 1486 as a *predialis* in the service of Ladislás Egervári, who then sent him to Bosnia with Ottoman captives to be ransomed.¹⁵⁵⁷ Consequently, however, both he and George came to be called of Kristallóc, although they merely owned there the third part of the portion once restored to Ladislás Josafi. Moreover, Anthony Tarko was at least occasionally titled *egregius*, apparently not because of his marriage with the daughter of Ladislás Josafi, but because in the early 1490s he emerged as one of the leading *familiares* of Balthasar Battyányi, then ban of Jajce and, as we have seen above, titled *magnificus* as such.¹⁵⁵⁸ In 1513 he was Balthasar's castellan of Greben.¹⁵⁵⁹ From Catherine Josafi Anthony Tarko had at least two sons, Stephen and Bartholomew, none of whom can be followed into the 16th century.¹⁵⁶⁰

2.2.28. Latkfi of Berstyanóc (Latković, Lathk de Berschanowch)

The Latkfi family descended from the same Hrvatin as the neighbouring Nelepec family. It was in 1363 that they received the castle and estate of Berstyanóc in the county of Körös in exchange for their Bosnian castle.¹⁵⁶¹ Master Latk (Vlatko) was a knight of the royal court under king Louis I.¹⁵⁶² As such he was able to obtain from the king exemption from all jurisdiction other than the king's own, and it was probably also Latk who managed to secure the tax exemption for all his estates. In 1391 the castle of Berstyanóc was for some reason confiscated by king Sigismund from his son, Nicholas, and donated to Nicholas Treutel and his brothers. Although the castellany devolved upon the crown in 1421, it was not restored to the Latk family but was granted instead to Nicholas of Prata whose descendants bore its name later on. Nevertheless, Latk and his sons seem to have retained some portions of its appurtenances, and it was in one of the villages belonging to the castle,

¹⁵⁵² DF 255772.

¹⁵⁵³ DL 106865.

¹⁵⁵⁴ DL 100807.

¹⁵⁵⁵ DL 102298.

¹⁵⁵⁶ DL 101336.

¹⁵⁵⁷ „*quendam Anthonium Thurk famulum seu predialem suum*” (DL 19210, cf. Klaić, Plemići 35-36.). That this Anthony Turk is identical with the later Anthony Tarko is only a hypothesis, but a very probable one.

¹⁵⁵⁸ DL 104047, DL 46450 (here once as of Palychna), DL 104011, DF 231937.

¹⁵⁵⁹ DL 34173.

¹⁵⁶⁰ DL 102298.

¹⁵⁶¹ Engel, *Archontológia* I. 278.

¹⁵⁶² Smičiklas, *Codex diplomaticus* XVI. 116.

namely Szobocsina, that either Latk himself or his son, Nicholas, erected the *castellum* called Latkovina/Mogor.¹⁵⁶³

Latk's son, Nicholas followed in his father's footsteps in the service of the king. It was surely not unrelated to the fact that his cousin, Paul, was also a confidential man of king Sigismund and even ban of Slavonia for a brief period. In 1407 he took part in the royal campaign led against Bosnia, whereas in 1413-1414 he served, apparently as a *familiaris* of ban Paul Csupor, in the Bosnian castle of Vesela Straža.¹⁵⁶⁴ In the summer of 1414 we still find him in the service of Csupor in the entourage of king Sigismund.¹⁵⁶⁵ Again for reasons that remain unknown to us, he mortgaged his *castellum* of Mogor to Ladislav Pekri,¹⁵⁶⁶ who only restored it to his son, Ladislav, in 1427.¹⁵⁶⁷

The son of Nicholas, Ladislav was a minor at the time of his father's death sometime before 1427, and thus came as a matter of fact under the tutelage of his kinsman, Benedict Nelepec.¹⁵⁶⁸ As late as 1438 it was still John Nelepec who proved the tax exemption of the lands of Ladislav in the name of the latter.¹⁵⁶⁹ All we know about him in later years is that he pledged the estate of Torcsec to the Rohfi of Décese.¹⁵⁷⁰ He married Anne, the daughter of Michael Raveni, from whom his son called Michael was born.¹⁵⁷¹

The latter was likewise under age when his father died before 1460, and his tutor became the new husband of his mother, Ladislav Hermanfi of Greben. During the childhood of his stepson Hermanfi performed various services and encountered considerable expenses in order to preserve the lands of Michael, in return for which in 1468 the latter conferred upon his stepfather the entire estate of Mogor for the case of his dying heirless.¹⁵⁷² Moreover, Michael gradually pledged and sold several of his villages to Hermanfi, who thus practically set his feet in the estate.¹⁵⁷³ Michael married the daughter of Tulbert of Berstyanóc, called Catherine, and in 1472 he pledged the estate of Mogor to his wife and her brother, Nicholas, for 2000 florins. They never really seized possession of it, however, and when Michael prepared his testament in 1475 he entrusted his children together with his estates to the protection of Ladislav Hermanfi.¹⁵⁷⁴ Although in 1481 Nicholas Tulbertfi sued for

¹⁵⁶³ Engel, *Archontológia* 278., 368.

¹⁵⁶⁴ Engel, *Archontológia* I. 547. (ZsO. IV. 1175: „in servitiis regii”)

¹⁵⁶⁵ ZsO. IV. 2102.

¹⁵⁶⁶ In 1422 they already protest together: ZsO. IX. 1045.

¹⁵⁶⁷ DL 103516.

¹⁵⁶⁸ DL 44001. Benedict Nelepec *tutor et protector* of Ladislav Latkfi.

¹⁵⁶⁹ DL 103587.

¹⁵⁷⁰ DL 103661.

¹⁵⁷¹ *Ibid.* For the references that Anne, mother of Michael, was the daughter of Michael Raveni see above in the chapter on the Grebeni.

¹⁵⁷² DL 100947: „*egregius Ladislaus de Greben in proteccione et conservacione possessionum suorum ac aliarum diversarum rerum suarum expeditionibus ipso Michaele in tenera etate constituto non sine gravibus et expensis (!) suis omni auxilio favoreque et ope affuisset*”; DL 103723, Michael as the *privignus* of Ladislav Hermanfi.

¹⁵⁷³ DL 103733, DL 103734.

¹⁵⁷⁴ DL 100858: “[...] *possessiones meas universas [...] simulcum coniuge mea et prolibus ac filiabus meis committo ad egregium Ladislaum Hermani patrem meum [...]*”

Mogor with reference to the letter of pledge of 1472, and in the same year Dorothy, the only surviving child of Michael Latk, also tried to acquire it by right of female inheritance,¹⁵⁷⁵ both attempts proved futile, and Mogor remained in the possession of Ladislás Hermanfi and later of his adopted son, Balthasar Batthyány.

2.2.29. Albert Lónyai (Lonjai, de Lonya)

The settlement of the Lónyai/Naményi family from the distant county of Bereg¹⁵⁷⁶ in Slavonia seems to have been due to the „colonisation” policy of governor John Hunyadi. At least Anthony Pocsaji of Namény, who is first attested as possessing the estate of Vámhida in the county of Körös, was the governor’s *vicecomes* of Temes and castellan of Tokaj.¹⁵⁷⁷ Yet we do not know how he acquired the estate itself. All we know is that in August 1456 he was sentenced to privation of his Slavonian estates together with Simon Nagy of Szentmárton for having invaded the fortification of one of count Ulrich of Cilli’s leading retainers, Christoph Paschingar.¹⁵⁷⁸ Consequently the estate was held by Jan Vitovec and his sons until 1469/70, when it seems to have been restored to Anthony Pocsaji and his relatives. We have no information whether any member of the Lónyai family resided permanently in Slavonia, but it is reasonable to suppose that the estate was in fact administered by one of the neighbouring lords, Ladislás Hermanfi. The latter and his stepson, Balthasar Batthyány even acquired portions of the estate in the 1470s and 1480s, and must have thought that they would sooner or later get the whole peacefully from the Naményi, who explicitly referred to the unprofitability of Vámhida because of the great distance separating it from their ancient family properties. Yet whatever they thought, events took a turn not quite to their liking.¹⁵⁷⁹ Albert Lónyai, the son of (another) Anthony,¹⁵⁸⁰ entered the court of king Matthias sometime before 1483 and rapidly grew in influence. In that year he was sent by the king to occupy the lands of István Makó,¹⁵⁸¹ and two years later he was engaged upon royal orders in forcing loans for the king from the towns.¹⁵⁸² He married the widow of Akacius Szentléleki, Elizabeth Csapi,¹⁵⁸³ and thus not

¹⁵⁷⁵ DL 100948.

¹⁵⁷⁶ Németh, *Középkori Szatmár megye 197-198*; Tibor Neumann ed., *Bereg megye hatóságának oklevelei (1299-1526)* (Nyíregyháza, 2006) *passim*. DL 100903 (their possessions in the counties of Bereg, Zemplén and Körös listed).

¹⁵⁷⁷ Engel, *Archontológia II*. 196. This policy, which resulted in the temporary settlement in Slavonia of such confidential followers of Hunyadi as, for instance, Nicholas Vizaknai, deputy governor of Transylvania, is yet to be examined.

¹⁵⁷⁸ DL 100653.

¹⁵⁷⁹ Pálosfalvi, “Grebbei Hermanfi” I. 863-864, for the references.

¹⁵⁸⁰ DL 66981: “*Anthonius Pochay dictus de Namen, ac Andreas, alter Anthonius et Ladislaus de Lonya*”; DL 30577: “*Albertus filius Anthonii de Lonya*”.

¹⁵⁸¹ DL 102627.

¹⁵⁸² Kubinyi, “Mátyás-kori államszervezet” 130. (n. 137.)

¹⁵⁸³ Elisabeth Csapi (from the county of Zala) is attested as the wife of Albert Lónyai in 1506: DL 75733. Since he is known to have married the widow of Akacius Kasztellánfi, it is very probable that this Erzsébet was previously the latter’s wife, although it is not stated in the charter itself. By this marriage he became related to the Bot of Bajna and Gorbónoki families.

only acquired the extensive Slavonian estates of her wife's late husband but also laid claim again to Vámhida. Although he finally resigned his claim and sold the estate to Ladislas Hermanfi and Balthasar Batthyány, in the possession of the Szentléleki lands he remained an influential member of the Slavonian nobility for some time.¹⁵⁸⁴ In 1487 he was sent by king Matthias to the king of France,¹⁵⁸⁵ and early in 1489 we find him again in royal service.¹⁵⁸⁶ Unlike his kinsmen, he certainly resided in Slavonia,¹⁵⁸⁷ and in March 1492 he was 18th among the nobility of Croatia and Slavonia who confirmed the succession of the Habsburgs to the Hungarian throne.

It would seem that after the death of king Matthias he temporarily left the royal court, for in 1496 he is referred to as castellan of the castle of Pekrec in the service of Bartholomew Drágfi.¹⁵⁸⁸ Yet the case is far from evident, for in an undated letter issued at Pekrec, thus presumably written at this time, he alluded to the possibility of his having to follow the king to Bohemia.¹⁵⁸⁹ A further hint in this direction is that in 1494 his Slavonian estates were exempted upon royal order.¹⁵⁹⁰ Four years later, however, he surely returned again to the field of foreign policy: as captain of Senj he was in charge of the negotiations destined to secure the financial support of Venice for Hungary in the planned anti-Ottoman campaign.¹⁵⁹¹ He remained one of the key figures of Hungarian diplomacy even after he had been removed from Zengg sometime after June 1505; in 1507 he was again sent to Venice, to take the annual monetary help of the Republic,¹⁵⁹² whereas three years later, in connection with the league of Cambray, he left a second time for France, although he was soon ordered to return.¹⁵⁹³ His new mission was as important as the original one, however: as a person of influence and well-versed in Slavonian affairs he was ordered to mediate in the conflict between the ban of Slavonia, Andrew Both on the one hand, and the king and palatine Perényi on the other.¹⁵⁹⁴ It was also Lónyai who in 1510 received from the Republic of Ragusa 3000 florins upon royal order.¹⁵⁹⁵

¹⁵⁸⁴ Pálosfalvi, "Grebenei Hermanfi" I. 864-865.

¹⁵⁸⁵ DL 107946/7.

¹⁵⁸⁶ DL 19556. „*sabato proximo ante dominicam oculi de domo sua versus Wyennam ad serenissimum dominum nostrum regem ire habuisset*". In September 1488 he is before the chapter of Pozsony as *aulicus regie maiestatis*: DF 227523.

¹⁵⁸⁷ See preceding note.

¹⁵⁸⁸ DL 104051.

¹⁵⁸⁹ "*Si nos oportebit transire post regiam maiestatem ad Bohemiam*". DL 104637. Wladislaw II stayed in Bohemia from the end of February to April, which dates the letter to this period.

¹⁵⁹⁰ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 4.

¹⁵⁹¹ Vilmos Fraknói, "Lónyai Albert zenggi kapitány velencei követségéi" [The Venetian Embassies of Albert Lónyai, Captain of Senj], in *Magyar Történelmi Tár XXII.* 3-44. His deputy captain was his own brother, János.

¹⁵⁹² *Ibid.* 6. On 27 August 1507 he is ordered by treasurer Benedict Batthyány to hand over 600 florins de pecuniis Venetorum to Balthasar Batthyány for a very urgent affair of the king; this matter may have possibly been related to the coronation of young Louis which had been negotiated earlier in the same month. DL 104330.

¹⁵⁹³ Vilmos Fraknói, "Magyarország és a cambrayi liga" [Hungary and the League of Cambray] 1509-1511, in *Századok* 16 (1882) 712.

¹⁵⁹⁴ Fraknói, "Lónyai Albert követségéi" 7.

¹⁵⁹⁵ József Gelcich, *Ragusa és Magyarország összeköttetéseinek oklevéltára*, Budapest 1887. 677.

By this time he seems to have joined the financial administration and entered the service of treasurer Peter Beriszló.¹⁵⁹⁶ This change was not without precedent, for already in 1505, after his removal from Senj, he had been count of the chamber of Máramaros (Maramureș, RO).¹⁵⁹⁷ Before 1516 he held half of the chief-thirtieth of Kassa.¹⁵⁹⁸ A year before he returned to Venice, for the last time, it seems.¹⁵⁹⁹ Yet by this time he had left Slavonia for good. Willingly or not, he restored the Slavonian estates to his stepson, Nicholas Szentléleki, and in 1517 he was registered with a mere two sessions on the estate of Vámhida.¹⁶⁰⁰ Neither he nor his son from Elisabeth Csapi, Nicholas, seem ever to have returned to Slavonia. In 1513, however, he was authorised by the king to redeem the market town of (Mező)kövesd which, as we have seen above, had been pledged to Helen Korbáviai and then held by George Kasztellánfi.¹⁶⁰¹ We do not know whether eventually he managed to put his hands on the town, but even his intention to get it shows that his ambitions were already directed towards other regions than Slavonia. By that time, moreover, he had married for a second time, his wife being a woman called Anastasia, from whom he had three sons, Christopher, Peter and Farkas.¹⁶⁰² None of them is recorded as a Slavonian landowner thereafter.

2.2.30. Megyericsei (de Megerechye, Megwrechye, etc.)

The wealth of the Megyericsei family was founded by a man of letters, George son of Michael. George, of unknown origins, was prothonotary to Stephen, duke of Croatia and Slavonia, and then became *ispán* and castellan of Orbász.¹⁶⁰³ He acquired the estate of Megyericse in the middle of Körös county.¹⁶⁰⁴ George married at first Catherine, daughter of Michael, son of Majos (the brother of Alexander, ancestor of the Gereci family),¹⁶⁰⁵ and then a woman called Elisabeth, of unknown origins, but had no male offspring of either of them, only three daughters, Jacoba, Clara and Anne. His possessions consequently devolved upon the sons of Nicholas, presumably his brother. About

¹⁵⁹⁶ In 1513 he was ordered by the king to be paid 200 florins worth of salt for his services made to treasurer Peter Beriszló. István Tringli ed., *A Perényi család levéltára 1222-1526* (Budapest: Magyar Országos Levéltár – MTA Történettudományi Intézete, 2008) 794.

¹⁵⁹⁷ Together with Benedict Battyányi. DL 216741.

¹⁵⁹⁸ András Kubinyi, *Szalkai László esztergomi érsek politikai szereplése* [The Political Activity of László Szalkai, Archbishop of Esztergom], in Idem, *Főpapok, egyházi intézmények és vallásosság a középkori Magyarországon* (Budapest, 1999) 153.

¹⁵⁹⁹ Fraknoi, Lónyai Albert 8-9.

¹⁶⁰⁰ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 99.

¹⁶⁰¹ DL 108335. His letter from Buda to the widow of George Kasztellánfi.

¹⁶⁰² DL 36584. The letter is undated, but the title of Emeric Perényi as ban of Slavonia certainly puts it to 1512 or 1513. In 1513 Albert, his wife Anastasia and their three sons take into pledge the village of Algyó in the county of Csongrád for 800 florins: DL 106083/194.

¹⁶⁰³ On master George see Bónis, *Jogtudó értelmiség* 80-81. More recently see Éva B. Halász, “Szlavón hercegi és báni ítélőmesterek a XIV. században” [Ducal and Banal Prothonotaries of Slavonia in the 14th Century], in *Acta Universitatis Szegediensis. Acta Historica. Tomus CXXX* (Szeged, 2009) 72-73., confusing, as others, Megyericse and Vasmeyericse. On this problem see below.

¹⁶⁰⁴ „*condam magister Georgius litteratus [...] dictam possessionem Megyurechye propriis suis laboribus aquisivisse dinoscitur*” – Smičiklas, *Codex diplomaticus XVII*. 8.

¹⁶⁰⁵ Smičiklas, *Codex diplomaticus XII*. no. 408. She had nothing to do with the Hontpázmány kindred, as maintained by B. Halász, apparently following János Karácsonyi, *Az első Lónyaiak*, Budapest 1904, in op. cit. 73.

the sons of Nicholas, Emeric, Gregory and Demetrius nothing is known. In 1403, however, the sons of Gregory: Demetrius and George were sentenced to loss of property because they had joined Emeric Bebek, prior of Vrana, and their estate was donated by king Sigismund to the Besenyő of Özdöge together with the *castellum* there.¹⁶⁰⁶ The confiscation was not complete, yet, and does not seem to have afflicted the other members of the family. In 1405 Demetrius Megyericsei (son of Nicholas) is referred to as a royal man, whereas between 1415 and 1430 the son of Emeric: George is shown active in the region.¹⁶⁰⁷

The true breakthrough was accomplished by the sons of Demetrius and George, however. Establishing the exact descent of the family is no straightforward task, yet, for there were two members called Demetrius and two George. Upon the basis of supposed age, it is probable that all the Megyericsei who were active in the latter part of the middle ages descended from the two sons of Gregory referred to in 1403.¹⁶⁰⁸ John, son of Gregory, whose master title is an indication of higher education, was a notary of the secret chancery in 1429,¹⁶⁰⁹ and a year later he is already mentioned as the king's *familiaris*.¹⁶¹⁰ We have no information on how he got into contact with the court, but reasonable hypotheses can nevertheless be proposed. We have seen above that John Megyericsei was related to the Vitéz of Kamarca, among whom Stephen Vitéz was one of the leading *familiares* of ban Herman of Cilli; now, it would evidently have caused no difficulty to the king's father-in-law to get a relative of his viceban introduced into the court. Another way offered itself as well: the cousin of John, Frank, married the sister of Vitus, provost of Zagreb, step-brother of Nicholas Bocskai, who was himself a member of the court in the 1420s. It is consequently also possible that it was thanks to Nicholas that brother-in-law found his way into the court,¹⁶¹¹ where he proved talented enough to stay until his death shortly after 1435. Indeed, he was among the handful

¹⁶⁰⁶ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár II. 2686. It is to be noted that the fortification (*castellum*) in question cannot be identified with the castle of Vasmegyericse, only mentioned from the middle of the 15th century, as is done by Csánki (Körösmegye 40.) and following him by Engel (Archontológia I. 455.). The estate on which the castle of Vasmegyericse (Međurić) was later erected originally belonged to the Pekri family and directly devolved onto John Maróti, to whom the construction of the fortification can reasonably be attributed. On the other hand, a *castellum* certainly existed on the estate of Megyericse (Međurača), owned by the sons of Demeter, later during the 15th century, which is beyond doubt identical to the one referred to in the charter of 1403. Anyhow, the estate of the Megyericsei family on which their fortification stood is said in 1386 to have laid „*penes fluvium de Mosyna in vicinitate filiorum Jacobi de Palichna et filiorum Endrey de Mosyna*”, which excludes its identification with Vasmegyericse which lay along the river Peker in the south.

¹⁶⁰⁷ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár V. 925, 2004, 2297; Ibidem VII. 754, 915, 1140; Ibidem IX. 504. He may also have been a royal man in 1424 (Ibidem XI. 1049). DL 12000.

¹⁶⁰⁸ In his petition drafted in 1433 at Rome, John Megyericsei listed, alongside his mother, Susan, three *fratres*, namely George, Frank and James, and two *sorores*, Catherine and Marguerite. In 1430 George, John, Catherine (Katko) and Marguerite turn up as the children of George Megyericsei and Susan, but James and Frank do not, although they were surely of age at that time, which makes it evident that they were not all brothers. That it was indeed the case is proved by the fact that the father of James and Frank was called Demetrius. It is, therefore, probable that the four *fratres* were in fact cousins.

¹⁶⁰⁹ DF 287914.

¹⁶¹⁰ Engel, Archontológia I. 505.

¹⁶¹¹ In 1436 provost Vitus and Frank and James Megyericsei try to acquire together portions of the estate of Szentandrás.

of people who followed Sigismund for the imperial coronation to Rome, where he petitioned a number of favours from the papal court.¹⁶¹² Of the brother of master John, called George, we know nothing; in 1430 his son, equally called George, tried to acquire parts of the lands of Nicholas Szerecsen and Josa the Turk, presumably by right of affinity, but apparently to no avail.¹⁶¹³ Among the sons of Demetrius, James, was castellan of Izdenc in the service of Simon Meggyesi,¹⁶¹⁴ whereas Frank was several times named as a designated lawyer,¹⁶¹⁵ and in January 1428 he was among the witnesses of John, bishop of Zagreb at Dombró.¹⁶¹⁶ At the gathering of the leading Slavonian nobility held by ban Matko Tallóci in 1439 all three surviving male relatives, Frank, James and George (presumably the son of the other György) were listed. Indeed, Frank was one of the four persons commissioned by the ban with the execution of the decrees accepted.¹⁶¹⁷ In October 1439 they were designated as royal men for the introduction of ban Matko Tallóci into the estate of Szentgyörgyvár.¹⁶¹⁸ In April 1444 George was present at the assembly held at Buda.¹⁶¹⁹ In the years of civil strife which followed the death of Albert of Habsburg, and especially after 1445 the family had some difficulties in maintaining themselves. Frank belonged to the immediate entourage of the Tallóci brothers,¹⁶²⁰ which menaced to become a serious disadvantage after they had been expelled from Slavonia by the counts of Cilli. In any case, Frank persuaded his wife, Veronica, to mortgage the latter's estates in the counties of Tolna and Somogy to Henry Tamási. Of the money they got Frank spent four hundred florins on the defence of his *castellum* at Megyericse and its belongings, in return for which he mortgaged to his wife his portions of the family property.¹⁶²¹ Later on he found a more convenient solution and, together with his brother James, entered the service of Jan Vitovec, viceban of Slavonia and mercenary captain of the counts of Cilli.¹⁶²² In 1452 Frank and James were members of the jury, led by Paul bishop of Arges and Nicholas Dombai, which had to decide in the important case concerning the castle and estate of

¹⁶¹² Csukovits, "Nagy utazás"; Lukinović, Povijesni spomenici VI. 368.

¹⁶¹³ DL 100475.

¹⁶¹⁴ Engel, Archontológia I. 332.

¹⁶¹⁵ DL 103526, DL 103539 (in the latter case together with his brother).

¹⁶¹⁶ Lukinović, Povijesni spomenici VI. 246.

¹⁶¹⁷ Kukuljević, Iura regni II. 20.

¹⁶¹⁸ József Teleki gr., *Hunyadiak kora Magyarországon* [The Age of the Hunyadis in Hungary] X (Pest, 1853) 63.

¹⁶¹⁹ Decreta regni 336.

¹⁶²⁰ Sometime before 1442 Petko Tallóci, then ban of Dalmatia and Croatia, invited Elisabeth Szobocsinai to the possession of Megyericse, and accompanied her together with Frank son of Demetrius to the chapter of Csázma, where it was Frank himself who in the name of Elisabeth conferred her castle of Szobocsina on the Tallóci brothers [*ipsa licet personaliter coram ipso capitulo astante non tamen suo ore proprio sed Franko filius Demetrii de Megywrechy predicta voce sua coram ipso capitulo taliter dixisset quod ipsa coram ipso capitulo personaliter astante castellum suum Zobochina vocatum simulcum oppido similiter Zobochyna vocato ac aliis villis [...] eidem Perkonii, Frankoni ac quondam Mathkoni banis necnon Johanni de eadem Tallocz priori Aurane in perpetuum contulisset*] – DL 100723. Frank's role in the affair hints at his close relationship to the Tallóci family, although its exact nature is not known.

¹⁶²¹ DL 94210. In 1448 Frank and his wife had already taken into pledge some portions of Ladislás Vitéz at Palicsnaszentpéter. DF 255728.

¹⁶²² DL 101749.

Ludbreg. In the same year James was also referred to as prothonotary of the seat of Körös,¹⁶²³ a fact which accounts for the issuing of banal charters at Megyericse.¹⁶²⁴ In May 1454 Frank and James petitioned together with Jan Vitovec for the estates of the chapter of Csázma,¹⁶²⁵ whereas two years later Frank played an important role in legalising the unlawful expansion of Vitovec in Slavonia.¹⁶²⁶ Among the sons of Demetrius, Frank seems to have died without offspring,¹⁶²⁷ whereas the only known son of John, Gregory entered the church,¹⁶²⁸ although no further details of his career are known. The son of James, Peter¹⁶²⁹ contracted, as already mentioned, a marriage as advantageous as his uncle Frank: his wife was the daughter of Peter Gudovci, episcopal *vicarius* of Zagreb. Through his marriage Peter became the brother-in-law of Francis Dombai, son of viceban Nicholas. It is no surprise, therefore, that the executors of the last will of James, prepared in January 1470 at Megyericse, were Peter Gudovci and another viceban of Slavonia, Ladislav Hermanfi.¹⁶³⁰ Peter died between 23 February 1477 and 30 March 1478;¹⁶³¹ his sons, Stephen and Bernard were still minors, for they were put under the tutelage of their maternal grandfather, Peter Gudovci.¹⁶³²

The sons of George, son of George, Emeric, Matthias and Francis, although sometimes also titled *egregius*,¹⁶³³ do not seem to have ever left their native county. They are mainly enlisted as neighbours in case of introductions, such as in 1471 at Polositica,¹⁶³⁴ in 1475 at Szobocsina,¹⁶³⁵ the next year at Orbona¹⁶³⁶ and in 1479 at Tamasovc.¹⁶³⁷ Emeric married Veronica, daughter of Emeric Szász of Tamasovc,¹⁶³⁸ and quarrelled for the remaining possessions of his father-in-law with Ladislav Nyári, administrator of bishop Oswald of Zagreb.¹⁶³⁹ He remained in contact with his brother-in-law, John Szász of Tamasovc, for in 1498 his brother, Matthias was involved together with John in an act of violence committed at Megyericse to the detriment of the castellan set by the chapter of Csázma in their *castellum* of Polositica.¹⁶⁴⁰ In 1493 Emeric and Matthias were designated

¹⁶²³ DL 106835: „*Jacobi de Megwrechy [...]* prothonotarii [...] *sedis Crisiensis*”

¹⁶²⁴ E.g. DL 103627. Confirmed with the seal of viceban Jan Vitovec. James also obtained some land in four villages in the county of Körös in 1455. DF 275008.

¹⁶²⁵ DL 102124.

¹⁶²⁶ Pálosfalvi, “Grebni Hermanfi” I. 847-848.

¹⁶²⁷ In January 1464 his widow, Veronica is introduced by right of pledge into portions of Palicsnászentpéter. DF 275013.

¹⁶²⁸ Lukinović, *Povijesni spomenici* VI. 267.

¹⁶²⁹ DF 255786.

¹⁶³⁰ DF 231570.

¹⁶³¹ On 23 February 1477 he is still mentioned alive as a neighbour: DL 33429; a year later his widow is referred to: *Leváltári Közlemények* 6 (1928) 159-160.

¹⁶³² “*magistro Petro de Gudowcz tutore bonorum possessionariorum filiorum quondam Petri de Megwrechy*”: DL 34311 (1481).

¹⁶³³ DF 255594, DL 33427.

¹⁶³⁴ DF 255594.

¹⁶³⁵ DL 276827.

¹⁶³⁶ DL 33427.

¹⁶³⁷ DF 218978. See also 1481: *Francisco de eadem Megwrechy* (DL 34311)

¹⁶³⁸ DF 255907.

¹⁶³⁹ Stipišić – Šamšalović, *Isprave* 3141. See section on the Tamasovci family.

¹⁶⁴⁰ DF 275023.

as royal men by Nicholas Bánfi, ispán of Verőce,¹⁶⁴¹ whereas in the mid 1490s Emeric was elected as *szolgabíró* in the county of Körös.¹⁶⁴² Both Emeric and Francis pledged parts of their portion at Megyericse,¹⁶⁴³ but these losses were probably compensated by the acquisition of the possession of Grebenna, which they received from Nicholas Mikcsec in 1484 with the stipulation that it would escheat to the latter in case of all three brothers dying without heirs.¹⁶⁴⁴ Later on the portions of Matthias as well as the possession of Grebenna came into the hands of a certain Paul Bubanić,¹⁶⁴⁵ presumably through his marriage with his daughter, Margaret; in any case, in 1517 we again find them in the possession of the widow of Matthias, Anne. Francis and Emeric seem to have died before 1507, when their portions at Megyericse were in the hands of the third brother, Matthias.¹⁶⁴⁶ The latter had a son called George, who surely died heirless before December 1519, when his possession of Grebenna was donated by king Louis II for *defectio seminis* to duke Lawrence Újlaki.¹⁶⁴⁷

About the sons of Peter, Bernard and Stephen, even less is known. In 1495 they are mentioned in some cases of violent trespass,¹⁶⁴⁸ and in 1506 Bernard was viceban of Jajca;¹⁶⁴⁹ he died before 1517, when his widow is mentioned. The latter, called Helen, may have been a daughter of Valentine Pálfi of Ogramovcszentmihály.¹⁶⁵⁰ Bernard had a son called Christopher, who married the sister of Louis Pekri junior.¹⁶⁵¹ After 1526 he is attested as a *familiaris* of bishop Simon of Zagreb.¹⁶⁵² This Christopher was once referred to as the carnal brother of John Megyericsei, the famous royal secretary and canon of Transylvania.¹⁶⁵³ This piece of information is certainly in keeping with another charter which tells us that the mother of Christopher Megyericsei was the stepmother (*glossa*) of archdeacon John, who thus would have been a half-brother of Christopher.¹⁶⁵⁴ John Megyericsei is surely identical to the *magister Johannes* who in 1517, the very year of his death, is registered as having 20 sessions at Megyericse.¹⁶⁵⁵ The case is not as evident as it would seem at first sight, however. For John Megyericsei is known to have been born

¹⁶⁴¹ DF 255918.

¹⁶⁴² DF 252208, 256929.

¹⁶⁴³ Stipišić – Šamšalović, Isprave 2681, DL 20167.

¹⁶⁴⁴ Ibidem 3004.

¹⁶⁴⁵ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 67. Paul Bubanić, of unknown origins, also had portions on the lands of the bishopric of Zagreb in the county of Zagreb, at Fintics in the county of Körös, and was registered together with members of the Vitéz of Kamarca family at Kernin.

¹⁶⁴⁶ Ibidem 35.

¹⁶⁴⁷ DF 274994.

¹⁶⁴⁸ Eg. DL 106875, DL 46314.

¹⁶⁴⁹ Thallóczy – Horváth, Jajca 201: „*vicebano nostro Veneraldo de Megyeriche*”

¹⁶⁵⁰ DF 277175/272-273.

¹⁶⁵¹ Laszowski, Monumenta Habsburgica I. 319. (Louis Pekri): “*sororius meus Christoforus Megyerehyey, qui sororem meam carnalem habet in uxorem*”. In 1543 this Christopher is referred to as possessing the *fortalicium* of Gudovc.

¹⁶⁵² Laszowski, Monumenta Habsburgica I. 240.

¹⁶⁵³ DF 232500.

¹⁶⁵⁴ DF 277175/ 209-210.

¹⁶⁵⁵ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 105.

around 1470, whereas Bernard, his presumed father, was still apparently under age as late as 1478. The key to the mystery is offered by a charter from 1491, which lists the three sons of Lucia Gudovci (and of Peter Megyericsei, of course), master John, Bernard and Stephen.¹⁶⁵⁶ John and Bernard were thus brothers, although we do not know what the reason was for the later confusion in the charters. It is, moreover, possible to offer two probable hypotheses to account for the alleged (and self-confessed) relationship of master John to the famous poet, Janus Pannonius, which had frequently but vainly been debated by historians so far; it can be solved with some probability, however. It is possible, as one historian supposed, that Sophie, wife of John Csezmicsei, was indeed a member of the Megyericsei family, which in itself would account for the relationship.¹⁶⁵⁷ If our hypothesis that the wife of Bernard Megyericsei was the daughter of Valentine Pálfi is true, the connection is even closer, for the wife of Valentine himself was the daughter of Peter Csezmicsei and Margaret Mikcsec of Cirkvena.¹⁶⁵⁸ Christopher Megyericsei was still alive in 1543, and the Farkas (Wolfgang) Megyericsei who is listed among the owners of Kustyerolc in 1576 seems to have been his son from the daughter of Louis Pekri.

2.2.31. Mindszenti (de Mendzenth)

There were several possessions called Mindszent in the county of Körös, and even more in Slavonia, and it is not easy to make a distinction between them and the families owning them. The village called Mindszent which concerns us now was situated in the region of Dobrakucsá and its other name was Habjanovc/Fabianovc; it had appurtenances in at least six neighbouring settlements.¹⁶⁵⁹ It was named after a certain Fabianus, who must have lived in the 13th century,¹⁶⁶⁰ but is impossible to identify; nor it is possible to decide whether the late medieval Mindszenti were the direct descendants of this Fabianus or not. We know very little about the family until 1466, when John, the son of Paul, as it seems, became the *alispán* of bishop John in the county of Pozsega.¹⁶⁶¹ This Paul, son of John, had been *szolgabíró* in the county of Körös, and was also active as a lawyer.¹⁶⁶² A year later, in 1467, John was administering the abbey of Béla for his lord,¹⁶⁶³ and in 1469 became his viceban and at the same time *ispán* of Zagreb. It is possible that the Matthias

¹⁶⁵⁶ DF 231837.

¹⁶⁵⁷ DF 277175/5.

¹⁶⁵⁸ DF 232021.

¹⁶⁵⁹ “*possessionis Myndzenth predictae alio nomine Habyanowcz*”. DF 277175. p. 146. It was also known as Benedikovec (Benedykowcz alio nomine Fabianowcz, DF 261977), perhaps after Benedict Mindszenti who is mentioned in 1414. In this case this Benedict and his sons, Nicholas and Stephen, were also members of the Mindszenti family which concerns us here.

¹⁶⁶⁰ “*ecclesia Omnium Sanctorum in possessione filiorum Fabiani (!)*”: Csánki, Körösmegye 79.

¹⁶⁶¹ DL 34216.

¹⁶⁶² Levéltári Közlemények 11 (1933) 79 (1439); DL 103615; Levéltári Közlemények 12 (1934) 122.

¹⁶⁶³ DF 255799: “*tempore quo Johannes litteratus de Mendzenth abbas de Bela in persona [...] Johannis episcopi ecclesie Quinqueecclesiensis tenuisset*”

Mindszenti, who is said in 1465 to have received the abbey *in commendam* was his brother.¹⁶⁶⁴ We do not know by what right he and his brother Nicholas¹⁶⁶⁵ laid claim upon the estate of Garignica,¹⁶⁶⁶ of which John did eventually obtain some parts together with the Pekri;¹⁶⁶⁷ what is certain is that in 1470 the three sons of Paul, John, Matthias and Nicholas, took half of the estate of Dobrakucsa into pledge, together with the castle there.¹⁶⁶⁸ Since they also had portions at Mellesovc,¹⁶⁶⁹ for some time they certainly counted among the wealthiest nobility of the region. Their glory did not last for long, however. The castle of Dobrakucsa was soon taken from them,¹⁶⁷⁰ and John as one of the leading *familiars* of the bishop of Pécs fell together with his lord. He was dead in 1481, so only three of his *familiars* could be proscribed then for having taken part in the events of 1471.¹⁶⁷¹ Nicholas Mindszenti was nevertheless sometimes accorded the *egregius* title,¹⁶⁷² and he was even capable of temporarily enlarging his landed wealth, when he was adjudged at the banal seat as many as thirty inhabited tenant sessions on the appurtenances of Gordova.¹⁶⁷³ In 1475 he was serving bishop Oswald of Zagreb.¹⁶⁷⁴ Yet his sons, John and Francis¹⁶⁷⁵ merely turn up as designated royal men,¹⁶⁷⁶ and Francis is once referred to as the castellan of Kristallóc.¹⁶⁷⁷ The daughter of Ladislav Mindszenti, who was *szolgabíró* of Körös in the 1470s,¹⁶⁷⁸ was married by a person called Andrew, who was at some time *provisor* of the castle of Pekrec.¹⁶⁷⁹ In 1505 the portions of the same Ladislav were donated by king Wladislaw to his courtier (*aulicus*), Peter Banych of Zrebernagorycza, who never seems to have effectively taken them, however.¹⁶⁸⁰ The last time the members of the Mindszenti family appear is in 1524, when Francis prohibited in the name of his relatives members of the Bátori and Batthyány families from the occupation of Mindszent and its appurtenances.¹⁶⁸¹

¹⁶⁶⁴ Andrić, Benediktinski samostan 51, n. 79. John did have a brother called Matthias, who was certainly not a cleric in 1470, however. DL 94500.

¹⁶⁶⁵ This Nicholas may have been the *familiaris* of ban Vitovec around 1461: DL 94536.

¹⁶⁶⁶ DL 103712.

¹⁶⁶⁷ DL 103716.

¹⁶⁶⁸ DL 94500, DL 94501, DF 278421-423 (“*egregiis Johanni, Mathie et Nicolao filiis quondam Pauli de Myndzenth*”)

¹⁶⁶⁹ DF 268097.

¹⁶⁷⁰ See the charter cited in the previous note.

¹⁶⁷¹ Tringli, Szlavóniai közgyűlés 316.

¹⁶⁷² DL 103801, DL 107113, and see the charter cited in the next note.

¹⁶⁷³ DF 279492.

¹⁶⁷⁴ DF 261839.

¹⁶⁷⁵ DL 106876.

¹⁶⁷⁶ DL 101421.

¹⁶⁷⁷ DF 279490.

¹⁶⁷⁸ DL 107013, DL 107017, DL 45542. Together with Ladislav Mindszenti another Ladislav, called of Benedikovc, also emerges as *szolgabíró*; he was the son of Gallus (DF 231610), and may have also belonged to the same family.

¹⁶⁷⁹ DL 94314.

¹⁶⁸⁰ DF 261977.

¹⁶⁸¹ DF 277175/146.

2.2.32. Musinai/Berzencei (de Musyna, Berzenche)

The family descended from the illustrious Péc kindred, to which the Marcali belonged as well.¹⁶⁸² They obtained their possessions beyond the river Drava, basically the future estate of Musina (Šandrovac), in 1330 through an exchange with their kinsmen belonging to the Marcali branch of the kindred.¹⁶⁸³ The bulk of their lands lay in the county of Somogy, however, where they had portions in more than thirty villages.¹⁶⁸⁴ By 1406 two fortifications had been erected at Szentersébet and Musina respectively. George, son of Lorand was *alispán* of Tolna in 1397,¹⁶⁸⁵ then joined Pipo Ozorai and became his castellan of Sárvár.¹⁶⁸⁶ In 1422 he accompanied king Sigismund for his Bohemian expedition,¹⁶⁸⁷ and in 1424 he was still attached to the court.¹⁶⁸⁸ Thirty years earlier, in 1391 he bought, together with his cousins, Stephen and Luke, sons of Demetrius, the possession of Oresja, in the vicinity of Musina, for 600 florins.¹⁶⁸⁹ Another cousin of George, Andrew son of Stephen, was one of those who sealed the charter concerning the inheritance of duke Albert of Habsburg in September 1402 at Pressburg,¹⁶⁹⁰ whereas his son, Nicholas, was present at the assembly of Buda in April 1444.¹⁶⁹¹

It is in connection with the fortification which, in all probability, was erected at Musina in the first years of Sigismund's reign, that we learn some details about their history during the tumultuous years of the mid-15th century. For in 1468 Sandrin, another son of George, petitioned king Matthias for a permission to construct a new fortification at his possession of Berzence, in the county of Somogy, instead of the one standing at Szentersébet, in the same county, to which they had been forced to move from Musina, razed to the ground before their leave. The reason of their leaving Slavonia had been their inability to defend the *castellum* in the years of trouble, and a fear of it falling into enemy hands and thus becoming a source of menace for the neighbouring region.¹⁶⁹²

¹⁶⁸² Engel, Középkori magyar genealógia, Péc nem I. tábla: zalai ág.

¹⁶⁸³ Somogy Megye Múltjából 29 (1998) 317.

¹⁶⁸⁴ DL 9198. This charter, in which king Sigismund donated to George, son of Lorand the royal right in all his possessions in the counties of Somogy and Körös, and which was confirmed and transcribed in a letter of privilege in 1418, was accepted as authentic by Csánki (Történelmi földrajz II. 664.) and Mályusz (Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár II/1. 4662.), but later rejected by the editors of the Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár. It is likewise referred to as a late forgery by Tibor Koppány (Középkori kastélyok 218.), with reference to oral communication by Pál Engel. The layout of the charter, however, is in perfect accordance with the practice of the age, and so are all the other data, such as, for instance, the list of officeholders. Therefore, I see no reason to reject its testimony and treat its information as genuine. There exists an apparently early 16th-century copy of the charter under the same archival sign; it may have been this which deceived Engel

¹⁶⁸⁵ Engel, Archontológia I. 207.

¹⁶⁸⁶ Ibidem 405.

¹⁶⁸⁷ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár IX. 38.

¹⁶⁸⁸ He was then sent from the court together with the prothonotaries of the palatine and the judge royal to witness a land dispute in the county of Veszprém. Ibidem XI. 578.

¹⁶⁸⁹ Ibidem I. 1965.

¹⁶⁹⁰ Engel, Archontológia 494.

¹⁶⁹¹ Decreta regni 335.

¹⁶⁹² DF 209346: "*alias ipse et fratres sui in regno nostro Sclavonie ex annuencia predecessorum nostrorum regum in loco Musina vocato castellum habuissent, sed tempore medio cum gravissima in regno nostro disturbia orientur, sencientes ad conservacionem ipsius castelli se inhabiles et insufficientes esse, castellum ipsum ne exinde si propter*

These events could be dated to the years following the death of king Ladislas V, which were equally referred to as a period of troubles, but some circumstances seem to prove that they in fact happened earlier. For in 1461 Thomas Székely, then prior of Vrana, stated that some charters concerning the lands of the priory in the county of Somogy fell into the hands of Sandrin, son of George, then his declared enemy, at the time when the counts of Cilli occupied the castles of the Hospitallers.¹⁶⁹³ It was in 1445 that the counts of Cilli conquered the Hospitaller estates in Slavonia, but at that time the prior was Jovan Tallóci, who even died at the siege of Hrasztovica (Hrastovica). Yet after 1445 it was very improbable for a supporter of the Cillei family to have felt the need to flee from Slavonia. Moreover, by 1444 at the latest a *castellum* had been built at Berzence/Szenterzsébet¹⁶⁹⁴, where it was possible to move.¹⁶⁹⁵ If this is indeed the case, the relocation of the Musinai family must have happened during the civil war of 1440-1441, when Jan Vitovec, the mercenary captain of the counts of Cilli, did occupy the southern counties of Hungary for some months.¹⁶⁹⁶ At the same time some villages owned by the Musinai in the county of Somogy were occupied by Ladislas and Nicholas Kanizsai, which again is a proof that they had taken the side of young Ladislas V in the civil war which followed the death of king Albert.¹⁶⁹⁷

In the petition mentioned above, Sandrin justified his request to build another fortification with the quarrels which emerged within the family by reason of their multitude.¹⁶⁹⁸ In fact, in the 1450s at least six adult males shared the family possessions, or rather the part which had remained of it.¹⁶⁹⁹ For in the course of the 1450s and 1460s they gradually pledged considerable portions of them. The majority was alienated by Ladislas, son of George, Martin, son of Nicholas, and John, son of Michael,¹⁷⁰⁰ and these portions were eventually redeemed by a newcomer in the region, namely George Forster, who may have stayed in the service of the Eruszt family from the outset.¹⁷⁰¹ Sandrin, son of George, who at first tried to regain the family lands in court, and even augmented them himself,¹⁷⁰² seems to have acquiesced in their loss in 1468, when he resigned them in favour of Forster before the king himself at Pozsony.¹⁷⁰³ Instead of the *castellum* at Szenterzsébet, which

eorum inhabilitatem ad manus alienas devenire contingeret regno et regnicolis nostris dampna et incommoda committerentur, funditus distraxissent, et tandem post distraccionem ipsius castelli omnes se cum omnibus fratribus et familia suis ad quoddam aliud castellum eorum in possessione Sentersebeth erectum transtulissent"

¹⁶⁹³ DF 261897.

¹⁶⁹⁴ The two in fact constituted a single settlement, see Horváth, "Kastélyépítési engedélyek" 17.

¹⁶⁹⁵ Zichy család okmánytára IX. 86.

¹⁶⁹⁶ Pálosfalvi, "Cilleiek és Tallóciak"

¹⁶⁹⁷ DL 70409.

¹⁶⁹⁸ "*tum propter multitudinem tum etiam propter discordanciam que ex huiusmodi multitudine inter eos interim nasceretur*"

¹⁶⁹⁹ Engel, Középkori magyar genealógia, loc. cit. Alongside the kinsmen listed there, Philip, son of Peter, also had a son called Stephen (DL 98001), whereas Nicholas, son of George, fathered a son called Martin.

¹⁷⁰⁰ DL 98000, DL 15167, DL 16420, DL 70406.

¹⁷⁰¹ DL 16529, DL 98001, DL 98003.

¹⁷⁰² DL 15396.

¹⁷⁰³ DF 209342: "*desiderans eiusdem Georgii mutuum habere societatem ut cum eo simul iunctus nedum res suas mutuis auxiliis eomelius tueri possit*", as he argued very reasonably.

was possessed entirely by Forster thereafter, Sandrin, by virtue of the royal permission, built another fortification on his own portion, and consequently two *castella* stood on the Berzencei lands in Somogy.¹⁷⁰⁴

Moreover, one of the sons of Sandrin, Bernard, even joined the service of Forster, who in the meantime had become castellan of Szentgyörgyvár.¹⁷⁰⁵ Yet in 1474 Forster and Sandrin made a new agreement, or rather, it was forced upon the latter by his powerful neighbour, according to which all the Berzencei lands in the county of Somogy were left in the hands of Forster, whereas Sandrin and his two sons seem definitively to have retired to Slavonia; at the same time the mutual inheritance of both parties was stipulated for the case of the other's dying heirless.¹⁷⁰⁶ It appears to have been in connection with this „return” south of the Drava that the *castellum* at Musina was rebuilt. In 1481, when, after the death of Sandrin, Andrew Justh and his wife tried to introduce themselves into his lands, alongside the estate of Musina only three villages in Somogy were enumerated.¹⁷⁰⁷ It is true, however, that by this time all the collateral kinsmen of Sandrin have died out, so whatever had remained of the family patrimony, especially in Slavonia, was exclusively owned by the descendants of Sandrin.

In the 1480s the sons of Sandrin, Bernard and Nicholas, were the only surviving members of their kin, but we do not know considerably more about them. Their mother was in all probability Elisabeth Balassa, the daughter of Ladislas Balassa.¹⁷⁰⁸ This relationship could have become the source of considerable social influence, especially after the brother of Elisabeth, Francis, had become the brother-in-law of Emeric Perényi, palatine of Hungary from 1504. There is no trace of their growing prestige, however, and they only occur in our sources in connection with their Slavonian possessions, mostly as neighbours or as designated royal men, which proves beyond doubt that they indeed lived in the county of Körös.¹⁷⁰⁹

The situation changed somewhat in the second decade of the 16th century. Then four members of the family turn up in our sources; one of them, Bernard, was the son of Sandrin, already mentioned above. The other three, John, Sandrin and George, were the sons of Nicholas, although perhaps from two consecutive marriages.¹⁷¹⁰ The latter George is mentioned but once as a witness, when Francis Both of Bajna commissioned lawyers at Kristallóc in 1509. He may thus have belonged to

¹⁷⁰⁴ Horváth, Kastélyépítési engedélyek 17.

¹⁷⁰⁵ DL 103765.

¹⁷⁰⁶ DF 209368.

¹⁷⁰⁷ Justh család levéltára 319-320. See Horváth, Kastélyépítési engedélyek 18. In december 1478 the house of Sandrin and his two sons at Musina was burnt (“*domum et curiam ignis voragine comburi et concremari [...] fecissent*”, DL 33135), whereas in 1481 there certainly stood a castellum on the same place (“*ad facies [...] possessionum Mosyna, Meglech ac castelli in eadem Mosyna habiti*”, DL 63294, abstract: Justh család levéltára 320.). In 1480 Sandrin is cited from his possession of Szentlászló, in the county of Somogy. DL 18379.

¹⁷⁰⁸ Balassa család levéltára 422.

¹⁷⁰⁹ DF 290158; DF 231830; DL 33454 (first, as it seems, in the form of Sandorfy); DL 46272.

¹⁷¹⁰ John and Sandrin were surely brothers (eg. DL 101600), whereas George is once referred to have been their *carnalis* brother (DF 209459).

the family of either Francis himself or their host, Balthasar Batthyány. As for John, he became secretary of Thomas Bakóc, archbishop of Esztergom.¹⁷¹¹ This confidential position helped his brother, Sandrin, to a very advantageous marriage. He was betrothed with Dorothy Erdódi, sister of Simon, bishop of Zagreb. Whether this marriage was the cause or already the consequence of their growing influence is unknown; what is sure is that from the late 1510s John and his brother Sandrin tried with every possible means to stop the family's social decline. At first they successfully pushed their uncle, Bernard, out of the family estates in Slavonia; after Bernard had been convicted of infidelity, his portions at Musina were donated to John and Sandrin in 1518.¹⁷¹² Somewhat later they laid claim again to the two family fortifications and their appurtenances in Somogy with reference to the contract once made with George Forster and his wife, who also had died in the meantime. King Louis did confirm the contract of 1474, and granted them the royal right in the estates, but the brothers proved impotent against John Bornemissza, one of the pillars of the government from 1500 on, who had acquired them by his marriage with the widow of Forster.¹⁷¹³ Consequently, in February 1526 John and Sandrin turned to Francis Batthyány, ban of Slavonia, and asked him to help them get back their legal due, contracting a treaty of mutual inheritance for the case the ban prevailed. It was to no avail, however, for both estates were undisturbedly possessed until at least 1527 by Bornemissza.

2.2.33. Nelepec

The settlement of the Bosnian Hrvatinić family in Slavonia from which the Nelepec family originated was a consequence of the marriage of king Louis I. In order to secure his rule over the newly acquired portion of Bosnia, Louis forced some of the indigenous families there to hand over their castles in exchange for estates in Slavonia.¹⁷¹⁴ Thus the sons of Paul (Hrvatinić) received the castle of Dobrakucsa in the county of Körös, and one of them, Nelepec, became the founder of the Nelepec family. Nelepec himself joined Frank Szécsényi and was his *alispán* in the county of Zala for some time. His brother, Gregory was knight of the royal court in the late 1350s.¹⁷¹⁵

¹⁷¹¹ DL 67885 (1517): “*egregius Joannes Sendorfy de Berzencze secretarius reverendissimi in Christo patris domini cardinalis Strigoniensis*”. See also DF 209453, DF 209454, DF 209458.

¹⁷¹² DF 209451, DF 209452, DF 209453, DF 209456. Bernard was accused of „*plurima nephanda scelera et sacrilegia perpetrasse ac in thorum nobilis domine Barbare consortis sue quendam Mathiam Horwath latronem et predonem publicum et proscriptum admisisse et cum ea adulterari ex eaque prolem bastardam procreari permisisse et procurasse.*”

¹⁷¹³ DF 209468, DF 209469.

¹⁷¹⁴ Pál Engel, “A 14-15. századi bosnyák-magyar kapcsolatok kérdéséhez” [On the Problem of Hungaro-Bosnian Relations in the 14th-15th Centuries], in Enikő Csukovits ed., *Honor, vár, ispánság. Válogatott tanulmányok*, (Budapest: Osiris) 2003. 498-499.

¹⁷¹⁵ On both see Engel, *Archontológia* I. 236, 482.

Master Benedict, the son of Nelepec from his wife Elisabeth Kasztellánfi, was in 1408-1409 *alispán* of the remote county of Trencsén in the service of palatine Nicholas Garai.¹⁷¹⁶ As late as 1423 he was still in the service of Garai, for in that year he was sent by his lord as an envoy to John Frangepán.¹⁷¹⁷ Yet neither he nor his sons seem to have played an outstanding role either in Slavonia or outside during the rest of Sigismund's reign, although for some time they even held three fortifications in the region. That of Mogor in the county of Körös seems to have concerned them by way of their kinship with its owner, Nicholas son of Latk. Latk (Vlatko) was in fact the cousin of Nelepec, and followed him some years later to Slavonia, where he had at first received the castle of Berstyanóc, and later his son built that of Mogor.¹⁷¹⁸ In the 1420s and 1430s Benedict Nelepec was the tutor of the son of Nicholas, Ladislas, and held as such the estate of Mogor.¹⁷¹⁹ In 1416 Benedict contracted a treaty of mutual inheritance with David Lack, ban of Slavonia, which, although seems never to have been realised, is certainly an indication of his elevated status.¹⁷²⁰ We do not know how the family put their hand on the castle of Levač in the county of Orbász; all that is known is that in 1449 they mortgaged it to Radivoy, brother of the king of Bosnia, for 2000 florins.¹⁷²¹ In August 1442 Benedict was one of the Slavonian envoys sent to the general assembly at Buda.¹⁷²² He also founded a Pauline monastery on his estate of Dobrakucsá.¹⁷²³

The alienation of Levač was the beginning of a long series of events which by the second half of the reign of king Matthias had almost completely undermined the initial social standing of the family. In 1455 Paul, son of Benedict mortgaged in the name of his close relatives one third of the appurtenances of the estate of Dobrakucsá to Nicholas Dombai and Nicholas Szentléleki for the enormous sum of 6000 florins.¹⁷²⁴ In view of this sum the deal may have been a purely nominal one, and in any case neither Dombai nor Szentléleki seems ever to have held any portion of Dobrakucsá. In 1462 it was again Paul, son of Benedict, who gave to John Geréb of Vingárt and his sons the castle of Bálványos (Unguraș, RO) in return for all those „friendly and brotherly favours” that he had made for him and his kinsmen before the king and the queen.¹⁷²⁵ Bálványos pertained to the Nelepec by virtue of the contract of mutual inheritance that they had entered into with David Lack, but they seem never to have taken real possession of it; consequently, it may have been but

¹⁷¹⁶ Ibidem I. 213.

¹⁷¹⁷ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár X. 1238.

¹⁷¹⁸ For the references see the section on the Latkfi below.

¹⁷¹⁹ DL 103522, 103524, 103571. In 1438 it was John, son of Benedek, who presented the documents testifying to the tax exemption of the lands of Ladislas Latkfi. DL 103587.

¹⁷²⁰ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár V. 2369.

¹⁷²¹ DL 44418; Engel, *Archontológia* I. 362. Lajos Thallóczy and Sándor Horváth eds., *Magyarország melléktartományainak oklevéltára III. Alsó-szlavóniai okmánytár* (Dubicza, Orbász és Szana vármegyék) 1244-1710 (Budapest: MTA, 1912) 174-178.; DL 88244.

¹⁷²² Teleki, *Hunyadiak kora* X. 120.

¹⁷²³ Romhányi, *Kolostorok* 21.

¹⁷²⁴ DL 102128.

¹⁷²⁵ DF 278419: „*in presenciis regie et reginalis maiestatum*”.

their rights that they transferred to Geréb.¹⁷²⁶ One of the grandsons of Benedict, John son of John served Ladislas Hunyadi for some time, and died of pestilence as his *familiaris* sometime after 2 April 1455.¹⁷²⁷ The brother of Paul, Dominic joined after 1456 Jan Vitovec, ban of Slavonia; he was present together with the ban in the royal camp at Szeged in the autumn of 1458 and continued to serve Vitovec after the latter had broken with king Mathias and gone over to Frederick of Habsburg.¹⁷²⁸

In January 1464 Ambrose and Peter Török of Enying invaded the castle of Dobrakucsa, expelled Dominic together with his wife and brothers, and confiscated all the charters of property rights stored there. Moreover, they devastated all the possessions belonging to the castle, robbed the churches, among them the monastery of the Pauline hermits, captivated the tenants, and finally forced Domokos to go with them to the chapter of Pécs and confer upon them the estate of Dobrakucsa under conditions „as nefarious as they were able to think of”.¹⁷²⁹ The motivations of this action are not clear. Ambrose Török was one of the newly rising, unscrupulous lords of the 1460s: at first a leading *familiaris* of Nicholas Újlaki, then he entered the service of king Matthias and became ispán of Sopron and later royal castellan of Krupa in the county of Zagreb.¹⁷³⁰ Some years earlier, as castellan of Nicholas Újlaki, he carried out an almost identical coup in the county of Somogy against the estate of Ders Szerdahelyi, and other sources show him to have been a person of singular cruelty even by the measures of the age.¹⁷³¹ It has to be added, however, that the wife of Peter Török was Catherine, the daughter of Paul Nelepeci, although we do not know whether this marriage preceded or followed the attack against Dobrakucsa.¹⁷³²

Whatever the reasons, the Nelepeci were later allowed to return to their castle, but their position constantly deteriorated. In 1466 Dominic mortgaged 11 tenant sessions on the appurtenances of Dobrakucsa to Demetrius Csupor, bishop of Győr.¹⁷³³ Three years later he was forced to dispose of further portions of the estate in order to pay the widow of his brother, Paul her dower.¹⁷³⁴ In 1470 half of the estate of Dobrakucsa was mortgaged for 500 florins to the neighbouring family of Mindszenti, one of whose members, John was then viceban of bishop John. The transfer was the somewhat belated consequence of the fact that Paul and Dominic Nelepec had previously been

¹⁷²⁶ On Bálványos see Géza Hegyi, „Bálványosvár és a nagypolitika (1456-1463). A Várdai és a losonci Dezsőfi család küzdelme a bálványosi uradalomért” [The Castle of Bálványos and High Politics. The Struggle of the Várdai and Dezsőfi of Losonc Families for the Estate of Bálványos], *Erdélyi Múzeum* 2005/3-4. 105-130.; Engel: *Archontológia* I. 271-272.

¹⁷²⁷ “*ex relatibus ac veridicis attestacionibus quamplurimorum militum et nobilium [...] consociorum eiusdem quondam Jankonis filii Johannis qui antecedenter per quamplurima tempora in serviciis quondam illustris principis domini Ladislai de Hwnyad [...] unacum eodem quondam Jankone continuatim perseverassent*” DL 103655.

¹⁷²⁸ Ibidem. In May 1463 he was pardoned among the *familiares* of Vitovec: DL 233405.

¹⁷²⁹ DL 103681: “*prout nefarius excogitare potuissent*”

¹⁷³⁰ Kubinyi, Kaposújtvári uradalom 29.

¹⁷³¹ DF 255788.

¹⁷³² DL 106640.

¹⁷³³ DL 103697.

¹⁷³⁴ DL 16792.

sentenced the capital punishment in a case against Paul Garázda; Dominic himself, and the sons of Paul thus needed money to redeem their lands.¹⁷³⁵ This time the affair was surely not fictitious, for Nicholas Mindszenti can be shown to have resided in the castle in the early 1470s.¹⁷³⁶ He did not have much time to get comfortable in his new residence, however, for soon after another newcomer arrived with whom it was impossible to contend: John Eruszt, ban of Slavonia.

Eruszt took the offensive already before his appointment as ban in November 1473. In March 1473 he sent his *familiaris*, Nicholas Pozsegai (later his viceban) to Slavonia. Pozsegai found Nicholas Mindszenti in the town of Zdenc, captivated him and took him to the castle of Sztrigó (Štrigova). Nicholas was later transferred to the castellum of Kristallóc, and while a prisoner Pozsegai besieged and took the castle of Dobručka for his lord.¹⁷³⁷ Consequently, Ladislav Nelepec and Peter Török, now allies against the common enemy, erected a new *castellum* on one of the possessions belonging to Dobručka, and set up their residence there. Not for a long time, however, for in November 1474 they were trapped by Nicholas Pozsegai, who forced them to hand over the castle, had it demolished and attached its appurtenances to Dobručka.¹⁷³⁸

Despite the evident illegality of his acquisition, Eruszt remained in possession of the estate, which devolved after his death in the spring of 1476 upon his widow and sons, bishop Sigismund and John the younger. In 1477, however, king Matthias forced them to resign Dobručka in order to keep the rest of their wealth in Hungary and Slavonia,¹⁷³⁹ and he donated the castle to one of his foreign mercenary captains, called Nicholas Lusiczky (Mikuláš Lušický z Čecvíc).¹⁷⁴⁰ The latter Nicholas seems indeed to have resided on his new estate,¹⁷⁴¹ the protests of Peter Török and his relatives notwithstanding. In 1486 the estate was finally acquired by James Székely of Kövend, then captain of Radkersburg and Pettau, one of the new favourites of king Matthias, and a rival as formidable as Eruszt had been earlier.¹⁷⁴² James, and later his brother, Nicholas, although sometimes calling themselves of Dobručka, rarely seem to have resided in Slavonia, but insisted on retaining the castle of Dobručka. Both held important posts in the court,¹⁷⁴³ the Nelepeci had consequently no chances of regaining their ancient estate, although this time again Francis son of David protested against the donation.¹⁷⁴⁴

¹⁷³⁵ DF 278421-278423.

¹⁷³⁶ See the section on the Mindszenti above.

¹⁷³⁷ DF 268098.

¹⁷³⁸ DL 94527. Many years later Ferenc Nelepeci remembered that after László had been captured by Eruszt, the third brother, Miklós, was driven by fear to escape and died „*extra bona et jura possessionaria sua*” (DL 94831.).

¹⁷³⁹ DF 231190.

¹⁷⁴⁰ DL 94831: “*cuidam Bohemo Nicolao Lwsiczky de Czerzwycz contulisset*”

¹⁷⁴¹ DL 35700: “*Friderico Lwsycky de Dobrukwchya*”; DL 107063.

¹⁷⁴² DL 101026.

¹⁷⁴³ See above p. 24. and n. 100.

¹⁷⁴⁴ DL 101026: protest was made in the name of Francis Nelepeci with regard to the sixth part of all the appurtenances of the castle.

We do not know how the surviving members of the Nelepeci family got along with the Székely brothers and how they managed to save at least a small portion of the estate for themselves. In September 1482 Dominic, son of Benedict and his three nephews: Ladislas, David and Nicholas were still mentioned together, and the castle of Dobrakucsá referred to as „theirs”.¹⁷⁴⁵ From the late 1480s Francis son of David is the only member of the Nelepeci family who turns up regularly in the sources, although the sons of Ladislas: John, Michael and Stephen were also alive. This John was a *famulus* of Francis Beriszló in 1494, but that is all we know about him.¹⁷⁴⁶ It is consequently Francis Nelepeci whose career can be reconstructed with some details.

The tax list of 1495 does not mention any portion of Dobrakucsá in the hands of the Nelepeci, the whole being attributed to James Székely. In 1507, however, we meet again Francis Nelepeci with a mere 16 tenant sessions under the heading of Dobrakucsá.¹⁷⁴⁷ In 1515 Francis was cited from the possession of Szobocsina, once belonging to the castle of Dobrakucsá, so he must have made an accord with the Székely brothers sometime before 1507.¹⁷⁴⁸ The tiny portion he finally managed to retain together with his cousins was obviously not enough to serve as a basis for a new social rise, and the clue to the otherwise mysterious career of Francis Nelepeci seems indeed to lay elsewhere.

As mentioned above, he married the daughter of Elias Businci, also called „Bosnian”.¹⁷⁴⁹ The origins and career of Elias have already been analysed, here it will suffice to repeat that at the turn of the century he was *provisor curie* of the castle of Jajce and an ever more influential member of the wealthy Slavonian nobility. In 1506 he was appointed as one of the vicebans of bans Andrew Both and Mark Horváth. He must have seemed powerful enough to make an effort at regaining the family castle of Dobrakucsá. In 1502 Francis Nelepeci wanted to sell him the castle with the evident aim of getting help from him against Nicholas Székely.¹⁷⁵⁰ Although the plan does not seem to have yielded any fruit, it was obviously thanks to the influence of Elias Bosnyák that Francis Nelepeci himself was appointed as viceban in 1507. His lord, Andrew Both was removed from his office early in 1508, and Francis lost his office accordingly, but he does not seem to have followed Both into open rebellion against king Wladislaw II.

Yet, perhaps counting on the help of his lord, he felt himself strong enough to defy the usurpers of the family castle and reestablish his social position by constructing a new fortification on one of the

¹⁷⁴⁵ DL 100980.

¹⁷⁴⁶ Engel, *Geschichte* 95-96.

¹⁷⁴⁷ Adamček – Kampuš, *Popisi* 11, 30. In 1495 a fraction of the estate is listed in the possession of Michael Ozorai. He married the widow of David Nelepeci, and thus acquired his lands. DF 265881. Previously he had been castellan and *alispán* of Verőce: DL 94264.

¹⁷⁴⁸ In 1515 Francis Nelepeci had tenants in both of the market towns belonging to the castle of Dobrakucsá, Hévíz and Csütörtökhely, and in sixteen villages, most of which can be identified with the appurtenances of the castle enumerated in 1486. DL 94819.

¹⁷⁴⁹ For the references see above the chapter on Elias Bosnyák.

¹⁷⁵⁰ DF 232106.

appurtenances of Dobrakucsa. On 30 December 1507 he dated a letter from Dobrakucsa,¹⁷⁵¹ the construction of his *castellum* may therefore by that time have been completed.¹⁷⁵² Nicholas Székely turned to the king for remedy, and Wladislaw II accordingly ordered the bans of Slavonia, George Kanizsai and John Eruszt, to demolish the newly erected fortification. The bans were unable or unwilling to act, however, and Székely was consequently forced to urge the king for assistance again. In 1510, after the general assembly of the kingdom had asserted the illegality of Nelepeci's *castellum*, Wladislaw commissioned in the absence of new bans the prior of Vrana and Francis Beriszló as well as the noble community of Slavonia to proceed to the destruction of the *castellum* if Francis refused to comply.¹⁷⁵³

Nothing seems to have happened, however, and the relationship between Nelepeci and Székely further deteriorated. Nelepeci confiscated some salt from his adversary, and even dishonoured him at the gathering of the Slavonian nobility at Körös, while Székely was staying at the court of the emperor in his king's business.¹⁷⁵⁴ Moreover, instead of refraining from continuing the work on his new residence, he surrounded it with a strong stonewall.¹⁷⁵⁵ His confidence is sufficiently accounted for by the authority of his new lord, Peter Beriszló, ban of Slavonia, whose entourage Francis joined soon after his appointment as ban.¹⁷⁵⁶ It was therefore without effect that king Wladislaw ordered again in June 1515 Peter Beriszló himself and the Slavonian nobility to demolish the *castellum* without delay.

Nicholas Székely then had the idea of resorting to more effective means instead of the distant and paralysed royal will. He turned to his most powerful neighbour, duke Lawrence Újlaki, and asked him, in return for rewards that remain unknown to us, to help him settle the affair. But ban Beriszló intervened immediately, and protested against the duke's action with reference to his own exclusive authority in Slavonia and to the liberties of the Slavonian nobility.¹⁷⁵⁷ The conflict which menaced to erupt between two of his most powerful barons prompted the king to mediate, and in September 1515 he only ordered Francis Nelepeci to suspend works on his castle until the Slavonian nobility would testify that each of their members had the right, according to ancient custom, to erect a fortification on his own estates.¹⁷⁵⁸ The outcome of the dispute is not known; it is certain that the

¹⁷⁵¹ DL 46830.

¹⁷⁵² In 1522 the fortification of Ferenc Nelepeci is said to stand in Kőalja (*curie nobilitaris sive fortalicie egregie Francisci Nelepeczy de Dobrakuchya in Subkywallya*, DL 94866.), and sometimes he is even called by it: *Franciscus Nelepeczy de Subkwalya in pertinenciis Dobrakuchya [...] commorans*. DL 94865., 94871.

¹⁷⁵³ DL 94736; 94737.

¹⁷⁵⁴ DL 94802.

¹⁷⁵⁵ “*contra nostram inhibitionem litteratorie factam muro fortissimo castellum huiusmodi edificare velles*”. DL 94803.

¹⁷⁵⁶ DL 104635: “*Circa festum Corporis Christi Francisco Nelepeczy servitori eiusdem domini dati sunt in paratis fl. L*” (1513).

¹⁷⁵⁷ DI 104278.

¹⁷⁵⁸ “*interea quoad litteras universitatis nobilium regni nostri Sclavonie super eo quod scilicet unusquisque nobilium erigendi huiusmodi castella in bonis suis ex vetusta regni consuetudine liberam habet potestatis facultatem coram nobis prout te ultro obtulisti producere et exhibere poteris*” DL 94811.

Székely of Kövend remained in possession of the old castle of Dobrakucsa until its occupation by the Ottomans in 1542, but nothing is known about the fate of the new castle.

As regards Francis Nelepeci, he remained one of the leading *familiares* of ban Beriszló. First his castellan in the Hospitaller castle of Krassó (Karaševo, Baranya county),¹⁷⁵⁹ later he was appointed as his captain of Zengg.¹⁷⁶⁰ In 1523 we find him among those leading nobles, together with members of the Batthyány, Tahi, Kasztellánfi, Pekri and Szencsei families, who invited the Slavonian nobility for a congregation to Zdenc.¹⁷⁶¹ He also managed to win back juridically the possessions of Kravarina and Gradec, once belonging to the estate of Dobrakucsa, which had been alienated from it by his ancestors.¹⁷⁶² He died before 5 December 1523.¹⁷⁶³ From his wife, Barbara, he had three sons called Farkas, John and Stephen. Francis also had at least two sisters, one of whom married Nicholas of Pezerio, a well-to-do nobleman from the county of Zagreb.¹⁷⁶⁴ The other, Clara, was married to Michael Ajtósi, a nobleman from the county of Békés, and prepared her last will in the house of her brother in 1510.¹⁷⁶⁵

2.2.34. Orrosovc (Orros) (Orros de Orrosowch)

We know nothing about the origins of the Orrosovc¹⁷⁶⁶ family; judging by the size of their namegiving village, they by no means counted among the poorest nobility, but still their possessions seem originally to have been restricted to a single village. In 1463 a certain Ladislav Orros of Orrosovc is referred to as the *familiaris* of Frank Fánecs and Andrew Alapi,¹⁷⁶⁷ and the master Nicholas, who made a career in the late 15th century which was certainly out of proportion with his family background, was in all probability his son. Indeed, if the latter is identical to the *Nicolaus filius quondam Ladislai de Orrossowcz* who turns up in 1482 as a public notary, for some time he was a cleric.¹⁷⁶⁸ Whatever the case, Nicholas was surely a learned person, as his master title shows, and started out as a lawyer at the banal court.¹⁷⁶⁹ At the same time he also acted as a royal

¹⁷⁵⁹ DL 104297.

¹⁷⁶⁰ DI 104220. 9. January 1517, wrongly dated by the MOL register to 1510.

¹⁷⁶¹ DF 252335. Interestingly, in December 1522 he was said to have died, and his son, Farkas, ordered to be cited. DL 94868.

¹⁷⁶² In 1517 he made an accord with Francis Pan, who presumably inherited these possessions from his father, before the ban. Catherine, the daughter of Barbara, daughter of Michael Ozorai and Perpetua, widow of David Nelepec, was betrothed to Francis Pan, and they were left in possession of half of Kravarina and Gradec, and so was Francis Nelepeci himself, with the provision of mutual inheritance in the case of one of the parties dying heirless. The accord was confirmed by palatine Stephen Bátori, royal lieutenant, in March 1523. DF 265881.

¹⁷⁶³ DL 94882.

¹⁷⁶⁴ DF 277175/130-131. The Barbara who is mentioned in this charter as the soror carnalis of Francis seems to be identical to the Barbara, daughter of Michael Ozorai.

¹⁷⁶⁵ Levéltári Közlemények 7 (1929) 309-311.

¹⁷⁶⁶ In all probability, the name of the village derived from that of the family (Orros) itself.

¹⁷⁶⁷ DF 255767.

¹⁷⁶⁸ DL 100980.

¹⁷⁶⁹ DL 107041, Levéltári Közlemények 13 (1935) 245-246, 249.

man,¹⁷⁷⁰ and it was evidently the respect he had earned as a legal expert that he became involved in the negotiations of the Slavonian nobility with bishop Oswald in the intricate matter of tithe-paying. More exactly, his growing influence seems to have been the consequence of the patronage of Ladislas Hermanfi, for whom (and then for his adopted son, Balthasar Batthyány) he acted as a kind of “family lawyer”.¹⁷⁷¹

Already in 1485 he was member of the committee which elaborated the document upon the method of taxpaying, alongside such figures as Peter Bocskai and Ladislas Hermanfi.¹⁷⁷² A year later he was against a representative of the Slavonian nobility at Buda,¹⁷⁷³ whereas in 1488 he acted in the same quality, together with Michael Kerhen and George Kapitánfi, at Vienna.¹⁷⁷⁴ From a later recollection we know that in the same period he also functioned several times as tax-collector in Slavonia.¹⁷⁷⁵ Moreover, he was elected *szolgabíró* of the county of Körös, in 1488 and 1489, and as such he issued charters under his own seal at his residence at Csakovc.¹⁷⁷⁶ In 1490 we find him again amongst the Slavonian nobility negotiating with bishop Oswald, and in 1492 he was present at Buda and confirmed the Habsburg succession there, although his name turns up fairly down on the list of Slavonian and Croatian nobility, opening, as it seems, the group of lawyers.

After 1492 Nicholas continued to function as a lawyer, frequently in the service of Balthasar Batthyány, but also as a legal expert connected to the banal court.¹⁷⁷⁷ Later on he also appears formally as a *familiaris* of Balthasar Batthyány,¹⁷⁷⁸ although it is impossible to tell what the difference was with regard to his previous role as his lawyer. What is well known, on the other hand, is that in 1497 and 1498 he went over to the neighbouring magnate, Nicholas Bánfi, and became his *officialis* at Orbona, and was as such titled *egregius*.¹⁷⁷⁹ As a proof of his enhanced prestige, he was one of the arbitrators between John Ernuszt and the chapter of Csázma in 1499,¹⁷⁸⁰ and was designated as the executor of the last will of Nicholas Mikulasić together with his former

¹⁷⁷⁰ DL 19045.

¹⁷⁷¹ DL 102223, DL 101029, DL 101024, DL 103922, DL 103928, DL 106865.

¹⁷⁷² DF 268111.

¹⁷⁷³ DF 268110.

¹⁷⁷⁴ DF 268111.

¹⁷⁷⁵ Thallóczy – Horváth, Jajcza 129: “*item pretactus Nicolaus Orros fassus extitisset, quod ipse vivente serenissimo condam domino Matthia rege fuisset pluries dicator comitatus Crisiensis...*”

¹⁷⁷⁶ DL 103938, DL 103961, DL 103948, DL 103950 (the latter two issued at Csakovc). 1494: “*ad domum et curiam nobilitarem [...] Nicolai de Orosowcz [...] in possessione sua Chakowcz habitam*” (DL 107101). In fact, there existed a family called of Csakovc, which cannot be linked to the family of master Nicholas: Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 67., DF 275004. This Csakovc, also known as Musinamelléke (Chakowcz aliter Mwsynyamelleky, DL 34311), is falsely assimilated with the Hospitaller estate of Csáktornya (Čaklovac) by the editors of Popisi. The Kamarcai also owned portions of Csakovc, and so did in 1517 master Peter Vratissa, prothonotary of Slavonia.

¹⁷⁷⁷ DL 68716 (1493): “*De sede nostra banali ad id specialiter transmissus*”

¹⁷⁷⁸ DL 104011, DL 104017.

¹⁷⁷⁹ DL 46406, DL 107119, DL 102277.

¹⁷⁸⁰ DF 282462. He was, it is true, carefully distinguished together with two other persons, who also held the office of *szolgabíró* in Körös, with the simple title of *nobilis*, from the group of *egregius* lords, three of whom were vicabans.

lord, Balthasar Batthyány.¹⁷⁸¹ He remained active as a lawyer until his death sometime after 1503.¹⁷⁸² Yet neither Gabriel Orros, who seems to have been his son, nor Ladislav Orros, who was also his kinsman, inherited either his legal knowledge and consequent authority or his local social prestige. Both turn up as a royal/banal man, but that is all we can know about their respective careers.¹⁷⁸³

2.2.35. Pálfi of Szentmihály (Palffy de [Obramelcz, Abramowcz]zenthmyhal

The origins of the Pálfi family, although it is possible to follow them back into the early 14th century, are as obscure as those of the Orros. The possession of Szentmihály itself lay in the neighbourhood of Dobrakucsa, and its earliest known possessor seems to have been a certain Obramich/Obramelch.¹⁷⁸⁴ Yet it is very probable that this Obramelch is identical to Abraham (Obram-Abraam), son of Isow¹⁷⁸⁵, whose sons, Paul and George divided their lands with their cousin Nicholas in 1314; the villages assorted to the former two were Zwncz, Thopolcha and Wochoyn, with a chapel dedicated to Saint Michael, in which it is perhaps possible to see the future Obramovcszentmihály.¹⁷⁸⁶ In this case the Alexander, son of Paul Szentmihályi, who turns up as a designated royal man in 1367,¹⁷⁸⁷ would be the son of Paul, son of Abraham,¹⁷⁸⁸ and he seems to be identical to the Sandrinus whose son, Nicholas is mentioned in 1431 together with his possession of Obramechzenthmyhal.¹⁷⁸⁹ This Nicholas, on the other hand, may be the same person as Nicholas Török (Turk) of Obramovcszentmihály, who ten years before tried to get portions of the estate of Újudvar.¹⁷⁹⁰

Yet it was not from this Nicholas but from Paul, son of George, son of Abraham that the Pálfi of Szentmihály family descended. Paul had two sons, Ladislav and John, about whom we know almost nothing;¹⁷⁹¹ they turn up but once as designated royal men with regard to the estate of Verőce.¹⁷⁹² It was the son of this latter John, called Valentine, who made a career which makes him worth

¹⁷⁸¹ DL 104131.

¹⁷⁸² DF 219118, for Stephen Egervári.

¹⁷⁸³ DF 256033, 274994. In 1517 Gabriel Orros was registered with altogether 22 tenant sessions at Orrosovc, Csakovc, and Povsinc, the latter in the county of Verőce. Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 101., 104., 112.

¹⁷⁸⁴ DL 35388: “*que vallis separet possessionem Dobrakucha a possessionibus filiorum Obramich*”. It later turns up as Obramowc[zentmi]hal (ZsO. VIII. 1289.), Obramynchzenthmyhal, Obramelczzenthmyhal and a number of other forms.

¹⁷⁸⁵ Isow (Izsó) is the Hungarian form of the name Esau.

¹⁷⁸⁶ Anjou-kori Oklevéltár III. 847. See DL 94435. The possessions given to Nicholas are one with a church dedicated to the Virgin Mary, presumably Bresztolc, and Kretin (Creytin) and Szaplunca (Soplunca). In the 14th-century list of parishes the two parish churches are referred to as „*Ecclesia Beate Virginis in possessione filiorum Ysau. Sancti Michaelis ibidem*”. Csánki, Körösmegye 79. About this Isow/Ysau, however, we know nothing.

¹⁷⁸⁷ Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus XIV. 14., Pauli wrongly rendered as Peculi (see DL 33756).

¹⁷⁸⁸ DL 94434, 1369: “*Georgii Abraee ac Alexandri et Valentini filiorum Pauli filii predicti Abraee nobilium de Zenthmyhal*”

¹⁷⁸⁹ DL 104532.

¹⁷⁹⁰ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár VIII. 1289.

¹⁷⁹¹ DL 33488.

¹⁷⁹² DL 33424.

considering a member of the noble elite. We first see him in 1472, when it was upon his instigation that Nicholas Pozsegai captivated Nicholas Mindszenti.¹⁷⁹³ From this charter we know that he was literate; moreover, he was then cited from the possession of Erwenyk, which seems identical to Rawenyk, in the county of Verőce, which was listed under his name in 1472.¹⁷⁹⁴ He also had portions at Alsó and Felső Csernec (*Chernecz*), which he donated to the monks of Dobrakucsa.¹⁷⁹⁵ All in all, he may have had more land in the neighbouring county of Verőce than in Körös, although it is impossible to tell whether it was ancient property or acquired recently. In 1481 he was one of the jurors elected by the assembly of Zagreb for the counties of Körös and Verőce,¹⁷⁹⁶ and thereafter embarked on a legal career which finally made him one of the most frequently employed lawyers even outside Slavonia. In the 1490s he represented practically all the magnates with possessions in Slavonia but also many among the rich nobility both before the ban and in the royal court.¹⁷⁹⁷ It was evidently due to his legal experience and growing prestige that in 1495 he was elected as one of the arbitrators between George Kasztellánfi and Francis Beriszló.¹⁷⁹⁸ Still in the same year he was appointed by the Bátori family as their castellan of Zdenc, and remained in this office until after August 1499, although he was not always mentioned as such.¹⁷⁹⁹ As castellan of Zdenc he was regularly titled *egregius*,¹⁸⁰⁰ and the title, at least once, was also given to his son, Nicholas.¹⁸⁰¹ In 1498 he and his three sons, Nicholas, John and Ladislas, received a coat-of-arms from king Wladislaw in return for the services done by Valentine, again titled *egregius*.¹⁸⁰² Perhaps due to his service of the Bátori family, after 1500 his clientele expanded to comprise families from outside Slavonia, but he also continued to represent the local families as well.¹⁸⁰³ As a lawyer he stayed regularly in the capital, and tried to profit from his closeness to the king already before 1494 to get the estate of Garignica, but with no result.¹⁸⁰⁴ Nor do we know of any later acquisitions of land by him either in Slavonia or outside, which seems to prove, together with the case of Nicholas Orros, that legal expertise and the wide network of relations which went with it were not necessarily enough to furnish the means, either fiscal or social, for a lasting rise. By 1505 at the latest he had been appointed as *alispán* of Verőce, and he is attested as such in 1507 as well;

¹⁷⁹³ DF 268097.

¹⁷⁹⁴ DF 268097; Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 43.

¹⁷⁹⁵ Levéltári Közlemények 7 (1929) 301-302.

¹⁷⁹⁶ Tringli, Szlavóniai közgyűlés 314.

¹⁷⁹⁷ Justh család levéltára 320, DL 102223, DF 219008, DL 101029, DL 101064, DL 103928, DL 107077, DL 101078, DL 37675, DF 233345, DF 231848, DF 231867, DF 231924, DL 37662.

¹⁷⁹⁸ Levéltári Közlemények 7 (1929) 301-302.

¹⁷⁹⁹ First mentioned as such in December 1495: DL 106875. August 1499: DL 46534.

¹⁸⁰⁰ DL 104047, DL 46386.

¹⁸⁰¹ DF 232021.

¹⁸⁰² DF 286308.

¹⁸⁰³ DF 233481, DL 20852, DL 64510, DL 75735, DL 75680, DL 37709, Balassa 486.

¹⁸⁰⁴ DL 107100.

this would mean that he went over to the Bánfi of Lindva family, the members of which then bore the *ispánság* of Verőce.¹⁸⁰⁵

Valentine Pálfi married the daughter of Peter Csezmicei and Margaret Mikcsec of Cirkvena, who bore him three sons and several daughters. One of the latter, Veronica, became the husband of Francis Raveni,¹⁸⁰⁶ and another, probably, that of Bernard Megyericsei.¹⁸⁰⁷ The son of Valentine, John, turns up once as a royal man,¹⁸⁰⁸ and had himself three sons from his wife,¹⁸⁰⁹ but neither he nor his sons seem to have played any role before or after Mohács.

2.2.36. Pataki (de Pathak)

The family of Albert Pataki (Potok Kalnički), son of Martin, belonged to the castle nobility of Kemlék.¹⁸¹⁰ His father already was a literate, as his master title shows.¹⁸¹¹ It is very probable that the Ladislav Pataki who is mentioned as captain of Kemlék (in the service of the counts of Cilli) in 1445 also belonged to his kin, although it is impossible to tell what role he played in the career of Albert.¹⁸¹² The latter merely occurs in the sources as designated royal man before he became prothonotary of the seat of Körös, presumably in the early 1450s.¹⁸¹³ His family, however, belonged to the elite within the castle nobility of Kemlék, if the fact that noblemen called Pataki were among those who represented their fellow nobles before the ban and the king respectively in 1448 and 1472, when they were menaced by subjection to seigniorial domination, can be judged as an indication of such preeminence.¹⁸¹⁴ Then, somewhat unexpectedly, Albert emerges as count of the Cumans in 1456.¹⁸¹⁵ The palatine, who normally bore this title, was Ladislav Garai then, but it is evident that it was count Ulrich of Cilli who stood behind this appointment. His „quasi-baronial” career proved short-lived, however, and he soon returned to Slavonia. After the death of count Ulrich he joined Jan Vitovec, and seems to have belonged to the „judicial team” of the ban, among

¹⁸⁰⁵ DL 94305, DL 101388. We have only two charters issued by the authorities of Verőce county between 1498 and 1512. It is worth remarking that, unlike their predecessors and successors in the office of *alispán*, Valentine Pálfi and Bernard Ördög of Vragovc, who figures in 1512 (DL 33906), are not simultaneously titled as castellan of Verőce.

¹⁸⁰⁶ DF 232021.

¹⁸⁰⁷ See the chapter on the Megyericsei above.

¹⁸⁰⁸ DF 274915.

¹⁸⁰⁹ DF 277175/158.

¹⁸¹⁰ DL 102112: *Albertus et Johannes filii Martini [...] de Patak [...] nobiles [...] castri Maioris Kemlek*. DF 231254: *Alberto Pathak, Nicolao de eadem [...] necnon aliis quampluribus nobilibus de Maiori Kemlek*.

¹⁸¹¹ Lukinović, *Povijesni spomenici VI. 7: magistrum Martinum filium Mathei de Pathak*.

¹⁸¹² Engel, *Archontológia I*. 372. I know of no other noble family known as of Patak, either in Slavonia or in Hungary proper. One branch of the Perényi family had been called Pataki as well, but it died out earlier.

¹⁸¹³ DF 275152, DF 275034 (royal man); DL 104197: *magister Albertus de Pathak alias sedis Crisiensis prothonotarius*. This charter, issued in 1458, was put to 1508 by Bónis (Jogtudó értelmiség 374.), and the name rendered as Pathas.

¹⁸¹⁴ DF 231254, DF 233345.

¹⁸¹⁵ DF 283739: “*fidelis noster egregius Albertus filius quondam Martini litterati de Wynarcz comes Comanorum nostrorum*”. He petitions the transcription of a charter which was issued two years earlier by ban Ulrich of Cilli “*in causa inter Albertum et Johannem filios quondam Martini litterati de Wynarcz ut actores ab una, et inter Stephanum litteratum filium Georgii de prefata Wynarcz alias de Winichno uti in causam attractum ab alia partibus super facto possessionis Wynarcz*”, which makes it evident that this Albert is identical to Albert Pataki.

whose *familiares* he was granted pardon in 1463.¹⁸¹⁶ In the 1460s he turns up both as designated royal man and as an arbitrator,¹⁸¹⁷ whereas in the 1470s he was in two cases listed among the representatives of the Slavonian nobility. In 1472 it was upon the instigation of master Albert and Stephen Bicskele that ban Blaise Magyar extorted the royal tax from a possession of the chapter of Zagreb in the county of Varasd despite their exemption, but we do not know by what right he was involved in the case.¹⁸¹⁸ What is sure is that in the 1470s not only Albert himself but also his sons were accorded the *egregius* title.¹⁸¹⁹ In 1471 he petitioned some of the Cirkvenai lands from king Matthias, perhaps a sign of his access to the royal favour. His sons, George and Nicholas, certainly possessed at Palicsnaszentpéter, which lay at a considerable distance from Kemlék.¹⁸²⁰ In 1480 he reappears as prothonotary of the county of Varasd.¹⁸²¹ A year later already his widow, Barbara was proscribed as the concubine of her stepson. At the same congregation a certain George Pataki was also put on the list of culprits as a person in charge of some border castles who had trafficked with weapons there.¹⁸²² We do not know whether this George belonged to the same kin, yet it is very probable, for no other family with the same name is known from the county of Körös. He may be identical to the George Pataki who turns up as a royal man in 1464 and 1476, which would mean that another member of the family equally entered the royal service.¹⁸²³ A further, albeit vague, indication in this direction is the fact that after the death of Peter Bikszádi it was in the company of the counts of Zagorje, ban Ladislav Egervári and George Turóci, all linked to the court, that George Pataki petitioned for the estates of Bikszád and Szentpéter from the king.¹⁸²⁴ Unfortunately, no other source refers to George Pataki as a royal castellan, it is consequently impossible to determine which royal castles were entrusted to him and when. We do know, however, that another kinsman of Albert Pataki, namely the son of his daughter, called Peter, was deputy-castellan at Rakonok in the service of Sigismund Frodnohar in 1518.¹⁸²⁵ With his exception, neither the sons of Albert Pataki, nor his nephew, Martin, who turns up as a designated royal man,¹⁸²⁶ seem to have inherited the local yet considerable influence of master Albert. Indeed, in 1489 Nicholas Pataki was involved in the collection of the Slavonian tax, apparently in the service

¹⁸¹⁶ In 1459 he was one of those legal experts whom ban Vitovec sent out to judge a case, involving the burghers of Varasd, together with the authorities of Varasd county: DL 103664. He also acted as an attorney at the banal seat: DL 103654, DL 103720. Royal pardon: DF 233405, and again in 1468: DF 233308.

¹⁸¹⁷ Levéltári Közlemények 8 (1930) 95.(royal man); DL 101757, DL 16793 (arbitrator, in both cases in the company of leading Slavonian noblemen).

¹⁸¹⁸ DF 256708.

¹⁸¹⁹ DF 279541, DF 276827.

¹⁸²⁰ DL 33135.

¹⁸²¹ DF 218983.

¹⁸²² Tringli, Szlavóniai közgyűlés 315, 316: “*condam Georgium Pathaky alias castra regie maiestatis finitiva tenentem*”

¹⁸²³ DF 255582, DF 275135. See also DF 233345. He could of course be identified with the son of master Albert, but since the two apparently belonged to the same generation, the hypothesis seemed too weak to be adopted.

¹⁸²⁴ DF 231678.

¹⁸²⁵ The son of Dorothy, sister of master Albert: DF 279542. Deputy castellan, himself literate: DF 252288.

¹⁸²⁶ DF 261907, DF 255533.

of the non-Slavonian Nicholas Verebélyi,¹⁸²⁷ but he disappears from our sources. The grandsons of master Albert, Francis and Nicholas appear in 1525 for the last time, as simple *nobiles* owning the possession of Marthynych.¹⁸²⁸

2.2.37. Pekri

The Pekri family boasted one of the most illustrious origins among the Slavonian nobility. Until the end of the 14th century it was also one of the richest, and Bálint Hóman even put them on the top of the Hungarian aristocracy at the end of the Angevin period.¹⁸²⁹ Although Hóman's classification of the nobility was convincingly refuted by Pál Engel,¹⁸³⁰ it remains a fact that the Tétény kindred, which originally seems to have settled in Hungary proper, owned a wide stretch of lands in the southern half of the county of Körös along the Peker river and in the eastern corner of the same county. The social standing of the kindred was proportionate to its landed wealth: Peter, the ancestor of the Pekri family, was ban of Slavonia in 1281-1283.¹⁸³¹ The son of Peter, Lawrence married from the even more illustrious Aba kindred; his two sons, Peter and Paul established the two branches of the Pekri family.¹⁸³² The son of Paul, Nicholas entered again the tiny group of barons under Louis I when he was appointed as master of the cupbearers to the queen.¹⁸³³ Both he and his brother Stephen married from the Bánca kindred, to which the notorious Horváti brothers belonged. This alliance seems to have sealed the fate of the entire Pekri family and put a definitive end to their baronial ambitions.

Although we know nothing about their eventual involvement in the revolt of the Horváti brothers, and, moreover, Nicholas Pekri was present at the assembly of Pressburg in 1402,¹⁸³⁴ a year later king Sigismund confiscated all their lands because they were „guilty of transferring Ladislas, son of Charles to the city of Zara, of having him crowned with a false crown and of taking part in the subsequent devastations”. They were even said to have killed their own kinsman, master Nicholas, Stephen's son of his previous marriage, who remained faithful to king Sigismund. Whatever the truth, they were among those few who really lost their property. The severe punishment struck both branches of the family: the three sons of Demetrius: Nicholas, John and Benedict, Paul, son of Nicholas, and the two sons of Stephen, son of Paul: John and Ladislas. In the branch of Peter the

¹⁸²⁷ DL 108319.

¹⁸²⁸ DF 277175/ 241-242.

¹⁸²⁹ Bálint Hóman and Gyula Szekfű, *Magyar Történet (History of Hungary)* II. (Budapest, 1936) 270.

¹⁸³⁰ Engel, “Magyar világi nagybirtok” 58. n. 41.

¹⁸³¹ On the early history and the lands of the kindred see Karácsonyi, *Magyar nemzetségek 1003-1007*. In the late middle ages, such important estates shared the territory of the original Tétény lands as those of Vasmegyericse, Garignica, Dobrakucsá and Aszúágy. The overall size of the lands which had originally belonged to the Tétény kindred can be put to some 1600 inhabited tenant sessions at the end of the middle ages.

¹⁸³² “*quondam Paulus, a quo possessiones ille Paulowyna nominantur tenuit illam partem possessionis et eam habuit per modum divisionis, ita quod possessiones que Petrowyna dicuntur cesserant alteri fratri videlicet Petro*”: DL 33495.

¹⁸³³ Engel, *Archontológia* I. 58.

¹⁸³⁴ Lövei, “1402. évi oklevél” 168.

son of Demetrius, Lawrence and his sons were left unmentioned, and so was Nicholas son of Nicholas in the branch of Paul.¹⁸³⁵ The son of Demetrius, Nicholas, who in 1403 was the *familiaris* of Ladislás Újlaki, managed to have a letter of grace before the rebellion was finally suppressed,¹⁸³⁶ but the new owner of the Pekri lands, John Maróti, ban of Macsó, proved insurmountable and Nicholas was again declared guilty of infidelity in 1405.¹⁸³⁷ In the other branch of the family the sons of Stephen: Ladislás and John were granted pardon at the congregation of Körös (in 1403), where the noble jurors asserted that at the time of rebellion both they and their mother had stayed in the castle of Siklós with the wife of the late palatine Nicholas Garai and had consequently remained immune of any act of infidelity.¹⁸³⁸

Henceforth the descendants of Paul seem to have resided on their remaining estates around Garignica, whereas those of Peter settled along the river Peker on the possession which was accordingly called Petrovina. As can be judged from later evidence, both remaining portions were of a considerable size, yet not great enough to allow a new social rise during the more peaceful second half of the rule of king Sigismund. The son of Nicholas, Ladislás, finally managed to find a *modus vivendi* with his powerful neighbour, John Maróti, for in 1420 some charters concerning the old Pekri estates were confirmed by the king with reference to their common services.¹⁸³⁹ He also held the *castellum* of Mogor and some of its appurtenances in pledge until 1427.¹⁸⁴⁰ His uncle, Paul, was likewise able to take some lands from Peter Kasztellánfi into pledge.¹⁸⁴¹ In the other branch the son of Nicholas, Frank, somehow made his way into the queen's court, and his services were rewarded by king Albert in 1439 with the grant of the estate of Tah in Pilis county.¹⁸⁴² Yet these services, which must have seemed the start of a new and more promising future for Frank and his brothers, turned out instead to be almost disastrous to the remaining possessions of the whole family.

In the ensuing civil war Frank evidently took sides with queen Elizabeth; it is no wonder, then, that his estates were confiscated anew by king Wladislaw with reference to his acts of infidelity in the time of the late king Sigismund but also to those he was said to have committed recently in the service of ban Ladislás Garai.¹⁸⁴³ Henceforth Frank had no option but to remain faithful to young king Ladislás V, and his relatives among the descendants of Paul almost shared his fate unwillingly.

¹⁸³⁵ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár II/1. 2905.

¹⁸³⁶ Ibidem II/1. 2647.

¹⁸³⁷ Ibidem II/1. 3697.

¹⁸³⁸ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár IV. 2700.

¹⁸³⁹ Ibidem VII. 2055.

¹⁸⁴⁰ DL 100453.

¹⁸⁴¹ Zsigmondkori oklevéltár XI. 165.

¹⁸⁴² DL 13301, with reference to services done "*serenissime principi domine Elizabeth regine [...] ab eiusdem infancie tempore*"

¹⁸⁴³ "*diversis nostris rebellibus qui regnum hoc crudeliter igne et preda vastabant adherendo et cum eis procedendo partemque eorum signanter Ladislai de Gara bani predicti fovendo*": DL 13613 (29 March 1441). On 6 April 1443 he is still staying at Wiener Neustadt as a partisan of young Ladislás V: DF 241898.

Ladislas Maróti, the son of the late ban John, was one of the chief supporters of Wladislaw I, and, evidently in knowledge of the role that Frank played in the entourage of the queen, petitioned from the king the remaining estates of Ladislas, son of Nicholas, to be confiscated for infidelity.¹⁸⁴⁴ This time the Slavonian nobility collectively intervened on behalf of Ladislas at Wladislaw,¹⁸⁴⁵ and he was also able to secure the support of another influential baron, Emeric Marcali.¹⁸⁴⁶ At the same time Ladislas, the son of John in the other branch was also taken into special royal protection.¹⁸⁴⁷ In 1444 an accord was again made with Maróti, who returned at least some of the possessions he had previously taken,¹⁸⁴⁸ but the decline of the family seemed almost irreversible nevertheless. After 1450 in the branch of Peter only the sons of Lawrence and their offspring remained alive, whereas in that of Paul only Ladislas and his descendants can be followed with some detail; since no practical cooperation between the two branches can be detected, I will accordingly treat them separately.

The fate of the branch descended from Paul was apparently determined by the consecutive marriages of Susan, Ladislas's daughter, despite the fact that she had two brothers as well. She first married Martin Goricaï, whose origins are unknown.¹⁸⁴⁹ The following events may perhaps be explained by a series of especially violent assaults that Ladislas Pekri and his family suffered in the first months of 1446. In the course of these not only his house was robbed and burned and the building material put together for the construction of his *castellum* taken away, but also his wife and daughters humiliated ruthlessly in the midst of winter rigour.¹⁸⁵⁰ For this reason or another, in May 1447 László pledged his portions in Garignica, in the name of his son Nicholas as well, to his own daughter Susan and her husband Martin Goricaï.¹⁸⁵¹ This act became the source of long years of conflict and litigation and led on the final account to the estate of Garignica being lost for the Pekri family. Ladislas's other son, John, who was left unmentioned by the accord, occupied forcefully some of its appurtenances two years later,¹⁸⁵² whereas Martin Goricaï, who had no hope of having offspring from his wife, gave his portions to his two sisters, Clara and Margaret.¹⁸⁵³ Their husbands, Matthias Kustyer and Peter Konzskai, accordingly laid claim to Garignica as well. Yet in the face of

¹⁸⁴⁴ Maróti must surely have applied for the neighbouring estate already before the war, for the Pekri had to protest in 1439: DL 103592.

¹⁸⁴⁵ DL 103594.

¹⁸⁴⁶ DL 102092. The petition of Imre Marcali from his camp along the river Sava to king Wladislaw to restore the possessions of Ladislas Pekri.

¹⁸⁴⁷ DL 44315 (29 June 1441): "*fideles nostros egregium Ladislaum filium Johannis de Pwkur alias de Garygnycha, item (...) Ladislaum filium Jose de Cristhalowcz puerum orphanum uti nobis dicitur in etate constitutum tenera et puerili [...] simulcum universis possessionibus, hereditatibus porcionibusque et juribus possessionariis*"

¹⁸⁴⁸ DF 257506. See Csánki, Körösmegye 41.

¹⁸⁴⁹ See above on page 134-135.

¹⁸⁵⁰ DL 103608.

¹⁸⁵¹ DL 103610.

¹⁸⁵² DL 102110: "*centum minus una sessiones jobagonales populosas videlicet et quasdam ex eisdem desertas in possessione ipsorum Garignicha vocata et suis pertinenciis*"

¹⁸⁵³ DL 103633.

the common danger the two sons of Ladislas Pekri, Nicholas and John united, and in 1452 they sold half of their portion in the estate for 3000 florins to Simon Nagy of Szentmárton and his sons.¹⁸⁵⁴ Simon was governor John Hunyadi's man in the region, and the affair soon assumed a political importance. For, after the death of Martin Goricaí, Susan Pekri married Christoph Paschingar, one of the leading *familiars* of count Ulrich of Cilli, ban of Slavonia. Christoph was granted by king Ladislas V the right to construct a wooden castle on the possession of Garignica, and the fortification was erected by 1456 at the latest. In the late spring of this year Simon Nagy attacked with his complices the *castellum* of Garignica and occupied it for himself. Among those who are said to have incited him we find the widow of John Pekri, Anne, and her new husband, Oswald Fejér of Kosztolány, (previously) castellan of Pozsegavár (Požega). Jan Vitovec, the mercenary captain of the counts of Cilli and their viceban recaptured immediately the castle and restored it to Paschingar and his wife.¹⁸⁵⁵ In April 1458 Oswald Fejér, stepfather of Nicholas Pekri junior made an accord with Paschingar and his wife, halving the appurtenances of Garignica between each other; they also agreed that they would commonly defend their rights against any attempt made by Matthias Kustyer and Peter Konzskai to make good their claims to Garignica.¹⁸⁵⁶

In 1463 Susan Pekri and her husband were forced to pledge one third of the estate of Garignica to Matthias Kustyer in exchange for the 425 florins which the latter had once provided for Martin Goricaí to redeem Susan's portion and she proved unable to repay.¹⁸⁵⁷ Moreover, Oswald Fejér and his stepson, Nicholas Pekri, instead of respecting the compromise of 1458, called back the *familiars* of Simon Nagy, then castellan of Fejérkő, to Garignica, and provoked an incident in retaliation of which Paschingar was seriously punished by the ban and died soon afterwards.¹⁸⁵⁸ After his death the widow began to alienate the appurtenances of her portion at Garignica to the detriment of her own children and of Nicholas Pekri.¹⁸⁵⁹ She soon remarried herself, however, with a man called John of Zelnycza/Zelancza. We do not know where he came from, but his social position is fairly well indicated by the fact that once he is attested as the *familiaris* of Peter Jakószerdahelyi.¹⁸⁶⁰ He was evidently not influential enough to safeguard the interests of Susan, especially after the death of Nicholas son of John, when not only her kinsmen from the branch of Peter reappeared with their claims,¹⁸⁶¹ but also powerful lords such as the Maróti brothers and

¹⁸⁵⁴ DL 103626.

¹⁸⁵⁵ On the whole affair see Pálosfalvi, "Vitovec János" 436-439.

¹⁸⁵⁶ DL 107001.

¹⁸⁵⁷ DL 103668.

¹⁸⁵⁸ DL 103671. On Christoph Paschingar see below.

¹⁸⁵⁹ DL 103675.

¹⁸⁶⁰ DL 102203: "*Johannes de Zelancza eotunc familiaris quondam Petri filii Blasii de Jakozerdahel maritus vero nobilis domine Suska vocate filie quondam Ladislai de Pekar*". Later he also appears as John Garignicaí: DL 106999.

¹⁸⁶¹ DL 103716.

Nicholas Csupor petitioned his inheritance from the king.¹⁸⁶² It was thus with good reason that in February 1468 she pledged her total remaining portion, that is, thirty tenant sessions to Matthias Kustyer.¹⁸⁶³

Susan Pekri had four surviving children from her marriage with Christoph Paschingar: the two sons, John and Christopher, do not seem to have played any role of importance in the devolution of the Pekri estates, unlike the two daughters, Helen and Dorothy. Helen first became the wife of Nicholas Pozsegai, a *familiaris* of ban John Ernusz, who finally managed to reunite the appurtenances of Garignica in his own hands.¹⁸⁶⁴ After the death of her first husband Helen married Andrew Kapitánfi of Desnice, who made efforts to occupy the important estate for himself, but proved impotent in the face of the royal will and paid with his own inherited lands for his obstination.¹⁸⁶⁵ Yet Helen did not give up her hopes of regaining at least some of her paternal inheritance, and married herself for a third time with John Csezmicsei. Shortly before her death Helen handed over the charters concerning Garignica to her husband and his friend, Valentine Pálfi of Szentmihály, asking them to give them to her sister, Dorothy, wife of Michael Orehovci.¹⁸⁶⁶ But instead of carrying out Helen's last will, John and Valentine kept the documents, and Valentine even tried with their help to obtain the estate of Garignica officially from the king.¹⁸⁶⁷ His efforts apparently proved futile, for Garignica remained in the possession of the Battyányi family from 1491 until its occupation by the Ottomans.

Due to the unequal repartition of the sources, much less is known about the fate of the branch which descended from Peter. It seems that all members of the Pekri family occurring in the sources from the late 1460s descended from Lawrence son of Demeter. The starting position after the calamities which afflicted the family in 1403 and in the early 1440s must not have been very promising; as a sure sign of their misery in 1442 we find Lawrence, son of Lawrence among the *familiars* of John Szencsei.¹⁸⁶⁸ It should nevertheless be remarked that even the remaining possessions of the family were considerable, for in 1495 220 inhabited tenant sessions were registered at Petrovina.¹⁸⁶⁹ After 1442 we have no information whatsoever for more than two decades, during which Lawrence and his sons completely disappear from our sources. The next time we hear of them is in 1469, when, after the death of Nicholas son of John, Oswald Fejér introduced the two cousins, Nicholas son of

¹⁸⁶² DL 103693.

¹⁸⁶³ DL 45278.

¹⁸⁶⁴ See below the chapter on Nicholas Pozsegai.

¹⁸⁶⁵ See above the section on the Kapitánfi family.

¹⁸⁶⁶ In the county of Körös, see Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 9.

¹⁸⁶⁷ DL 107100: “*per huiusmodi indebitam retentionem ipsarum litterarum et litteralium instrumentorum fraude concepta annotatam possessionem Garignicza cum suis pertinenciis per regiam maiestatem sibi dari et conferri procurasset pretendens easdem possessiones sibi ipsi posse appropriare*”

¹⁸⁶⁸ DF 255717.

¹⁸⁶⁹ In the hands of Francis, Louis and Stephen Pekri: Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 9-10.

Michael (of Peker) and Nicholas son of Lawrence (of Petrovina) into the portions of their deceased kinsman in Garignica.¹⁸⁷⁰

In 1474 Nicholas and Francis Pekri, in 1478 Nicholas son of Michael and Nicholas son of Lawrence were enlisted among the representatives of the Slavonian nobility, whereas in 1490 it is Francis again who represented his kin among the local noble community. One of the two Nicholas was elected noble juror in the county of Körös at the assembly held by king Matthias early in 1481 at Zagreb.¹⁸⁷¹ In 1486, after the castle of Vasmegeyericse and its estate had come into the hands of the Paksi family, Stephen, Nicholas and Ladislás, the sons of Nicholas son of Lawrence, made an effort to regain their ancient property from its new owners, who seemed less formidable than the Drágfi had been before, but to no avail.¹⁸⁷² It is probable, however, that by the early 1490s some kind of fortification had been erected on their possession of Petrovina.¹⁸⁷³ It is nevertheless remarkable that in March 1492 Francis was a mere 37th among the Croatian and Slavonian nobility, and in January 1493, when an inquisition involving many of the local nobility was carried out at the seat of Körös, the same Francis was titled as simply *nobilis*, whereas his peers among the Bocskai, Kasztellánfi, Kapitánfi and Gorbonoki families were all accorded the *egregius* title.¹⁸⁷⁴ It is probable, however, that in 1500 Ladislás was performing some kind of royal service, for then he committed a violent trespass „with the men and mercenaries of the lord king”, maybe with those garrisoned at Jajce. But that may already have been a consequence of the career of his brother, Louis.¹⁸⁷⁵

It was almost as unexpected as a lightning out of a cloudless summer sky that Louis Pekri, the great figure of the family's late medieval history, and founder of their post-Mohács career, was appointed by bans John Both of Bajna and Emeric Derencsényi as one of their vicebans in August 1493. Curiously enough, nothing is known about his preceding career. It is in 1485 that he turns up first together with his brother Ladislás,¹⁸⁷⁶ and in 1493 he is referred to as the *carnalis* brother of the same Ladislás.¹⁸⁷⁷ In 1486, however, he is not listed among the sons of Nicholas, son of Lawrence. He evidently must have been of age in 1486 to become viceban only seven years later, so he was perhaps born from another mother than the other three boys. Whatever the case, he proved trustworthy enough to remain in office under the next ban, Ladislás Kanizsai as well. In 1496 all the lands of Stephen, Ladislás and Louis Pekri, together with those of George and Nicholas

¹⁸⁷⁰ DL 103716.

¹⁸⁷¹ Tringli, Szlavóniai közgyűlés 314.

¹⁸⁷² DL 33595; 34238.

¹⁸⁷³ In 1493 a castellan called Barnaby (*Barnaba castellano*) is mentioned among the people of Petrovina (DF 271779). The fortification is first mentioned in 1523 under the name of Kalinovec, and surely stood at Petrovina: „*castellum Kalynowcz vocatum ac totales porciones possessionarias in possessionibus Pethrowyna ac Blagay vocatis ac cunctas pertinencias ad idem castellum spectantes*” (DF 277175/92-93.)

¹⁸⁷⁴ DF 233293.

¹⁸⁷⁵ DL 34148: “*assumptis sibi ipsi quampluribus gentibus et stipendiariis regie maiestatis*”

¹⁸⁷⁶ DL 46001: “*Ladislai et Lodovici filiorum quondam Nicolai Lewrinczfy de Peker*”

¹⁸⁷⁷ DF 271779.

Kasztellánfi, were donated by Wladislaw II to judge royal Peter Geréb, with the pretext that they have attacked with their followers the king's man sent to Slavonia to collect the royal tax there.¹⁸⁷⁸ Than he disappears for some years from the sources, and emerges again in 1499, when we learn that his possessions (and those of his brothers) were still occupied by the king. Whether it was the consequence of their infidelity of three years before, or it was somehow connected to the revolt of duke John Corvin, is impossible to decide;¹⁸⁷⁹ eventually all their lands were restored to them. Moreover, Louis contracted a marriage which proved both politically and economically advantageous: he married the daughter of Peter Bocskai, Elisabeth.¹⁸⁸⁰ We do not know when this marriage took place, but if it was before 1493, it would sufficiently account for his appointment as viceban. In 1504 he already kept a castellan in the *castellum* of Raszinya,¹⁸⁸¹ and in 1507 half of its appurtenances were in his hands,¹⁸⁸² and also put his hand on the estate of Kustyerolc together with its *castellum*.¹⁸⁸³

In 1503 he was castellan in the castle of Marót (Morović, Valkó county, SRB), evidently in the service of duke John Corvin.¹⁸⁸⁴ After the latter's death, in any case before 1506, he rejoined the Kanizsai family and became castellan in the castle of Sztenicsnyak in the county of Zagreb.¹⁸⁸⁵ When Andrew Both of Bajna, the brother of the late John Both, was appointed in his turn as ban of Slavonia, he naturally found the viceban of his late brother, thus initiating the most adventurous part of the life of Louis Pekri. The latter was „officially” viceban during 1507, but remained faithful to his lord even after he had been removed from office and openly opposed the royal government. Andrew Both, who regarded and titled himself as ban after his deposition, titled as a matter of fact Louis Pekri as his viceban. The latter assisted his lord in collecting the tax of Slavonia for him, and gradually became a kind of deputy-in-chief, especially when Both became ill. In December 1509 he operated with two hundred cavalry south of the river Sava, and mutilated the peasants who dared to oppose. He also acted as a mediator between the deposed ban and the Slavonian nobility. Moreover, sometime before September 1511 he returned with Elias Bosnyák as regular vicebans of Slavonia for a very short period. No wonder, then, that after the death of Andrew Both in September 1511, as a leading *familiaris* of the late ban and the captain of his troops he played a key role in reestablishing the order in Slavonia. In September 1512 he was left in charge of the crucially

¹⁸⁷⁸ DL 20495.

¹⁸⁷⁹ See below the section on the Szencsei.

¹⁸⁸⁰ Eg. DF 276909.

¹⁸⁸¹ DF 256008.

¹⁸⁸² In 1507 100 tenant sessions were registered in his hands, 61 and 45 being owned by Francis Kecer and Stephen Bocskai respectively. Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 27.

¹⁸⁸³ Popisi 51.

¹⁸⁸⁴ DF 276738: “*Lodovico Pekry castellano illustris domini Johannis ducis Corvini in castro suo Maroth*”

¹⁸⁸⁵ DL 26120.

important castle of Bihać in Croatia until the situation of the ban's widow was arranged and his own salary paid.¹⁸⁸⁶

He also continued the expansion of his possessions in Slavonia. It was not only as the son-in-law of Peter Bocskai that he obtained portions of the Bocskai lands. Another daughter of Peter, Martha, married Francis Szencsei, to whom she bore a son called Farkas (Bolffangus). Among the executors of her testament she named her brother-in-law, Louis Pekri,¹⁸⁸⁷ who was presumably not late in occupying the possessions of Farkas, among the them the *castellum* of Szentlőrinc, as the boy's „tutor and protector”.¹⁸⁸⁸ He seems to have been equally fortunate in finding consorts for his children. As we have seen, one of his sons, John married the only daughter of Stephen Gudovci and thus inherited the possessions amassed by master Peter Gudovci.¹⁸⁸⁹ One of the daughters, Helen married John Predrihoi, the brother of viceban Marcinko, who, in the absence of male relatives, designated as heir to his castle of Oszterc (Oštrc) and its appurtenances Louis Pekri and his sons.¹⁸⁹⁰ Another daughter became the husband of Christopher Megyericsei.¹⁸⁹¹ His son, John Pekri acquired portions in the estate of Szentlélek by the right of his grandmother, Margaret Kasztellánfi,¹⁸⁹² and his brother, Louis also vindicated the portions there of George Battyányi, presumably by the same right.¹⁸⁹³ Holder of one castle and three or even four *castella*, Louis Pekri senior was one of the richest nobles of Slavonia at the time of his death sometime during 1516, even though he had to be constantly on the alert for the defense of the inheritance of his wife.

Among the sons of Louis senior, the eldest, John followed in the footsteps of his father and became castellan of Sztenicsnyak in the service of Ladislas Kanizsai.¹⁸⁹⁴ In 1525, however, he is already attested, together with his brother Nicholas, in the service of ban John Tahi.¹⁸⁹⁵ As for Louis junior, he joined the court of Louis II as a *familiaris*, then became captain of Slavonia in 1525.¹⁸⁹⁶ The two youngest, Farkas and Sigismund, enumerated in 1513, seem to have come to adulthood only after 1526.¹⁸⁹⁷

All we know about Stephen, (half)-brother of Louis the elder and Ladislas, is that he married from the distant county of Nyitra. The daughter of Sigismund Sóki, called Margaret, is first mentioned as

¹⁸⁸⁶ On all this see Pálosfalvi, Bajnai Both *passim*.

¹⁸⁸⁷ DL 94317.

¹⁸⁸⁸ “*Lodovicum de Peker tutorem eiusdem castelli et bonorum Wolffangi filii quondam domine Marthe*” (DF 255568.); “*egregiorum Wolffangi filii quondam domine Marthe filie olim Petri Bochkay de Razyna sive de Zenthleryncz et Lodovii de Peker tanquam tutoris et defensoris eiusdem Wolffangi*” (DF 262164.)

¹⁸⁸⁹ DL 25625, DL 24107, DF 277175/18-19.

¹⁸⁹⁰ DF 232371.

¹⁸⁹¹ See above the note 1648.

¹⁸⁹² DF 232597, DF 261910.

¹⁸⁹³ DL 65656.

¹⁸⁹⁴ DL 25685.

¹⁸⁹⁵ DF 277175.

¹⁸⁹⁶ Fraknói, II. Lajos számadási könyve 163.

¹⁸⁹⁷ DF 232367.

the wife of Stephen Pekri in 1505;¹⁸⁹⁸ he does not seem to have moved to the estates of his consort, however, for in the 1510s he was occupied in the defence of the Bosnian castles in the service of ban Peter Beriszló.¹⁸⁹⁹ He died before 1520 and left only four daughters. His widow made some efforts to get a share for them in the Slavonian Pekri estates, but to no avail.¹⁹⁰⁰

We are in a much more difficult situation as regards the descendants of Michael son of Lawrence, and it is aggravated by a problem of identification. For not only Nicholas, son of Lawrence but also Nicholas, son of Michael had a son called Stephen, between whom it is difficult to make a distinction. According to the sequence of names, it seems to have been Stephen son of Nicholas, son of Michael, who had in 1492 for wife a woman called Hedvig (Adviga), who was the daughter of Nicholas Bizerei, a wealthy nobleman from the county of Temes.¹⁹⁰¹ This marriage hints at a service outside Slavonia, yet we do not know how he got there. This Stephen had a son called Michael,¹⁹⁰² who claimed the market town of Rékas, in the county of Temes, by right of inheritance,¹⁹⁰³ and was on one occasion even called by it.¹⁹⁰⁴ Michael married Sarah Csornai, from another local noble family, from whom his son called Gabriel was born.¹⁹⁰⁵ This Gabriel seems to have been the ancestor of that branch of the family which flourished in Transylvania after Mohács. Michael died before 1523, when his widow prohibited that of the other Stephen from petitioning the Pekri estates in Körös. As for Francis, uncle of Stephen, the only thing we know about him after 1493 is that his wife was Dorothy, the daughter of Paul Garazdinci.¹⁹⁰⁶ As we will see above, Paul descended from the Vajk kindred, which had received their lands before the 13th century in the same area as the Tétény. Francis was once titled as master, which is the sign of higher education, but we do not know where he obtained it, nor what he used it for. In 1472 he is referred to as a special royal man sent from the court.¹⁹⁰⁷ In 1529 Gabriel and Francis were convicted of infidelity and their estates granted away by king John Szapolyai.¹⁹⁰⁸

One further member of the Pekri family is impossible to be attached to the family tree. Namely, another Michael Pekri is attested as canon of Bács between 1513 and 1521, when he was sent by his provost to palatine Bátori as an envoy.¹⁹⁰⁹ In 1513 he is called master Michael Pekri of Cil (Chyl), and his kinsmen: Paul and two Nicholas are also mentioned. In 1525 this Paul Pewkhry of Chyl was

¹⁸⁹⁸ DF 267897.

¹⁸⁹⁹ DL 75785 (1516): "*in nostris (sc. regis) et tocius regni nostri serviciis cum fidele nostro reverendo in Christo patre domino Petro Beryzlo episcopo ecclesie Wesprimiensis ac regnorum nostrorum Dalmacie, Croacie et Sclavonie bano domino scilicet suo in defensione castrorum nostrorum Boznensium occupatus*"

¹⁹⁰⁰ DF 277175/92-93.

¹⁹⁰¹ DL 19618.

¹⁹⁰² DL 59940.

¹⁹⁰³ DL 106083/221. Rékas was partly owned by the Bizerei family: Csánki, *Történelmi földrajz* II. 19.

¹⁹⁰⁴ DL 106083/250: "*Michaelis Pewkry de Rekas*"

¹⁹⁰⁵ DL 106083/221, DF 277175/92-93.

¹⁹⁰⁶ DL 34333.

¹⁹⁰⁷ DL 17340.

¹⁹⁰⁸ Laszowski, *Monumenta Habsburgica* I. 161.

¹⁹⁰⁹ DL 39612, 25637.

designated as a lawyer before the chapter of Bács.¹⁹¹⁰ Where this Cil lay is uncertain; yet in 1465 the same Nicholas Pwkri of Chyl, who is referred to as dead in 1513, alienated in the name of his son, Peter, and of his two daughters in the village of Bánca, in the county of Bács.¹⁹¹¹ Since this possession was one of the ancient properties of the Bánca kindred,¹⁹¹² it is reasonable to suppose that they descended from either of the brothers Nicholas and Stephen, both of whom, as we have seen, married from the Bánca kindred. In 1492 Andrew, *provisor curie* of the castle of Buda, who married into the same kindred,¹⁹¹³ also possessed at the same village of Bánca, as well as in some neighbouring settlements, among them at Thyl.¹⁹¹⁴ If this Thyl can be identified with Chyl, which is very probable, we did find another link which attaches this branch of the Pekri family to the Bánca, which further reinforces our hypothesis.

2.2.38. Pogány (Pogan de Cheb, de Herbothya)

The Pogány of Cseb (originally of Enyere) were a well-to-do noble family, having lands in more than a dozen villages mostly in the county of Zala, but also in that of Vas.¹⁹¹⁵ Most members of the family had been accorded the master title in the late Árpád and the Angevin era,¹⁹¹⁶ and one of them, Peter son of Stephen, was *alispán* of Zala in the 1410s.¹⁹¹⁷ In the next generation, however, the horizon of the family widened considerably. Among the three sons of Peter, Thomas Pogány was in the service of the magnate Szécsi family,¹⁹¹⁸ whereas Denis belonged to the leading *familiars* of Paul Bánfi. Both the Szécsi and the Bánfi were counted among the opponents of the young Matthias, yet it seems to have cast no shadow on the career of the Pogány. In June 1458 Denis Pogány, together with his two brothers, was confirmed by the king in their ancestral lands, and the charter was issued upon the *relatio* of Michael Ország, who was appointed palatine shortly thereafter.¹⁹¹⁹ As late as 1477 Denis may still have stood in the service of the Bánfi family, for in that year he was one of the arbitrators between Nicholas, king of Bosnia, and the Bánfi brothers, Nicholas and James.¹⁹²⁰ It was the third brother, Emeric, who acquired the estate of Herbortya in the county of Körös for his family, by marrying Barbara, the daughter and heir of John Ostfi. Emeric himself seems to have moved to the estate of his wife, where a *castellum* was standing, for in 1476 he was one of the royal men designated for the introduction of the Bánfi into the estate of Orbona,

¹⁹¹⁰ DF 260420.

¹⁹¹¹ DL 39599.

¹⁹¹² Karácsonyi, Magyar Nemzetségek 220.

¹⁹¹³ Engel, Középkori magyar genealógia, Bánca

¹⁹¹⁴ DL 19904.

¹⁹¹⁵ Csánki, Történelmi földrajz II. 845.; III. 175-176. See DL 47030 (1497), and DF 280208 (1510), where the possessions of Zsigmond Pogány are listed.

¹⁹¹⁶ Engel, Középkori magyar genealógia, Pogány (csébi, enyerei)

¹⁹¹⁷ Engel, Archontológia I. 237.

¹⁹¹⁸ DL 14539.

¹⁹¹⁹ Zala vármegye története II. 572-573.

¹⁹²⁰ DL 33432.

and was called of Herbortya on this occasion.¹⁹²¹ Indeed, already in the upheaval which followed the death of king Ladislas V he had enlarged his lands in the county of Körös to the detriment of the chapter of Zagreb.¹⁹²²

One of the sons of Emeric, master John, became a notary of the king's personal presence,¹⁹²³ but it was his cousin, Peter son of Denis, who laid the foundations of the family's rapid social and political rise. As usual, we know nothing about the exact circumstances of his joining the royal court. It is very probable, however, that it was connected to the career of another newly elevated baron from his native region, namely Ladislas Egervári. When we first meet him in 1480, he was staying with the king in Bosnia, and was rewarded for his services with the lands of a distant kinsman of his in the county of Zala.¹⁹²⁴ By 1483 he seemed influential enough for his cousins, the sons of Emeric, to enter into a contract of mutual inheritance, which concerned on their part all their inherited lands, the estate of Herbortya comprised, whereas Peter brought in only his movables and those possessions he would eventually be able to get from the king or otherwise acquire for money.¹⁹²⁵ What is sure is that by the late 1480s he had become one of the key figures of the military administration established by king Matthias in conquered Austria, governing several castles, among them that of Wiener Neustadt.¹⁹²⁶ As such, he surely made an oath of allegiance to duke Corvin. Although, as we will see below, he used his growing influence to obtain further possessions, chiefly in Western Hungary, to the north of his family possessions, he was already regarded as a member of the Slavonian nobility, among whose representatives he confirmed the succession of the Habsburgs in March 1492.

He remained an influential member of the government under Wladislaw II as well. He played a leading role in the war against Maximilian of Habsburg, and in May 1491 he took over the important castle of Pressburg together with the county itself.¹⁹²⁷ Indeed, the castle had originally belonged to duke Corvin by right of pledge, but he alienated it by the same right to Pogány and another ducal *familiaris*, John Bikli. After the death of Peter Pogány it was held for some time by his cousins, the sons of Emeric, until it was eventually redeemed for the king by Ambrose Sárkány for 8000 florins.¹⁹²⁸ In 1493 he was referred to as a royal courtier,¹⁹²⁹ and from 1495 until his death

¹⁹²¹ DL 33429: *Emericus Pogan de Herbarthya*.

¹⁹²² DF 256696.

¹⁹²³ Bónis, *Jogtudó értelmiség* 299. n. 27.

¹⁹²⁴ Zala vármegye története 613-615.

¹⁹²⁵ *Ibidem* 622-624. This charter proves that, contrary to the opinion of Csánki (*Körösmegye* 12.), the Pogány did not possess two fortifications in the county of Körös, but it was the castellum otherwise called Herbortya which stood in the village of Oslovc.

¹⁹²⁶ Kubinyi, *Két sorsdöntő esztendő* 7; DL 103975

¹⁹²⁷ Tibor Neumann, "Békekötés Pozsonyban – országgyűlés Budán. A Jagelló-Habsburg kapcsolatok egy fejezete (1490-1492). Első közlemény" [Peace Treaty at Pressburg – General Assembly at Buda. A Chapter in the History of Habsburg-Jagello Relationship. First part], in *Századok* 144 (2010) 351-352.

¹⁹²⁸ DL 103080 (1507), DL 93753 (1510).

¹⁹²⁹ *egregius Petrus Pogan aulicus noster* (DL 101180)

he was again *ispán* of Pressburg.¹⁹³⁰ Parallely, he also functioned as a royal chamberlain, and as such referred several affairs to the chancery.¹⁹³¹ One such case concerned the dispute between the bishop of Zagreb and the Slavonian nobility, but it is impossible to decide whether his involvement was due to a kind of „specialisation” in Slavonian affairs or a mere matter of chance.¹⁹³² 1497 was one of the commissioners sent by the king to negotiate with duke John Corvin.¹⁹³³ In 1500 he was appointed as a *decempersona*, that is, one of the non-magnate courtiers enjoying the privileges of the *barones banderiat* enacted two years before.¹⁹³⁴ Shortly before his heirless¹⁹³⁵ death in 1501 he was appointed as master of the court, and thus entered the tiny circle of barons.¹⁹³⁶

His cousins, George, Sigismund and John, the sons of Emeric, also stood in royal sevice in the late 1480s, partly at least together with Peter himself.¹⁹³⁷ Later on, however, it is only Sigismund whose career in the financial administration can be followed with some detail. Between 1493 and 1495 he was *ispán* of the salt chamber of Máramaros,¹⁹³⁸ and in 1503 and 1504 he administered the thirtieth of Kassa (Košice, SL).¹⁹³⁹ In the same year, and again in 1510 and 1513-1514 he is referred to as a royal *vexillifer*, a post of dubious nature, but whose main responsibility seems to have been juridical.¹⁹⁴⁰ Later on he returned to the head of the salt chamber at Máramaros, and then (or parallely) became *ispán* of Zala.¹⁹⁴¹ He also turns up as a royal councillor.¹⁹⁴² In 1522 he was one of the envoys sent by the government to the *Reichstag* at Nuremberg, and in the next year he is attested as a court *familiaris*.¹⁹⁴³ Still in 1523 he acted as a tax-collector in Slavonia,¹⁹⁴⁴ and assumed the same post a year later again,¹⁹⁴⁵ when he also appeared as was one of the emissaries elected by the assembly of the Slavonian nobility to be sent to the king.¹⁹⁴⁶ In 1526 it was in the

¹⁹³⁰ DF 212132 (9 Sept. 1495); thereafter he is continuously referred to as such.

¹⁹³¹ DL 105081, DF 225665; DF 240795, Perényi család levéltára 687; Balassa család oklevéltára 458.

¹⁹³² DF 268155.

¹⁹³³ DL 37716.

¹⁹³⁴ Kubinyi, Királyi tanács ülnökei 266-267 and n. 56.

¹⁹³⁵ Pál Engel (Középkori magyar genealógia, ibidem) identified as his wife Dorothy Bocskai. Yet I have found no source to prove this; indeed, as we have seen above, Nicholas Bocskai married the sister of Peter Pogány, from whom he had a daughter called Dorothy, who then married Francis Kecser.

¹⁹³⁶ Kubinyi, Bárók a királyi tanácsban 210.

¹⁹³⁷ Béla Iványi Dr ed., A római szent birodalmi széki gróf Teleki család gyömrői levéltára (Szeged, 1931) 168. no. 339; 169. no. 343. The originals of these charters can no more be found in the Hungarian National Archives, nor among the photocopies preseved there.

¹⁹³⁸ DL 56796; Teleki család gyömrői lt. 179. no. 378; DL 98434.

¹⁹³⁹ Teleki család gyömrői levéltára 190. no. 418; DL 88915.

¹⁹⁴⁰ DF 216681; DF 280208; Perényi család levéltára 771; DL 86745.

¹⁹⁴¹ DL 86752; Perényi család levéltára 806; DL 89158.; Teleki család gyömrői levéltára 211. no. 491; 212. no. 495; 214. nos. 503 and 504; 215. no. 508; 216. no. 511.

¹⁹⁴² DL 23405.

¹⁹⁴³ Béla Iványi, “Adalékok nemzetközi érintkezéseink történetéhez a Jagelló-korban” [On the History of Hungarian Foreign Relations in the Jagello Period], in Történelmi Tár 1906. 344-349.

¹⁹⁴⁴ DF 232690, DL 104420, DL 104422.

¹⁹⁴⁵ Teleki család gyömrői levéltára 218. no. 518.

¹⁹⁴⁶ DL 102338.

contingent of ban Francis Battyányi, that is, as a member of the Slavonian nobility, that he arrived to the royal army at Mohács, and finished his life in the battle.¹⁹⁴⁷

Both Peter and Sigismund profited from their influence at court to acquire new possessions, but not in Slavonia. Before 1493 Peter possessed the market town of Rohonc (Vas c., Rechnitz, AU) by right of pledge. In 1495 he received, together with his cousin Sigismund, the inheritance of Thomas of Úrmező in the county of Máramaros.¹⁹⁴⁸ Three years later it was again Peter who took into pledge from duke Corvin the castle of Hunyad (Hunedoara, RO),¹⁹⁴⁹ and a year later he received from the king lands confiscated for infidelity in the county of Szabolcs.¹⁹⁵⁰ The scale of his ambitions is shown by the fact that in the same year he petitioned from the king the inheritance of John Ellerbach, which comprised one castle and three *castella*, in the company of the archbishop of Esztergom, the palatine and the judge royal.¹⁹⁵¹ Although eventually his efforts came to naught, he had more luck with the lands of John Szentgróti, that is, the castle of Szentgrót (Zala c.) and its appurtenances, into which he was introduced, together with George Móré of Csula, upon royal order.¹⁹⁵² Before 1503 Sigismund obtained the castle of Kövesd in the county of Zemplén,¹⁹⁵³ and in 1504 he took into pledge for the enormous sum of 2400 florins the estates of Gerard Tibai of Nagymihály (Mihalovce/Vinné, SL), with the two castles of Nagymihály and Bukovc, in the counties of Zemplén and Ung respectively; yet the letter of introduction was only issued in 1517, and he never seems to have effectively occupied them.¹⁹⁵⁴ As so many others, Sigismund was rewarded with further possessions after the suppression of the peasant rising of 1514.¹⁹⁵⁵ It was evidently in connection with his office at the chamber of Máramaros that he obtained a house at Huszt.¹⁹⁵⁶ In 1518 he took into pledge lands in the three counties of Bereg, Szabolcs and Abaúj.¹⁹⁵⁷ In 1522 Paul Várdai, bishop of Veszprém, and royal treasurer, pledged to him half of his bishopric, the castles of Veszprém and Sümeg comprised, in return for the enormous sum of 6300 florins which he owed to him as ispán of the salt chamber of Máramaros.¹⁹⁵⁸ Sigismund also acquired somehow half of the village of (Tápió)szentmárton in the county of Pest, which he donated in 1525

¹⁹⁴⁷ András Kubinyi, “A mohácsi csata és előzményei” [The Battle of Mohács and its Antecedents], in *Századok* 115 (1981) 102.

¹⁹⁴⁸ DF 212132.

¹⁹⁴⁹ DL 37718.

¹⁹⁵⁰ DL 105416.

¹⁹⁵¹ DL 101262.

¹⁹⁵² DL 101267.

¹⁹⁵³ The formal exchange of possessions with Ladislav Szerdahelyi, which involved on the part of the latter the castle of Kövesd, took place only in 1512 before the convent of Lelesz (DL 89021). Yet Sigismund dated two letters *ex castro nostro Kewesd* in 1503, which proves that he was already in possession of at that time: DF 216624, 216626.

¹⁹⁵⁴ DL 88915, 89091.

¹⁹⁵⁵ Balassa család oklevéltára 508.

¹⁹⁵⁶ DL 47398.

¹⁹⁵⁷ The villages were pledged to him for the 1600 florins which he had lent to the treasurer *ad facta et negocia [...]* *domini nostri regis*. DL 89126.

¹⁹⁵⁸ DL 89158.

to Stephen Verböci.¹⁹⁵⁹ A necessary consequence of all these offices and land acquisitions was that Sigismund was permanently absent from his Slavonian estates.¹⁹⁶⁰ This absence, on the other hand, may have been the cause of the fact that his acquisitions in Slavonia were on a much smaller scale or aborted altogether.

Before 1502 it was Peter Pogány who reobtained the lands of Nicholas Bocskai, evidently for the benefit of his own sister, who had married Nicholas.¹⁹⁶¹ These lands, however, namely the portions of the estate of Raszinyakeresztúr, devolved later with the hands of the widowed Dorothy upon her second husband, Francis Kecer. Ten years later Sigismund tried to have himself introduced into the estates of the late Peter Bocskai by right of pledge, but his effort foundered upon the resistance of Louis Pekri.¹⁹⁶² It was the son of Sigismund, Peter, born from Euphrosyne Várdai, who continued the family after Mohács.¹⁹⁶³

2.2.39. Nicholas Pozsegai (de Posega)

Nicholas Pozsegai seems to have come from the Györkvölgyi family in the neighbouring county of Pozsega.¹⁹⁶⁴ The mere fact that he was known in neighbouring Slavonia by the name of his native county shows that he rose from the ranks of the petty nobility. We do not know how he met treasurer John Ernuszt, whom he served until the latter's death in 1476. Still merely *nobilis*, he is first attested in 1472 as castellan of Szombathely and administrator of the tax in the county of Vas.¹⁹⁶⁵ Somewhat later he accompanied his lord to Slavonia and became his castellan of Sztrigó. He married the daughter of Christoph Paschingar and Susan Pekri, Helen,¹⁹⁶⁶ and thus acquired the

¹⁹⁵⁹ DL 72216.

¹⁹⁶⁰ [Sigismund] “*ad presens personalem residenciam non in ipsa Herbolthya et per consequens in hoc regno Sclavonie sed in partibus regni Hungarie haberet*”: DF 262028. This does not mean, however, that he never turned up there or in the wider region. In the spring he issued a quittance for his *familiares* who had accounted for the tax collected in Máramaros at Herbortya (DL 86757), and he also stayed there in May 1525 (DL 56815). In April 1526 it is his wife who is attested at Herbortya: DL 82716. In 1514 he was one of the arbitrators in the case between archbishop Thomas Bakóc and the Bánfi brothers on the one hand, and Benedict Batthyány on the other, together with other noblemen from the counties of Körös and Zala (DF 252279), whereas two years later he again emerges as an arbitrator between the same Bánfi brothers and Paul Kerecsényi, this time at the market town of Páka in the county of Zala (DL 94325.). Interestingly, Herbortya seems to have been regarded as his residence, despite the fact that he was regularly absent, as is shown by a letter from 1516: *Sigismundum Pogan domi non invenerunt, dicunt ipsum esse Hungarie*, says a letter written in Slavonia (DL 25574).

¹⁹⁶¹ DF 276912

¹⁹⁶² DL 47013.

¹⁹⁶³ DL 106083/378 (his wife); DL 97684 (his son, Peter).

¹⁹⁶⁴ In 1476 he is said to have killed “*quendam Blasium de Gyewrkwelgh fratrem suum sibi in propinqua linea consanguineitatis attinentem*” (DL 103789). It is, however, impossible to link him to the few known members of the family: Michael son of Gregory, who is mentioned in 1424 (Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár XI. 733.); and Stephen, who is mentioned as a neighbour in 1489 (DL 33496) and as a royal man two years later (DL 19713).

¹⁹⁶⁵ DF 261757: “*nobili Nicolao de Posega castellano castris Zombathel ac dicatori et exactori presentis taxe octuaginta denariorum in comitatu Castriferrei constituto*”. In fact, Szombathely belonged to the bishopric of Győr, then headed by the Slavonian Demetrius Csupor. It is thus possible that he had originally followed the prelate and joined Ernuszt thereafter. A latter dated by him at Szombathely from early 1472 survives: DL 93452.

¹⁹⁶⁶ DL 100829: “*egregius Nicolaus de Posega capitaneus castris Sthrygo sponsus nobilis puelle Elena vocate filie quondam Christofori Passyngar de Garygnycza ex nobili domina Swsko vocata filia quondam Ladislai de Peker progenite*” (also DL 103740).

estate of Garignica in the county of Körös. As we have seen above, it was as a leading *familiaris* of Ernuszt that he occupied the castle of Dobrakucsa for his lord, of which he was also castellan for some time.¹⁹⁶⁷ The service of Ernuszt must have been a lucrative job, for Pozsegai was able to take several estates into pledge in the region of Garignica, which also boasted a *castellum*;¹⁹⁶⁸ thereafter he was consequently called by his new possession. Shortly after the appointment of Ernuszt as ban of Slavonia (Nov. 1473) he became his viceban, and held the office first together with Ladislás Hermanfi and later with Peter Bocskai.

The disappearance of Ernuszt and the confusion lingering over his inheritance involved serious dangers not only for his sons¹⁹⁶⁹ but also for his retainers, however.¹⁹⁷⁰ The estate of Garignica had been donated to Ladislás Karai, provost of Buda, as early as 1466,¹⁹⁷¹ but he was unable to make good his claim. In June 1476 Karai, who had been appointed as *personalis* in the meantime, received again from the king the estate of Garignica, together with all the other possessions of Nicholas Pozsegai, who was then sentenced for fratricide.¹⁹⁷² Moreover, evidently upon hearing the royal judgement, the estate was also petitioned by Andrew Dánfi, ban of Croatia, and Andrew Lábatlani.¹⁹⁷³ By December 1476 Pozsegai was able to reach a compromise with provost Ladislás,¹⁹⁷⁴ and also to obtain royal grace, for none of his possessions seems to have been lost. On two occasions, in 1474 and 1478, he was listed fifth among the representatives of the Slavonian nobility.

Yet his situation remained precarious. In a case pursued parallelly against Helen Paschingar, as the heir of Susan Pekri, the judge royal decided in favour of provost Ladislás in 1478, but the wife of Nicholas forcefully prevented the execution.¹⁹⁷⁵ This act seems to have remained unpunished, and that it was so must have been due to the new lords and protectors of Pozsegai. One of them, Urban Nagylucsei, was another former *familiaris* of Ernuszt, and ultimately his follower at the head of the

¹⁹⁶⁷ See the chapter on the Nelepec. DL 107021 (castellan).

¹⁹⁶⁸ He took into pledge the portions of Michael Csezmecei at Laztesin and Butkafölde (DF 231663), and those of Stephen and Ladislás Bicskele at the same Butkafölde together with their *curia* there, and further portions at Palicsnaszentpéter and Mocsila (DL 103757). Nicholas Pozsegai also had a *curia* at Markovc (DL 103785).

¹⁹⁶⁹ The abstract published in Stipišić – Šamšalović, *Isprave* no. 2841 and, consequently, the interpretation of András Kubinyi based on it (Ernuszt Zsigmond 313.) is wrong. According to the original charter (DF 231190), king Matthias, as the chief executor of the elder János' will (*tamquam executor principalis*) ordered the sale of the castle of Szentgyörgy and of the two *castella* belonging to it, in order to effectively comply with the testamentary dispositions of the late treasurer, and eventually sold it to bishop Sigismund and his brother in exchange of 20.000 florins and the castle of Dobrakucsa, which was thus not given to but alienated from them in 1477.

¹⁹⁷⁰ See the letter of George Forster, castellan of Csáktornya, to Nicholas Pozsegai: DL 103782.

¹⁹⁷¹ DL 100753.

¹⁹⁷² DL 103789. Bónis, *Jogtudó értelmiség* 228. for the career of Karai.

¹⁹⁷³ DL 103788.

¹⁹⁷⁴ DL 100875. Provost Ladislás resigned his rights concerning the estate of Garignica, based on the royal donation, in exchange for 800 florins to be paid by Nicholas Pozsegai partly in cash, partly in land.

¹⁹⁷⁵ DL 103834.

treasury;¹⁹⁷⁶ this relationship is thus in no need of explanation. The other, Paul Kinizsi, had no relationship to Slavonia; he also began his career in the financial administration in the early 1470s, and may have met Pozsegai there. In any case, shortly after his appointment as count of Temes in 1479 Nicholas Pozsegai was ordered by the king to join him at Temesvár for the anti-Ottoman campaign. Since the Slavonian nobles were not mobilised outside Slavonia, the mission of Pozsegai may indicate that he was somehow attached to the court, perhaps through Nagylucsei or Kinizsi.¹⁹⁷⁷ In 1481 he was again proscribed for fratricide at the assembly of Zagreb,¹⁹⁷⁸ and ban Ladislav Egervári immediately petitioned some of his estates from the king.¹⁹⁷⁹ The outcome of the affair is not known, and Pozsegai died soon afterwards.¹⁹⁸⁰ Although he had a son, called Leonard,¹⁹⁸¹ he had no chances of inheriting his father's possessions; the latter were declared as having devolved upon the crown and (as we have seen above), donated to an Italian *familiaris* of queen Beatrix.¹⁹⁸² There is no further trace of Leonard Pozsegai, and so the career of the family in Slavonia ended within less than a decade.

2.2.40. Prasovci (Praščevec, de Praschowcz)

The Prasovci family seems equally to have belonged to the castle nobility of Körös.¹⁹⁸³ Nothing is known about their history up to the middle of the 15th century, although they were by no means poor.¹⁹⁸⁴ In 1445/1446 their only possession of Prasovc was devastated by the counts of Cilli, an indication that they may have belonged to the supporters of the Tallóci brothers. The fact that the village was donated to them by right of new donation by governor John Hunyadi in August 1446 at Szeged, points in the same direction.¹⁹⁸⁵ Thereafter they lived the life of the petty nobility, engaging in their habitual activities. Ladislav and Blaise, sons of Paul, both functioned as royal men,¹⁹⁸⁶ whereas the third brother, George, besides assuming the same function, also acted as a lawyer at the banal seat, and was also elected as *szolgabíró* of Körös.¹⁹⁸⁷

¹⁹⁷⁶ András Kubinyi, "A kincstári személyzet a XV. század második felében" [The Personnel of the Treasury in the Second Half of the 15th Century], in *Tanulmányok Budapest Múltjából*, 12 (1957) 31-32. In fact, the provost master Urban who is mentioned by George Forster in the letter cited above is surely identical to Urban Nagylucsei.

¹⁹⁷⁷ All this is known from his testament prepared in July 1479 at Garignica: DL 45790.

¹⁹⁷⁸ Tringli, *Szlavóniai közgyűlés*.

¹⁹⁷⁹ DL 103851.

¹⁹⁸⁰ Before 9 February 1482: DL 103786.

¹⁹⁸¹ DL 45790, DL 103851.

¹⁹⁸² For the references see the chapter on the Kapitánfi.

¹⁹⁸³ In 1499 George Prasovci claimed the lands of the late Peter Mikcsec to have devolved upon him (*in ipsum exponentem tamquam fratrem condivisionalem fuissent condescense*) (DF 232028); in fact, the parents (or relatives, depending on the sense of the word parentum) of George were buried in the church of the Virgin Mary at Cirkvena, and George himself wanted to be buried there. DF 232179.

¹⁹⁸⁴ The possession of Prasovc itself contained some twenty inhabited tenant sessions. Adamček – Kampuš, *Popisi* 15, 26.

¹⁹⁸⁵ DF 231287.

¹⁹⁸⁶ DF 231362 (1455); DF 231372 (1456); DF 282430 (1458); DF 231844 (1492).

¹⁹⁸⁷ DL 100658 (1454), lawyer; DL 103639 (1455), *szolgabíró*;

In the next generation it was his nephew, the son of Blaise, likewise called George,¹⁹⁸⁸ who continued the family tradition. In the late eighties we find him among the elected noble jurors of Körös,¹⁹⁸⁹ then he was again elected as a *szolgabíró* in the same county, and at the same time he also acted as special commissioner attached to the banal court.¹⁹⁹⁰ His long career within the county certainly earned him respect, for in 1499 he was an arbitrator in the case between the Ernuszt family and the chapter of Csázma in the company of three former vicebans.¹⁹⁹¹ From the register attached to his testament, drafted in 1505, it appears that he held many pieces of property in pledge, perhaps more than the total of his family inheritance, and he lent money to several people, nobles and peasants alike. This proves that during his long career he was able to accumulate not only esteem but also a considerable amount of money. It is certainly not surprising that he recommended his family into the protection of two such figures of authority as George Kerecsényi and Elias Bosnyák.¹⁹⁹²

His son, Stephen, followed in the footsteps of his father, but, perhaps with the support of one of the two persons mentioned above, already found his way to the royal court. In 1503 it was upon the intervention of unnamed patrons that Stephen and his sister, Catherine, were confirmed by Wladislaw II in their portions at Sabnicaszentiván and two neighbouring villages.¹⁹⁹³ In 1505 he was already a notary in the royal chancery, and it was as such that he received, together precisely with Illés Bosnyák and the castellan of Dombró, all three titled *egregius*, lands in the county of Zagreb.¹⁹⁹⁴ Later on he seems to have returned to his native land, where, in the early 1510s, he turns up frequently as a royal man.¹⁹⁹⁵ Before February 1517 he was likewise elected as a *szolgabíró* in the county of Körös, and served as such until 1520.¹⁹⁹⁶ In the meantime, however, he was appointed by bishop Simon as his *provisor* at Zagreb,¹⁹⁹⁷ and in 1522 at the latest he became his *vicarius generalis*,¹⁹⁹⁸ a post which must have been lucrative enough to embark on a massive process of land acquisition. Already in 1519 he obtained half of the *castellum* at Csányó (Čanjevo) in the county of

¹⁹⁸⁸ DF 232028 (1499): „*Georgii filii quondam Blasii de Praschoucz*”. His uncle, George son of Paul, died before 1464: DL 100743.

¹⁹⁸⁹ DL 101080, DL 19557.

¹⁹⁹⁰ Between 1492 and 1496 he seems to have been continuously in office, so I only give the first and last references: DF 231839, 231956; again, between 1501 and 1504 there seems no break in his service, although from 1503 I have found no mention of him as *szolgabíró*: DF 277021 (1501); DF 252223 (1502); DF 219141 (1504); *de sede nostra banali [...] specialiter transmissus*: DL 68716.

¹⁹⁹¹ DF 282462.

¹⁹⁹² DF 232179, with the register attached thereto.

¹⁹⁹³ DL 32047.

¹⁹⁹⁴ DF 255550.

¹⁹⁹⁵ DF 252269 (1512), 219225 (1513), DF 274934 (1517).

¹⁹⁹⁶ DF 219373 (1517); DF 219285 (1518); DF 219306 (1519); DF 268424 (1520).

¹⁹⁹⁷ Levéltári Közlemények 5 (1927) 204. (1516); *ibid.* 207. (1517); DL 104345 (1518), where the Z. in the subscription evidently means Zagradiensis.

¹⁹⁹⁸ DL 33095: *ecclesie Zagradiensis in temporalibus vicarius generalis*; DF 277175/159-162.: *administrator proventuum episcopatus Zagradiensis*.

Körös, from the brother of his wife, Pál Spirančić, former viceban of Croatia.¹⁹⁹⁹ In the following years he took many pieces of property into pledge, a sure sign that he had a lot of cash to spend, but his main source of acquisition seems to have been his influence as administrator of the episcopal lands.²⁰⁰⁰ Stephen seems to have been as successful as he was unscrupulous, and, although it is precisely from the years of his rapid enrichment that the tax registers are missing, it is evident that by the middle of the 1520s he was one of the richest noblemen in the region. He held portions in dozens of villages, mostly by right of pledge, it is true.²⁰⁰¹ No miracle, then, that he was constantly titled *egregius*. He survived Mohács by many years, and continued to serve the bishop of Zagreb as well as to further augment his possessions.²⁰⁰² By the early 1540s, he had already erected a fortification at Prasovc.²⁰⁰³ The family survived right into the 17th century and continued to play an outstanding role in the history of Slavonia.²⁰⁰⁴

2.2.41. Predrihoi (Predrihovo, de Predryho)

Predriho (Gornje Predrijevo) was one of the appurtenances of the castle of Siklós in the county of Körös.²⁰⁰⁵ It was thus beyond doubt given by duke John Corvin to Marcinko who is first mentioned in 1494 as the captain of the duke's troops.²⁰⁰⁶ He was the son of Simon of *Dampno*, equally called Jezdarich,²⁰⁰⁷ and also of Zsupánpatak,²⁰⁰⁸ that is, he evidently came from the Bosnian town of Duvno, earlier called Dumno.²⁰⁰⁹ Indeed, duke Corvin himself referred in 1497 to the the services that Marcinko had done to the late king Matthias, so the beginning of his career should be put to before 1490.²⁰¹⁰ In 1496 his lands in Körös were occupied by Andrew Both, who had received from the duke the castle of Siklós, and seems to have laid claim to all of its appurtenances.²⁰¹¹ Late in the same year he was appointed as the duke's viceban of Slavonia, and received from him the castellany of Oszterc in the county of Varasd.²⁰¹² He also acquired other lands in Varasd by way of violence.²⁰¹³ After Corvin's return to the royal favour he seems at first to have served him as his

¹⁹⁹⁹ DF 232531.

²⁰⁰⁰ DF 277175/13-14; ibidem 63-66; ibidem 71-72; ibidem 90-92; ibidem 119-121; ibidem 159-162; ibidem 198.

²⁰⁰¹ See, alongside the charters cited in the previous note, Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 56, 91, 93, 105.

²⁰⁰² See Szabolcs Varga, *Szlavónia berendezkedése a késő középkor és kora újkor hajnalán [The Government of Slavonia at the Dawn of the Modern Age]* Unpublished PhD dissertation (Pécs: JPTE, 2008.) 352.

²⁰⁰³ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 136.

²⁰⁰⁴ See for instance Pálffy, Budróci Budor család 956.

²⁰⁰⁵ DL 75707: Predryho, Newkes, Zenthwyd, Rachan et Wakar [...] in Crisiensi [comitatu].

²⁰⁰⁶ DF 231902: “*Martinkone de Predryhowo capitanei (!) gencium eiusdem domini Johannis ducis*”

²⁰⁰⁷ DF 233410: *Martinus Simonis de Dumpno*; DF 232533: *quondam Marchynkonis de Dwman*; DF 231978: *Johannem filium quondam Simonis Jezdarych de Predryho*.

²⁰⁰⁸ DF 231978: *Marthynkoni de Swpanpothok alias de Predrykowo*.

²⁰⁰⁹ Today Tomislavgrad, Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

²⁰¹⁰ DF 231978.

²⁰¹¹ DL 46337.

²⁰¹² DF 231978.

²⁰¹³ DF 274952.

viceban in Croatia and Dalmatia,²⁰¹⁴ before reassuming the same office in Slavonia as well. Later on he was allegedly bribed by the Venetians into handing over to them the castle of Knin, and was consequently captured by the duke.²⁰¹⁵ This incident surely accounts for the fact that he completely disappears from our sources after February 1500.

Marcinko had three brothers, one called Gregory, the other two John, one of them was at least literate.²⁰¹⁶ In 1513 the only surviving among the four brothers, John called Ivica, married Helen, the daughter of Louis Pekri. According to his own words, he was then the only surviving male member of his family, he therefore bequeathed all his possessions upon his father-in-law, Louis Pekri and his sons, whom he had adopted as his brothers.²⁰¹⁷ From this charter it appears that besides the considerable estates in the counties of Varasd and Körös, Marcinko had also obtained some lands in that of Bihar, presumably likewise from his lord, duke Corvin. Before January 1516 John Ivica died without offspring, and his possessions were donated by the king to palatine Emeric Perényi.²⁰¹⁸ Whereas the estate of Oszterc did devolve upon the Pekri,²⁰¹⁹ Predriho seems to have been reallocated to the castle of Siklós by palatine Imre Perényi.²⁰²⁰ The four brothers also had two sisters, one of whom, called Anna, married a Slavonian nobleman, Anthony Borotva of Mocsila, whereas the other, Margaret, became the wife of Paul Bwsanych of Bwsan.²⁰²¹ None of the two husbands seems to have inherited any of their brother-in-law's acquisitions.

2.2.42. Rohfi of Décese (de Deche, Decche)

Their origin again presents difficulties which cannot be solved with absolute certainty. The *comes* Ruh/Roh from whom the Roh(fi) family descended appears for the first time in 1263, when he buys the land of Décese (*Descha*) in the county of Garics.²⁰²² Two years later he had this act confirmed by king Bela IV, who donated him at the same time a huge parcel of land belonging to the castle of Garics.²⁰²³ In 1273 king Ladislas IV rewarded the services which comes Roh had done to his predecessors, kings Bela IV and Stephen V, and to himself, and especially referred to his participation in the Bohemian war, where he appeared with a number of good warriors, although he had no office by reason of which he would have been expected to do so.²⁰²⁴ Still in the same year

²⁰¹⁴ DF 233410.

²⁰¹⁵ Gyula Schönherr, *Hunyadi Corvin János*, Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1894, 276.

²⁰¹⁶ DF 274952. DL 94734: Gregorius Simonovich de Ozthercz (1510)

²⁰¹⁷ DF 232371: “*de sua stirpe nullus masculini generis superesset*”.

²⁰¹⁸ DL 22743.

²⁰¹⁹ 1517. DL 33075: “*providus Clemens de Ozthercz jobagio domine Elene relicte quondam Iwycza*”

²⁰²⁰ DF 252278.

²⁰²¹ DF 232533; DF 277175/ 214.

²⁰²² Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus V. 358-60.

²⁰²³ Szentpéteri – Borsa 1467.

²⁰²⁴ Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus VI. 39. (“*idem comes Ruh licet tunc nullo esset honoris culmine sublimatus, ad nostrum venit exercitum ducens secum manu potentes milites et in belli examine virtuosos*”), but see Szentpéteri - Borsa 2361, where the war against the Bohemians is not mentioned, and the charter is otherwise not beyond all doubt.

Ladislav IV exempted all his possessions, namely that of Kutenya (Kutina) in the county of Gerzence, those of D cse and Polositica in the county of Garics, which he had either bought from local *v rjobb gyok* or received as a donation from king Bela IV, from all hereditary services, and permitted him to possess them by the right of the Slavonian nobility.²⁰²⁵

Although the evidence available is not beyond all doubt, it is certain that comes Roh acquired all his known possessions in Slavonia either through purchase or by royal donation. It is thus legitimate to suppose that he was not indigenous in Slavonia but arrived there sometime before 1263. And we do have traces, albeit quite late, that it was indeed so. In October 1402 John and Ladislav Roh presented some documents to king Sigismund, which proved that the possession called Becz in the county of Z lyom (Zvolen, SL) had once belonged to their ancestor called Tegzew.²⁰²⁶ In 1417 we learn that the other name of the possession was Kir lyfalva (Kyralfalva), and was partially in the hands of the descendants of Peter called Tegzew.²⁰²⁷ Since the name Tegzew was especially rare, it is with reasonable hope that we search for a joint mention of Ruh and Tegzew or at least for some link between the two. It is evident, however, that the county of Z lyom, which was uninhabited woodland until the Mongol invasion, could not be the place of origin of comes Roh and Tegzew either. In a charter of Bela IV dated to April 1244 we find isp ns Ruch and Thegezu (Schegzen), upon whose request the king ennobles their kinsmen, *udvarnoks* in the Csall k z.²⁰²⁸ Although the document concerned is a manifest forgery, known only from a later transcription, the joint mention of Roh and Tegzew certainly deserves attention. Unfortunately, it is the closest we can get to the possible origins of the family, but even until further research will shed more light on the problem, we can state with some probability that the Rohfi of D cse were not indigenous in Slavonia.

In the course of the 14th century the son and grandsons of *comes* Roh frequently turn up in the sources in different cases of litigation and minor property transfers, almost always bearing the title of master, but these charters tell us nothing about their non-legal activity.²⁰²⁹ The first among them known to have held any office is John, grandson of Roh, who is attested as *isp n* of Gerzence in 1385.²⁰³⁰ Sometime during the first tumultuous years of king Sigismund's reign their estates were donated to Nicholas Kosztajnicai on the pretext that Ladislav and John Roh had taken part among the retainers of the Horv ti brothers in the skirmish at Gara. Although they do not seem to have effectively lost their lands, in 1412 they judged it necessary (or were compelled) to prove anew

²⁰²⁵ Szentp teri – Borsa 2361. The Dyene mentioned in this charter seems to have been the namegiver of Dianv ra/Dianf lde.

²⁰²⁶ DL 42782: “*quedam possessio Beech vocata in comitatu Zoliensi existens [...] quondam Tegzew predecessoris ipsorum extitisset, que ipsis tanquam legitimis successoribus ipsius Tegzew omnis juris titulo pertineret*”

²⁰²⁷ Zsigmondkori Oklev lt r. VI. 1202.

²⁰²⁸ Fej r, Codex diplomaticus 4/I. 333-334. On its authenticity see Szentp teri – Borsa 761. See also Richard Marsina ed., Codex diplomaticus et epistolaris Slovaciae II. Inde ab a. MCCXXV usque ad a. MCCLX (Bratislavae, 1987) 48, where the name is given in the form of Thegezu.

²⁰²⁹ Smi iklas, Codex diplomaticus XI. 64; Ibidem XIII. 299-301; Ibidem XIV. 519; Ibidem XV. 235.

²⁰³⁰ Engel, Archontol gia I. 252.

their fidelity to the king, who, after an inquisition and according to the testimony of the charters presented by the Roh brothers, gave them all their estates by right of new donation.²⁰³¹ In the meantime, on 5 October 1402 they received a donation from king Sigismund at Pressburg, which proves that they were present at the congregation which confirmed the inheritance of Albert of Habsburg in Hungary, even though they did not seal the charter itself.²⁰³²

John Roh was in the service of palatine Nicholas Garai, and accompanied his lord for the coronation of Sigismund as king of the Romans to Aachen.²⁰³³ His brother, Ladislás, presumably fought in the Venetian war, for he received another new donation concerning their possessions in the county of Dubica in May 1413 at Udine.²⁰³⁴

Ladislás and John Roh tried with all possible means to enlarge their hereditary possessions. They obtained the estate of Szentjakab from king Sigismund partly in exchange for other possessions, partly for the considerable sum of 1200 golden florins. The estate was given to them as property confiscated for infidelity, but they were compelled to return it in 1408 upon royal pressure.²⁰³⁵ They also wanted to occupy by right of pledge the possessions of the Töttös family, which bordered upon their own estates along the Sava river.²⁰³⁶ Although none of these efforts seem to have yielded durable results, they do show that they were not lacking the necessary financial means, even if it is impossible to tell how they acquired them. John was active as a lawyer,²⁰³⁷ and he also turns up in an important arbitration in 1417, which shows that he had some legal knowledge.²⁰³⁸

In the next generation, among the three sons of Ladislás, Stephen, Andrew and John, and Ladislás, son of John, apparently the latter was the most active. In his petition presented to the papal court in 1432 he proudly referred to himself as „lord of the castle of Veszele”,²⁰³⁹ and his behaviour was entirely in keeping with the self-image reflected by this title. From 1427 on he spent as much as a thousand golden florins upon the acquisition of the neighbouring estate of Újudvar and the *castellum* standing there, partly at least together with his cousins.²⁰⁴⁰ He paid even more for portions of the estate of Kristallóc, pledged to him by John Szerecsen for 1550 florins.²⁰⁴¹ An even more valuable, though also temporary, acquisition was the town of Tolnavár in the county of Tolna, which likewise belonged to Ladislás by right of pledge.²⁰⁴² He also took into pledge the village of

²⁰³¹ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár III. 2736.

²⁰³² See the charter cited in the note 2023 above.

²⁰³³ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár IV. 564.

²⁰³⁴ *Ibidem* IV. 640.

²⁰³⁵ *Ibidem* II/2. 5989.

²⁰³⁶ *Ibidem* V. 2378.

²⁰³⁷ *Ibidem* VI. 213.

²⁰³⁸ *Ibidem* VI. 803.

²⁰³⁹ Lukinović, *Povijesni spomenici* VI. 352: „*domino castris in Wesalia*”

²⁰⁴⁰ DL 106957; DL 103513; DL 43777; DL 103553; DL 44049.

²⁰⁴¹ DF 278378.

²⁰⁴² DL 44606. Tolna belonged to the queen's demesne before the 1450s, so it must have been Barbara of Cilli who alienated it to Ladislás Roh. Csánki, *Történelmi földrajz* III. 412.

Thorchez from Ladislav Latk for 150 florins,²⁰⁴³ and parts of the estate of Desnice for 160.²⁰⁴⁴ In the 1440s he at first tried to occupy forcefully, together with members of the Kaptánfi family, some possessions which the widow of Andrew Kapitánfi had bequeathed upon the monks of Garics,²⁰⁴⁵ then, in 1446, in a series of particularly violent assaults, he devastated the possessions of Ladislav Pekri, burning down his house and those of his tenants, and taking off all the material gathered there for the construction of a *castellum*.²⁰⁴⁶ He nevertheless fully enjoyed the confidence of the local nobility, for in 1436 he was one of the collectors of the tax imposed by emperor Sigismund,²⁰⁴⁷ and in 1442 he acted as one of the Slavonian envoys at the diet held at Buda.²⁰⁴⁸ It was also Ladislav Roh who, in the name of the Slavonian nobility, had the decrees of king Albert transcribed by the chapter of Csázma in 1439.²⁰⁴⁹ He was also present, together with his cousin, Stephen, at the congregation of the Slavonian nobility at Körös in 1439. He died before 1453.

In May 1456 the *familiares* of Stephen and Ladislav Roh junior were involved in a violent assault which later assumed a political character and was punished as a crime of infidelity. The reason why they supported Simon Nagy, a *familiaris* of John Hunyadi in Slavonia, in taking the *castellum* of Garignica, then in the hands of a *familiaris* of count Ulrich of Cilli, is unknown. It is interesting that whereas in the report of the investigation prepared by the *szolgabírák* of Körös county in May 1456 they were listed among the instigators of the action,²⁰⁵⁰ in the royal judgment, issued in August of the same year, they were left unmentioned.²⁰⁵¹ Another, albeit quite vague, trace also points in the direction of a possible link with the Hunyadi family. For it was Ladislav Roh who redeemed some charters concerning the possessions of the priory of Vrana, which had been taken by Alexander (Sandrin) Berzencei at the time when the counts of Cilli besieged the castles of the priory. The prior in question was Thomas Székely of Szentgyörgy, a kinsman of the late John Hunyadi, who rewarded with an uninhabited predium the services of Ladislav.²⁰⁵²

This latter Ladislav, the son of Stephen, was beyond doubt the most outstanding figure of the family in the 15th century. In 1464 he was appointed as Slavonian viceban by Nicholas Újlaki, and seems to have used his office and the authority of his lord for further territorial expansion. With reference to a royal letter of protection he occupied the town of Rojcsa from the Dersfi family,²⁰⁵³ whereas upon the tenants of Stephen Csupor at Monoszló he imposed an extraordinary tax, and collected the

²⁰⁴³ DL 103661.

²⁰⁴⁴ DL 45056.

²⁰⁴⁵ Levéltári Közlemények 11 (1933) 81.

²⁰⁴⁶ See the chapter on the Pekri family.

²⁰⁴⁷ Levéltári Közlemények 3 (1925) 139.

²⁰⁴⁸ Teleki, Hunyadiak kora X. 120.

²⁰⁴⁹ DF 268078.

²⁰⁵⁰ DL 102132.

²⁰⁵¹ DL 100653.

²⁰⁵² DF 261897. He redeemed the charters “*tum ex nostra voluntate et inforacione tumque sua industria*”

²⁰⁵³ DL 16011.

revenues for himself.²⁰⁵⁴ Sometime in the beginning of 1466 he was replaced by John Macedóniai in the office of viceban, yet his authority remained considerable. At the congregation of the Slavonian nobility in January 1471 he was listed first, and soon reappeared as viceban and count of Zagreb in the service of Damján Horvát of Litva. As such he obtained the castle of Kozora in the county of Szana, among circumstances which are very obscure. Whereas Ladislás himself stated later that he had paid 3.000 florins for the castle and its appurtenances to Nicholas Székely, presumably a kinsman of prior Thomas,²⁰⁵⁵ the king's attorney maintained in 1481 that it was with royal revenues and as the deputy of ban Damján Horvát that Ladislás redeemed the castle and consequently held it without any royal authorisation.²⁰⁵⁶

Kozora was not the only castle which came into the hands of Ladislás Roh in the 1470s. He also co-possessed for some time that of Berstyanovc as the guardian and protector of young Nicholas Tulbertfi, although it is not known by what right.²⁰⁵⁷ It seems to have been this Ladislás who erected a *castellum* at Kutenya, first mentioned in 1470.²⁰⁵⁸ In May 1472 he received a minor royal grant at the general assembly held at Buda.²⁰⁵⁹ In May 1474 he was present, together with Stephen and John Roh, among the representatives of the Slavonian nobility at Körös, and he was one of the arbitrators between the counts of Blagay and Zrin in the next year.²⁰⁶⁰ Sometime before July 1476 he joined king Nicholas Újlaki, for at that time he is attested in his service at Jajce.²⁰⁶¹ In January 1481 he was among the jurors from the county of Körös elected for the congregation at Zagreb, even though he was also proscribed at the congregation for homicide, and at the same time he had to renounce his rights concerning Kozora in favour of the king.²⁰⁶² He was appointed as one of the collectors of the tax levied in the course of the congregation itself.²⁰⁶³ Still at about the same time he was one of the Slavonian nobles who lent money to the king, presumably for his Styrian war.²⁰⁶⁴ In 1483 he returned for a third time as viceban of Slavonia in the service of ban Matthias Geréb. He last occurs as such in May 1484, and left his office soon thereafter for reasons which remain unknown to us. In November of the next year he and his nephew, Bernard Roh committed a violent assault together with the *familiares* of Ladislás Egervári, which may indicate that they were both

²⁰⁵⁴ DF 255802.

²⁰⁵⁵ The Rohfi were certainly in contact with Nicholas Székely, for before September 1479 they pledged to him their village of Glogovc to him. DL 107041.

²⁰⁵⁶ Thallóczy – Horváth, *Alsó-szlavóniai okmánytár* 218.

²⁰⁵⁷ DL 107017: “*egregiorum Nicolai filii quondam Tulberti de Berschyanowcz ac Ladislai Roh de Deche tutoris et protectoris eiusdem Nicolai*”; *Levéltári Közlemények* 13 (1935) 244. (= DL 35695: “*cuius onera tutoris more ad presens gerimus*”).

²⁰⁵⁸ DF 255820.

²⁰⁵⁹ Erdődy 10137.

²⁰⁶⁰ DL 33150.

²⁰⁶¹ DL 102190.

²⁰⁶² Tringli, *Szlavóniai közgyűlés*.

²⁰⁶³ *Ibidem*.

²⁰⁶⁴ DL 103863.

serving the latter then.²⁰⁶⁵ Ladislav turns up for the last time in March 1486 as one of the arbitrators between Ladislav Hermanfi and the Kapitánfi brothers.²⁰⁶⁶

About the wives of Ladislav we know nothing but their names: in 1470 a certain Catherine is mentioned, whereas in 1491 his widow was called Scholastica.²⁰⁶⁷ From one of them was born his only known son called Nicholas, who died before his father. Ladislav's brother, Michael died before November 1482. His only surviving son from his wife, Catherine Csupor, was Bernard, who seems to have inherited the political authority of his uncle. In January 1490 he was listed among the Slavonian nobility assembled at Körös, and in June of the same year he was present at the diet of Pest convoked for the election of the new king.²⁰⁶⁸ Later on his possessions seem to have been violently occupied by duke Lawrence Újlaki, presumably during the civil war which followed the death of king Matthias.²⁰⁶⁹ In March 1492 he was listed third, behind Balthasar Battyányi and Peter Bocskai, among the representatives of the Slavonian nobility at Buda. In the late summer of 1493 he was appointed, together with Louis Pekri, as Slavonian viceban by John Both and Emeric Derencsényi. He disappeared soon thereafter, presumably in the tragic battle of Udbina, although as late as March 1495 his death was still not confirmed.²⁰⁷⁰

Bernard had been betrothed to Agnes, a niece of Thomas Bakóc. In view of the fact that his mother, Catherine was the cousin of István Csupor, who had bequeathed his lands on the prelate, this marriage was evidently aimed on the long run to strengthen the domination of the Erdődi family in Slavonia. Bernard had left all his possessions to his wife and her uncle for the case of his heirless death, and so did his cousin, Matthias. Since the latter also died without leaving offspring before February 1497, all the Rohfi lands were indeed inherited by bishop Bakóc.²⁰⁷¹

Not without some resistance, however. Alongside Matthias, Stephen Roh also had a daughter called Catherine from his wife, Euphrosyne. Before 1501 they started a case before the ban with reference to the fact that some at least of the Roh lands belonged to the female right (*jus femineum*), and as such they made part of their inheritance; their claim seems to have been appreciated, for in 1501 the estate of Podgorja at least was judged to them.²⁰⁷² Catherine married Peter Billyei, of the county of

²⁰⁶⁵ DL 32833.

²⁰⁶⁶ DL 107065.

²⁰⁶⁷ DF 255820 (1470); Levéltári Közlemények 13 (1935) 251-252 (1491). See also DF 255913. In 1490 Scolastica is involved in a violent trespass together with Balthasar Batthyány, which, of course, is not sufficient reason to count her as a relative of the latter.

²⁰⁶⁸ DF 252107.

²⁰⁶⁹ DL 32736. In his last will Stephen Csupor mentioned the sums that Bernard, the son of his sister, owned him pro possessionibus suis: Levéltári Közlemények 10 (1932) 127.

²⁰⁷⁰ DF 219074: „*in conflictu exercitus in regno nostro Croacie cum seivissimis Turcis tocius Christianitatis inimicis facto periclitasset, de cuius vita et morte certitudo veritatis nemini constare dinosceretur*”

²⁰⁷¹ On all this see Fraknói, Erdődi Bakócz Tamás pp. ??; DF 219074.

²⁰⁷² DL 94295. Unfortunately, only the last section of the charter has survived.

Baranya, who made some career under the Jagello kings.²⁰⁷³ In 1513 he received from the king the possessions of his own wife, which had devolved upon the crown because she presented a forged charter in her suit against Peter Erdődi at the banal court.²⁰⁷⁴ It is not known whether he ever took possession of any of the former Roh lands.

2.2.43. Stefekfi/Pan of Kravarina (Sthefekfy, Pan de Krawarina)

The Stefekfi/Szentandrás family apparently descended from a person called Stepk, whose sons acquired the land called Temenice, also known as Szentandrás,²⁰⁷⁵ in the county of Garics, in 1277.²⁰⁷⁶ A year later James, son of the same Stepk is referred to as a *várjobbágy* of Garics.²⁰⁷⁷ In fact, Stepk and his sons seem to have belonged to a populous *várjobbágy* kindred from which the various branches of the Kamarjai family, as well as the Korbovai Vidfi and other less known noble families, which flourished in the region of Garics in the later middle ages, descended also.²⁰⁷⁸ Most of these families remained firmly located in their native region throughout their existence, but some of them achieved some prominence which certainly justifies their inclusion in the present analysis. The first member of the kindred to leave his native land and make a career was master Paul, son of Lawrence, and great-grandson of Stepk.²⁰⁷⁹ After a period of service as a notary in the royal court, he rose to become the *secretarius notarius* of palatine Stephen Lackfi.²⁰⁸⁰ Through his marriage, it seems, and also by royal donation, he acquired the estate of Újudvar, by which he and his descendants were called sometimes.²⁰⁸¹ Despite his evident affinity with Stephen Lackfi, during the troubled years after 1400 he not only remained faithful to Sigismund but also helped him actively in

²⁰⁷³ 1491-1493: *Alispán* of Somogy (Iván Borsa, "Somogy középkori alispánjai. A Mohács előtti megyei archontológia ügye" [The Medieval Alispánok of Somogy County. The Problem of County Archontologies in Pre-Mohács Hungary], in *Somogy megye múltjából* 13 [1982] 13-14); 1498: castellan of Szabadka in the service of the Pongrác of Dengeleg (László Blazovich, "Szabadka földesurai a középkorban" [The Lords of Szabadka in the Middle Ages], in László Magyar and József Szabó eds., *Szabadka igazgatástörténetéből 1428-1918* (Szabadka: Pannon Press, 1996) 38); 1520: castellan of Visegrád (DL 94342).

²⁰⁷⁴ DL 94321. In October of the same year, after the death of Catherine, the king confirmed the donation in favour of Peter: DL 94323.

²⁰⁷⁵ DL 100805: "*Zenthandras alio nomine Themennycze*"

²⁰⁷⁶ Gusztáv Wenzel ed., *Árpádkori Új Okmánytár I-XII* (Pest – Budapest, 1860-1874) XII. 175.

²⁰⁷⁷ *Ibidem* 200.

²⁰⁷⁸ The reconstruction of this family network would necessitate a research of its own, which cannot be done in the framework of the present dissertation. Consequently, here I only indicate some of the information which underpin my hypothesis. As late as 1416 the Szentandrás and the Kamarjai are still termed as *fratres condivisionales*, both possessing at Kamarja and Szentandrás (Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár V. 2004.). The same families, together with the Vidfi of Korbova, appear as the patrons of the Saint Martin parish church at Kamarja in 1408 (Lukinović, *Povijesni spomenici* V. 313.); in fact, the latter seem to have descended from Vitus, son of James, son of Stepk, who turns up in 1347. In 1351 they were called „nobles of Garics” (DL 100047), and in 1380, when the borders of Garics were rectified, and their possessions of Szentandrás and Kamarja menaced by incorporation, they managed to prove their title to them and were consequently confirmed therein by king Louis „*sub mere et sincere nobilitatis prerogativa*” (DL 100173).

²⁰⁷⁹ DL 101920: "*Paulus litteratus filius Laurencii filii Iwachini de Zenthandras*". The village of Cuzmich mentioned in this charter was still among the appurtenances of Szentandrás in 1492 as Kuzmincz (DL 101157).

²⁰⁸⁰ Bónis, *Jogtudó értelmiség* 200. Bonis is wrong in attaching him to a *várjobbágy* kindred of the same name from the county of Zala.

²⁰⁸¹ On his land acquisitions see *ibid.* 201. n. 68., with all the references. Újudvari: Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár VI. 204; 908.

the service of ban Ladislás Gordovai. As a reward, he received the Ervencei lands, but he was apparently unable to obtain it effectively. He died before August 1406, leaving two sons, Nicholas and Stephen.²⁰⁸² Yet he was not the only one in his generation to leave Slavonia by service. The George, son of James of Szentandrás, who is attested as castellan of Pécs in 1414 certainly belonged to the same family.²⁰⁸³ Moreover, another kinsman of theirs, Stephen, son of James, became in the 1420s the deputy of Stephen Csupor, master of the janitors in the queen's court.²⁰⁸⁴ None of these offices was enough to lay the foundations for a further rise, however, and decline already set in the second part of Sigismund's reign. One of the sons of Paul, Stephen, retained some of the authority of his father, for it was he who obtained the royal authorisation to hold a fair at Újudvar,²⁰⁸⁵ and probably erected a *castellum* at the same place.²⁰⁸⁶ Yet his social capital seems to have been gradually undermined by the alienation of great parts of Újudvar to the Rohfi of Décsé by his own brother Nicholas,²⁰⁸⁷ who, like their father, was literate, but operated at a purely local level.²⁰⁸⁸ This alienation proved definitive, moreover, for, presumably during the upheaval after 1445, Újudvar was somehow occupied by Jan Vitovec, who in 1456 transferred it to Ladislás Hermanfi, who then possessed it until his death.

The son of Stephen, John, although lost the estate of Újudvar, and his lands became limited again to the appurtenances of Szentandrás/Temenice, was at first sometimes named by the estate once acquired by his grandfather.²⁰⁸⁹ Later on, however, he was constantly called Stefekfi after the ancestor of the family, and of Temenice, where by the 1470s he erected a *castellum* of his own.²⁰⁹⁰ About the career of John not much is known. In 1463 he is referred to as a royal man,²⁰⁹¹ and somewhat later he joined the service of John, bishop of Pécs, among whose *familiares* he was proscribed in 1481.²⁰⁹² In 1475 he was already listed among the men of bishop Oswald of Zagreb;²⁰⁹³ in 1480 he turns up in an arbitration,²⁰⁹⁴ and a year later we find him among the jurors

²⁰⁸² **DL 103412 = ZsO. ??**

²⁰⁸³ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár V. 2004. Castellan: Engel, Archontológia I. 390. The previous incumbent of the office, Thomas Cigány of (Berivoj)szentiván, is also listed among the patrons of the Saint Martin parish church at Kamarja in 1402 (Lukinović, Povijesni spomenici V. 165.)

²⁰⁸⁴ Engel, Archontológia I. 61. He is surely identical with the James son of Stephen mentioned in ZsO. V. 2004.

²⁰⁸⁵ DL 103600: "*contra [...] donacionem et libertatem domini nostri imperatoris super eundem forum eidem Stephano attributum*"

²⁰⁸⁶ First mentioned in 1429: DL 43777.

²⁰⁸⁷ See the previous chapter.

²⁰⁸⁸ Lawyer in 1430: DL 106960.

²⁰⁸⁹ 100607: *Johanne filio Stephek de Wyudwar*; DL 100805: *Johannem filium Stephani filii Pauli literati de Wywdwar*.

²⁰⁹⁰ The *castellum* is mentioned together with three similar fortifications in Hungary by the decree of May 1472, to be demolished. Franciscus Döry, Georgius Bónis, Geisa Érszegi and Susanna Teke eds., *Decreta Regni Hungariae. Gesetze und Verordnungen Ungarns 1458-1490* (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1989) 206. Eventually it was not destroyed, or was rebuilt soon afterwards, as we will see later.

²⁰⁹¹ DF 255767.

²⁰⁹² Tringli, Szlavóniai közgyűlés 316.

²⁰⁹³ DF 261839.

²⁰⁹⁴ DL 100942.

of Körös at the assembly of Zagreb.²⁰⁹⁵ He married the daughter of Tulbert of Berstyanóc, widow of Michael Latk.²⁰⁹⁶ What is evident is that he enjoyed considerable prestige, for he was constantly titled *egregius*.²⁰⁹⁷ He died sometime before 1488.²⁰⁹⁸

Although in 1477 a son called Stanislas was also mentioned, the surviving heir of John was called Gabriel, and was born from Catherine Tulbert.²⁰⁹⁹ He also died heirless before 1492, however, and it is at this point that the history of another family, that of the Pán of Kravarina, comes into the picture. In 1492 king Wladislaw donated the *castellum* of Szentandrás, already called Szerencsi (*Serenchy, Serencze*), with appurtenances in fourteen villages, all of them on the territory of Szentandrás and Kamarja, to two of his courtiers, Balthasar Battyányi and Peter Butkai.²¹⁰⁰ Yet their introduction early in the next year was impeded by the contradiction of Catherine Tulbert, and also of duke Lawrence Újlaki, although we do not know by what right the latter intervened.²¹⁰¹ Behind the widow there stood her brother, Nicholas Tulbertfi who, although under the pretext of securing the rights of his sister, evidently aimed at retaining the estate for himself.²¹⁰² Yet in the end it was not Nicholas Tulbertfi but the new husband of Catherine, called Paul Pan of Kravarina, who got hold of the estate precisely through his marriage with the widow.²¹⁰³

Kravarina seems once to have belonged to the estate of Dobrakucsá, and was presumably alienated from it sometime during the 1470s, when the Nelepec lost much of their inherited lands, as we have seen above.²¹⁰⁴ How the Pan family obtained it, and where they came from, is a rather more obscure story, however. The inquiry into their origins is made possible by the joint mentions among the owners of Kravarina, in 1507 and 1517, of Francis Pan and Nicholas Ebeni.²¹⁰⁵ The Slavic name Pan was very frequent in the 15th century, yet there was only one village called Eben in medieval

²⁰⁹⁵ Tringli, Szlavóniai közgyűlés 314.

²⁰⁹⁶ DL 100889.

²⁰⁹⁷ DL 103699; DL 100835; DL 100889; DL 100891.

²⁰⁹⁸ DL 46090. It is interesting to observe that the distant kinsman of John, John Vidfi of Korbóva, who, as we have seen above, descended from the same male ancestor, produced a similar rise in the second half of the 15th century; although never titled *egregius*, he certainly enjoyed some more than average local esteem. He started his career as *szolgabíró* of Körös, an office in which he seems to have spent three terms (ZsO. X. 541., 587., ZsO. XI. 441., 619., DL 44351., DL 103689.), and in the 1440s he was twice Slavonian envoy to the general assembly at Buda (Teleki, Hunyadiak kora X. 120.; Béla Radvánszky and Levente Závodszy eds., *A Héderváry család oklevéltára. I-II*, Budapest, 1909-1922, I. 251.). He married the daughter of Paul Garázda of Keresztúr, whereby he acquired portions in the Garázda lands as well (DL 15200). In 1470 he was already acting, together with Anthony Kopinci, in the name of the entire Slavonian nobility (DF 268072.), and four years later he was one of the envoys delegated to the king by them (*Iura regni*, 211-212.). He also emerges as an arbitrator elected by Ladislas Hermanfi (DF 252063), and as a member of the Slavonian assembly in 1478.

²⁰⁹⁹ DL 100891 (Stanislaus); DL 101157 (Gabriel).

²¹⁰⁰ DL 101145.

²¹⁰¹ DL 101168.

²¹⁰² DL 101202.

²¹⁰³ DL 101242.

²¹⁰⁴ In 1523 Francis Nelepeci maintained that the possessions of Gradec and Kravarina were transferred “*dudum a progenitoribus ipsius Francisci Nelepeczy similiter progenitoribus dicti alterius Francisci Pan vigore certarum litterarum superinde confectarum pro certa summa pecuniarum partim pignoris partim vero perpetuitatis titulis*”: DF 265881. See also DF 277175/130-131.

²¹⁰⁵ Adamček – Kampuš, *Popisi* 30, 98.

Hungary, in the county of Pilis.²¹⁰⁶ Along this line it is relatively easy to identify the families concerned: in 1518 we learn that Francis was the son of Paul, himself the son of Peter Pan of Báté, whose daughter, Elisabeth was married by George Ebeni, and his son called Nicholas.²¹⁰⁷ The village called Báté (today Százhalombatta) likewise lay in the county of Pilis,²¹⁰⁸ so the question remains of how they got to the distant county of Körös.

In fact, the joint names of Pan and Báté are so unique that we have every reason to identify the Peter Pan of Báté with the *alispán* of Pozsega of exactly the same name who turns up in our sources between 1464 and 1469.²¹⁰⁹ Since he was the *familiaris* of Emeric Hédervári, in 1464 his castellan of Pozsegavár, it is evident that it was in the service of the son of the late palatine that he arrived to Pozsega. As the successor of Hédervári in the *ispánság* of Pozsega was John Eruszt,²¹¹⁰ it is probable that Peter joined him and received from his new lord the estate of Kravarina after Eruszt had occupied Dobrakucsá. The first trace of their actually owning Kravarina comes from 1481, when the wife of Peter Pan of Kravarina was proscribed at the congregation of Zagreb.²¹¹¹ It was thus the son of this Peter, called Paul Pan, who married the widow of John Stefekfi and thus occupied the estate of Temenice.²¹¹² In 1495 both Kravarina and Temenice were listed under his name, together with almost sixty inhabited tenant sessions.²¹¹³

In fact, Paul Pan and Nicholas Tulbertfi seem for some time to have held Temenice together,²¹¹⁴ but the former was forced to defend his position before the law by Balthasar Battyányi and Peter Butkai.²¹¹⁵ Although Paul managed to remain in the possession of the estate until 1498, he may have felt himself too weak to survive there and transferred the Stefekfi lands to Nicholas Bánfi before October 1499.²¹¹⁶ In the meantime the estate had been divided by the palatine between the grantees of 1492 and Ladislas son of Peter of Szentandrás, who had intervened in the case as a *frater aviticus* of the late John Stefekfi, but Paul soon alienated again the whole of Temenice together with the *castellum* there to Bartholomew Beriszló, prior of Vrana.²¹¹⁷ In 1503 Wladislaw II donated again the half of Szentandrás, this time as having escheated to the crown by the heirless death of Ladislas Szentandrási, to Balthasar Battyányi,²¹¹⁸ and the latter seems indeed to have

²¹⁰⁶ István Tringli, "Pest megye a késő középkorban" [The County of Pest in the Late Middle Ages], in Attila Zsoldos ed., *Pest megye monográfiája I/2. A honfoglalástól 1686-ig*, Budapest, 2001) 92-93.

²¹⁰⁷ DL 106083/457., where it appears that they also possessed parts of the village Székely.

²¹⁰⁸ Tringli, *Pest megye története* 153.

²¹⁰⁹ DL 33506, 34216, 108315. (Petrus Pan de Bathe).

²¹¹⁰ DL 45579.

²¹¹¹ Tringli, *Szlavóniai közgyűlés* 316.

²¹¹² DL 101206.

²¹¹³ Adamček – Kampuš, *Popisi* 10.

²¹¹⁴ DL 106868.

²¹¹⁵ DL 101257.

²¹¹⁶ DL 101269.

²¹¹⁷ DL 101334.

²¹¹⁸ DL 101339.

seized it before 1517 at the latest.²¹¹⁹ What happened to the other half is not known; what is certain is that the Pan of Kravarina never returned there any more.

This does not mean that they disappeared from the history of Slavonia, however. Although we have very limited information, it seems that the son of Paul, Francis, was for some time in royal service.²¹²⁰ In 1517 his lands in Körös were exempted *ad rationem domini bani*, which proves that at that time he was employed by Peter Beriszló.²¹²¹ In 1522 he was already castellan of Monoszló in the service of Peter Erdődi.²¹²² One more person should also be mentioned in this context, although his exact relationship with the Pan cannot be established: Francis Ebeni was castellan of Sümeg (Veszprém c.) in the service of bishop Peter Beriszló;²¹²³ he was evidently related to the Nicholas Ebeni who descended from Peter Pan on his mother's side, and owned portions of Kravarina.²¹²⁴ Since the Beriszló family also seems to have acquired portions of Kravarina, it is probable that Francis was taken by his lord from Slavonia to the distant county of Veszprém.²¹²⁵

2.2.44. Szász of Tamasovc (Zaaz de Thamasowcz)

The Szász of Tamasovc family descended from the Gatal kindred, whose possessions originally lay in the county of Sopron. Some of its members came very early to Slavonia, however, and founded there the village of Gatalóc and the noble family which bore its name.²¹²⁶ The branch which later became that of Tamasovc remained in the north-western part of Hungary until 1388, when Matthias son of Nicholas was deprived of his estate of Endréd (Sopron county) for his having been involved in the attack against queens Elizabeth and Mary in 1386.²¹²⁷ His mere participation in the revolt of the Horváti brothers proves that he had some earlier contacts with any of its leaders, and we will soon return to their possible roots. Yet he still does not seem to have had possessions in Slavonia

²¹¹⁹ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 100.

²¹²⁰ The only reference we have is in the letter of his father, in which the latter advised him to proceed in the defence of their lands „*ita quod servicia regie maiestatis non amittatis*”. What the nature of these services was is not known. DF 288098.

²¹²¹ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 98.

²¹²² DL 25657.

²¹²³ DF 262167.

²¹²⁴ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 98.

²¹²⁵ I regard the Nicolaus Desew who is listed among the owners of Kravarina in 1517 as a member of the Beriszló family.

²¹²⁶ Engel, *Középkori magyar genealógia*, Gatal nem tamasóci (endrédi) Szász. This Gatalóc, which lay in the county of Körös (Csánki, *Körösmegeye* 86., Popisi 7.), should be carefully distinguished from the village of the same name in Varasd. Unfortunately, the exact descent of the Gatalóci family which lived in the county of Körös cannot be reconstructed. Pál Engel (op. cit.) thought that they may have descended from the master Ladislav who turns up in 1335 with regard to the possession of Racsica (szentistván), yet this hypothesis cannot be proved. What is certain is that the Gatalóci who lived in the county of Körös in the 15th century, unlike the Gatalóci of Varasd, belonged to the petty nobility, and the highest office they assumed was that of *szolgabíró*; in any case, none of them was ever titled *egregius*. The only exception was Matthias Gatalóci, son of Gregory, bishop of Vác and then of Veszprém, and arch-chancellor. He certainly belonged to the Gatalóci of Körös (his father is probably identical with the Gregory son of Benedict who turns up in 1399; yet see Bónis, *Jogtudó* 107., who makes him descend from the Gatalóci of Varasd), but his career involved no social consequences for his kinsmen. Nor can be established any link between the Tamasóci and the Gatalóci, despite their supposedly common origins; I have consequently left the latter out of consideration.

²¹²⁷ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár I. 534.

when he joined ban Detre Bebek, and received as his *familiaris* from king Sigismund the estate of Tamasovc, in the vicinity of Racsa and Megyericse, in the county of Körös in 1396.²¹²⁸

Somewhat later he adroitly shifted his allegiance and joined Nicholas Garai sometime before 1398.²¹²⁹ Thanks to this choice, he profited from the revolt of 1403 by acquiring new possessions confiscated for reasons of infidelity in the county of Körös. He was thus donated as a „*miles egregius*” portions in the Kamarcai estates,²¹³⁰ as well as parts of Klokocsovc.²¹³¹ He also seems to have erected a *castellum* on one of the appurtenances of Tamasovc.²¹³² It was thanks to his marriage that he obtained the possession of Kretin (Krajetin) likewise in Körös. His wife was the daughter of Lanceus Szigeti, member of a well-to-do noble family from the county of Somogy, himself a court knight under Louis I. Indeed, it was probably his very marriage with Helen Szigeti which paved the way for master Matthias to Slavonia. Both Lanceus and his brother Antimus were *alispánok* of Sopron in the early 1360s, and it must have been then that they acquainted themselves with Matthias. Later on John, son of Antimus became first castellan of Vrana and later viceban of Slavonia in the service of Nicholas Garai, and presumably played a dominant role in Matthias’ joining his lord at that time. The fact that another cousin, Stephen Szigeti had served ban John Horváti as his *alispán* of Baranya in the late 1370s may also account for the participation of Matthias in the coup of 1386.²¹³³

In 1405 Matthias was sent by his lord to the distant county of Torontál and became castellan in the important castle of Becse (Bečej, SRB).²¹³⁴ He died before 22 January 1408, in the midst of preparations for a new campaign to Serbia.²¹³⁵ After his death his two sons, Ladislás and John were put under the tutelage of John Antimus, who in the meantime had been appointed as deputy palatine by Nicholas Garai. Only five years later, however, John Szász is attested as one of the participants of the expedition sent against duke Hervoja, among the followers of John Garai, brother of the palatine.²¹³⁶ He appears to have remained faithful to the Garai family, for later became *alispán* of Bodrog county in the service of Ladislás, son of palatine Nicholas.²¹³⁷ That he still enjoyed considerable prestige locally is borne out by the fact that among the arbitrators called upon to settle his quarrel with Benedict Nelepeci we find, among others, Sigismund Kasztellánfi, Stephen Fánics,

²¹²⁸ „*possessionem nostram Thamascouch vocatam in districtu Racha existentem*”: DL 87756. The introduction was carried out by a knight of the court, Lawrence Tót, which certainly shows the prestige of the grantee.

²¹²⁹ Lukinović, *Povijesni spomenici* V. 80: “*strenui et nobilis viri magistri Mathie Zaz fidelis familiaris nostri*”

²¹³⁰ DF 230834. As late as September 1430 he was still in litigation with the sons of Peter Vitéz: DL 103544.

²¹³¹ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár VI. 2370.

²¹³² ZsO. II/2. 6285; ZsO. II/2. 6889: “*castellum in dicta villa Otrochauch situm*”

²¹³³ Engel, *Archontológia* II. 13-14, 231.

²¹³⁴ *Ibidem* I. 275.

²¹³⁵ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár I. 5920.

²¹³⁶ *Ibidem* IV. 964.

²¹³⁷ Engel, *Archontológia* I. 116.

James Garázda and Frank Megyericsei.²¹³⁸ He died sometime before 1449, whereas his brother Ladislás disappeared much earlier.

After the death of John decline clearly set in. His widow, Sophie married Ambrose Petneházi, who seems to have been brought to Slavonia by governor John Hunyadi, and thus became the stepfather of young Emeric Szász, only son of the late John.²¹³⁹ Whether this marriage played any role in the subsequent long series of pledges which definitively undermined the family's social standing is impossible to tell. Already before 1460 Emeric pledged the possession of Tamasovc together with its appurtenances to a person called Valentine Magnus of Kemlékallya, but in this case he proved able to redeem his property.²¹⁴⁰ Before 1461 he also pledged his possession of Krayetin [Kretin] for two hundred florins to Anthony Kopinci, and in that year he borrowed a further sum of 60 florins in return for the same piece of property.²¹⁴¹ Later on his portions in Klokocsovszentmiklós, Oliverc and Plavnica were assigned to Peter Gudovci, and so were his possessions of Tamasovc and Krayetin „by virtue of a certain contract”.²¹⁴² In 1481 he pledged two sessions to a neighbouring nobleman, whereas in 1486 he mortgaged two entire villas for 132 florins.²¹⁴³ A year later he seems to have intended to alienate his remaining portions on Tamasovc and Krayetin to duke Lawrence Újlaki and his sister for all, but this time his son, John intervened and protested against the deal.²¹⁴⁴ The only known element in the career of Emeric is that in 1475 he was in the service of bishop Oswald of Zagreb.²¹⁴⁵

Emeric married several times, and one of his wives was called Margaret.²¹⁴⁶ They were both proscribed in 1481, Emeric for homicide.²¹⁴⁷ It is possible that either Emeric himself or his father married a member of the Matucsinaí family from the county of Baranya, for in 1479 Emeric is said to have together with Sigismund and Nicholas Matucsinaí a common castellan in the castle of Matucsina.²¹⁴⁸ Emeric drafted his last will on 21 August 1489 in the episcopal palace of Csázma, and died soon afterwards. Curiously enough, in his testament he made no mention at all of his son,

²¹³⁸ DL 43730.

²¹³⁹ DL 44768, DF 255731.

²¹⁴⁰ DF 218869.

²¹⁴¹ DF 231441.

²¹⁴² DF 218978.

²¹⁴³ DF 231783.

²¹⁴⁴ DF 231786. In another charter issued in the same year, however, he indeed pledged his possession of Tamasovc to the duke, in the name of his son and his daughters, before the chapter of Pozsega (DF 275088)

²¹⁴⁵ DF 261839.

²¹⁴⁶ The last wife of Emeric was said in his testament to have been the widow of John Zelna („*ultima coniux mea que fuit relicta quondam Johannis Zelna*”). I was unable to identify him.

²¹⁴⁷ Tringli, Szlavóniai közgyűlés 316, as “*Emericum de Zazowcz*”

²¹⁴⁸ DL 70048: „*egregii Sigismundus et Nicolaus Chir dicti de Mathuchina ac Emericus Zaz de Thamasowcz missis et destinatis Georgio de Kereskez et Sigismundo castellanis dicti castris ipsorum Mathuchina*” It seems more probable that it was John Szász who married from the Matucsinaí family. The Matucsinaí mostly possessed in the county of Baranya, but also had some land in that of Bodrog, where John Szász was *alispán*. It is worth remarking that Ladislás Petykei, who followed John Szász as *alispán* of Bodrog, also married from the Matucsinaí family. See Engel, *Archontológia I* 116., and Idem, *Középkori Magyar Genealógia, Matucsinaí (Cseményi)*.

John, but commissioned Ladislav Nyári to dispose of all his goods, and even asked him to marry one of his daughters. The latter Ladislav was then a leading *familiaris* of bishop Osvát of Zagreb, which at least explains why Emeric prepared his last will at Csázma.²¹⁴⁹ Indeed, in 1490 it was Ladislav Nyári who was required to hand out the filial quarter to the two daughters of Emeric, whose sister, Veronica, was then the wife of Emeric Megyericsei.²¹⁵⁰

Whereas Emeric Szász was still occasionally titled *egregius*,²¹⁵¹ his son, John, apparently never received the title, and almost nothing is known about his activity. He continued to hold parts of Tamasovc and Szászovc (Zazowcz, apparently called as such after the family name, today as Sasovac), together with a certain Peter Fekete of Szászovc, who was apparently not related to him.²¹⁵² This Peter was *szolgabíró* of Körös in 1516-18 and then again from 1520 to 1524.²¹⁵³ In 1503 Peter, still called of Komosovc, represented the son of John, Ladislav, and Apollonia, who was the daughter of Emeric Megyericsei and Veronica Szász, before the ban, and, although there is no proof of it, he may have acquired Szászovc by marriage thereafter.²¹⁵⁴ John was already dead at that time, and his son Ladislav also disappeared soon, for in 1507 Szászovc was already possessed by Peter Fekete and Michael Tompa, and in 1513 by Peter Fekete alone.²¹⁵⁵

2.2.45. Szencsei (de Zenche, Zempchey)

The Szencsei family was one of the most illustrious and their history perhaps the most eventful during the long centuries of their existence. No surprise, then, that it is the only Slavonian noble family which found its historian in the person of Vjekoslav Klaić.²¹⁵⁶ Albeit far from exhaustive, the long article of the great Croatian historian is still useful for the early section of the family's history; but it is in need of a profound revision as regards the period following 1400.

The family descended from *comes* Theobaldus, of German origins, who is attested as one of the leading men of the realm during the reign of king Coloman. Klaić seems to have been right in supposing that it was this Theobaldus who held the office of ban for some time, for during the 13th century even those branches of the family wrote themselves *de genere Tybold bani* who were evidently collateral relatives of the later Tibolds.²¹⁵⁷ Yet the first member of the family from whom

²¹⁴⁹ DF 275069. Ladislav Nyári “*director negotiorum reverendissimi in Christo patris et domini [...] Osvaldi episcopi ecclesie Zagrabiensis*”: DF 268047.

²¹⁵⁰ DF 255907.

²¹⁵¹ DF 231441, DF 275088, and see also the charter cited in the preceding note.

²¹⁵² DF 275023.

²¹⁵³ DF 219257, DF 219373, DF 219285, Balassa család oklevéltára 533, DF 276785, DL 101566, DF 219350. He may have held the office without a break, anyway.

²¹⁵⁴ DL 94634.

²¹⁵⁵ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 32, 62.

²¹⁵⁶ Klaić, Plemići Svetački. Very recently, a book has been consecrated to the Kasztellánfi as well, though not in the form of a proper narrative. See section on the Kasztellánfi.

²¹⁵⁷ Whereas Karácsonyi (Magyar nemzetségek 1008.) identifies with Tibold I or II the ban after whom the members of the kindred were called *de genere Thiboldi bani*, according to the more probable hypothesis of Klaić (Plemići Svetački

their descent can be reconstructed with relative certainty is count Budur who lived in the first third of the 13th century. Budur had six sons, who divided their extensive estates in 1231.²¹⁵⁸ Not counting their possessions north of the Drava, these lands spread in a wide stretch from the river Sava deep into the heart of Körös county, and were probably only comparable in size to those owned by the Tétény kindred.²¹⁵⁹

Those among the six branches descended from the sons of comes Budur which owned land in Somogy seem to have disappeared by the early 14th century, and together with them their estates north of the Drava river.²¹⁶⁰ Moreover, all members of the Szencsei family mentioned in the 14th and 15th centuries seem to have been the descendants of comes Tibold, son of Budur, although the reconstruction of their exact genealogy is still hindered by the lack of sources.²¹⁶¹ Among the grandsons of Tibold, Lőkös (Lewkus) and John, sons of John remained faithful to king Charles I in the years of disturbance and were accordingly rewarded in 1322 by the king who exempted their lands from the marten tax. Yet their cousin, John, son of Nicholas was for some reason captivated by the king and was consequently obliged to pledge some of his lands to make money after his liberation. Paul, son of Mihalc likewise confronted king Charles before 1330. In the autumn of 1327²¹⁶² we still find him together with his brother Nicholas among the followers of ban Mikcs at the siege of the castle of Sztenicsnyák, but somewhat later he turned against the king, and, shutting himself up in the castle of Szaplonca, committed „innumerable sorts of evil” to the detriment of the king’s supporters. Later he was captured and killed by a lightning in his prison. His brother, Nicholas handed over Szaplonca to the king and was accordingly pardoned together with his son and nephews.²¹⁶³

In 1343 Lőkös and Kakas divided their estates, which already boasted the castle of Fejérkő.²¹⁶⁴ Lőkös was castellan of the royal castle of Lipovec in the 1340s.²¹⁶⁵ The sons of Nicholas, son of

7.) the ban was the Tibold comes who lived in the time of king Coloman. Somewhat awkwardly, Karácsonyi does not even mention this latter Tibold, unlike Gyula Pauler, who unequivocally originates the kindred from Tibold (Theobald), ispán of Somogy in the 12th century. (Gyula Pauler, *A magyar nemzet története az Árpád-házi királyok alatt [The History of the Hungarian Nation under the Kings of the Árpád Dynasty]* (Budapest, 1899) I. 407.)

²¹⁵⁸ Karácsonyi, *Magyar nemzetségek* 1008.

²¹⁵⁹ On their lands see Klaić, *Plemići Svetački* 18-19.

²¹⁶⁰ Karácsonyi, *Magyar nemzetségek* 1011.

²¹⁶¹ The chief problem is presented by the branch of Mihalc, which belonged beyond any doubt to the Tibold kindred. Karácsonyi thought that the father of Mihalc was either Petke or Thomas, probably the former, for the name Petke seemed to him a diminutive of Peter, which was frequently used among the descendants of Mihalc. Klaić, on the other hand, referring to a charter still unknown to Karácsonyi, which enumerates the two sons of Petke, Grab and Demetrius, left unsolved the problem of „which among the six sons of Budur was the father of Mihalc”. The proposal of Karácsonyi, according to which Petke may have been the father of Mihalc seems improbable not only in view of the charter referred to by Klaić, but also because at the partition of 1231 Petke was given no portion in the estate of Szencse, whereas the descendants of Mihalc were constantly called of Szencse and did possess a part of it. The problem cannot be solved for the time being.

²¹⁶² In this year he is also attested as ispán of Gerzence: Engel, *Archontológia* I. 252.

²¹⁶³ On the history of the family in the Angevin period see Klaić, *Plemići Svetački* 12-18.; Karácsonyi: *Magyar nemzetségek* 1010-1011.

²¹⁶⁴ Klaić, *Plemići Svetački* 18-19.

Mihalc were again convicted of infidelity together with their father before 1378, although in this case the reason is unknown.²¹⁶⁶ Yet the worst was still to come during the first tumultuous years of king Sigismund's reign. Nothing is known about the family's eventual role in the political troubles which followed the death of Louis I 1382. Early in 1389, however, Sigismund ordered John, son of George and the other John, son of Tibold to join Albert Losonci, prior of Vrana and march against the rebels in Croatia.²¹⁶⁷ But less than three months later, in May 1389 a third member of the family, Tibold son of Desiderius (Dezső) was already sentenced for infidelity that he had committed by joining John Palisnai, and his possessions were donated to Ladislav Kasztellánfi.²¹⁶⁸ Moreover, in 1392 John, son of George was likewise struck by perpetual infidelity and deprived of his landed wealth for having joined the rebel prior of Vrana; so either the king was not well informed at the time of his order sent to the two Szencsei in February 1389, or John joined Sigismund's enemies afterwards.²¹⁶⁹ John son of Tibold seems this time to have remained faithful to Sigismund, but was unable to avoid the fate of his kinsmen in 1402. Nevertheless, he either had more luck or more influential patrons at court, for he managed to obtain the royal grace shortly after the suppression of the revolt, and even to regain most of his possessions which had already been granted away to the Kasztellánfi.²¹⁷⁰ In view of the possible dangers facing him he could judge himself a lucky man despite the fact that he had definitively lost the important estate of Szircs, and that the Kasztellánfi posed henceforth a constant danger by laying claim upon all the remaining Szencsei estates.

We have much less information upon the descendants of Mihalc. Paul, son of Nicholas joined already during the reign of Louis I Nicholas Garai the elder, and became first his castellan of Óvár and later his deputy-palatine. After the accession of Sigismund he followed his lord to Croatia and became his viceban there.²¹⁷¹ After 1402, however, when he is for the last time attested as a member of the court, there is no trace of either Paul himself or of his offspring if he had any. Other members of his branch did have children, for in 1378 we have what seems to be a complete list of the members of the Szencsei family then alive. Here, alongside John son of Tibold, Ladislav Kakas, Tibold son of Desiderius and John son of George, we find Adam son of John, Fabian and Emeric sons of Paul, and George, James, Peter and Nicholas sons of Stephen, who all seem to have descended from Mihalc.²¹⁷² The latter Stephen is surely identical to the Stephen son of Nicholas referred to in 1366,²¹⁷³ and his father was most probably Nicholas son of Peter.²¹⁷⁴ What is really

²¹⁶⁵ Engel, *Archontológia* I. 361.

²¹⁶⁶ Smičiklas, *Codex diplomaticus* XV. 404-405.

²¹⁶⁷ DL 7484. The letter is only known in a late copy.

²¹⁶⁸ Smičiklas, *Codex diplomaticus* XVII. 200.

²¹⁶⁹ *Ibidem* XVII. 421-423.

²¹⁷⁰ DF 230833.

²¹⁷¹ Engel, *Archontológia* II. 225.

²¹⁷² Smičiklas, *Codex diplomaticus* XV. 397.

²¹⁷³ *Ibidem* XIII. 578.

difficult to account for is that consequently the members of the Mihalc branch almost completely disappear from our sources, and when they reappear again in the middle of the 15th century, if, indeed, it is really they who reappear, it is not possible any more to establish their exact relationship to their forbears in the last third of the 14th century. Whatever the situation, it is sure that in the 1400s the descendants of Mihalc, although their involvement in the political upheaval before 1403 cannot be documented, lost their previous social position and were clearly pushed to the background by the branch of Tibold, son of Budur. The reconstruction of the exact descent of the latter, however, illustrates all the difficulties that a historian of the family, and of all contemporary non-baronial families, for that matter, is forced to confront in consequence of the nature of our sources.

Among the descendants of Tibold the first to assume a political role after the consolidation was Ladislas, son of John, son of Tibold (son of Lőkös). In 1417 he became *ispán* of Zagreb in the service of ban David Lackfi,²¹⁷⁵ and it would be logical to suppose, as did Pál Engel, that it was he who later joined one of the new pillars of king Sigismund's regime, count Hermann of Cilli and served him as his viceban of Slavonia for more than eight years. [March 1427 – August 1435].²¹⁷⁶ Yet things are a lot more complicated, as we will see below. What is sure is that this Ladislas, grandson of Tibold, joined ban Matko Tallóci in the 1430s and was appointed as his castellan of Jajce in Bosnia.²¹⁷⁷ This Ladislas Szencsei married the daughter of viceban Andrew Rohonci, called Catherine, who bore him a son, Ladislas junior, and two daughters, Barbara and Anne.²¹⁷⁸ Ladislas son of John is still alive in April 1448, and is first mentioned as dead in 1452.²¹⁷⁹

Vjekoslav Klaić supposed that Ladislas son of John had three sons, Christopher, John and Ladislas, and was thus the ancestor of all future members of the Szencsei family.²¹⁸⁰ At first glance the Croatian historian seems to be right, for a prohibition made before the chapter of Pozsega in 1443 does mention these three sons of *one* Ladislas.²¹⁸¹ A charter of 1456 likewise refers to a John son of Ladislas and a Ladislas son of the same Ladislas.²¹⁸² Yet in this latter case the terminology can be said to be at least clumsy in case John and Ladislas were indeed brothers. Other, more convincing sources plainly exclude the possibility of this brotherhood, however. In 1442 we meet together Ladislas son of John, son of Tibold of Szencse and John, son of the *late* Ladislas son of John of the

²¹⁷⁴ The absence of his other son, Paul from the list is explained by the fact that at this time he was already away from Slavonia in the service of Nicholas Garai.

²¹⁷⁵ Engel, *Archontológia* I. 259.

²¹⁷⁶ It is interesting that Klaić does not mention at all the long vicebanatus of Ladislas Szencsei at all.

²¹⁷⁷ Engel, *Archontológia* I. 332.

²¹⁷⁸ 1421: Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár VIII. 1161; 1428: Lukinović, *Povijesni Spomenici* VI. 253; 1452: DL 101749.

²¹⁷⁹ DL 101749.

²¹⁸⁰ Klaić, *Plemići Svetački* 27.

²¹⁸¹ „*Cristoforum, Johannem, Ladislaum filios Ladislai de Zenche*”. Thallóczy – Horváth, *Alsó-szlavóniai okmánytár* 173-174.

²¹⁸² DL 106834: “*egregius Johannes filius quondam Ladislai de Zenche*”, and. “*Ladislaus filius similiter eiusdem Ladislai de Zenche*”.

other Szencse [*de alia Zenche*], and Christopher is said to be the *carnalis* brother of John alone.²¹⁸³ Consequently, the father of John cannot be identical to the Ladislav son of John, son of Tibold, and John and Ladislav junior could not be brothers. The value of this charter is clearly enhanced by the fact that its source was Ladislav son of John himself, for we have good reason to suppose that he had solid knowledge about his own family. In 1448 Ladislav son of John, son of Tibold and John, son of the *late* Ladislav of the same Szencse protest together against a third party,²¹⁸⁴ which again is a strong argument on behalf of the theory that one has to count with at least two persons called Ladislav within the branch of Tibold in the first half of the 15th century. In my view the information of the charter of 1443, upon which Klaić based his reconstruction, can safely be left out of consideration, for its source, Desiderius Cserneki of Pozsega county, was hardly better informed than Ladislav Szencsei himself. The joint *fassio* made by John and Ladislav in 1456 is a more intricate problem, however, and in this case I am inclined to suppose a mistake on behalf of the scribe, who falsely put *eiusdem* alongside *similiter*, which in itself is correct, for both fathers were called Ladislav.

Yet in case Ladislav junior, John and Christopher were not brothers, there remains the question of who the father of the latter two was? Although this question cannot be answered definitively, it is highly probable that they descended from master Kakas, who, as we have seen above, divided the family estates with his brother Lőkös in 1343. Thus, the grandson of master Kakas, called John, most likely had a son called Ladislav, who then became the father of John and Christopher. This reconstruction would sufficiently account for the reference to the other Szencse, for after the division our sources speak indeed about two parts of the same Szencse, and the appurtenances are likewise regularly divided between Lower and Upper Szencse.²¹⁸⁵ Consequently, Ladislav junior and his supposed brothers, John and Christopher were in fact merely related by the fourth degree, and their divergent careers fully support this new reconstruction of their descent.

Yet by distinguishing the two surviving branches of the Tibolds we have by no means solved all the difficulties facing the historian of the family. For Klaić thought that Ladislav junior had himself a son called Ladislav, and both held the office of viceban. Thus according to him three persons called Ladislav, grandfather, father and son, would have followed each other as vicebans of Slavonia.²¹⁸⁶ But Ladislav son of Ladislav, whom Klaić imagined to have been the grandson of Ladislav son of John, in his petition prepared for the papal court in 1462 stated that twenty years before, at the age

²¹⁸³ Inquisition upon the complaint „*Ladislav filii Johannis filii Tibaldi de Zenche et Ladislav filii sui de eadem*”, „*Johannes filius quondam Ladislav filii Johannis de alia Zenche, ex commissione et voluntate Cristofori fratris sui carnalis*” commits violent trespass. DF 255717.

²¹⁸⁴ DL 74497: „*in personis Ladislav filii Johannis filii Thiboldi de Zencze et Johannis filii quondam Ladislav de eadem Zencze*”.

²¹⁸⁵ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 10, 30.

²¹⁸⁶ Klaić, Plemići Svetački, genealogical table between pages 26 and 27. In discussing genealogical problems I continue to refer to this table below, without always indicating it in an independent footnote.

of eight he had already been an orphan.²¹⁸⁷ Although the events described in Ladislav junior's petition were not altogether in keeping with reality,²¹⁸⁸ we have absolutely no reason to reckon with a „middle” Ladislav: Ladislav junior was indeed the son of Ladislav son of John.

Now it is time to return to the problem of which Ladislav was the deputy of ban Hermann of Cilli in the 1420s and 1430s. The core of the problem is that we have two Ladislavs, both the sons of a father called John, living simultaneously. Thus, in case no further clue is offered by our sources apart from the mere name of the viceban, decision is impossible. Fortunately, we have one single document, a *fassio* made before the chapter of Csázma in 1429 by viceban Ladislav Szencsei, son of John, in the name of his sons, Christopher, George and John.²¹⁸⁹ This charter makes it evident that the viceban in question was not Ladislav son of John son of Tibold, but his namesake from the other branch of the family which descended from Kakas.²¹⁹⁰ This, moreover, is a further proof of the fact that Christopher and John had no brother called Ladislav.

Unfortunately, the same problem returns again in the next generation. The career itself of a second Ladislav Szencsei can be summarised with sufficient precision. Between January 1459 and March 1464 he served as the viceban of Jan Vitovec, and presumably left his office together with his lord after the coronation of king Matthias. In March 1463 he was granted royal pardon together with another Szencsei, John, among the *familiares* of Vitovec.²¹⁹¹ In 1468, when he was excommunicated by bishop Oswald of Zagreb because of the dispute over the tithe, the noble *universitas* of the county of Körös intervened on his behalf.²¹⁹² In 1470 he returned to the office of viceban as the *familiaris* of ban Blaise Magyar. In October 1476 ban Ladislav Egervári appointed him again as one of his deputies, and, although for reasons unknown to us his place was taken during 1479 by Peter Bocskai,²¹⁹³ when Blaise Magyar briefly returned to Slavonia in 1482, Ladislav naturally reappeared at his sides as viceban. Ladislav Szencsei was listed among the representatives of the Slavonian nobility on the second place in 1474, and on the third one four years later. But who was this Ladislav?

As we have seen above, Ladislav son of John, son of Tibold did have a son called Ladislav, who was surely alive in 1432. This Ladislav died before 28 June 1489, when his widow, Lucia gave a

²¹⁸⁷ Augustinus Theiner ed., *Vetera monumenta historica Hungariam sacram illustrantia*. I-II. (Romae 1859-1860) II. 372-373.

²¹⁸⁸ He is mentioned by our sources as early as 1432 (DL 74485: “*Ladislav filii Johannis filii Thyboldi de Zenche ac alterius Ladislav filii eiusdem*”), so, if we accept his statement, the forced marriage should have taken place in 1440 at the latest. Yet, as we have seen, at that time he was surely not an orphan, for his father only died sometime after 1448.

²¹⁸⁹ DF 278723.

²¹⁹⁰ Before getting knowledge of this charter, I also identified the viceban with the other Ladislav. Tamás Pálosfalvi, „A Szencsei és Pekri családok a 15. században és a 16. század első harmadában” [The Szencsei and Pekri Families in the 15th Century and the First Part of the 16th Century], in *Turul* 86 (2010) 66.

²¹⁹¹ DF 233405.

²¹⁹² DF 252048.

²¹⁹³ Perhaps the relationship between the ban and the Szencsei deteriorated for some reason, an indication of which can be the fact that in 1480 their *castellum* at Čubin, in the county of Zagreb, was sieged *ex speciali commissione et mandato* of the ban. DF 255849.

quittance to Francis Szencsei, who had paid her dowry from the lands of her late husband.²¹⁹⁴ His wife was the daughter of Clement Tapán of Haraszt, prothonotary of the judge royal and of Slavonia, and we will later on return to the circumstances of this marriage. On the other hand, John, the son of the other Ladislás, also had a son called Ladislás, who died in the course of 1484.²¹⁹⁵ Since he was then married, he was surely of age, and, consequently, he could also be identified with the viceban. Yet, as his father, John, seems to have been still a minor in 1429, it is far less likely that he had a son capable of assuming the office of viceban in 1459, than is the supposition that it was in fact the other Ladislás, son of Ladislás, who was certainly born before 1432. It is, however, a mere conjecture that it was always the same Ladislás who took the office under the consecutive bans of Slavonia; it is, nevertheless, more probable than a supposed rotation between the two. The problem itself, although uniquely complex, is highly significant as a warning of how dependent all social reconstruction is upon the availability of the sources.

His distant relative, John son of Ladislás apparently played a far less prominent role among the Slavonian nobility than either his own father or Ladislás junior. In September 1452 he was pardoned by governor John Hunyadi for his misdeeds committed thus far, but the nature of these violent acts is unknown.²¹⁹⁶ His relationship to his brother seems initially to have been far from harmonious, for Ladislás junior occupied the estates of the wife of John prior to 1456, whereas John put his hands upon the possessions of Ladislás when he took the castle of Szombathely.²¹⁹⁷ The reasons of the conflict remain unknown to us, but later on they served together Jan Vitovec. In 1468 John was among the four delegates of the Slavonian nobility who had the right to elect the persons who would then assist and control the bishop's men in collecting the tithe.²¹⁹⁸ Somewhat later he joined the entourage of John, bishop of Pécs, and it was upon the prelate's order that, together with John Mindszenti, he occupied the portions of the proscribed Caspar Kórógyi in the estate of Darnóc. Once within the castle, however, they immediately ousted the castellan and other men of Lawrence

²¹⁹⁴ DL 74535. The exact date of the death of Ladislás Szencsei junior can be of crucial help in dating a list without indication of year, which gives the number of horsemen to be equipped by the persons who figure on the list. The list was registered in the Hungarian National Archives as issued sometime between 1490 and 1500, and András Kubinyi also dated it to „around the turn of the century” (András Kubinyi, “A Szávaszentdemeter – Nagyolaszi győzelem 1523-ban. Adatok Mohács előzményeihez” [The Victory of Szávaszentdemeter – Nagyolaszi. On the Precedents of Mohács], in Idem, Nándorfehérvártól Mohácsig. A Mátyás- és a Jagelló-kor hadtörténete (Budapest: Argumentum 2007) 125. n. 18.). Yet the list was surely drafted before 1493, when three persons on the list, Charles Korbáviai, John Frangepán and Stephen Csupor died. Now, the mention of Ladislás Szencsei makes it obvious that the list was in fact prepared before the death of king Matthias. Alongside the Croatian counts and the voivode of Hum and his brothers, the list also contains noblemen from Slavonia: not only Ladislás Szencsei and Stephen Csupor, but also Balthasar Batthyány and a Čavlović, perhaps Paul. Batthyány, who was paid for 50 horses, and Csupor, who equipped 40, were beyond doubt the richest noblemen in Slavonia at that time, and Ladislás Szencsei followed them closely with his 32 horsemen.

²¹⁹⁵ On this Ladislás see below.

²¹⁹⁶ DL 74501. In fact, Matthias Csapi, who was pardoned together with John Szencsei, had previously been a *familiaris* of Hunyadi himself.

²¹⁹⁷ DL 106834.

²¹⁹⁸ DF 252047.

Bánfi, its co-owner, and occupied the whole for themselves.²¹⁹⁹ John died before 1481. He married at least twice; his first wife, whose name is not known, died before 1456,²²⁰⁰ whereas the second, called Catherine, survived him. She was the daughter of Nicholas Velikei from the county of Pozsega, widow of Radivoy, younger brother of Stephen Tomašević, king of Bosnia.²²⁰¹

Among the sons of John Szencsei apparently George played the most outstandig role, although its details are not always clear. In March 1492 he was among the Slavonian lords who confirmed at Buda the inheritance of the Habsburgs. Still in the same year we see him as the *alispán* of Ladislav Egervári in the county of Pozsega.²²⁰² In the spring of 1494 he was, together with George Kapitánfi of Desnice, sent by the Slavonian nobility to the king.²²⁰³ After the removal of Egervári from the banate he seems to have shifted his allegiance, for in the course of that year we already find him in the service of bishop Oswald.²²⁰⁴ On 24 March 1496 at Pressburg he received from king Wladislaw II the royal right in the lands of his deceased kinsmen, Ladislav son of Ladislav and Ladislav son of John, a sure sign that he still had access to the royal favour.²²⁰⁵ Shortly afterwards he was certainly in disgrace, however, together with his brothers: Stephen and Francis, as well as with several members of the Pekri and Kasztellánfi families, and even their possessions were donated away by the king. Klaić supposed that the event was somehow connected to the revolt of ban John Corvin,²²⁰⁶ and his hypothesis seems highly probable, although Francis Szencsei is the only one (together, perhaps, with Louis Pekri) among the culprits who can be proved to have stayed in the duke's service in the critical period. Yet, in view of the fact that the Pekri and the Kasztellánfi were sentenced to loss of property in 1496 for violently disturbing tax-collection in Slavonia, the Szencsei may also have been afflicted for the same reason. Whatever the truth, the affair was important enough for the Slavonian nobility to intervene through envoys at the king.²²⁰⁷ The case of George Szencsei was particularly delicate, however, or the king's grace more difficult to obtain, for it was only after a second dispatch of Slavonian envoys that Wladislaw II ordered the prothonotary of Slavonia, Nicholas Vojkfi, to deliver the estates of George which had so far been occupied by Elias Bosnyák.²²⁰⁸

²¹⁹⁹ DL 74533.

²²⁰⁰ DL 106834. She may have belonged to the Csupor family. In 1492 not only Bernard Rohfi, but also the Szencsei (*nobiles de Zempche*) claimed to be heirs of the Csupor on the female line (Erdődy 11122: *heredes femineae sexus generacionis Chupor*). We have seen above that the mother of Bernard was indeed Katherine Csupor; it is thus possible that the first wife of John Szencsei was from the same family also. It is, however, the same possible that the connection dates back to viceban Ladislav the elder, whose consort is also unknown.

²²⁰¹ DF 255882; Csánki, *Történelmi földrajz* II. 435.

²²⁰² Klaić, *Plemići Svetački* 38.

²²⁰³ Kukuljević, *Jura regni* I. 228-229.

²²⁰⁴ DL 107104; DL 101196: castellan of Hrasztovica.

²²⁰⁵ DL 33326.

²²⁰⁶ Klaić, *Plemići Svetački* 40-41.

²²⁰⁷ Kukuljević, *Jura regni* I. 241.

²²⁰⁸ DF 268149: "*superioribus diebus universitas regnicolarum illius regni nostri Sclavonie pro parte egregii Georgii Zempchey supplicaverat ut nos bona eiusdem sibi remitti facere dignemur*"

Yet it seems that the portions of George had in the meantime been taken by his kinsmen,²²⁰⁹ and his actions were henceforth directed by his will to get them back. Sometime during 1501 he occupied the portions of Francis Beriszló in the district of Szencse together with the *castellum* there,²²¹⁰ and soon turned against his own brother, Stephen. At first he joined the revolting ban of Slavonia, Andrew Both of Bajna with the evident aim of profiting from the upheaval there, then chose a new lord in the person of another restless trouble-maker, Bartholomew, prior of Vrana.²²¹¹ His efforts did not pay off, however, and he seems to have died childless soon thereafter.

Much less is known about his two brothers, Ladislas and Stephen. Ladislas, who seems to have been the eldest among them, died between 23 June and 2 December in 1484.²²¹² His wife was called Christine from whom he perhaps had a son called Nicholas, who died sometime during 1495.²²¹³ Stephen married Ursula, the daughter of Nicholas Kasztellánfi, who bore him a son called Pangracius (Pongrác).²²¹⁴ He may have been in the service of Thomas Bakócz, for it was the archbishop of Esztergom who intervened on his behalf at the ban of Slavonia, George Kanizsai, in 1509.

The fourth brother, Francis, was born from the second wife of John Szencsei, Catherine, and was thus only half-brother of Ladislas, George and Stephen.²²¹⁵ In 1493 he is mentioned as the *familiaris* of John Kishorvát and Lawrence Bánfi,²²¹⁶ but later he entered the service of duke John Corvin and participated as his *familiaris* to the diet of Rákos in 1498.²²¹⁷ From his first wife, whose name is unknown to us, he had four sons, Nicholas, John, Michael and Christopher.²²¹⁸ For the second time he married one of the daughters of Peter Bocskai, Martha, who bore him a son called Farkas (Wolfgang).²²¹⁹ Francis died before 1510, and all of his possessions seem to have been inherited by his eldest son, Nicholas.²²²⁰ All that is known about the latter is that in 1513 it was upon the intervention of this Nicholas and Peter Keglević that viceban Balthasar Battyányi released Michael Török of Sándorfalva, arrested for violent trespass, and this is a clear indication of his

²²⁰⁹ In 1507 he is registered with a mere 15 sessions. Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 30.

²²¹⁰ DL 21084.

²²¹¹ DL 25510 (1509)

²²¹² DF 255882, 255884.

²²¹³ Although according to Klaić he had a son called Francis, the person who turns up as Franciscus Ladizlaych de Zenthmarthon in 1508 among the neighbours of Fejérkő, and to whom I will return later, was surely not his son. On the other hand, the Nicholas son of Ladislas, who had a common castellan with Stephen son of John at Szombathely in 1495 (DF 231904.), was certainly his son. Since he is not listed in the tax list of 1495, he must have died in the course of this year. As we have seen above, on 14 March 1496 the portions of both Ladislas were donated by the king to George Szencsei, it is safe to conclude that by that time none of them had surviving offspring.

²²¹⁴ Klaić, Plemići Svetački 43.

²²¹⁵ DF 255882, DL 32833.

²²¹⁶ DF 233299.

²²¹⁷ Klaić, Plemići Svetački 40.

²²¹⁸ DL 74548.

²²¹⁹ DL 94317.

²²²⁰ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 98.

influence.²²²¹ He is known to have been later a man of ban Peter Beriszló and died childless (sometime during 1520).²²²² His three brothers and their half-brother, Farkas, all survived the battle of Mohács and played an important role in the critical years thereafter. John married already before Mohács Catherine Bevenyöd, the widow of Sylvester Kapitánfi, and thus acquired portions of the estate of Desnice.²²²³ In the 1520s he is attested as a court *familiaris*.²²²⁴ As for Farkas, he had to share the estate of Szentlőrinc, which he inherited from her mother, with Ladislas Kisvárdai, from the Gutkeled kindred, who had married the daughter of Martha Bocskai called Katalin.²²²⁵

We are facing a much more intricate problem in searching for the supposed members of the Mihalc branch. Following the chronological order, at first we meet in 1442 Ladislas son of Nicholas, who is, surprisingly enough, the very *familiaris* of John, son of Ladislas.²²²⁶ In 1450 Nicholas and Stephen Szencsei are referred to as royal men.²²²⁷ In 1469 a complaint is lodged by Ladislas son of Ladislas against Ladislas son of Nicholas.²²²⁸ In 1476 Ladislas, son of the late Nicholas is the castellan of despot Vuk at Fejérkö,²²²⁹ and at the same time Ladislas, the son of a certain Stephen Horváth of Szencse occurs as castellan of Bagyanovc.²²³⁰ Then comes in 1486 Nicholas son of Ladislas (*Nicolaus Ladislawycz*), mentioned above, to be followed in 1487 by Ladislas son of Ladislas (*Ladizlaus Ladizlawich*), who turns up as a noble juror of Körös county.²²³¹ The list can be completed by the Nicholas son of Ladislas (*Nicolaus Ladizlawych*) who is recorded to have owned 2 to 9 sessions at Szencse between 1495 and 1517.²²³² In 1508 this Nicholas is attested as a royal man at the introduction of the Beriszló into the estate of Fejérkö, where Francis son of Ladislas (*Francisco Ladyzlayth de Zenthmarthon*) also appears as a neighbour.²²³³ Finally, in 1524 this same *Franciscus Ladyslawych of Zempchezenthmarthon* was castellan at Dobovc.²²³⁴

Now, it is evident that all these persons belonged to the same Szencsei family as those treated above. Yet it is the same evident that they represented a clearly inferior category within the nobility:

²²²¹ DL 101463.

²²²² Klaić, Plemići Svetački 34. He is surely wrong in supposing that this Nicholas was the son of Ladislas, son of Ladislas, and that he was identical to the „master Nicholas of Szencse and Vasmegyericse” mentioned in 1521; the latter certainly had nothing to do with the Szencsei family.

²²²³ His wife is the widow of Sylvester Kapitánfi of Desnice: DL 101531, the daughter of Nicholas Bevenyöd: Klaić, Plemići Svetački 45.

²²²⁴ Fraknói, Lajos király számadásikönyve 132.

²²²⁵ DL 94317, 101597; DF 255568.

²²²⁶ DF 255717: “*Nicolao filio Ladislai de dicta Zenche*”

²²²⁷ DF 231261.

²²²⁸ DF 255808.

²²²⁹ DL 74528.

²²³⁰ DL 17875.

²²³¹ DL 32833. Klaić identified him with viceban Ladislas, son of Ladislas, which is excluded among other things by the fact that we find no persons of viceban László’s status among the noble jurors of the late 1480s. On this problem see later on.

²²³² Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 10, 30, 98. Again, according to Klaić this Nicholas was the son of the nonexistent „middle” Ladislas and thus the brother of viceban Ladislas. In the charter referred to by the Croatian historian (DL 33495) there is no mention of this Nicholas at all.

²²³³ DL 34323.

²²³⁴ DF 277175. Klaić thought this Francis to have been the son of Ladislas, son of John.

none of them was ever accorded the *egregius* title, and the known aspects of their „public” activity also separate them from the rest of their kin. It is impossible to link them to the known members of the Tibold branch, which, of course, does not exclude that they also descended from Tibold. It is on the basis of the recurrent name Ladislavich, and the adjective „Horvát”, which turns up once, that I think that these members of the Szencsei family were the descendants of Mihalc, whose grandson, Paul, is lost from our eyes in the very first years of the 15th century as viceban of Croatia and podesta of Spalato. How and when they returned to Slavonia is a problem that cannot be solved. Only Ladislav, son of Nicholas can be shown to have possessed a tiny parcel of the estate of Szencse itself, although it is to be admitted that we have no tax registers prior to 1495. It is thus in all probability as a consequence of their poverty with regard to their distant kin that they were forced to accept posts such as the castellanship of the neighbouring fortifications.

2.2.46. Tahi (de Thah, Tah, Tahy)

The origins of John Tahi, who launched the family’s career in Slavonia are rather obscure. The village whose name he and his relatives bore lay in the medieval county of Pilis. Yet it was not one of their ancient pieces of property. The village of Tah had been donated by king Albert in 1439 to Frank Pekri and his brothers, who then adopted Stephen Botos and his brother, Peter, as their brothers and gave them the village together with an adjacent predium for certain financial services previously done to them by Stephen.²²³⁵ This Stephen was notary in the chancery already during the last years of Sigismund’s reign, and later became royal prothonotary, parallely pursuing a career in the church as well, holding canonries at Vác and Várad. He retained his leading position in the chancery under John Hunyadi and Ladislav V as well, and received as a form of reward the provostry of Dömös in the early 1450s.²²³⁶

In 1437, when he and his brother received from king Sigismund parts of the village of Félegyház in the county of Bihar, they were called of Hosszúaszó.²²³⁷ There were four villages in medieval Hungary of that name, three among them owned by noble families to which Stephen and Peter can by no means be attached. It is thus with good reason that György Bónis supposed that they were in fact inhabitants of the Hosszúaszó in the county of Bihar, owned by the bishop of Várad, and were thus non-nobles by origin. Nevertheless, thanks to the services of Stephen in the chancery, they acquired considerable possessions, mainly in the counties of Pest and Pilis, but also in that of Bihar.²²³⁸

²²³⁵ DL 13317, DL 14095.

²²³⁶ Bónis, *Jogtudó értelmiség* 51, 159-160.

²²³⁷ DL 13146, 13271. In neither of these two charters, cited by Bónis, did I find any trace of the ennoblement mentioned by the eminent legal historian.

²²³⁸ Bónis, *Jogtudó értelmiség* 151. n. 15.; Mályusz, *Magyar rendi állam* 586-589.

The descendants of Peter were at first called Botos of Tah, and later simply Tahi, which seems to have become their residence.²²³⁹ Nothing is known about the two sons of Peter, Elias and Stephen, who lived the ordinary life of the county nobility. In 1492 Stephen turns up as a designated royal man, in the company of other local noblemen, and even if the person to be cited was duke John Corvin himself, it cannot be regarded as a mark of growing prestige.²²⁴⁰ The first sign which can be interpreted in this sense is the fact that in 1505 Stephen was one of the envoys sent by the county of Pilis to the assembly of Rákos.²²⁴¹ It is totally enigmatic, however, how he got acquainted with Bartholomew Beriszló, prior of Vrana, whose sister he married.²²⁴² This ignorance of ours is a real pity, for it was surely this marriage which paved the way before the Tahi family to Slavonia. Although it may seem to be going too far without any evidence, I would not exclude the hypothesis that it was somehow connected to the career of Peter Pan of Báté, another nobleman from Pilis, whom we have seen above to have made his way to Pozsega, the native county of the Beriszló family. There are, moreover, other problems as well. In 1480 Elias Tahi had three sons called Peter, Martin and Nicholas, whereas the only son of Stephen was named Bernard at the same time.²²⁴³ John, son of Stephen is first referred to in 1505, when he was represented by his father before the chapter of Buda.²²⁴⁴ This does not mean that he was still a minor, for only two years later we already see him in Slavonia receiving a possession from his uncle, Bartholomew Beriszló.²²⁴⁵ He seems thus to have been born shortly after 1480, perhaps from another mother than Bernard. Whatever the case, in 1509 John was already governing the priory of Vrana for his uncle,²²⁴⁶ and at the time of prior Bartholomew's death in 1512 all the castles of the priory remained in his hands, and were consequently taken over by Peter Beriszló in the name of the king. In return, John received from the king those portions of the estate of Gorbonok which had been held by Bartholomew Beriszló until his death, as it seems. These were the portions of the late Stephen Gorbonoki and David Dombai, thanks to which John Tahi came to possess well over two hundred tenant sessions in the county of Körös, with a castellum at Gorbonok.²²⁴⁷ Consequently, he also put his hands on some parts of the Belosovci lands.²²⁴⁸

In the next decade we know very little about the activities of John Tahi. In April 1518 he protested personally, together with Stephen Tahi, on their way to or back from the assembly of Buda, before

²²³⁹ DL 17568, 17454, 17864.

²²⁴⁰ DL 37669.

²²⁴¹ DL 22559.

²²⁴² DF 268266: "*egregii Johannis de Thah [...] condam Bartholomei prioris ex sorore nepotis*"

²²⁴³ DL 18353.

²²⁴⁴ DL 21431.

²²⁴⁵ DF 232208: "*cuidam nobili Johanni de Thah consanguineo suo*"

²²⁴⁶ DF 232266.

²²⁴⁷ DF 219189; Somogy Megye Múltjából 14 (1983) 78/165.

²²⁴⁸ DF 277175/252-253.

the Hospitaller convent of Fehérvár,²²⁴⁹ whereas in 1519 he collected the Slavonian tax.²²⁵⁰ In 1521-1522 he was ban of Jajce together with Peter Keglević.²²⁵¹ In August 1522 he contracted an agreement with the newly appointed prior of Vrana, Matthias Baracsi, to whom he had given as much as 12000 florins to redeem the possessions of the priory from the *familiares* of the late Peter Beriszló; in return, the prior, who had adopted John Tahy as his son, mortgaged to him those possessions which were then in his hands, among them the castles of Pekrec and Csurgó and the castellum of Krassó.²²⁵² In February 1523 he was among the Slavonian noble leaders who convoked their fellow nobles for an assembly to Izdenc, another proof that he had by that time been adopted as one of their ranks.²²⁵³ A year later he was appointed, together with Francis Battyányi, as ban of Slavonia and Croatia, but, although he did occupy the castles belonging to the banatus, he was only partially recognised by the local nobility.²²⁵⁴ This refusal to accept him as ban on the part of the Slavonian nobility certainly does not make part of the present research; it should be remarked, however, that the conflict should rather be seen as part of the strife between the kin of the late archbishop Bakócz, led by Simon, bishop of Zagreb, and ban John Korbáviai on the one hand, and chancellor Szalkai, whose backing John Tahy seems indeed to have enjoyed, on the other. Whatever the case, some of the leading Slavonian nobility, such as John Kasztellánfi, and John and Nicholas Pekri, did accept Tahy as their superior.²²⁵⁵ Francis Battyányi himself, his colleague in the office, later blamed bishop Simon for the resistance against Tahy.²²⁵⁶

András Kubinyi supposed that Tahy was also member of the so-called „Kalandos” alliance, formed in the summer of 1525, the prime goal of which was the consolidation of royal authority. Yet the prior of Vrana mentioned there was certainly not Tahy, who was never titular prior, but Matthias Baracsi, already mentioned above.²²⁵⁷ He nevertheless enjoyed firm royal support, and it was even rumoured that Louis II planned a personal visit to Slavonia in order to get his ban generally recognised.²²⁵⁸ Later on, however, the king merely prompted Francis Battyányi to persuade the

²²⁴⁹ DL 23021.

²²⁵⁰ DL 38042: „dicatorem huius regni”

²²⁵¹ Thallóczy – Horváth, Jajcza CCLXXIII; DL 106083/593.

²²⁵² DL 23657. See also DF 277175/5-6.

²²⁵³ DF 252335.

²²⁵⁴ Thallóczy – Hodinka, Horvát véghelyek oklevéltára 397. (on the occupation of the castles); „*Est eciam hic fama quod regnicole Sclavonie nolunt facere dietam in Varasdino tum propterea quod civitas illa duas tantum portas haberet et nollet (!) in tali loco includi, tum quia esset hoc contra eorum libertates ut illic dietam preter solitum celebrarent; fama eciam est eos dixisse quod propterea nollent in civitate murata convenire propter Joannem Tahy quia rex ad instanciam meam vellet eos cogere in eo loco ut illum in banum susciperent*”, as the letter of chancellor Szalkai to Ferenc Battyányi states. DL 104452.

²²⁵⁵ DF 277175.

²²⁵⁶ Šišić, Acta comitialia I. 158-163.

²²⁵⁷ DL 82712: prior Aurane, identified by Kubinyi as John Tahy in “Közneemesi ülnökök” 268. Matthias Baracsi, prior of Vrana, is at Buda in August 1525: DL 106773.

²²⁵⁸ DL 104452. The chancellor, it is true, maintained that the king intended to make the journey „*nec pro se nec pro Johanne Tahy sed pro salute confinium et regnorum suorum*”.

Slavonian nobility to accept his colleague, but even his influence proved insufficient.²²⁵⁹ John Tahi was forced to resign definitively from the banal office shortly before the great Ottoman offensive in 1526.²²⁶⁰ Yet in the early spring of the same year he had managed to have his son, called Francis, appointed by Louis II as prior of Vrana, and consequently took over the administration of the immense estates and several castles of the priory in the name of his son.²²⁶¹ It guaranteed him a place of considerable influence even after the battle of Mohács, where he conducted the troops of the priory. John married Magdalena, the daughter of George Strezsemlyei from the county of Pozsega.²²⁶²

2.2.47. Tompa of Horzova

The origins of the Horzovai (Hrsovo) family are impossible to establish with absolute certainty, but there is a strong likelihood that they were equally nobles belonging to the castle of Körös.²²⁶³ The first known member of the family, John, the son of Andrew, was *szolgabíró* in the county of Körös in the years around the turn of the 14th and 15th centuries. It was as such that in February 1405 he appeared before the king at Visegrád and proved there that he had remained faithful to Sigismund in the course of the past revolts.²²⁶⁴ At the same time a certain master Nicholas, son of another John Horzovai is attested as a canon of Csázma, who had an uncle called Thomas.²²⁶⁵ Other nobles equally called Horzovai also turn up in our sources, but unfortunately it is impossible to link them to each other.²²⁶⁶

John had three sons, Matthew, James and Andrew. Matthew and James were designated as royal men in 1435,²²⁶⁷ and Matthew is referred to as *comes terrestris* of Körös in 1437.²²⁶⁸ It may have been this James, or his namesake, the son of Matthew, who, together with his kinsman Thomas, petitioned in 1454 together with Jan Vitovec and the Megyericsei brothers a possession of the chapter of Csázma from the king.²²⁶⁹ Since Frank and James Megyericsei were at that time in the service of Vitovec, we may reasonably presume this to have been the case with the Horzovai as

²²⁵⁹ Iura regni II. 273-274.

²²⁶⁰ Thallóczy – Hodinka, Horvát véghelyek oklevéltára 544.

²²⁶¹ DF 276806. Since the charter mentions the death of prior Matthias, Istvánfi is certainly wrong in stating that in the battle of Mohács John Tahi led the troops of the priory in the place of the sick prior. In fact, he may have led them instead of his own son.

²²⁶² Balassa család oklevéltára 534.

²²⁶³ In 1416, after Ladislav Cirkvenai had disappeared in the Bosnian expedition, the sons of John Horzovai were among those who tried to obtain his properties on account of his heirless death. ZSO. V. 2512. The fact that Matthew Horzovai was *comes terrestris* of Körös (see below) was points in the same direction, and so does a reference to James Horzovai as patron of the parish church of Hegen in the vicinity of Körös itself. DF 255803.

²²⁶⁴ DF 230845. See also Lukinović, Povijesni spomenici V. 31., 46, Smičiklas XVIII. 83.

²²⁶⁵ Lukinović, Povijesni spomenici V. 126/7.

²²⁶⁶ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár VI. 1031; DL 38718.

²²⁶⁷ Lukinović, Povijesni spomenici VI. 439.

²²⁶⁸ DF 218734.

²²⁶⁹ “*Jacobus egregius (!) et Thomas dicti Tumpa de Horzova*”: DL 102124.

well. In 1461 George, son of Matthew was an arbitrator in the company of Nicholas Dombai, ban of Macsó, in a case involving the castellan of Bakva and the local *provisor*.²²⁷⁰ This George, also bearing the sobriquet Tompa, must have been a man of more than elementary literacy, for in 1477 he is recorded as possessing several books, among them chronicles, medical and horticultural works.²²⁷¹ His kinsman, Thomas Tompa, was for more than two decades canon of Zagreb, and for some time also that of Esztergom.²²⁷² Another member of his kin, Paul Horzovai, who frequently turns up as a designated royal man in the second half of the 15th century, was regularly titled as master, another sign of higher education.²²⁷³

All this, of course, would not be sufficient reason for dealing with the family among the noble elite of the county. Not even the fact in itself that in 1474 James and George Tompa were listed among the representatives of the Slavonian nobility. At the congregation of 1481, however, Michael and Thomas Tompa were proscribed among the nobility of the county of Zagreb, as unjustly extorting tolls from the burghers of Zagreb at a place called *Jaxabrisda*; what this settlement can be identified with, I was unable to find out.²²⁷⁴ A year later we meet Michael Tompa as a courtier sent by king Matthias to occupy the vacant estate of Garignica.²²⁷⁵ Although nothing proves beyond doubt that he is identical with Michael Tompa of Horzova, the career of the latter points in this direction. By the early 1500 he had gathered a landed wealth amounting to some 40 inhabited tenant sessions in several different villages, and was, alone among his kin, titled *egregius*.²²⁷⁶ In 1508 he was tax collector in Slavonia, which again supports the hypothesis that he is to be identified with the courtier of 1482.²²⁷⁷ There is a strong probability that two years before he had already discharged the same duty in Slavonia.²²⁷⁸ He married Christine, the daughter of Nicholas Garázda, who in all probability belonged to the Garázda of Garazdinc family. Nicholas Garázda was a *familiaris* of Stephen Szapolyai, who first appointed him as his castellan of Zelina, and later took him to the county of Pozsega as his *alispán* there.²²⁷⁹ After the death of Michael Tompa Christine married an *egregius* nobleman of the same county, Ladislav Bencsik of Cirkvenik, who was allegedly related to

²²⁷⁰ DL 35989.

²²⁷¹ “*quampures libros tam medicinales, cronicas et ortulanos et nonnullos alios libros*”: DF 275094.

²²⁷² Tkalčić, Monumenta 249, 357, 398; DF 255811.

²²⁷³ DF 255809, DL 17193, DF 255594, DL 103789, DF 276864.

²²⁷⁴ Tkalčić, Monumenta 405-406. Since they were proscribed among the nobility of Zagreb, the place in question must evidently have lain in that county. See Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 156 and 191, however, where the Christopher Tompa seems to be identical with the son of John Tompa of Horzova.

²²⁷⁵ DL 103867.

²²⁷⁶ DF 279472, 279513. His possessions: Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 13, 28, 32; DF 232507.

²²⁷⁷ Iványi, Körmendi memorabiliák 31-32.

²²⁷⁸ Thallóczy – Horváth, Jajcza 208. 1506. “*Item Michael Thompa ad petitionem domini thesaurarii ordinavit banis prefatis circa festum beati Jacobi apostoli*”

²²⁷⁹ DL 107102 (castellan); DL 59870 (*alispán*).

the Szapolyai family, and who received from his lord, duke Lawrence Újlaki, the castle of Bakva for his lifetime.²²⁸⁰

Whatever the case, the brief career of Michael Tompa failed to have any durable influence upon the life of his kinsmen, probably because he does not seem to have had offspring. His brother (*frater*), John Tompa, was for some time in the service of David Dombai, and is also referred to as a royal man together with his kinsman, Blaise Nagy (*Magnus*) of Horzova.²²⁸¹ One of his four sons, Balthasar Tompa of Horzova, equally joined the royal court, perhaps with the backing of his uncle, but his career there involved no social rise; in 1519 he is mentioned as a special royal man sent from the court, and in the 1520s he is referred to as a notary of the smaller royal chancellery.²²⁸² The last member of the family about whom we know something is a certain Michael Benkoich of Horzova, who was likewise designated royal man, and later stood in the service of the Ernuszt family.²²⁸³

2.2.48. Tulbert of Berstyanóc (Tulbert od Brštanovca, Thulbert de Berschanowch, Berschyanocz, etc.)

The family which came to be known as Tulbert of Berstyanóc, originally counts of Prata (today Prata di Pordenone), came from the Italian province of Friaul.²²⁸⁴ The son of Biachino di Prata, Pietro Pileo, was cardinal of the Roman Church in the 14th century, and it was from his brother, Tulberto (Tulbertus) that the family which later set roots in Slavonia descended. Both his sons, Nicholas (Niccolò) and William (Guglielmino) supported king Sigismund in his struggle against Venice,²²⁸⁵ and Nicholas even fought alongside Pipo of Ozora (Filippo Scolari), commander of the Hungarian troops, in the battle of Motta in 1412. His brother, William, was sent by Sigismund as his councillor to Friuli in order to prepare his new campaign against Venice.²²⁸⁶ In 1413 he was still acting as Sigismund's missionary and envoy in Friuli.²²⁸⁷ He seems to have stayed constantly

²²⁸⁰ DF 232507: the wife of Ladislav Bencsik is Christine, *alias relicta egregii quondam Michaelis Thompa de Horzowa*; DF 277175. p. 228: "*domine Christine consortis egregii Ladislav Benczyk de Bakwa filie vero nobilis quondam Nicolai Garazda*". Laszowski, *Monumenta Habsburgica* I. 216. (received the castle of Bakva, consanguineus of John Szapolyai). It is worth remarking that the previous wife of Ladislav Bencsik was the daughter of Stephen Dersfi of Szerdahely. DF 225504.

²²⁸¹ DL 106869, 104017; DF 232028.

²²⁸² Justh család levéltára 701, DL 38060, DF 267967 (the latter reads as „*homo regius egregius Balthasar Thompa notarius cancellarie minoris regie maiestatis*”). See Bónis, *Jogtudó értelmiség* 406. n. 90.

²²⁸³ DF 277175/246.

²²⁸⁴ „*dominis Brachino (recte: Biachino) et Tulberto eius filio de Prata militibus*”: J(osef) v(on) Zahn ed., *Austro-Friulana. Sammlung von Actenstücken zur Geschichte des Conflictes Herzog Rudolfs IV von Österreich mit dem Patriarchate von Aquileja 1358-1365*. *Fontes Rerum Austriacarum. Zweite Abteilung. Diplomataria et Acta. XL. Band.* Wien 1877. 210. On the early history of the family see also Joseph Valentinelli ed., *Diplomatarium Portusnaonense*. *Fontes Rerum Austriacarum. Zweite Abteilung. Diplomataria et Acta. XXIV. Band.* Wien, 1865. passim. Engel, *Archontológia* II. 199. „*Johannes et Tulbertus comites de Pratis nunc vero de Berschanowcz*”: DL 102077.

²²⁸⁵ ZsO. III. 2123.

²²⁸⁶ ZsO. III. 2853.

²²⁸⁷ ZsO. IV. 875.

by the Hungarian ruler's side, for he is attested at Constance in 1417, at Passau in 1418, and in Kutteneberg (Bohemia) in 1420, in all cases in the entourage of Sigismund.²²⁸⁸ His brother, Nicholas, remained in his native region,²²⁸⁹ and in 1419 we again find him again in war against Venice on the side of Sigismund.²²⁹⁰ Apparently it was William who first took refuge definitively in Hungary, to be followed by his brother Nicholas in 1420, after the family castle at Prata had been occupied and destroyed by the Venetians, and they lost their ancestral lands in Friaul.²²⁹¹ They received from Sigismund the castle of Berstyanóc in the county of Körös which, however, they shared with the Latk family.²²⁹² John, son of William²²⁹³ nevertheless regarded the appurtenances of the castle as his own and alienated them at will.²²⁹⁴ John prepared his last will in 1441, and died before 1446; he had no surviving son from his marriage with a woman called Magdalena.²²⁹⁵ His cousin, Tulbert is referred to as a knight in the court of king Albert, but he is recorded in the charter to have served emperor Sigismund also.²²⁹⁶ In 1457 he was already one of the envoys sent by the Slavonian nobility to the king, a commission certainly not unrelated to the fact that his sister, Jacoma, had been married to Gaspar Kasztellánfi.²²⁹⁷ He died shortly after 1465.²²⁹⁸

The only son of Tulbert was called Nicholas. He seems to have been under age at the time of his father's death, for he was for some time under the tutelage of Ladislas Roh.²²⁹⁹ About his mother, called Barbara, we only know that after the death of her husband she married Paul Grebeni, and before 1481 she left for Germany, perhaps an indication that he had originally arrived with his husband from somewhere outside the Kingdom of Hungary.²³⁰⁰ Nicholas himself was betrothed around 1470 with Ursula, the daughter of Nicholas Kasztellánfi. Alongside the estate of Berstyanóc in the county of Körös, Miklós also owned that of Ilova in Verőce, which had been donated to the

²²⁸⁸ ZsO. VI. 1910., 2538., VII. 2090.

²²⁸⁹ ZsO. VI. 647.

²²⁹⁰ ZsO. VII. 638.

²²⁹¹ DL 101341: „*quondam comes Nicolaus pater suus et per consequens ipse (sc. Tulbertus) propter fidelitatis dicto quondam domino imperatori ac huic regno nostro Hungarie observacionem eorum terris patrimoniisque et dominiis quas et que in Fori Julii partibus optinebant per Venetos et orum gentes armigeras privati sunt et destituti.*”

²²⁹² Engel, Archontológia I. 278; DL 100502. In 1424 they are already in possession of the estate: ZsO. XI. 1342.

²²⁹³ In fact, John is not said to have been the son of William. In his own will John called Tulbertus „*fratrem meum carissimum*”, but in other contemporary documents John is referred to as the *patruelis frater* of Tulbertus (DL 101341, DL 35601). Since Tulbertus was surely the son of Nicholas („*egregii Toloberti aule nostre militis filii scilicet quondam magnifici Nicolai comitis de Prata*”, DL 101341), John was very probably the son of William.

²²⁹⁴ DL 102077.; Levéltári Közlemények (1933) 74.

²²⁹⁵ Levéltári Közlemények 7 (1929) 289-291. In his testament, his wife is called Magdalena, whereas in 1446 his widow is referred to as domina Bango (DL 103603); the two may be identical. This Bango is probably the woman of the same name who turns up in 1454 as the sister of Demetrius Tárnok of Gát, then already the wife of John Pekri (DL 103638). Demetrius, from the county of Valkó, was a knight in the royal court in the 1430s (Engel, Archontológia II. 82.), just like the cousin of John, Tulbert, so a marriage with his sister would only be logical to suppose.

²²⁹⁶ Engel, Archontológia II. 199. He made services to Sigismund “*in Almanie, Lombardie, Tuscie et Italie partibus*”, and to king Albert *in regno nostro Bohemie*. DL 101341.

²²⁹⁷ DF 268080; Maček – Jurković, Rodoslov plemića 93-94.

²²⁹⁸ Levéltári Közlemények 12 (1934) 140., 149-150.

²²⁹⁹ DL 107017.

²³⁰⁰ DF 231576; Levéltári Közlemények 13 (1935) 246.

family together with the estate of Berstyanóc.²³⁰¹ Since his sister, Catherine, married Mihály Latk of Latkovina, Miklós also tried to put his hands on the neighbouring estate of Mogor, but he proved impotent to make good his claims against Ladislav Hermanfi.²³⁰² In return, the latter Ladislav also sued him for the estate of Berstyanovc, and in 1484 Nicholas had to content his opponent with the handing over of two possessions on the appurtenances of Berstyanóc.²³⁰³

In the 1470s and 1480s Nicholas, always titled *egregius*, frequently turns up in cases of violent trespass and as a neighbour.²³⁰⁴ In the first years of the 1490s he was castellan of Bakva in the service of duke Lawrence Újlaki, the first of the two known instances of his entering someone's *familiaritas*.²³⁰⁵ In 1492 he was listed fourteenth among the representatives of the Croatian and Slavonian nobility at Buda. Around 1504 he is referred to as castellan of Berzöce, another local fortification owned by duke Lawrence Újlaki.²³⁰⁶ He died sometime after 1507.

Nicholas had no son, only three daughters from his wife whose identity is unknown.²³⁰⁷ Two of them married persons whose families had long been rooted in the county of Körös. Sophie married Nicholas Kasztellánfi, the son of viceban Acacius.²³⁰⁸ Ursula became the wife of Nicholas Kerhen, son of another former viceban, Michael Kerhen.²³⁰⁹ The third daughter, called Catherine, married a man who previously had no possessions in Körös, and was a newcomer in Slavonia as well. Francis Pető of Gerse²³¹⁰ was not the son of John, master of the janitors, but that of his cousin, Nicholas, master of the cupbearers.²³¹¹ Among his six sons, Ladislav seems to have been the first to join duke Corvin, and was appointed as his castellan of Medve and Rakonok. He was later followed by his brother, Thomas, with whom he was castellan of Lipovec in 1503. In 1507 Ladislav already possessed the estate of Béla in the county of Varasd.²³¹² We do not know when the third brother, Francis joined them, but in 1513 he was surely owning a portion of the Tulbert lands, and not only in the county of Körös, but also in that of Verőce.²³¹³ He had three sons from his wife, Blaise, Michael and Gaspar, but none of them turn up in the later tax-registers.

²³⁰¹ DL 35575: "*Johannes alias comes de Prata tunc vero dominus de Ilowa frater noster patruelis*", was how Nicholas Tulbertfi recalled his uncle, making reference to the 1440s. 1491 [DL 33454]: *Nicolao Thewrbelth de Ilowa*.

²³⁰² See the chapter on the Latkfi family.

²³⁰³ DL 101001.

²³⁰⁴ In fact, Nicholas Tulbert is one of the handful of persons to be titled *egregius* without exception; since he turns up in several dozens of charters, I decided not to give selective references here.

²³⁰⁵ DL 20035

²³⁰⁶ DF 252248.

²³⁰⁷ Although, as we have seen, he was betrothed with Ursula, daughter of Nicholas Kasztellánfi, this Ursula later turns up as the consort of Stephen Szencsei. Maček – Jurković, *Rodoslov plemića* 143.

²³⁰⁸ *Ibidem* 176.

²³⁰⁹ DF 254528; Balassa család oklevéltára 520.

²³¹⁰ DF 277175/265-266. "*Nobilis domina Katherina consors egregii Francisci Pethew de Gersse filia vero egregii quondam Nicolai Thwrbelthffy de Berschanowcz*". In 1516 both Nicholas Kerhen and Francis Pető have a castellan of their own in Berstyanóc: DL 101507.

²³¹¹ Engel, *Középkori magyar genealógia*, Nádasd nem 3. tábla Pető (gersei)

²³¹² DF 231956, Df 277043, DF 219083, DL 46413, DF 276840.

²³¹³ Adamček – Kampuš, *Popisi* 71, 97.

2.2.49. Turóci (de Thurocz, Thwroc)

The Turóci family originated from the northern county whose name they bore.²³¹⁴ Their settlement in Slavonia in the middle of the 15th century was a result of their relationship with the Cilli family. The sons of Blaise, Paul and Blaise were both members of queen Barbara's entourage in the 1410s, and returned there after the queen's court was reestablished again in the late 1420s.²³¹⁵ Presumably it was during the service of the queen that they acquired the estate of Kóka in the county of Pest, after which they were sometimes called later.²³¹⁶

The real founder of the family's wealth and power was Benedict Turóci, one of the sons of Paul.²³¹⁷ It was obviously thanks to the role that his father and uncle played in the court of Barbara that he joined the queen's nephew, count Ulrich of Cilli. He soon became one of the leading *familiares* of the count, and in April 1441 king Wladislaw engaged himself to hand over the letters of obligation concerning the captivity of Ulrich either to the count himself or in his name to his *familiaris* Benedict Turóci.²³¹⁸ He began to accumulate landed wealth immediately after his arrival to Slavonia. Already before 1444 he occupied portions of Komor in the county of Varasd, which had previously been held by Johann Meusenreiter, chancellor of the counts of Cilli.²³¹⁹ Sometime after 1446 he received from his lord the castle of Belec in the Zagorje district.²³²⁰

After the counts of Cilli had taken over the power in Slavonia, he was appointed as one of their vicebans and *ispáns* of Körös. Before his appointment he was present at the assembly of Buda held in September 1447 as one of the group listed between the barons and the county envoys.²³²¹ Although he soon had to cede his position as viceban of Slavonia to his more powerful neighbour, Jan Vitovec, mercenary captain of the counts of Cilli, he was recompensed in the county of Varasd of which he was *alispán* for several years.²³²² He married Anna, the daughter of Andrew Rohonci, previously also viceban of Slavonia, and thus acquired the important estate of Ludbreg in the county of Körös.²³²³ In December 1451 he received from bishop Benedict of Zagreb the episcopal villa of

²³¹⁴ Engel, *Középkori magyar genealógia*, Turóci (ludbregi)

²³¹⁵ Engel, *Archontológia II.* 248., with all their successive offices listed there.

²³¹⁶ Kóka as the queen's estate: Tringli, *Pest megye* 86.

²³¹⁷ For a brief summary of his career see Mályusz, *Magyar rendi állam* 535.

²³¹⁸ DF 287163: "*prefato comiti Ulricho aut eius nomine egregio Benedicto de Thwroc familiari suo*".

²³¹⁹ DF 288125.

²³²⁰ Engel, *Archontológia I.* 276.

²³²¹ Mályusz, *Magyar rendi állam* 535.

²³²² Engel, *Archontológia I.* 225.

²³²³ Engel, *Archontológia I.* 363. In fact, the charter referred to by Engel does not prove that the estate was already in the hands of Benedict; it merely attests that he acquired portions of it by right of pledge. DF 261475. On his wife and the acquisition of Ludbreg see DL 101814. It was George son of John Ludbregi who *certo juris titulo obligaverat* the estate to Benedict and his wife. DL 101755.

Biskupci, near the castle of Zelnávár, upon the condition of serving the prelate and his successors with four horsemen.²³²⁴

After his lord, count Ulrich of Cilli had recovered his leading position in the court of young Ladislas V, Benedict also joined the royal entourage.²³²⁵ Even after the assassination of count Ulrich at Belgrade in November 1456, he was left in his office of *alispán* in Varasd, remained a member of the court,²³²⁶ and was finally appointed as treasurer sometime during 1457.²³²⁷ Despite his obvious attachment to count Ulrich not even the death of king Ladislas in November 1457 and the consequent accession of Matthias Hunyadi to the Hungarian throne proved fatal to his career. In January 1458 he was present among the followers of palatine Ladislas Garai at the meeting of Szeged, where the conditions of the election of Matthias as king of Hungary were put down by Garai and Michael Szilágyi.²³²⁸ He managed to remain on good terms with the new ban of Slavonia, Jan Vitovec, but persevered on king Matthias' side even after Vitovec had gone over to emperor Frederick in 1459.

In the spring of 1459 he journeyed to Rome for unknown reasons,²³²⁹ and upon his return he became an increasingly influential member of king Matthias' court. Already in February 1460 we find him at Buda,²³³⁰ and he subsequently followed the king on his campaign to the north-east.²³³¹ In the very beginning of 1461 he was sent from Trencsén together with the bishop of Veszprém, Ladislas Pálóci, John Rozgonyi and Emeric Hédervári, that is, three of the major officeholders of the realm, to king George of Bohemia in order to bring the matter of Matthias' marriage with the daughter of the Czech king to completion.²³³² At the end of the same month he was again the only one without any office among those barons who guaranteed king George that Matthias would keep his promises concerning the new queen's dower.²³³³ Later during the year we see him at Buda again,²³³⁴ and in the autumn he was in the royal campaign that Matthias led against Jan Jiskra.²³³⁵ After his return he was appointed as count of the chamber of Körmöc, and as such titled *magnificus* for the first time. At the same time his brother, Ladislas became castellan of the royal castle of Becse (Torontál county).²³³⁶

²³²⁴ DF 252402.

²³²⁵ Relator of a royal charter at Buda on 17 March 1456 – DL 38855.

²³²⁶ DL 15130.

²³²⁷ Soós, Kincstartók 39.

²³²⁸ Teleki, Hunyadiak kora X. 569.

²³²⁹ DF 288158.

²³³⁰ DL 73414.

²³³¹ DF 270354, 270357.

²³³² DF 240457.

²³³³ Teleki, Hunyadiak kora XI. 7.

²³³⁴ DL 15586.

²³³⁵ DL 15649.

²³³⁶ DF 209320.

In 1462 Benedict was appointed as master of the janitors,²³³⁷ the most illustrious among the court dignitaries. In the autumn of 1462 he accompanied his king to Transylvania,²³³⁸ and seems to have spent the whole next year by his side in the southern marches of the realm.²³³⁹ He was also present in the expedition against Jajce.²³⁴⁰ His position in the court is perfectly illustrated by the fact that in the conflict which opposed him to Jan Vitovec and his sons because of the estate of Ludbreg the royal council, among the members of which we find two prelates and three barons, decided in his favour in the king's presence on the way back from Bosnia.²³⁴¹ After the coronation king Matthias confirmed Benedict again in the possession of the estate of Ludbreg and its appurtenances, with the stipulation that in the case of his or his son's heirless death the estate would devolve upon his brother Ladislav or his uncle Blaise and their offspring.²³⁴² In the autumn of 1465 he was again on campaign with king Matthias,²³⁴³ but seems to have died soon thereafter for he completely disappears from the sources.

The only surviving son of Benedict, George Turóci, is quite an obscure figure, especially in view of his long tenure of a baronial office. The latter is difficult to reconstruct due to the lack of an archontology covering the period. According to the evidence of the lists of officeholders listed in the royal privileges, he became master of the cupbearers nine years after the death of his father, in 1474.²³⁴⁴ Yet already three years before he issued a charter as „*dapifer et pincernarius*”, when he was sent by the king to carry out an arbitration.²³⁴⁵ It is almost certain, however, that this title cannot be interpreted as “master of the table and of the cupbearers”; we are rather dealing with a court office of an inferior rank. It seems to have been him who in 1476 was a member of the embassy sent by king Matthias to Italy for his bride.²³⁴⁶ Late in 1479 he seems to have lost the mastership of the cupbearers, but by February 1481 at the latest he had recovered the office.²³⁴⁷ Another break in his officeholding, in the course of 1486-1487, may not be other than an illusion created by the royal charters.²³⁴⁸ What is certain, however, is that he continued to hold the office

²³³⁷ DL 86392 (3 July 1462)

²³³⁸ Samu Barabás ed., *A római szent birodalmi gróf széki Teleki család oklevéltára II. 1438-1526* (Budapest: Athenaeum, 1895) 76-77.

²³³⁹ *Ibidem* 81.; DF 233341.

²³⁴⁰ *Frangepán család oklevéltára II.* 56-60.

²³⁴¹ DL 101814.

²³⁴² DF 231494; DL 101755.

²³⁴³ *Zichy család okmánytára X.* 348-349.

²³⁴⁴ DF 266099.

²³⁴⁵ DL 62091.

²³⁴⁶ Albert Berzeviczy ed., *Aragoniai Beatrix magyar királyné életére vonatkozó okiratok* (Budapest: MTA, 1914) 28. If the Twroczy listed among the *aulici* is indeed our George, he travelled with five horsemen.

²³⁴⁷ These pieces of information come from the archontology of the late medieval Kingdom of Hungary that is currently being prepared at the Institute of History of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

²³⁴⁸ Fügedi, *Mobilitás* 122.

even after the accession of Wladislaw II and right until his death,²³⁴⁹ although, interestingly enough, he did not always use his title himself, nor was it given to him without exception.²³⁵⁰ His long baronial career cannot be automatically regarded as proof of a confidential situation at court, especially if we consider that by this time the court dignities, with the exception of the mastership of the janitors, had lost their significance. In this respect it is worth examining the case of George Turóci parallel with that of William Vitovec. The son of another Slavonian baron, ban Jan Vitovec, William held the mastership of the table for almost a decade at the same time when Turóci was master of the cupbearers, yet, with one single exception, none of them can be shown to have been active in the royal council.²³⁵¹ It is highly characteristic that both before and after his office-holding we find George Turóci among the representatives of the Slavonian nobility, which means that despite the baronial status of his father and his own he remained firmly rooted in the wealthy nobility of his native land. Besides the fact that he was not always titled *magnificus* despite his baronial office, his marriage with Christine Csornai, who belonged to the non-baronial branch of the Osli kindred, also points in this direction.²³⁵² Nor did his second wife, Catherine Zalai, belong to a baronial family. Sometime before 1482 he took into pledge the castle of Szigliget (Zala county) from the Újlaki family, which, however, he was obliged to return to duke Lawrence upon royal orders in that year.²³⁵³ He also put his hands upon certain possessions in the county of Baranya in return for the 6000 florins that duke Corvin owed to him.²³⁵⁴

He prepared his last will in April 1492 at Buda. He bequeathed all his hereditary possessions, to his cousins, Bernard and Andrew, who were the sons of his brother, Ladislas; nevertheless, his wife, Catherine was allowed to retain the castle of Ludbreg and its appurtenances until she was remarried.²³⁵⁵ Bernard and Andrew did in fact inherit the possessions of their late cousin, whereas those which George acquired with his consecutive marriages were lost to them. Whereas we know nothing about the life of Andrew, Bernard rose to become one of the most esteemed members of the Slavonian nobility.

²³⁴⁹ He figures without any title among the barons who concluded the treaty with John Corvin on 17 July 1490. On 26 January 1492 he is *relator* of a royal charter as *magister pincernarum*. DF 248044. On 2 February 1492 he is listed among the court dignitaries. DL 39325.

²³⁵⁰ DL 101125, his own letter from 28 April 1491. Nor is he called *magister pincernarum* and titled simply *egregius* by the convent of Csorna in February 1477 (Imre Nagy ed., Sopron vármegye története. Oklevéltár II. 1412-1653 (Sopron, 1891) 513.) and by palatine Michael Ország in July 1482 (Ibidem 538.). In March 1482 the king himself titles him *egregius* (DF 233310.), although a month later George calls himself in his own letter *pincernarum magister* (DL 100969.), and so does the chapter of Csázma in June 1482 (DL 101137.). On the other hand, the *magnificus* title is sometimes given to him without indicating his office, such as in 1477 (DL 45698.), or in two letters by Peter Gudovci in 1488 (DF 256912, 255848)

²³⁵¹ Kubinyi, *Bárók a királyi tanácsban* 208.

²³⁵² As we have seen above, Christine's aunt was married by Ladislas Bocskai.

²³⁵³ DF 233310.

²³⁵⁴ DL 29327. In fact, this debt had been accumulated by Matthias, and inherited by his son.

²³⁵⁵ DL 32399.

As far as we know, he started his career as castellan of Medve in the service of duke John Corvin.²³⁵⁶ Late in 1493 he temporarily left the duke, however, and became one of the Slavonian vicebans of Ladislás Kanizsai.²³⁵⁷ Yet he did not leave his office together with his lord, but rejoined Corvin and remained his deputy in Slavonia in the company of John Gyulai. At the turn of 1495/1496 he for some reason ceded his place to Stephen Bradács, and in December 1496 he was one of the envoys of the Slavonian nobility at king Wladislaw II.²³⁵⁸ In January 1499, and again a year later he was sent by his Slavonian fellow nobles to negotiate with the ruler in matters of importance.²³⁵⁹ At the same time he also acted as an elected arbitrator in a case between John Ernuszt and the chapter of Csázma, again a sign of local respect.²³⁶⁰ Sometime during the summer of 1502 he returned as Slavonian viceban in the service of duke John, and remained in the office until the death of his lord. Indeed, upon the death of Corvin he prevented the Slavonian nobility from recognising the new bans appointed by the king, apparently upon the initiative of the late duke's widow, Beatrice Frangepán.²³⁶¹ In the same year, however, he was again among the envoys of the Slavonian nobility upon whose request the king transcribed the decrees of the assembly of Rákos.²³⁶² Consequently he seems to have withdrawn himself into the county of Varasd, as *alispán* of which he emerges in 1506, and remained in this office probably until his death, in the service of György of Brandenburg.²³⁶³ He died before 1517, when his widow is mentioned.²³⁶⁴

Bernard Turóci married Helen Székely of Kövend, sister of James Székely. His son, John, followed in the footsteps of his father as *alispán* of Varasd, and survived Mohács. Bernard also had a daughter called Catherine. The only surviving child of Andrew, the brother of Bernard, seems to have been Anne, who married Ladislás Ostfi of Asszonyfalva. He was the brother of Francis Ostfi, who, as mentioned above, married from the Vitéz of Kamarca family. It is impossible to tell what lay behind this double marriage of the Ostfi brothers, mainly based in the northwestern regions of Hungary, in the county of Körös. Bernard and Andrew also had a sister who was married by an Austrian nobleman, Veit von Puchheim.

²³⁵⁶ Tkalčić, Monumenta II. 486.

²³⁵⁷ In view of his preceding and consequent career, the hypothesis can be risked that even as a viceban appointed by Kanizsai he continued to defend the interests of duke Corvin.

²³⁵⁸ Jura regni, 234.

²³⁵⁹ Jura regni, 241.; DF 268156.

²³⁶⁰ DF 282462.

²³⁶¹ Georgius Pray, Epistolae procerum regni Hungariae. Pars I. Posonii MDCCCXVI. 51-53.

²³⁶² Jura regni, 255.

²³⁶³ Levéltári Közlemények 3 (1925) 162-163 (1506); DF 232453 (1516)

²³⁶⁴ DL 33075 (1517) "Anthonius Kolar de Belec jobagio domine Elene relicte quondam Bernardi de Thwroc"

2.2.50. Vojkfi/Garázda (Voykfy, de Woykowcz/Garazda de Kerezthwr, Garazdyncz)

The Vojk kindred allegedly received the land between the rivers Tapolca and Peker from Saint Stephen with the purpose of populating it;²³⁶⁵ it was in all probability with reference to this charter that Bónis described master Nicholas Vojkfi as having descended from one of the oldest kindreds of Slavonia.²³⁶⁶ Karácsonyi maintained that they were of “Southern Slav” origins, apparently basing his hypothesis upon the name of the kindred, although he did not list them among the “Slavonian” kindreds.²³⁶⁷ It should be remarked that the persons enumerated in the earliest charter which refer to them bear no Slavic-sounding names at all, and their estate was from the outset known by the Hungarian name Szentkereszt/Keresztúr.²³⁶⁸ What is beyond doubt is that the lands of the kindred lay in the immediate vicinity of those of the Tétény kindred and of the future estate of Kristallóc, and must have been of quite considerable extent originally, as can be judged from the fact that they were shared by a great number of families in the later middle ages. In any way, the reference to Saint Stephen may mean that they were originally *várjobbágyok*, as at least part of the people who possessed the neighbouring estate of Tapolca/Kristallóc, but the possibility that they were newcomers like the Tétény cannot be excluded either.

However, the problem of which families belonged to the kindred, or, rather, which shared the lands originally belonging to it, is difficult to solve. Csánki enumerated half a dozen such families, most of which, like the Dur of Durovc and the Bojnik of Bojnikovc, belonged to the petty nobility in the 15th and 16th centuries, and played no role outside their immediate vicinity.²³⁶⁹ The case is different with the Garázda, who shared the lands of the Vojk kindred without any doubt, but who present nevertheless serious problems. The whole estate seems to have been organised around the church of the Holy Cross,²³⁷⁰ clearly connected to the kindred after which it was named.²³⁷¹ Yet it was also known as Garazdinckeresztúr, which induced Csánki and Engel, with reason as it seems, to count the Garázda as well as having descended from the Vojk kindred. Pál Engel distinguished at least two Garázda families, one which he regarded as belonging to the Vojk kindred, and another represented by James Garázda.²³⁷² In fact, the latter, the son of Blaise Csernarekai, belonged in all probability to the same kindred in view of the fact that the estate of Csernareka also bordered upon Kristallóc.²³⁷³ That the Garázda of Istvándi, in the county of Somogy, originally also came from

²³⁶⁵ Wenzel, Árpádkori Új Okmánytár VI. 457-460.

²³⁶⁶ Bónis, Jogtudó értelmiség 372.

²³⁶⁷ Karácsonyi, Magyar nemzetségek 1051.

²³⁶⁸ It is worth comparing with the neighbouring Kristallóc, which, as we have seen above, was originally called Toplica, and was later rebaptised after comes Cristol in the equally Slavic form of Kristalovc.

²³⁶⁹ Csánki, Körösmegye 47.

²³⁷⁰ DL 101952 (1404): “*Woykowcz ad Sanctam Crucem spectantis*”; DL 15200 (1457): “*ad [...] ecclesiam parochialem Woykkerezthwr vocatam pertinentes*”

²³⁷¹ Voykoczkeresztúr (DL 100761, 1466), Woykkerezthwr (DF 268149, 1499).

²³⁷² Engel, Archontológia II. 81-82.

²³⁷³ DL 106942.

Körös is proved by the fact that as late as 1453 Blaise Garázda of Istvándi still owned portions of Garazdinc.²³⁷⁴ The exact descent of the different members of the kindred is difficult to establish, however. The first to be called Garázda was Peter, son of Endre, who first appears in 1358 with his five brothers as belonging to the Vojk kindred.²³⁷⁵ That the Peter Garázda who is referred to as a royal man in 1363 precisely in connection with Kristallóc is identical to the Peter mentioned five years before is made evident by the names of his father and brother.²³⁷⁶ In 1385 Andrew, provost of Hánta, Stephen, Ladislás, Lökös (Lewkus), John, Thomas, Peter, Denis, Emeric, Nicholas and another Ladislás „nobiles dicti Garazda” appear together with the Pekri kindred as patrons of the church of Holy Cross at Mecsenicemelléki (Medchenichamelleky).²³⁷⁷ Another Garázda, namely Nicholas, provost of Csanád in the late 14th century, should also be linked to the Garázda of Keresztúr.²³⁷⁸ The two provostships, as well as the common appearance together with the Pekri suggest that already by the last third of the 14th century the Garázda were above the level of the petty nobility; indeed, it may have been a marriage alliance between the Garázda branch of the Vojk kindred and the neighbouring Pekri that allowed for the Garázda the social rise which removed some of them at least definitively from Slavonia. It is very probable that the Denis Garázda of Mecsenice (Mechyncze), who received in 1409 a common coat of arms with his kinsman, Nicholas Garázda of Mecsenice,²³⁷⁹ and Ladislás Szilágyi,²³⁸⁰ and was *alispán* of Somogy in 1408-1410,²³⁸¹ was the son of master Peter Garázda, son of Endre; he received together with his brother Peter lands in the counties of Zala and Tolna, among them parts of Apar, by which his descendants were sometimes called.²³⁸² Miklós Garázda himself may be identical to the Nicholas who appears in 1385; he joined János Maróti, served him first as *alispán* of Tolna, then, as mentioned above, became castellan of Szrebernik. In 1419 he was confirmed in the possession of Lak (c. of Tolna), and in 1427 he received as a special court *familiaris* a minor royal donation in the the same

²³⁷⁴ DL 106832.

²³⁷⁵ DF 283655: “*Andak filius Endre nobilis de genere Woyk*”, his brothers are called Peter, Stephen, John, Nicholas and Bako (Bakow).

²³⁷⁶ DL 33610. See Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus XIII. 322. where his father is wrongly rendered as Side.

²³⁷⁷ DL 66544.

²³⁷⁸ The village of Fenék (c. Somogy), which is mentioned in the possession of Paul Garázda in 1457 seems to be identical to the Fenék from the acquisition of which provost Nicholas Garázda is prohibited in 1371, even if in this latter case the village is said to lay in the county of Baranya. DL 87458, DL 15200.

²³⁷⁹ Mecsenice seems originally to have been of quite considerable extent, called a districtus as late as 1470 (DF 255815). Part of it was surely owned by the Berivojszentiváni family (Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár X. 871, DL 100882), which, as we have seen, was certainly of várjobbágy origins. Moreover, the village of Podlusja (Podlwsya), which is mentioned as owned by Stephen Garázda in 1457, also turns up in the possession of the Berivojszentiváni family (DL 15200, DL 100896, see DF 279513 also). Together with Csernareka, Mecsenice also figures among the appurtenances of Kristallóc in 1471, but this is surely a later development (DL 100807).

²³⁸⁰ Barabás, Teleki család oklevéltára I. 345-349.

²³⁸¹ Engel, Archontológia II. 81.

²³⁸² Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár I. 5301.

county.²³⁸³ He was then called of Horogszeg, in the county of Temes, which he likewise received from Sigismund together with Ladislás Szilágyi.²³⁸⁴ In 1443 one of his two sons called Blaise was still owning parts of Horogszeg.²³⁸⁵ This Balázs, or his brother and namesake, was part of the king's entourage in Italy in 1433 as a "noble baron and knight", and later became *alispán* of Temes in the service of the Marcali brothers.²³⁸⁶ He was called of Lak and Istvándi alternatively, and in the latter village he erected a *castellum*.²³⁸⁷ All of these members of the Garázda family seem to have left Slavonia for good,²³⁸⁸ although Blaise still owned parts of Garazdinc in 1446, and in 1454 his own son, equally called Blaise, quarrelled with John Nábrádi, that is, around Kristallóc.²³⁸⁹ George Garázda, who appears as *alispán* of Somogy and *ispán* of Körös in the service of the same Marcali family,²³⁹⁰ may have been the son or brother of Denis; that he belonged to the same family is clearly proved by the fact of his being called of Istvándi.

It is conspicuous that all the other persons who turn up as belonging to the Vojk kindred (*de genere Woyk*), are more numerous and of a markedly more inferior social rank than the Garázda seem to have been. They merely appear as designated royal men or lawyers, none of them a mark of esteem.²³⁹¹ Yet one of them is especially interesting for us, namely the Paul son of Ivan of the Vojk kindred who appears in 1378, for he is surely identical with the Paul son of Ivan of Mecsence (Medsenicha) who acts as a royal man three years earlier.²³⁹² In 1358, a certain Nicholas son of Benedict of Mecsence (Mechchenche) turns up together with the sons of Endre. These pieces of information, together with the fact that the Garázda were occasionally called of Mecsence, helps to attach Mathusel Mecsencei, son of Adam, who was one of the vicebans of Paul Csupor,²³⁹³ to the Vojk kindred. Indeed, his father can surely be identified with the master Adam *litteratus* who was *szolgabíró* of Körös in the 1370s, and in 1371 even emerges as the deputy of Ugrin, *ispán* of Körös, and notary of the county.²³⁹⁴

²³⁸³ 1419: Hazai Okmánytár IV. 277. It is worth remarking that the possession of Lak was then said to have been held already by the ancestors of Nicholas as well. 1427: DF 209255.

²³⁸⁴ Csánki, Történelmi földrajz II. 89.

²³⁸⁵ DL 59275.

²³⁸⁶ Pál Lukcsics ed., *XV. századi pápák oklevelei* [Papal Charters from the 15th Century]. I-II. Budapest 1931-1938. II. 200.; Engel, Archontológia II. 81.

²³⁸⁷ DL 106832.

²³⁸⁸ All of them are called by their new possessions in the counties of Zala, Somogy and Tolna, and never by their ancient possessions in Körös. The known marriages of the kindred also seem to prove that their social network shifted definitively away from Slavonia (See DF 233104, DF 209273, DF 209285)

²³⁸⁹ DL 100643.

²³⁹⁰ Engel: Archontológia I. 177. (*alispán* of Somogy); ZsO. VII. 70. (*ispán* of Körös); *ibidem* 1354. (in Italy).

²³⁹¹ DL 100151., DL 103343., Levéltári Közlemények 9 (1931) 288., 289., DL 100258., Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár XI. 165.

²³⁹² Smičiklas, Codex diplomaticus XV. 166.

²³⁹³ Engel, Archontológia I. 20.

²³⁹⁴ Engel: Archontológia I. 254. DL 103342 (1376): „*nobilem virum magistrum Adam litteratum notarium et unum ex nobis iudicibus nobilium*”

We are in an even more difficult situation with regard to those families which remained in the county of Körös in the late middle ages; we should begin with the persons called Garázda. As stated above, those members of the kindred who relocated themselves outside Slavonia continued to hold portions of the kindred's estates there, whereas others apparently continued to reside in Körös. First of all, the Paul, son of Stephen of Keresztúr,²³⁹⁵ who in 1466 pledged five tenant sessions on the appurtenances of Kristallóc and was then called of Vojkovckeresztúr.²³⁹⁶ He turns up as royal man and as a neighbour with regard to Kristallóc, and we know that his daughter, Dorothy, was married first to John Vidfi of Korbova, and then to Francis Pekri.²³⁹⁷ At the same time we meet Matthew (Matheus) and John Garázda of Garazdinc, both apparently in the service of the Fáncs of Gordova family.²³⁹⁸ This Matthew was equally called of Csázmafő (Chasmafew),²³⁹⁹ for he was the son of Emeric Garázda, presumably a brother of Nicholas, and of the daughter of Denis of Csázmafő.²⁴⁰⁰ John was apparently his son, who also turns up as royal man in 1470.²⁴⁰¹ In 1495 the possession of Garazdinc, with more than 30 inhabited tenant sessions, was shared by Nicholas and Ladislav Garázda;²⁴⁰² the first, as we have seen above, was castellan of Zelina and later *alispán* of Pozsega, whereas the latter merely appears as royal man.²⁴⁰³ It is not known what the relationship between them and Michael Garázda of Garazdinc was, who appears in 1507 with a mere 3 sessions at Garazdinc, Ladislav having but one.²⁴⁰⁴ This Michael surely belonged to the same Garázda family,²⁴⁰⁵ and spent as many as ten years, in two terms, as *szolgabíró* of the county of Körös.²⁴⁰⁶ In 1525 Emeric Garázda is attested as owning parts of Garazdinc.²⁴⁰⁷

The Csernarekai family, which seems to have descended from the Blaise whose son, Philip, was sentenced for infidelity in 1394, also continued to play some role in Körös in the 15th century. The son of Philip, James Garázda, made a career in the service of Pipo Ozorai,²⁴⁰⁸ and may even have constructed a *castellum* at Csernareka.²⁴⁰⁹ He married from the county of Tolna, and was equally

²³⁹⁵ DL 15200.

²³⁹⁶ DL 100761.

²³⁹⁷ DL 15200., DL 34333., DF 277175/153-156.

²³⁹⁸ DF 255767, DF 255594.

²³⁹⁹ Levéltári Közlemények 3 (1925) 107 (1449): Among the neighbours of Csázmafő: *Mathia Garazda de dicta Chasmafew*.

²⁴⁰⁰ Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár IV. 71.

²⁴⁰¹ DL 107005.

²⁴⁰² Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 11.

²⁴⁰³ DF 261977.

²⁴⁰⁴ Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 31.

²⁴⁰⁵ The village of Farkasovc, where he was listed with seven sessions in 1507 (Ibidem 29) was stated by Dorothy Garázda to be her hereditary land in 1523 (DL 34333).

²⁴⁰⁶ DL 107125 (1500), DL 101393 (1504), DL 46830 (1507), DF 279477 (1512).

²⁴⁰⁷ DF 233306.

²⁴⁰⁸ Engel, *Archontológia* II 81-82.

²⁴⁰⁹ DL 106788 (1454): "*Emerico Mraaz, castellano Jacobi Garazda de Chernareka*".

called Móri after the estate he had thus acquired.²⁴¹⁰ It is impossible to tell whether the Gaspar Csernarekai who turns up in the 1470s was his son, and whether Peter Csernarekai who is mentioned once as a neighbour, and appears as royal man and a notary of the court in the 1490s was his brother or other relative.²⁴¹¹ What is sure is that this Gaspar, once called as Bedegey, was regularly titled *egregius*,²⁴¹² and was proscribed in 1481 as a *familiaris* of archbishop János Vitéz.²⁴¹³ His wife had portions together with that of Valentine Pálfi in some villages in the county of Verőce.²⁴¹⁴ In 1522 we hear of Matthias Csernarekai and his son Ladislas, but, unlike Gaspar, they remain no more than simple names for us.²⁴¹⁵

This is not the case with master Nicholas Vojkfi of Vojkovec,²⁴¹⁶ who certainly belonged to the Vojk kindred.²⁴¹⁷ He was the son of Sandrin, son of Nicholas; it is in itself indicative that we know nothing about his father, who cannot be linked to the several persons who turn up as belonging to the Vojk kindred until the 1420s.²⁴¹⁸ Master Nicholas himself was a notary in the royal chancellery in the late 1480s, and it was as such that he received from king Matthias in 1489 the royal right in the estate and *castellum* of Mogor, then in the possession of Ladislas Hermanfi.²⁴¹⁹ Although the latter contradicted to the introduction, the scale of the donation itself, unusual for a simple notary, suggests that master Nicholas had influential patrons in the court. Hermanfi in his testament allotted some villages that he had bought from other members of the Vojk kindred to master Nicholas, and Balthasar Battyányi complied with the last will of his stepfather.²⁴²⁰ After 1491 he disappears from sight for some years, but his authority continued to grow, for when he emerges again in 1495 he is already one of the arbitrators between George Kasztellánfi and Francis Beriszló.²⁴²¹ Moreover, in the next years he was one of the Slavonian envoys (together with Bernard Turóci and George Kapitánfi), sent to king Wladislaw II in the matter of the Slavonian coat-of-arms.²⁴²² Sometime before September 1498 he was elected as Slavonian deputy-prothonotary, and a few months later he

²⁴¹⁰ Ferenc Szakály, *Ami Tolna vármegye középkori okleveleiből megmaradt 1314-1525* [The Remaining Medieval Charters of the Authorities of Tolna County], Szekszárd 1998. 135. He also turns up as Szentkirályi, the reason for which seems to be that the parish church at Csernareka was dedicated to Saint Stephen. DL 104040.

²⁴¹¹ DL 33453 (together with Gaspar); Bónis, *Jogtudó értelmiség* 400.

²⁴¹² DL 103823., 33454., 106865.

²⁴¹³ Tringli, *Szlavóniai közgyűlés* 316.

²⁴¹⁴ Adamček – Kampuš, *Popisi* 71.

²⁴¹⁵ DF 255589.

²⁴¹⁶ His career was briefly summarised by Bónis, *Jogtudó* 372-373.

²⁴¹⁷ DL 101124, where Peter Bajnok and John Dur, as well as master Nicholas Vojkfi are referred to as „fratres avitici”. In 1430 John Dur is expressly mentioned as of the Vojk kindred (Johannes Dur de genere Woyk de Kerezthur, DL 100473.)

²⁴¹⁸ One possible exception is the Nicholas whose son, Bartholomew turns up as a royal man in 1424. He may have had another son called Sandrin. *Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár* X. 871.

²⁴¹⁹ DL 102242.

²⁴²⁰ DL 101124.

²⁴²¹ DF 231944.

²⁴²² *Iura regni* II. 234.

was already titled as prothonotary.²⁴²³ Still as deputy he mediated upon royal orders between duke Lawrence Újlaki and Nicholas Bánfi, whereas in February 1499 he was again one of the envoys of the Slavonian nobility before the king, and in April he was the Slavonian delegate appointed to assist the royal tax-collector, Benedict Vémeri.²⁴²⁴

In September 1499 he was member in the illustrious company of several barons and magnates of a jury which was sent out to decide in a case opposing duke John Corvin and James Székely, and through him king Maximilian himself.²⁴²⁵ Shortly thereafter he was commissioned by the king to restore the lands of George Szencsei, and in January 1500 he again appeared as one of the Slavonian envoys at the assembly of Buda.²⁴²⁶ Still in the same year he accomplished an inquisition upon royal orders among the people of the estate of Atyina about the exactions levied by Elias Bosnyák in the preceding years.²⁴²⁷ Although we know of no major acquisitions of land by master Nicholas, he surely constructed a *castellum* on his estate of Vojkocv,²⁴²⁸ where the banal charters were issued during his officeholding as prothonotary. We do not know for sure which family his wife called Justina came from; yet there is a strong probability that she was in fact the daughter of Nicholas Battyányi, which again would be a sign of his enhanced prestige.²⁴²⁹ If our hypothesis is true, the further rise of master Nicholas was only cut short by his untimely death in 1504.²⁴³⁰ He does not seem to have left offspring.

2.2.51. Other families

Finally, I have grouped together some families/persons who all thanked their settlement in Slavonia to the counts of Cilli, yet individually we know too little about them to treat them in separate “biographies”. In the order of their settlement in Slavonia the first to mention is the **Rohonci** family. Andrew Rohonci descended from the illustrious Kőszegi family, and had been the lord of two castles, those of Rohonc and Kemend, until he lost both when he was involved on the losing side in the revolt against king Sigismund in 1403.²⁴³¹ Consequently he joined count Herman of Cilli, whom he served for several years as his alispán of Varasd, and became his viceban of

²⁴²³ DF 255940, DF 275023, DF 276989, all banal charters dated at Vojkocv, 13 Sept.1498.; Iura regni II. 241. (prothonotary, 4 Feb. 1499.).

²⁴²⁴ Somogy Megye Múltjából 14 (1983) 71/148.; Iura regni II. 241., 242-243.

²⁴²⁵ DL 37730, DL 37731.

²⁴²⁶ DF 268149.; DF 268156.

²⁴²⁷ DF 268148.

²⁴²⁸ Although the castellum is first mentioned after the death of master Nicholas (1517: „*castelli Zenthkereszt alio nomine Woykowschyna nuncupati*”, DL 101519.), in view of his career it is very probable that its construction should be attributed to him.

²⁴²⁹ In May 1504 the widow of Nicholas Vojkfi was called Justine (Iványi, Memorabiliák 27. no. 39.), and we have seen above that Paul Čavlović, whose wife was Justine Batthyány, inherited the lands of master Nicholas. It is thus reasonable to presume that it was the hands of the widow that he acquired Vojkocv.

²⁴³⁰ He was drowned in the Danube in the course of an assembly.

²⁴³¹ Engel, Királyi hatalom 44-45.

Slavonia in 1423.²⁴³² He was able to take into pledge the estate of Ludbreg in 1421, and acquired by the same means that of Bisztrica in the county of Zagreb.²⁴³³ His son, Stephen, was member of the entourage of Sigismund in Italy in 1433, and seems to have remained a member of the imperial court thereafter.²⁴³⁴ In 1438 he took into pledge the estate of Szlavina from Ladislav Hagymás for 1000 florins,²⁴³⁵ and also tried, together with his relatives, to secure the future heritage of John Ost.²⁴³⁶ In the civil war which followed the death of king Albert he served count Herman's grandson, Ulrich of Cilli, as one of his captains.²⁴³⁷ In the beginning he briefly reoccupied, together with his nephew, John Kakas, the family castle at Kemend, but lost it soon afterwards.²⁴³⁸ He died heirless, and thus the family died out on the male line, since John Kakas disappeared without trace after 1441.²⁴³⁹ Yet the daughters of Andrew played an important role locally in the struggle for the inheritance of their father, as we have seen above at the Szencsei and Turóci families.

One of the foreign *familiars* who owed his establishment in the county of Körös to the counts of Cilli was **Christoph Paschingar**. Apparently he came from the locality in Upper Austria whose name he bore. We know of no office that he held in the service of his lord; nevertheless, at least according to the words of the royal charter which declared him an inhabitant (*regnicola*) of the Slavonian realm,²⁴⁴⁰ he must have belonged to the immediate entourage of count Ulrich, for he followed with him the royal court. He married Susan, the daughter of Ladislav Pekri, and thus obtained portions in the estate of Garignica, though not without the help of his lord as ban of Slavonia, as it seems. After the death of count Ulrich he joined the royal court and became a *familiaris* of young Ladislav V.²⁴⁴¹ Later on, however, he seems to have fallen out with the new master of Slavonia, Jan Vitovec, which resulted in his mutilation and death.²⁴⁴² It was with the hand of his daughter from Susan Pekri that Nicholas Pozsegai inherited the estate of Garignica.

The **Piers** (Pyers) family seems to have come from Treun in Styria.²⁴⁴³ Of the two brothers, George and Gaspar (Caspar), it is the first who apparently played a more important role. After the occupation of Slavonia by the counts of Cilli 1445, he was at first castellan of Hrasztovica and captain of Csázma. From 1448 he served his lords as *alispán* of Varasd, and parallelly commended the castles of Trakostyán and Gornec. From 1451 he governed the equally important castle of

²⁴³² Engel, Archontológia II. 205.

²⁴³³ Ibidem I. 363.; Engel, Királyi hatalom 98.

²⁴³⁴ Csukovits, "Nagy utazás"; In 1442 he still called himself *aule imperialis maiestatis miles*: DF 231301.

²⁴³⁵ DL 44211.

²⁴³⁶ DL 86358.

²⁴³⁷ DL 103595.

²⁴³⁸ Zala vármegye története II. 506-507.

²⁴³⁹ The Andrew who figures as Stephen's son at Engel (Középkori magyar genealógia Héder nem 4. tábla: Köszegi (és Rohonci), belongs in fact to the other Ludbregi family (ibidem Ludbregi (Csúz).

²⁴⁴⁰ DL 100623.

²⁴⁴¹ DL 102136.

²⁴⁴² DL 103671.;

²⁴⁴³ See Levéltári Közlemények 3 (1925) 130. (1505), Sigismundus Pyers de Threwen, captain of Möttling in der Krain.

Kemlék, apparently until the death of count Ulrich in 1456. His brother, Gaspar, was castellan of Szentgyörgy, and although he is attested as such only in the late 1440s, he may have served there from 1445 until 1456.²⁴⁴⁴ In 1449 they took into pledge some of the Kamarcai lands from the widow of Ladislav Koreni,²⁴⁴⁵ but a more important acquisition was the estate of Szobocsina which came to George through his marriage with Elisabeth Szobocsinai.²⁴⁴⁶ After the extinction of the counts of Cilli George Piers served for some time Jan Vitovec. His only known child from Elisabeth was Dorothy,²⁴⁴⁷ who, as we have seen above, gradually lost much of Szobocsina to the Ervencei brothers and Ladislav Hermanfi.

Another foreigner established in the county of Körös by the counts of Cilli was Wolfgang **Frodnohar**. He belonged in all probability to the Austrian Frodnacher family,²⁴⁴⁸ and received from his lord, Ulrich of Cilli, the estate of Bednya with the *castellum* there.²⁴⁴⁹ We do not know whether he was related to the Eustach Frodnacher who was arrested together with the Hunyadi brothers and their supporters in March 1457.²⁴⁵⁰ Whatever the case, in May 1457 he was confirmed by king Ladislav in his estate of Bednya.²⁴⁵¹ Unlike other *familiares* of the counts of Cilli, he does not seem to have transferred his allegiance to Jan Vitovec, which may explain that he remained on good terms with king Matthias as well. In 1471 he received for his services three villages which he had previously given to a certain Lausinger but were confiscated from him for infidelity.²⁴⁵² He died before 1478, and left three sons, Raphael, John and Sigismund.²⁴⁵³ They were at first tutored by their *sororius*, Christoph Hochburger, who was the adoptive brother of George Forster.²⁴⁵⁴ Rafael died before 1497, and only the career of Sigismund can be followed with some detail: in 1512 he was the *familiaris* of John Ernuszt,²⁴⁵⁵ and between 1517 and 1520 he was captain of Medve and Rakonok in the service of George, margrave of Brandenburg.²⁴⁵⁶ There is no trace of the family in Slavonia after 1526.

Apparently also “imported” by the counts of Cilli were the **Fodorovci**. Gregory, son of Andrew of Adi, first appears as the dapifer of bishop Eberhard of Zagreb in 1410, when he received the

²⁴⁴⁴ Engel, Archontológia II. 195.

²⁴⁴⁵ DF 231246.

²⁴⁴⁶ DL 103642.; DL 103654.

²⁴⁴⁷ DL 103727.; DL 103804.

²⁴⁴⁸ Paul-Joachim Heinig, Kaiser Friedrich III (1440-1493). Hof, Regierung und Politik (Köln, Weimar, Wien, 1997) I. 45. and 427.

²⁴⁴⁹ DF 233110.

²⁴⁵⁰ Kubinyi, Mátyás király 22.

²⁴⁵¹ DF 233110.

²⁴⁵² DF 231593.

²⁴⁵³ DF 262127.

²⁴⁵⁴ DL 102275.

²⁴⁵⁵ DL 106083.

²⁴⁵⁶ DL 38000.; DF 252288.; DL 38049.

predium called Fodorovc in the episcopal district of Szentmihály.²⁴⁵⁷ We do not know where he came from, but the fact that he and his descendants were consequently called exclusively by their predium shows that their origins must have been quite modest. Yet the son of Gregory, equally called Gregory, already achieved some prominence, for it was as an *egregius* that in 1446 he received from the counts of Cilli the village of Borkovc by the castle of Belec in reward of his services that he had done since his youth.²⁴⁵⁸ In 1451 the same Gregory took into pledge some 25 tenant sessions together with other pieces of property along the Kamarja river, and was again titled as *egregius* on that occasion; he also acquired there a *curia nobilitaris*.²⁴⁵⁹ He was among those Cilli *familiares* who after 1456 went over to Jan Vitovec, and in 1458 he received a royal donation from king Matthias for his efforts in establishing the peace of the kingdom.²⁴⁶⁰ Later on he seems to have followed Vitovec into rebellion and served the ban as his *ispán* of Zagreb for some time, and was accordingly pardoned in 1463 among his *familiares*.²⁴⁶¹ In 1464 king Matthias confirmed him in the possession of Borkovc, and again called him *egregius*.²⁴⁶²

The son of Gregory, Ladislav, never received the title, and in general seems a much more obscure figure than his father. He is not recorded to have had lands outside Fodorovc itself and Borkovc, and is only attested as a royal man.²⁴⁶³ The same is true of his own son called John, who, however, emerges in the 1510s as *szolgabíró* of Varasd.²⁴⁶⁴ The family surely survived Mohács.²⁴⁶⁵

A very special case is presented by the **Osli kindred**, which apparently represented themselves with two families in the noble elite of the county of Körös. The kindred was originally settled in the county of Sopron, from where it expanded southwards and acquired lands throughout modern Transdanubia. Comes Osli already had possessions in the county of Varasd in 1225, and it was one of his sons called Herbord who received the land called Raszinya which came to be called Herbortya thereafter.²⁴⁶⁶ Despite the fact that his descendants generally, although by no means exclusively, bore the name of Herbortya, they are not remembered to have played any role south of the Drava river before the 15th century. Herbortya, moreover, was shared with another branch of the kindred, namely the descendants of Dominic, ban of Macsó, later called Ostfi of Asszonyfalva, whereas the Ost of Herbortya retained their share in the family patrimony in the county of

²⁴⁵⁷ “*Gregorius filius Andree filii Davoth de Adi dapifer noster*” (of bishop Eberhard) receives the predium Fodorouch: Lukinović, Povijesni spomenici V. 341. This possession should be distinguished from the village equally called Fodorovc which lay in the county of Varasd.

²⁴⁵⁸ DF 231253.

²⁴⁵⁹ DL 100607.

²⁴⁶⁰ DF 252413: „*fidelis nostri egregii Gregorii de Fodorowch militis nobilis regni nostri Sclavonie*”.

²⁴⁶¹ DF 233405.

²⁴⁶² DF 231281.

²⁴⁶³ DF 219010., DF 275019.

²⁴⁶⁴ DL 22548.; DF 219231, DF 279464.

²⁴⁶⁵ In 1566 Melchior Fodoróczy is listed at Borkovc. Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 195.

²⁴⁶⁶ Karácsonyi, Magyar nemzetségek 858-863.

Sopron.²⁴⁶⁷ This undivided possession is all the more interesting since it apparently did not include either the Kanizsai and Csornai families, who were related to the Ost of Herbortya by the same degree as the Ostfi, only the Bresztolci family, the closest kinsmen of the latter, since they also descended from ban Dominic.²⁴⁶⁸

Among the Ost of Herbortya it is precisely the last male member, John son of Francis, who can be linked somewhat more closely to the county of Körös. He seems to have resided at Herbortya,²⁴⁶⁹ although he most frequently appears in connection with the family lands in Sopron together with his kinsman from the Ostfi family. For some time he belonged to the royal court in the 1410s,²⁴⁷⁰ and, as we have seen above, it was upon the request of Michael Raveni and John Ost that in 1430 king Sigismund relieved the castle nobles of Kemlék and their lands from their traditional dependence.²⁴⁷¹ His condivisional kinsman, Ladislav son of Francis, despite the family's involvement in the revolt of 1403, rose to be ispán of Sopron in the 1430s, and was even knight of the court in 1439.²⁴⁷² In 1455 his son, Francis, received from king Ladislav V for his services the entire inheritance of John Ost, that is, the estate of Herbortya in the county of Körös and four villages in that of Sopron.²⁴⁷³ These lands, however, eventually devolved upon the Pogány family with the hands of Barbara Ost, who, as we have already seen, also acquired the Ostfi lands in the county of Zala by right of pledge. The Ostfi were consequently regarded as a noble family basically located in Sopron and Vas, where they boasted a fortification as well,²⁴⁷⁴ yet they do not seem to have lost all interest in the equally ancient family lands in Körös.

That it was so is proved by their marriages. At first, Euphrosyne, the daughter of Ladislav son of Ladislav, married George Ósi, who, although originally from Baranya, did acquire some lands in Körös as well. After his death Euphrosyne married George Kasztellánfi, and, since she was occasionally called of Zselnyak, she certainly resided in Körös together with her sons born from George.²⁴⁷⁵ Whether the first of her marriages was instrumental in the making of another one, that of Francis Ostfi with Veronica Vitéz of Kamarca, is at least dubious, for the exact time when these marriages took place cannot be established. Francis was the brother of Euphrosyne, and in 1496 he was already the husband of Veronica, for then John Vitéz, bishop of Veszprém, called him his

²⁴⁶⁷ DL 86306., DL 86308., DL 86315., DL 86358., and a lot more charters in the Ostffy archives. In 1451 John Ost of Herbortya wants to alienate lands in the county of Sopron: Imre Nagy, ed., *Sopron vármegye története. Oklevéltár II 1412-1653.*, Sopron, 1891. 370-371.; *ibidem* 379-380.

²⁴⁶⁸ Engel, *Középkori Magyar Genealógia*, Osli nem 1. tábla: elágazás; 3. tábla: Ostfi (asszonyfalvi).

²⁴⁶⁹ We have at least two letters of him and his wife, one dated at Szobotica (DL 56771, 1435), the other at Herbortya itself (DL 15284, 1448).

²⁴⁷⁰ Engel, *Archontológia II*. 179.

²⁴⁷¹ DF 233120.

²⁴⁷² Engel, *Archontológia II*. 179.

²⁴⁷³ *Sopron vármegye története II*. 389-391.

²⁴⁷⁴ *Ibidem I*. 341.

²⁴⁷⁵ For the references see above the chapter on the Kasztellánfi.

sororius.²⁴⁷⁶ Since another Ostfi, Nicholas, is attested as canon of Várad in 1493,²⁴⁷⁷ this means a further link between the two families,²⁴⁷⁸ although in this case again we do not know whether his appearance at Várad preceded or followed the marriage of Francis. Francis himself was member of the queen's court in the 1480s, then became at first *alispán*, then *ispán* of Sopron,²⁴⁷⁹ his brother, Ladislás, once tax-collector in the county of Vas,²⁴⁸⁰ and none of them seems ever to have resided in Slavonia. Nevertheless, this Ladislás likewise married from there by taking the daughter of Andrew Turóci as his wife.²⁴⁸¹

²⁴⁷⁶ DL 46357.

²⁴⁷⁷ DL 46227.

²⁴⁷⁸ In 1496 John Vitéz, bishop of Veszprém, takes into pledge some Ostfi lands in the county of Sopron. DL 86421.

²⁴⁷⁹ DL 86148 (1485): *fidelem parvulum nostrum* (sc. Beatricis regine); Sopron vármegye története II. 593. (*alispán*); 601. (appointment as *ispán*).

²⁴⁸⁰ DL 68541.

²⁴⁸¹ See above the chapter on the Turóci.

3. SOCIAL ANALYSIS

Having thus retraced the history of the families which, along the criteria elaborated in the first part of the dissertation, can be regarded as belonging to the noble elite of the county of Körös, in the next step it is necessary to examine these families as a group from a number of approaches which may helpfully give ground for some general conclusions; these, then, would be able to serve as a basis of comparison for similar analyses concerning other regions of the medieval Kingdom of Hungary. On the other hand, these investigations are intended to further refine the internal stratification of the county elite in general, so that in the end it would be possible to return to the problem again and offer some clues which may prove useful for anyone engaged in a similar work. As mentioned above, I have partly involved in this analysis some of the families and persons who have not been treated in independent sub-chapters for lack of sufficient information, but in case of which the little we know can still help to make the picture as broad as possible.²⁴⁸²

²⁴⁸² See above the chapter 2.1. It is, particularly, with regard to the origins that these examples offer a wider basis for the investigation; for it is clear that even if these families and persons remained attached to other parts of the kingdom, or disappeared fairly quickly from Slavonia, the means and ways of their getting there are nevertheless highly indicative.

3.1. Origins

NAME	KINDRED	TIME OF SETTLEMENT IN SLAVONIA	MEANS OF ACQUISITION
Vojkfi/Garázda	Vojk	11 th century	royal donation
Gorbonoki		12 th century	descendants of ban Belos, royal donation?
Kerhen of Belosovec		12 th century	descendants of ban Belos, royal donation?
Budor of Budrovc		12 th century	[the same]
Csupor of Monoszló	Monoszló	12 th century	royal donation
Szencsei	Tibold	12 th century	royal donation
Fáncs of Gordova		13 th century	indigenous? + royal donation
Rohfi of Dégse		13 th century	purchase
Pekri	Tétény	13 th century	royal donation
Grebeni	Gárdony	13 th century	purchase
Bocskai	Gutkeled	13 th century	royal donation
Herbortyai/Ostfi	Oslí	13 th century	royal donation
Rumi		13 th century ²⁴⁸³	?
Szentgróti	Türje	13 th century	royal donation
Paksi	Rátót	13 th century	royal donation ²⁴⁸⁴
Terbenyei		13 th century	?
Bakolcai		14 th century	?
Bakonyai	Hermán	14 th century	?
Gereci		14 th century	descendants of palatine Mojs, royal donation?
Musinai	Péc	14 th century	?
Kasztellánfi		14 th century	Italy, marriage
Kapitánfi of Desnice		14 th century	?
Nelepec	[Hrvatinić]	14 th century	Bosnia, royal donation
Ludbregi		14 th century	royal donation
Latkfi	[Hrvatinić]	14 th century	Bosnia, royal donation

²⁴⁸³ Both of the persons called Doroszló, whose name their possession in the county of Körös bore, lived in the 13th century. See Engel, *Középkori Magyar Genealógia*, Tengerdi rokonság 1. tábla: Rumi

²⁴⁸⁴ In case the estate of Bradna did originally belong to the castle of Kemlék. We do not know how and when they acquired the estate of Sukanc where the castellum of Szentlászló is supposed to have stayed.

Kustyer		14 th century	royal donation
Dersfi	Győr	14 th century	royal donation
Rohonci	Héder	15 th century	pledge
B. Tulbert		15 th century	Italy, royal donation
Dombai	Győr	15 th century	royal donation
Simon Nagy		15 th century	purchase, Hunyadi (familiaritas)
Tamasovci	Gatal	15 th century	royal donation
Paschingar		15 th century	marriage, Cilli (fam.)
Piers		15 th century	marriage, Cilli (fam.)
Ladislás Zalai		15 th century	Cilli (fam.)
Nicholas Vizaknai		15 th century	adoption (Hunyadi fam.)
Fodorovci		15 th century	donation, bishop of Zagreb (fam.)
Kristallóci (2), K. Török		15 th century	royal donation
Frodnohar		15 th century	donation, Cilli (fam.)?
Pozsegai		15 th century	marriage, Ernuszt
Lónyai		15 th century	marriage, Hunyadi (fam.)
Turóci		15 th century	donation, marriage, Cilli (fam.)
Lusiczky		15 th century	Bohemia, royal donation
Székely of Kövend		15 th century	royal donation
Stephen Doroszlai		15 th century	purchase
Gesztí		15 th century	?
Batthyány (Kövágóórsi)		15 th century	royal donation, marriage
Pogány		15 th century	marriage
Kecer	Aba	15 th century	marriage, b. Oswald (fam.)
Kerecsényi	Ják	15 th century	marriage, b. Oswald (fam.)
G. Pető	Nádasd	15 th century	marriage, Corvin
Butkai	Gutkeled	15 th century	marriage
George Diakói		15 th century	marriage?
Móré of Dada		15/16 th century	marriage
Ósi		15 th century	pledge
Gregory Horváth		15 th century	pledge
Szerecsen		15 th century	marriage?

Predrihoi		15 th century	Croatia, donation, Corvin
Bosnyák		15 th century	Bosnia, marriage?
Alapi		15 th century	donation, Corvin
Gyulai	Győr	15 th century	purchase, Corvin
Sabatinus		15 th century	royal donation
Pan of Kravarina		15 th century	marriage, Ernuszt
Tahi		15 th century	marriage
Hássági		15 th century	marriage
Čavlović		?	Croatia?
Dacsó of Őr, Pečiban of Čomorag, Horváth of Szeglak		16 th century	marriage
Sztrazsemyei		16 th century	marriage?
Bikszádi		13 th century	?? (royal donation?)
Kristallóci (1)		13 th century	?? (várjobbágy?)
Kamarcai		13 th century	??
Jakószerdahelyi		13 th century	??
Mindszenti		13 th century	??
Berivojszentiváni		13 th century	Várjobbágy
Stefekfi of Temenica		13 th century	Várjobbágy
C. Mikcsec		13 th century	<i>nobilis castri</i>
Raveni		13 th century	<i>nobilis castri</i>
Borotva		13 th century	<i>nobilis castri</i>
Horzovai		13 th century	<i>nobilis castri?</i>
Prasovci		13 th century	<i>Nobilis castri?</i>
Pataki		13 th century	<i>nobilis castri</i>
Gudovci		13 th century	<i>predialis</i>
Kopinci		14 th century	??
Sz. Pálfi		14 th (13 th) century	??
Orrosovci		?	?
Ervencei		14 th century	??
Megyericsei		14 th century	??
Hobetić		15 th century	??

The inquiry into the origins of the some 60 families which have been selected upon the basis of the criteria set out in the introduction, complemented by those which have not been subjected to particular investigation, although their history at some point came to be connected with the county of Körös, is hindered by a number of obstacles. These obstacles become ever more evident as we descend the social scale. There are no problems with the families whose descent can be established from one of the *genera* of early medieval (that is, 12th-13th centuries) Hungarian society. None of these was indigenous in Slavonia, and at the time of their settlement there, in the 12th and 13th centuries, no person other than the king could give such huge parcels of land as they possess there when they become visible in our sources. The same refers to ban Beloš, of Serbian origin, who must have received his lands in Hungary from the king. These were obviously much more widespread than those we find later in the possession of the Gorbonoki, Kerhen and other related families, but we have no information whatsoever upon their original extension. The only kindred among those who arrived to Slavonia in the 13th century, and did not get their lands there by royal donation, is the Gárdony, who purchased the estate after which they were named later. So did among the early comers the Rohfi of Décese, whereas the Fánacs of Gordova, who are not known to have belonged to any of the kindreds, received at least part of their Slavonian possessions from king Béla IV. Interestingly, it is the apparently less important Vojk kindred whose acquisition of their Slavonian lands can be retraced farthest back in time, even if we do not take seriously the allusion to Saint Stephen. It is, nevertheless, conspicuous, that they referred to royal donation as the source of their landed wealth. This can be taken as an indication with regard to the origins of the other great estates in the region.

Originally these kindreds, and especially the Monoszló, the Tibold and the Tétény, shared most of the land in the county of Körös which did not remain in royal or ecclesiastical property. In a wide stretch from the Monoszló near the river Sava to the possession of the same name along the Drava, such future estates belonged to them as those of Szencse, Fejérkő and Szaplonca (Tibold), Vasmegyericse, Garignica, Dobrakucsá and Aszúágy (Tétény), and Atyina and Darnóc (Monoszló). In the northern regions of the county their domination was less complete, yet the Gutkeled and Osli kindreds, as well as the descendants of ban Beloš still counted among the major landholders in the 13th century.²⁴⁸⁵ And, despite the heavy losses suffered in the course of the centuries, these kindreds proved especially persistent: with two exceptions, the Csák (Raholca) and one branch of the Péc (Ludbreg), which disappeared in the course of the 14th century, and thus do not concern us here, all the families originating from these kindreds flourished right until the end of the 15th

²⁴⁸⁵ All this of course, has huge implications from the point of view of the original settlement of Slavonia, which cannot be treated here in detail. Let it suffice to remark that if we discount the lands which the incoming kindreds are recorded to have possessed there in the 13th and 14th centuries, and also those incorporated into the domain pertaining to the major Slavonian churches, there remains very little room for others outside the tiny *várispánságok*, more numerous, it is true, than elsewhere in medieval Hungary.

century, and three of them, the Bocskai (Gutkeled), the Pekri (Tétény) and the Szencsei (Tibold) even survived Mohács. So did among the other early settlers the Fánecs of Gordova, and partly at least the Gárdony (even if then they no more belonged to the top layer of the local nobility), whereas the Rohfi only disappeared at the very end of the 15th century. The Garázda (Vojk) can also be counted among these long-lived kindreds, although the centre of their activity had definitively shifted to Hungary proper by the early 15th century.

After the first two tumultuous decades of the 14th century royal power became as overwhelming as it had been half a century before.²⁴⁸⁶ No wonder, then, that it continued to play a dominant role in the emergence of new landowners in the county of Körös throughout the 14th century. The situation is quite clear in the case of the Nelepec and Latkfi families, from the Bosnian Hrvatinić family, who were transferred to Slavonia by king Louis I. The Ludbregi (that is, the descendants of ban John Csúz), Kustyer and Dersfi families could also thank their settlement in Körös to the royal grace: whereas the first received the lands of a family belonging to the Péc kindred, which disappeared in 1357,²⁴⁸⁷ the latter two were donated former royal lands. An equally unambiguous case is that of the Kasztellánfi, who, however, established themselves in Slavonia through marriage, and settled on some of the lands of the Tétény kindred. Yet the arrival of their ancestor, first attested in 1320,²⁴⁸⁸ should be put to the period preceding the final restoration of royal authority in Slavonia.

Problems are more numerous with regard to the families emerging in the 14th century. We have seen above that the circumstances of the settlement of the Bakolcai family (and of the Bakonyai, for that matter) in Körös are totally obscure. Similarly, we know nothing about the way by which the Gereci and Musinai families acquired their possessions there. Since both the Péc kindred and palatine Mojs, from whom the Gereci family descended, did have possessions in Körös in the 13th century, it is possible that their settlement at Musina and Gerec respectively had been continuous since then. It should be remarked, however, that the castle called Musina beyond the Drava, which is surely identical to the later Musina, was before 1273 precisely in the hands of palatine Majos.²⁴⁸⁹

It is thus purely because of their absence from the sources in the course of the 13th century that I put their definitive settlement in Körös to the 14th century.

The establishment of the Dersfi family in Slavonia at the very end of the 14th century leads us to the last phase of royal authority as a dominant factor of horizontal noble mobility. The estate of Tapalóc, which was given to Márton Ders then, had been confiscated from the Ördög family for infidelity. In the first years of the 15th century, the last serious upheaval before the consolidation of king Sigismund's reign, three other families established themselves in Körös. Two of them, the

²⁴⁸⁶ Engel, *Realm of Saint Stephen 140-151*.

²⁴⁸⁷ Engel, *Archontológia I*. 363.

²⁴⁸⁸ Maček – Jurković, *Rodoslov plemića 53*.

²⁴⁸⁹ Karácsonyi, *Magyar nemzetségek 448*.

Szász and the Dombai, equally received land confiscated for infidelity, whereas George Kővágóörsi, the ancestor of the Batthyány family, was given royal property. It is worth remarking that George, who was a *familiaris* of archbishop John Kanizsai, almost lost his newly acquired estate after the temporary fall of his lord in 1403.

After his definitive victory over the baronial opposition in 1403, king Sigismund became increasingly parsimonious, and this fact reflected itself not only in his policy towards the aristocracy.²⁴⁹⁰ During the remaining thirty four years of his reign only two non-baronial families received considerable lands in the county of Körös. Nicholas Gereci together with Josa the Turk, as well as the Italian counts of Prata, later known as the Tulbert family, were given estates which had previously devolved upon the crown. The only other family which arrived to the county of Körös before the death of Sigismund, namely the Rohonci of the Héder kindred, acquired the estate of Ludbreg there by pledge. The remaining elements of the ban's honor (the two Kemlék, Kővár, Garics and Velike) were given by Sigismund first to his wife, queen Barbara, and later to his chief baronial supporters, which meant that there remained nothing to be given in the county of Körös unless the lands which eventually devolved upon the crown.²⁴⁹¹

It is no wonder, then, that among the several families which arrived to the county of Körös during the second half of the 15th century, only three are known to have received their lands by royal donation. Two cases concern the same estate of Dobrakucsa, confiscated from the Ernuszt family, which was donated by king Matthias successively to Nicholas Lusicky and James Székely, and the latter (or, more precisely, his brother and his descendants) got hold of it definitively. The castellany of Garignica, available for royal donation after the heirless death of Nicholas Pozsegai, was given by the same king to the Italian Sabatinus, the husband of the nurse of queen Beatrix, who, however, only possessed it for some years.

All the others acquired their Slavonian lands by means other than a royal grant. In these cases two factors seem to have played a dominant role: *familiaritas* and marriage. One could even say that in the latter part of the 15th century the routine way of getting land in Körös was to join the service of a local magnate or prelate and then marry a woman from a well-to-do local noble family. This is what happened in the case of the Paschingar, Pozsegai, Lónyai, Kecser, Kerecsényi, Pető, Predrihoi, Bosnyák, Čavlović, Kravarinai and Tahi families, and the examples could be multiplied.²⁴⁹² As for the Pogány, Hásságyi and Szerecsen families, they seem to have arrived to Körös through marriage alone, which, in view of their long settlement in two neighbouring counties, is not surprising at all. Others, such as Simon Nagy in the middle of the 15th century and John Gyulai at its end, apparently

²⁴⁹⁰ Engel, Királyi hatalom, *passim*.

²⁴⁹¹ Engel, Archontológia I. 16. on the fate of the banal honor.

²⁴⁹² Thus, for instance, it is quite clear that for Leonard Dacsó of Ór it was the service of the Geréb family which paved the way to Slavonia.

also arrived to Slavonia as *familiares*, but bought their lands there for cash. Somewhat similar is the case of the Rohonci: scion of the notorious Kőszegi family, sentenced for infidelity in 1403, Andrew Rohonci arrived to Slavonia as a man of count Hermann of Cilli, and later managed to take into pledge the important estate of Ludbreg and its castle.²⁴⁹³ Three cases apart are those of Ladislav Zalai, Wolfgang Frodnohar and Balthasar Alapi; the first two arrived in the service of count Ulrich of Cilli, the third in that of duke Corvin, and all three received their lands in Körös directly from the lord they served. Another way can be observed in the case of Benedict Turóci, who first received an estate from his lord, Ulrich of Cilli, in the county of Varasd, and later moved to Körös by way of marriage. A fairly rare case in the 15th century is that of the Geszti, as the circumstances among which they set foot in Körös are simply unknown.²⁴⁹⁴ Again a somewhat special case is that of the Fodorovci, who came as episcopal prediales, and later acquired property in the county of Varasd thanks to their lords, the counts of Cilli.

The last group of families leads us back to the „prehistory” of Slavonia and thus raises questions which can only partly be answered. Roughly half of the families listed there can safely be connected to the „castle lordships” (*várispánságok*) which can be shown to have existed in the county of Körös in the course of the 13th century. Yet the emergence of these “castle lordships” themselves is very much open to debate, together with that of the families which were eventually subordinated to them.²⁴⁹⁵ It is thus only with reference to their appearance in the sources that I put their origins into the 13th century, although it is by no means impossible that they (or most of them) were indigenous in Slavonia. In one important respect, however, these families clearly fall into a category that can be neatly distinguished from those who can be attached to the early medieval *genera* or otherwise can be shown to have been “full” nobles at the time of their appearance in Slavonia: their original landed wealth was evidently of a much more modest size, which, inversely, is a further proof of their more humble, “conditional” origins. The memory of these origins survived with surprising tenacity, as we have seen upon the example of those families which had originally belonged to the castle of Körös; in the case of Kemlék the survival of an entire “castle nobility” until the end of the middle ages has always been well known, but, as the case of the Temenicei family shows, the common origins and rights of the families which had once belonged to the castle of Garics also lived on until the end of the 15th century despite the early dissolution of the castle organisation itself.²⁴⁹⁶

²⁴⁹³ On him see Engel, *Királyi hatalom* 44-45.

²⁴⁹⁴ In view of the fact, however, that they were based in the neighbouring counties of Baranya and Bodrog, their move to Slavonia cannot be regarded as exceptional. That in 1492 Balthasar Batthyány was called by Francis Geszti as his *patruelis* brother (Csánki, *Körösmegye* 34.), marriage is the most probable link between them as well.

²⁴⁹⁵ On the *várispánságok* in the county of Körös see Gyula Kristó, *A vármegyék kialakulása Magyarországon [The Formation of Counties in Hungary]* (Budapest: Magvető, 1988) 311-318. On conditional landholding in Slavonia in general: Rady, *Nobility, Land and Service* 80-82.

²⁴⁹⁶ Kristó, *Vármegyék* 315.

In two cases, those of the Kristallóci (1) and the Bikszádi, we do know when the estate after which they were later named was acquired, but we have no information whatsoever as to where these families came from. Both of them can be shown to have been active in Slavonia prior to the acquisition of their namegiving possession, which, however, does not in itself prove that they were indigenous there. The same is true of the Megyericsei family, which, as we have seen above, obtained the estate of Megyericse in the second half of the 14th century, but no source refers to them as living in the county of Körös before, which forces us to leave the question of their eventual origins unanswered. And, finally, the original wealth and early ramification of the Kamarcai family, and, if our hypothesis is tenable, of the related Jakószerdahelyi family, seem to mark them out as the only kin whose Slavonian origins are probable, without apparently belonging to any of the local *várispánságok*.

In order to have a view of the changes more precisely within the period between 1400 and 1526, and with regard to only those families which have been analysed individually, it would be necessary to determine which among the families examined belonged to the top layer of the nobility of the county already at the starting point of the analysis. The end of the upheaval which characterised the first phase of king Sigismund's reign, that is, 1403 seems a convenient standpoint. But the task is not an easy one; as we have seen above, we have no sources for measuring exactly noble landed wealth before the end of the 15th century, and the use of the *egregius* title begins only in the 1420s. Nevertheless, we can calculate the size of the estates with the help of later figures, and use the *magister* title which, during the 14th century, played the same role as *egregius* later. If we add to these the information on officeholding and court career, and also consider the history of the individual families prior to 1403, we have at least a vague idea of who can be regarded as belonging to the upper stratum of the nobility in the county of Körös then.²⁴⁹⁷ Of course, there is no doubt about those families like the Fáncs of Gordova: the baronial post of Ladislas (1402-04), the flow of royal donations, and the size their landed wealth, which seems to have been roughly the same by 1408 as in 1495, leaves no doubt about their local status. In other cases, however, it is merely the supposed size of the landed wealth, occasionally coupled with the *magister* title, which argues for counting a given family as member of a supposedly outstanding group within the nobility. All this is very much open to doubt; it is thus highly questionable whether, around 1400, the Fáncs can be regarded as belonging to the same group within the nobility as the Cirkvenai. But this is a problem at any given time in the pre-1526 history of the Hungarian nobility, and we will have to return to it later. All in all, altogether 32 families, that is, roughly half of the units chosen along the criteria set out in the introduction can be regarded as belonging to a layer that can be fairly clearly

²⁴⁹⁷ Here, and in the following pages, I try to avoid using the term „elite”, for I will return to the problem of the extent to which the groups of nobility defined here can be regarded as an elite in chapter 3.7 below.

distinguished from the great mass of the petty nobility in the county of Körös at that time.²⁴⁹⁸ If we prepare the same list in 1526, we find 29 families, 16 among which can be found on the list of 1403 as well.²⁴⁹⁹ 10 out of the 32 listed in 1403 died out altogether,²⁵⁰⁰ whereas four had become so insignificant, because of the loss of their lands or for some other reasons, that they can by no means be treated any more as belonging to the “leading” nobility, however wide it is perceived.²⁵⁰¹

This in itself would suggest important change within the ranks of the top layer of the nobility between 1403 and 1526. Yet we also have to take into consideration those families and persons which entered the elite after 1403, but disappeared biologically or socially, or otherwise simply left Slavonia before 1526. We find altogether 17 such families,²⁵⁰² 9 of which arrived from outside the county of Körös, the rest rising from the lower sections of the nobility; this number in itself hints at an intensive horizontal mobility in the course of the 15th century. In any case, the picture is in sharp contrast with what Pál Engel found in the distant county of Ung, where „at the end of the reign of king Sigismund roughly 80 to 85 % of the estates were possessed by the descendants of those who had owned them in the time of Charles I.”²⁵⁰³ It is true, though, that Engel counted the entire nobility of the county, and in a different period which only partially overlaps with the one studied here.

We have seen above that the wide majority of the new members of the noble elite of the county of Körös arrived from other regions of Hungary, or, in three cases, from Croatia and Bosnia, through various ways, but generally by way of *familiaritas* and marriage. Most of them belonged to the leading nobility already in their counties of origin, and, apart from the *familiares* of the counts of Cilli, about whom we know very little, Nicholas Pozsegai and Peter Pan of Kravarina seem to have been exceptional in that they could thank their rise entirely to their lord, János Ernuszt, thus combining territorial with social mobility.²⁵⁰⁴

²⁴⁹⁸ Bikszádi, Borotva, Kustyer, Grebeni, Bocskai, Ostfi, Gorbonoki, Dombai, Dersfi, Kamarcai, Jakószerdahelyi, Ervencei, Megyericsei, Musinai, Fánscs, Berivojszentiváni, Csupor, Rohfi, Latkfi, Kapitánfi, Pekri, Szencsei, Kasztellánfi, Nelepec, Kristallóci 1, Bakolcai, Cirkvenai, Raveni, Gereci, Tamasovci, Garázda, Stefekfi.

²⁴⁹⁹ Kerhen, Szencsei, Fánscs, Pekri, Batthyány/Grebeni, Bocskai, Bakolcai, Gereci, Musinai, Kasztellánfi, Kapitánfi, Nelepec, Dersfi, Kamarcai, Dombai, Frodnohar, Turóci, Pogány, Hásságyi, Kecser, Kerecsényi, Alapi, Tahi, Čavlović, Prasovci, Hobetić, Raveni, Garázda, Budor.

²⁵⁰⁰ Bikszádi, Kustyer, Ostfi, Gorbonoki, Jakószerdahelyi, Csupor, Rohfi, Latkfi, Kristallóci 1, Cirkvenai.

²⁵⁰¹ Borotva, Ervencei, Berivojszentiváni, Tamasovci.

²⁵⁰² Rohonci, Tulbert, Paschingar, Piers, Kristallóci 2, Pozsegai, Lónyai, Bosnyák, Gudovci, Horzovai, Pataki, Kopinci, Fodorovci, Mindszenti, Pan of Kravarina, Orros, Pálfi.

²⁵⁰³ Engel, Ung megye 85.

²⁵⁰⁴ Defining the social position of a given individual at the time of his arrival to Slavonia is not always a straightforward task, however, and sometimes even impossible. This is particularly the case with those persons, such as Elias Bosnyák and Paul Čavlović, whose place of origin cannot be established. This difficulty is not limited to newcomers from Croatia and Bosnia, moreover. Yet in the majority of cases an inquiry along the lines adopted for the definition of the target group of this dissertation (title, landed wealth, office-holding) makes it possible to define social position with relative certainty. There always remain dubious cases, however, for example, that of the Kerecsényi. It is beyond doubt that originally the family did not belong to the first rank of the nobility in the county of Zala, judging from their great numbers and the restricted amount of their landed wealth. Yet in 1510 George Kerecsényi was having portions in nineteen villages in the same county (DF 280208), which evidently put him among the richest non baronial

Much more restricted were the ways which led from the local petty nobility to the higher ranks of noble society. Altogether eight cases can be treated as instances of social rise, temporary or definitive. Although it is of course impossible to detect with absolute certainty the underlying causes of such rise, some elements may nevertheless be suspected. Two of them, literacy and service, seem to have played a dominant role. It is conspicuous that the rise of at least five among the families concerned, that is, the Horzovai, Kopinci, Pataki, Fodorovci and Gudovci, can somehow be linked to the patronage of the counts of Cilli or of Jan Vitovec. Peter Gudovci, notary of the counts, and Albert Pataki, prothonotary of the seat of Körös, surely served Vitovec with their pen, whereas Anthony Kopinci, also pardoned among the *familiares* of Vitovec in 1463, seems to have been a man of legal knowledge, as his participation in arbitrations shows. As for John Mindszenti, he apparently could thank his career to his lord, and perhaps even kinsman, John, bishop of Pécs. What is clear is that such service could at least sometimes be profitable, as the acquisitions of both Anthony Kopinci and the Mindszenti show. The career of Nicholas Gereci is evidently a case apart, for it was based on the expertise he had gained during his long Ottoman captivity. And, at the very end of the period, the rise of the Prasovci family was again launched by literacy.

It has to be remarked, however, that, with three exceptions, such rise proved to be ephemeral, and did not last for more than two generations. The Gereci/Kristallóci and the Mindszenti sank into obscurity after they had lost Kristallóc and Dobrakucsa respectively. In the case of the Pataki the momentum seemed great enough to last for two generations, especially if the George Pataki who held some border castles was indeed member of the same family, but ceased soon after the death of Albert, evidently because he was unable to acquire enough land. The situation is the same with the Horzovai, for even Michael Tompa proved unable to transmit his social prestige to his kinsmen. As for the Fodorovci, the son and grandsons of Gregory continued to live the unremarkable life of the petty nobility, again because of the lack of sufficient landed wealth. It is worth remarking that both the Gereci and the Mindszenti began to lose prestige after they had lost their fortifications, whereas the Pataki, the Horzovai and the Fodorovci were unable to get or build one.

Nor were the Kopinci, yet their social position was not undermined completely after the death of Anthony. It is true that Ladislas did not inherit the authority of his father, but both he and his son John remained at least occasionally titled *egregius*, and their service of duke Lawrence Újlaki is significant. Yet the real exceptions are the cases of the Gudovci, Prasovci and Hobetić families. All of them started from the ranks of the conditional nobility, although in the case of the Prasovci it may already have gone into oblivion. Both Peter Gudovci and Stephen Prasovci began their careers

landowners there. It is, however, impossible to tell how much of this wealth had been accumulated by the time of his joining the bishop of Zagreb, and what was acquired thereafter.

as a notary, the first in the chancery of count Ulrich of Cilli, the second in that of the king. Balthasar Hobetić, on the other hand, was from the start in the service of the bishop of Zagreb. There is one common element in their careers which seems to account for their enrichment: all three governed the estates of the bishopric of Zagreb for several years. The see of Zagreb was one of the richest among the Hungarian bishoprics,²⁵⁰⁵ and since the major acquisitions of Peter Gudovci and Stephen Prasovci, and, as it seems, also those of Balthasar, can be dated to their service as secular administrators, it is evident that it was the revenues accruing from their office which enabled them to gather possessions which secured a place for their offspring within the top ranks of the nobility in the county. The Gudovci family died out in the second generation, and the career of Balthasar Hobetić leads us beyond Mohács, it is true, but the fact that the daughter of Stephen married John Pekri, and that Balthasar could marry from a constantly *egregius* family from the county of Zagreb, shows that their prestige was already well established and in the case of the Gudovci it would certainly have survived Mohács in case Stephen he had had a son. As for the Prasovci (Prassóczy in Hungarian), they remained influential members of the Slavonian nobility right into the 17th century. That literacy itself and entry to the royal court were not necessarily enough as a springboard for ambitious petty noblemen is illustrated by the dozens of Slavonian notaries attested as functioning in royal chancelleries and the central courts during the whole period scrutinized by the present dissertation, none of whom were able to lay the foundations for any social rise deserving this name.²⁵⁰⁶ Nor was the office of deputy prothonotary of Slavonia, although providing considerable prestige locally, in itself sufficient to launch such a rise, as is proved by the examples of Clement Paulovci²⁵⁰⁷ or Peter Vratissa,²⁵⁰⁸ who remained much more obscure socially than either Peter Gudovci or Balthasar Hobetić or indeed master Nicholas Vojkfi, albeit the office of deputy prothonotary evidently involved some revenues. In itself, however, it was apparently not enough to serve as a foundation for social rise. The only apparent exception to the rule is indeed Nicholas Vojkfi, who is not known to have held other office than that of the Slavonian (deputy) prothonotary, yet he was evidently on the way to establish his place within the *egregius* nobility when his untimely death occurred. Apparently, thus, his case should also be regarded as that of a successful social climber; and, since he never served the bishop of Zagreb, his example would prove that a simple notary could equally make his way into the top ranks of the nobility. Yet, if our

²⁵⁰⁵ True, in 1525 it was only seventh among the Hungarian sees with an annual income of 18.000 florins, but this sum still stood closer to the revenues of the richer dioceses than to those of the ones which lagged behind. Moreover, it should not be forgotten that by 1525 the lands of Zagreb had been greatly impoverished by the constant Ottoman incursions. See Erik Fügedi, "A XV. Századi magyar püspökök" [The Hungarian Bishops in the 15th Century], in Idem, *Kolduló barátok, polgárok, nemesek. Tanulmányok a magyar középkorról* (Budapest: Magvető, 1981) 111.

²⁵⁰⁶ Bónis, *Jogtudó értelmiség passim*.

²⁵⁰⁷ DF 231416, DF 233405, DF 255803, DF 231575, DF 279539, DF 231588.

²⁵⁰⁸ On Peter Vratissa and his family: Smičiklas, *Codex diplomaticus XI*. 555-557; DF 218971, DF 290158, DL 101176, DF 232448, DL 104298, DF 276901, DF 219273, DF 219285.

reconstruction is correct, master Nicholas can by no means be regarded as a newcomer, even if he belonged to the least prestigious group of his kindred.

3.2. Wealth, traffic of land and social mobility

At first sight, it may seem very dubious whether the some sixty families which I have selected along the criteria set out in the first chapter of this dissertation really fit into the same social category. In a sense, nor it is possible to compare them one with another for a number of reasons. The first is chronological: not all the families listed were contemporaries of each other, and social and political circumstances could (and did) change a lot between 1400 and 1526. Second, even the individual families and persons could go through such profound changes that the place they occupy within local society seems to have to be reassessed anew at different points within the period studied. Take, for instance, the example of the Gudovci family, or that of Ladislav Hermanfi, whose wealth multiplied perhaps tenfold in the course of his life (whether his local esteem grew accordingly is another matter to be analysed later on). Thirdly, inequality and the loosening of the ties of kinship within the individual families mean that it is sometimes misleading to speak about the wealth and prestige of a given family or kindred instead of speaking about those of individuals. I will return to these problems in the last chapter of the present dissertation. Nevertheless, it is necessary somehow to try to establish at least the relative wealth and status of the families concerned, for it is the basis of all further analysis and comparison.

To start with, the material wealth of the families has to be reconstructed and at least some smaller groups distinguished among them. In the absence of lists enumerating the number of tenant sessions owned by the individual families, the marker which is generally used in drafting such lists, and with a view to the risks inherent in the numbers based directly upon the charter material, I decided to examine at first another feature, that of the possession of fortifications and market towns, supposing that these forms of human settlement can be a useful guide not only with regard to the aristocracy.²⁵⁰⁹ Indeed, we have a unique document which proves beyond doubt that the possession of one or more *castella* was perceived by contemporaries as an indicator of social position within the nobility. It is the agreement drafted in 1490, destined to settle the dispute which had dragged on since the early 1430s with the bishop of Zagreb around the matter of tithe-paying. In defining the number of exempt persons, the authors of the agreement, themselves Slavonian noblemen, set greater numbers for the same amount of tenant sessions in case a *castellum* belonged to them.²⁵¹⁰ As regards market towns, this type of settlement was as a matter of fact attached to greater estates. In drafting the list, I neglected the question of how many such objects were possessed by the

²⁵⁰⁹ Engel, *Magyar világi nagybirtok passim*

²⁵¹⁰ “*Item qui habet viginti quinque usque ad quinquaginta jobagiones cum castello habeat liberos tres, si non habet castellum habeat duos liberos.*

Item qui habet quinquaginta usque ad centum jobagiones sed (si) non habet castellum habeat liberos tres, cum castello habeat liberos quatuor.

Item qui habet centum usque ad trecentos jobagiones cum castello habeat liberos octo, sine castello habeat liberos quinque”. DF 252108.

individual families at any given time; I included all which turn up in the sources during the period between 1400 and 1526. Nor do I consider the sometimes enormous differences within the individual families; this again raises problems which will have to be analysed in detail below. I hope that this approach, to be refined later on, is sufficiently justified by the analysis which follows.²⁵¹¹

Family	Castrum	Castellum	Market town
Alapi	1 (4) ²⁵¹²	1 ²⁵¹³	1 ²⁵¹⁴
Bocskai	1 ²⁵¹⁵	4 ²⁵¹⁶	2 ²⁵¹⁷
Csupor	2 ²⁵¹⁸	1 ²⁵¹⁹	4 ²⁵²⁰

²⁵¹¹ The families follow each other in three major groups: first come those with castles, followed by those who only had one or more *castella*. In the end are treated those who did not have any of these fortifications. Within the first group the alphabetical order has been retained, whereas in the second I tried to order the families in a hierarchy from top to bottom. I only give references where these are missing in the biographical chapters, with the exception of the market towns, for which I indicate the charters where they are mentioned.

²⁵¹² **Nagykemlék** (Körös) (1502 – beyond 1526). He also possessed, at least partly, three castles in Croatia, **Pozvird** (**Podzwyrd**), **Wranograchya** and **Chawycza**, previously owned by the Frangepán family. DF 275098, DF 232658. These were in all probability donated to him by duke Corvin.

²⁵¹³ **Vokovina** (Zagreb) (1500 – beyond 1526).

²⁵¹⁴ **Brezovica** (Körös), belonging to the castle of Nagykemlék (DL 32874). I did not count either the possessions held by right of pledge by Andrew Alapi or those of the Batthyány in which the Alapi Battyányi had a share, but not Balthasar Alapi himself.

²⁵¹⁵ **Apajvára** (Körös) (13th century – 1468 and beyond?) On its early history see Engel, *Archontológia* I. 267. According to Engel, it vanished around the middle of the 15th century. Yet it is still mentioned in 1468 (castrum Apay, DL 94233), and seems to be identical to the domus seu castrum [...] de Razyna referred to in 1490/95 (Csánki, *Körösmegye* 12. n. 2.; I was unable to find this charter, allegedly in the archives of the Pogány family.). 1463/1481: castrum Razyna (DF 276922).

²⁵¹⁶ **Kéthely** (Körös) (1450) Belonging exclusively to Ladislas and his son Peter (castelli [...] sui et ipsius Petri filii sui proprii Kedhel nuncupati, DL 33353); **Kustyerolc** (Körös) (1492 – 1502), bought by Peter Bocskai; **Szentlőrinc** (Körös) (1481 – 1502). Szentlőrinc is identical to Gostović, originally belonging to the castle of Körös (Csánki, *Körösmegye* 7.); it was acquired by the Bocskai family before 1381 (Hazai Okmánytár V. 127., *Gozthovichzenthlourinch*), in 1450 still mentioned without any fortification (DL 33353: *Zenthlewryncz et Gozthowincz*). First mentioned in 1481 (DL 37582: *castelli egregii Petri Bochkay de Razynakerezhthwr in Zenthlwryncz habiti*), it was perhaps built by Peter Bocskai himself; **Raszinya** (Körös) (before 1496 – beyond 1526), it stood within the town of Raszinya itself, erected by Peter Bocskai. It was certainly in existence in 1496, when Peter Bocskai recommended it into the protection of his kinsman, Sigismund (DF 262302: *castellum [...] in proteccionem commendamus*).

²⁵¹⁷ **Raszinya** (Körös) (DF 262037, DF 282462, DF 276907), once even *civitas* (DF 276922), common property of the whole Bocskai family; **Szentlőrinc** (Körös) (DF 262164) belonging only to Peter Bocskai.

²⁵¹⁸ **Szarvaskő/Kosuchak** (Körös) (early 15th century – 1492). According to Engel (*Archontológia* I. 422.), Szarvaskő was built by ban Paul Csupor sometime before 1415. The castle of the Csupor family referred to as Kossuchak in 1422 (Anita Kiss, *A monoszlói Csupor család osztálylevele 1422-ből*, *Fons* 12/1 (2005), 97: *sub castro Kossuchak*) seems identical to the castrum Kosuchak mentioned in 1334 (Csánki, *Körösmegye* 75.). It was certainly abandoned by 1440 (castrum desertum Kosuchak nuncupatum, Erdődy 11078.). Since the Croatian word *košuta* means *szarvas(ünő)* in Hungarian, we have every reason to suppose that the castle known in Hungarian as Szarvaskő was in fact erected as a sort of “twin” alongside Kosuchak, probably in consequence to a division of land, in the manner of the Kasztellánfi twin fortifications of Szircs and Zselnyak. The connection between Szarvaskő and the castle called Monoszló, also built by the Monoszló kindred sometime before the end of the 13th century (Engel, *Archontológia* I. 368.), is not clear, however. **Kisgerzence** (Minor Gresencze, 1453). Since it appears together with Szarvaskő (Erdődy 11088), it was evidently a different fortification. It must have stood on the estate of Gerzence (Gračenica). Stephen Csupor apparently made no reference to it in his will; see next note.

²⁵¹⁹ **Monoszló** (Körös) (after 1463 – 1492). The *castellum* was certainly erected after the authorisation received from king Matthias. It seems to have stood in the town of Monoszló itself (DF 282453). The words of the testament of

Dersfi	$\frac{1}{2}^{2521}$	2^{2522}	3^{2523}
Gorbonoki	1^{2524}	2^{2525}	1^{2526}
Grebeni/Battyányi	2^{2527}	5^{2528}	7^{2529}
Kasztellánfi	$(2)^{2530}$	2^{2531}	3^{2532}
Kecer	2^{2533}	$(2)^{2534}$	1^{2535}
Lónyai	$\frac{1}{2}^{2536}$	$\frac{1}{2}^{2537}$	$1 + 2 \times \frac{1}{2}^{2538}$

Stephen Csupor (*tam in castro quam in castello*) apparently refer to Szarvaskő and Monoszló (LK 13 [1935] 253-257.). In 1509 it is already referred to as a *castrum*, then in the possession of the Erdődi family (DF 232269).

²⁵²⁰ **Monoszló** (Körös) (DF 231261, DF 282453). **Lovászpata** (Veszprém) (1409 – 1425), it was given by king Sigismund to Stephen and Paul Csupor for announcing to him the news of the birth of his daughter, Elizabeth, and exchanged for Gerzence in 1425 (Erdődy 10092.). **Alsó and Felső Gerzence** oppida (Körös) (1425 – 1492). Gerzence was bequeathed by Stephen Csupor to his wife in 1492. In 1509 they were listed in the possession of Thomas Bakóc (Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 29.).

²⁵²¹ Half of the castle of **Kaposújvár** in the county of Somogy (1403 – beyond 1526). Csánki, Körösmegye 573-574; Engel, Archontológia I. 336.

²⁵²² **Tapalóc** (Körös) (1398 – beyond 1526). **Bat** (Somogy) (before 1444 – 1459, after 1478 – beyond 1526). See Horváth, Kastélyépítési engedélyek 18-19.; Csánki, Körösmegye 17; Somogy Megye Múltjából 3 (1972) 50. (1521).

²⁵²³ **Rojcsa** (DL 15201, DL 32845, DF 255615); **Szentkereszt** (DL 21225); **Szentbenedek** (DL 15272, DL 15274, DF 282494).

²⁵²⁴ **(Bagoly)szentgyörgy** (Zala) (1500 – before 1512).

²⁵²⁵ **Gorbonok** (before 1461 – beyond 1526) (Csánki, Körösmegye 16.). In fact, the castellum called Gorbonok stood in the village Pridvorje (in castello [...] Gorbonok vocato in possessione Prydvorya: DF 232605). **Racsicaszentistván** (1490s?)

²⁵²⁶ **Gorbonok** (DL 101385, DF 232594).

²⁵²⁷ **Greben** (Körös, Varasd, Zagreb) (13th century – early 14th century, regained before 1357, lost again in 1445, reobtained after 1490, but it belongs uniquely to the Batthyány thereafter). **Németújvár** (Vas): Acquisition of Francis Batthyány in 1524.

²⁵²⁸ **Mogor** (1468 – beyond 1526); **Kristallóc** (1469 – beyond 1426); **Újudvar**: (rebuilt before 1490 – beyond 1526); **Desnice** (partly, 1482 – beyond 1526); **Garignica** (1492 – beyond 1526).

²⁵²⁹ **Kristallóc** (Körös) (DL 103933, DF 255589); **Újudvar** (Körös) (DL 45213, DL 100892); **Hrascina** (Zagreb) (DL 101416, DL 104441); **Magyarlak** (Körös) (Csánki, Körösmegye 11.), the latter two belonging to the castle of Greben; **Desnice** (Körös) (in part, DL 101077, DL 102199); **Garignica** (Körös) (DL 101118, DL 45790); **Rákos** (Vas) (DL 104551, belonging to the castle of Németújvár).

²⁵³⁰ **Szircs** (Körös) (1423 – beyond 1526). It is mentioned as a castellum in 1423, but referred to constantly as a castrum from 1457 on (Engel, Archontológia I. 432.; DL 103736, DL 34162, DF 288099, DF 232150); **Zselnyak** (Körös) (1499 – beyond 1526), it is generally called castrum, exceptionally a castellum (DL 108325, DL 107141, DF 219342, DF 232650). Zselnyak seems to have been erected on the estate of Szircs by George Kasztellánfi, and lay quite close to the castle of Szircs itself (D. Szabo). See also Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 30, where Zselnyak is mentioned as the part of George, whereas Szircs as that of Nicholas Kasztellánfi; it seems to attest that the construction of another fortification was consequent to the partition of the estate..

²⁵³¹ **Szentlélek** (Körös) (after 1430 – beyond 1526), once referred to as a castellum seu fortalicium (DF 288099); **Bikszád** (Körös) (cca. 1480 – beyond 1526), only George and John Kasztellánfi. Although occasionally called castrum (DF 274918), I have counted Bikszád among the castella.

²⁵³² **Szentlélek** (Körös) (DL 103759, DF 283653, DF 283653); **Dimicskfölde** (Körös) (DL 106865, DF 283653, DF 255589, here as Mychkowyna); **Mezőkövesd** (Borsod) (DL 86433, DL 67488), the latter only possessed by George and John Kasztellánfi.

²⁵³³ **Lobor** (Varasd) (1523 - ?) (DF 277049); **Lipóc** (Sáros) (1514 - ?).

²⁵³⁴ **(Raszinyakeresztúr)**. It is, in fact, far from sure that Francis Kecer had a share in the castellum which stood on the estate of Raszinya. According to a charter of 1515, Louis Pekri and his wife owned the castellum itself, whereas Francis Kecer and his consort had a simple noble house (*curia nobile*), both buildings standing in the town of Raszinya. DF 277038. **Szlavina** (Körös), presumably acquired with the Hagymás lands (DL 68040), although the castellum is not mentioned in 1514 (DL 60025).

²⁵³⁵ **Raszinyakeresztúr** (in part) (see the references at the Bocskai family).

²⁵³⁶ Half of the castle of **Szircs** (before 1487 – before 1507)

²⁵³⁷ Half of the castellum of **Szentlélek** (see previous note)

²⁵³⁸ **Szentlélek**, **Dimicskfölde**, both in part (see references at the Kasztellánfi); **Namény** (Bereg) (DL 71148 = Perényi család levéltára 794.)

Nelepec	1 ²⁵³⁹	4 ²⁵⁴⁰	3 ²⁵⁴¹
Pekri	1 ²⁵⁴²	9 ²⁵⁴³	5 ²⁵⁴⁴
Pogány	1 (5) ²⁵⁴⁵	1 ²⁵⁴⁶	3
Predrihoi	1 ²⁵⁴⁷		1 ²⁵⁴⁸
Rohfi	4 ²⁵⁴⁹	1 (2) ²⁵⁵⁰	4 ²⁵⁵¹

²⁵³⁹ **Dobrakucsa** (Körös) (1358 – 1474)

²⁵⁴⁰ **Dobrakucsa/Kőalja** (Körös) (built by Francis Nelepeci in the early 16th century on the appurtenances of Dobrakucsa). **Kővár** (Körös) (built by the Nelepeci family in the early 1470s, destroyed before 1476. Csánki, Körösmegye 45. is wrong in identifying this Kővár with the one later in the possession of the Szapolyai family.) **Levać**: in Bosnia, belonging to the Nelepec prior to 1451. **Businc** (Körös) (inherited by Francis Nelepeci from his father-in-law, Elias Bosnyák.)

²⁵⁴¹ **Csütörtökhely, Hévíz** (Körös) (Csánki, Körösmegye 45.) (both belonging to the castle of Dobrakucsa, and lost with it after 1474. We have seen above, however, that Francis Nelepeci at least owned portions of them in the early 16th century.) **Kravarina** (Körös) (originally also an appurtenance of Dobrakucsa, later apparently separated from it.

²⁵⁴² **Oszterc** (Varasd) (1513 – 1518), only Louis Pekri.

²⁵⁴³ **Mogor** (Körös) (? – 1427); **Garignica** (in part, and only in the 1460s); we are in a more difficult situation as regards the fortification(s) which existed at Petrovina. The castellum called **Kalinovc** is first referred in 1523, and another fortification, also standing at Petrovina, named **Kukinovc** (Kwkynewcz) turns up in 1530 (castrum Kwkynewcz cum districtu Pethrowyna, Šišić, Acta Comititalia I. 263.), and also simultaneously with Kalinovc (Laszowski, Monumenta Habsburgica II 470.). Since, as we have seen above, in 1493 a castellan called Barnabás is mentioned among the Pekri *familiares*, it may be supposed that at least one of them already existed at that time. **Szentlőrinc** (Körös) (1502 – until the coming of age of Wolfgang Szencsei); **Kustyerolc** (Körös) (1502 - ?); **Raszinya** (1502 – beyond 1526) only Louis Pekri and his sons. **Gudovc, Oresja** (Körös) (only John Pekri).

²⁵⁴⁴ **Garignica** (Körös) (in part) (DL 45790, DL 101118, DL 107100); **Szentpéter** (Körös). Szentpéter is first mentioned as a market town in 1529 (Laszowski, Monumenta Habsburgica I. 161.), but it is very probable that the huge estate of Petrovina boasted at least one such settlement before 1526 as well; **Raszinya** (in part) and **Szentlőrinc** (see the references at the Pekri), only Louis Pekri. **Szentmárton** (Varasd), on the appurtenances of Oszterc, only as long as the castle itself was in the hands of the Pekri.

²⁵⁴⁵ **Pozsony** (Pozsony) (1491? - ?); **Hunyad** (Hunyad) (1498 – 1501?), both by right of pledge. **Veszprém, Sümeg** (Veszprém) (1522 - ?) (also in pledge); **Kövesd** (Zemplén c.) (1503 - ?); **Szentgrót** (Zala) (1499 - ?); Peter Pogány was indeed introduced into the castle and the estate, but even if he held it until his death, he surely did not bequeath it to his cousins, for it was not mentioned by Sigismund Pogány in 1510.

²⁵⁴⁶ **Herbortya** (Oslovc) (Körös) (after 1453 – beyond 1526); **Rohonc** (Vas) before 1493, only Peter Pogány; **Úrmező** (Máramaros) (1495 - ?) (DL 106083/378.).

²⁵⁴⁷ **Oszterc** (Varasd) (1497 – 1513)

²⁵⁴⁸ **Szentmárton** (Varasd) (belonging to the castle of Oszterc)

²⁵⁴⁹ **Veszele/Dianvára** (Körös), Nerjuk (Körös). Determining the exact number of fortifications in the possession of the Rohfi family is one of the most intricate problems. The relevant pieces of information in chronological order are as follow: 1412: castrum Vezelye nuncupatum [Alsó-szlavóniai okmánytár 143.]; 1433: Ladislav, son of John Roh „dominus castri in Wesalia” [Lukinović, Povijesni spomenici VI. 352.]; 1446: castrum Nerywk [DL 103608]; 1466 [DL 45213]: „sub castro suo Nerywk”; 1476: „in possessionibus Dyanfeld, Kothenna et Kaptolovcz [...] necnon totalium porcionum possessionariarum in Podgorya ac castelli Nerywk” [DL 103787]; 1479: „ad viam publicam qua pergitur de Kuthenna versus Dyanwara” [DL 107041]; 1482: „super castro Nerywk” [DL 102216]; 1484: „castelli Nyeryrwk” [DL 102223]; 1494: „ad possessionem Decche consequenterque castellanum et waydam egregii Bernardi Roh in castro Dyanwara et predicta possessione Decche constitutos” [DL 101155]; 1495: „in castro Dyanwara” [DF 219074]; 1495: „Jobagiones egregii Mathie Rohfy de Deche in pertinenciis castri sui Dyanowcz commorantes; ecclesia sancti Ladislai in Dyanfelde fundata” [DL 104042]; 1503: „nobilis Georgius de Zowkoyna castellanus egregii Valentini Erdedi de Monozlo per eundem in castro suo Dyanwara constitutus [...] (unacum) jobagionibus eiusdem Valentini Erdedi in pertinenciis Decze prescripta ac castri Dianfelde (!) commorantibus” [DL 107147]; 1523: „castellano de Plowdyn” [DL 34192]; After 1526: Dyanwara et Ploudin arces et Cothin oppidum; Castellanfy: petit ut assecuracio sibi facta super castro Dyanwara extendatur eciam ad castellum Plowdyn et oppidum Kothenna, quia asserit illa pertinere ad Dyanwara...” What is clear is that three fortifications in the course of the 15th century are referred to as castrum: Veszele, Dianvára and Nerjuk. Since they never turn up simultaneously in the sources, Csánki (Körösmegye 42.) and Engel (Archontológia I. 301.) thought that two of them or even all three are in fact identical. I accept the opinion of Engel, who identified Veszele with later Dianvára, for in 1412 the possession of Dianföde is said to belong to the castle of Veszele; Dianvára, on the other hand, according to the charter of 1494, was the fortification belonging to the estate of Déce. As for Nerjuk, two charters make it evident that it stood on the estate of Podgorja: one of them was cited above,

Rohonci	1		1
Szencsei	2 (4) ²⁵⁵²	4 ²⁵⁵³	3 ²⁵⁵⁴
Tahi	2 ²⁵⁵⁵	3 ²⁵⁵⁶	4 ²⁵⁵⁷
Tulbert	1 ²⁵⁵⁸		1 ²⁵⁵⁹
Turóci	3 ²⁵⁶⁰		3 ²⁵⁶¹
Fáncs	(2) ²⁵⁶²	(1) ²⁵⁶³	3 ²⁵⁶⁴
Ervencei		3 ²⁵⁶⁵	2 ²⁵⁶⁶

from 1476, which clearly associates Podgorja with Nerjuk; the other, a mutilated charter from 1501, which seems to prove that the castellum stood in Podgorja itself (DL 94295: although the most important part of the charter disappeared, since the remaining part of it revolves around Podgorja, it is clear that the phrase „castellum Nerwyk vocatum in eadem habitum” should refer to it.). **Kozara** (Szana) (1473 – 1481), only Ladislav Roh; **Berstyánóc** (Körös) (1470s), Ladislav Roh by right of guardianship.

²⁵⁵⁰ **Kutenya** (Körös) (1463 - ?) stood in the market town of the same name. It may be identical to **Plovdiv**, which after 1526 is connected to the town of Kutenya (see previous note), whereas castellum Kutenya turns up for the last time in 1494. In 1412 another castellum of the Rohfi is attested at **Szencse** (Alsó-szlavóniai okmánytár 143.), which, however, never turns up any more.

²⁵⁵¹ **Kutenya** (Körös) (DL 106880, DL 103843, DF 232010); **Décse** (Körös) (DL 32833); **Tolnavár** (Tolna) (Csánki); **Cekno** (belonging to the castle of Berstyánóc) (DL 101507, Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 31.)

²⁵⁵² **Fejérvő** (before 1440/44?); **Szombathely** (before 1442 – beyond 1526), on the appurtenances of Szencse. It is alternatively called *castrum* and *castellum* (DL 74528, Klaić: Plemići 42-43; DL 106834, DL 25510), yet I counted it among the castles; John Szencsei and his son from Catherine Velikei, Francis, acquired portions of the Velikei lands in Pozsega, among them in the castles of **Velike** and **Petnyevára**. Since in 1502 Francis Szencsei, together with John Matucsinaí and Emeric and John Fáncs of Gordova, had castellans of his own in both castles (quoad castellanos ipsorum in pretactis castris Welyke et Pethnyewar, DL 88870), they should also be listed among the Szencsei fortifications.

²⁵⁵³ **Csubin** (Zagreb); **Rakovaz** and **Novi** (Orbász). **Svinjar** (?) (before 1450, DF 255734). On Szombathely, sometimes called a castellum, see the previous note. **Szentlőrinc** (Körös), belonging only to Wolfgang Szencsei. I did not find in the sources the castellum allegedly standing at Szencse itself in 1502 (Csánki, Körösmegye 37.).

²⁵⁵⁴ **Szencseszentdemeter** (Körös) (Csánki, Körösmegye 37.). Szentdemeter, in fact, never turns up as an oppidum, and was ranked as such by Csánki because it boasted fairs. **Szombathely** (Körös) (DL 19210, here as Zobotha); **Szentlőrinc**: only Wolfgang Szencsei (for the references see the Pekri)

²⁵⁵⁵ **Pekrec** (Körös) (from 1522); **Csurgó** (Somogy) from 1522 (DL 23657).

²⁵⁵⁶ **Zvinica** (Zagreb) (1507 - ?) (DF 232208, DF 232383); **Gorbonok** (1512 – beyond 1526). **Krassó** (Baranya) (from 1522) (DL 23657).

²⁵⁵⁷ **Gorbonok** (see the references at the Gorbonoki family); **Csurgó** (Somogy) (Csánki, Történelmi földrajz II. 577); **Rassa** (Körös) (Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 31.); **Lesnekhegy** (Körös) (DL 107119), the latter three from 1522 (DL 23657). As with the castles and castella, I only counted those which were certainly in the hands of prior Matthias in 1522, although the agreement also extended to those to be redeemed by John Tahi thereafter. Since the agreement included the wife and children of Tahi, it is certainly legitimate to treat these possessions, although owned by the priory, as belonging to the family patrimony of John Tahi as long as the mortgage lasted.

²⁵⁵⁸ **Berstyánóc** (Körös) (1439 – c. 1507)

²⁵⁵⁹ **Cekno** (on the appurtenances of Berstyánóc, see at the Rohfi family)

²⁵⁶⁰ **Belec** (Varasd) (before 1456 – beyond 1526); **Ludbreg** (Körös) (before 1454 – beyond 1526); **Szigliget** (Zala) (before 1482), only George Turóci.

²⁵⁶¹ **Ludbreg** (Körös, belonging to the castle of the same name) (DF 275003, DL 103824); **Csorna**, **Beled** (Sopron) (Engel, Világi nagybirtok 71.)

²⁵⁶² Emeric and John Fáncs acquired portions in the castles of **Velike** and **Petnyevára** (Pozsega) through their mother, Dorottya Velikei. For the references see above at the Szencsei castles.

²⁵⁶³ **Gordova** (Körös) (before 1455 – beyond Mohács). I do not count the castle which stood at Gordova in the 13th century, and the fortification which replaced it later is never called a castrum. It is possible, moreover, that more than one existed on the estate.

²⁵⁶⁴ **Gordova** (Körös) (DF 255801, DL 100865, DL 101413) **Korpád**, **Mesztegnyő** (in part, Somogy) (C. Tóth, Gordovai Fáncs család 279; Csánki, Körösmegye 579.)

²⁵⁶⁵ **Ervence** (Körös) (after 1439? – before 1526? In that year it is referred to as *locum castelli in districtu et provincia Erwenceze*; **Atak** (Visnice, Zagreb) (before 1481 – after 1525) (DF 255849, ??); **Szvibovc** (Körös) (only Ladislav and Stanislas Ervencei) (1461 – 1487)

Dombai		3 ²⁵⁶⁷	2 ²⁵⁶⁸
Musinai		3 ²⁵⁶⁹	
Gudovci		2 ²⁵⁷⁰	1 (2) ²⁵⁷¹
Kapitánfi		1 (2) ²⁵⁷²	1 (2) ²⁵⁷³
Kerecsényi		2 ²⁵⁷⁴	
Pan of Kravarina		1 ²⁵⁷⁵	2 ²⁵⁷⁶
Megyericsei		1 ²⁵⁷⁷	1 ²⁵⁷⁸
Pozsegai		1 ²⁵⁷⁹	1 ²⁵⁸⁰
Berivojszentiváni		1 ²⁵⁸¹	1 ²⁵⁸²
Kamarcai		1 ²⁵⁸³	1 ²⁵⁸⁴
Paschingar		1 ²⁵⁸⁵	1 ²⁵⁸⁶
Kristallóci 1		1 ²⁵⁸⁷	1 ²⁵⁸⁸
Kristallóci 2		1 ²⁵⁸⁹	1 ²⁵⁹⁰
Stefekfi		1 ²⁵⁹¹	1 ²⁵⁹²

²⁵⁶⁶ **Ervence** (Körös) (DF 232719); **Szobocsina** (Körös) (DL 100723, DL 103896, DL 103912) (only Ladislas and Stanislas Ervencei).

²⁵⁶⁷ **Zákány** (Somogy) (1450 - ?); **Kontovc** (Körös) (perhaps given to David Dombai by Lawrence Újlaki); (**Gorbonok**) It is, in fact, impossible to tell whether the Dombai had a share in the castellum at Gorbonok, or they constructed one for themselves; the fact that before 1490 Francis Dombai pledged *his* castellum of Gorbonok (castellum quondam Francisci de Dombo Gorbonok appellatum, DF 231834) to Peter Gudovci points in this latter direction.

²⁵⁶⁸ **Gorbonok** (see references above at the Gorbonoki); **Zákány** (Somogy).

²⁵⁶⁹ **Musina** (Körös) (before 1406 – 1440s?; before 1481 – beyond 1526); **Szenterzsébet** (Somogy) (1406 – 1460s); **Berzence** (Somogy) (before 1444 – 1460s). In the late Jagello period both Szenterzsébet and Berzence are called castrum (DF 277175/335., DL 101600), since, however, they were not held by the Musinai then, I counted them among the castella.

²⁵⁷⁰ **Gudovc** (Körös) (1482? – 1520); **Oresja** (Körös).

²⁵⁷¹ **Gudovc** (Körös) (DF 274988, DF 231939), **Jakószerdahely** (Körös, only in part) (DL 32845, DL 107608).

²⁵⁷² **Desnice** (Körös) (mid-15th c.? – beyond 1526); **Garignica** (only Andrew Kapitánfi, for a very brief period before 1482.)

²⁵⁷³ **Desnice** (DL 102199, DL 102223, DL 101077); **Garignica**, see previous note.

²⁵⁷⁴ **Cirkvena** (Körös) (1498 – beyond 1526); **Kányafölde** (Zala) (before 1516 - ?)

²⁵⁷⁵ **Temenice** (Körös) (before 1495 - ?)

²⁵⁷⁶ **Temenice** (DL 101339); **Kravarina** (see above)

²⁵⁷⁷ **Megyericse** (Körös) (14th c. - ?)

²⁵⁷⁸ **Megyericse** (DL 107022, DL 34240, DL 106845).

²⁵⁷⁹ **Garignica** (Körös) (1473 – c. 1481).

²⁵⁸⁰ **Garignica** (for the references see at the Pekri)

²⁵⁸¹ **Berivojszentiván/Jalovc** (Körös) (before 1415 – after 1484).

²⁵⁸² **Berivojszentiván** (DL 100896, DL 102251). Once even *civitas* (!): Erdődy 11074 (“in civitate Zenthivan”)

²⁵⁸³ **Tulova** (Körös)

²⁵⁸⁴ **Jakószerdahely** (in part, see the references at the Gudovci)

²⁵⁸⁵ **Garignica** (1454/1455 – c. 1464) (see above)

²⁵⁸⁶ **Garignica** (see above)

²⁵⁸⁷ **Kristallóc.**

²⁵⁸⁸ **Kristallóc** (see above).

²⁵⁸⁹ **Kristallóc** (1428 – 1470).

²⁵⁹⁰ **Kristallóc.**

²⁵⁹¹ **Temenica.**

²⁵⁹² **Szentandrás** (see above)

Ost		1	
Cirkvenai		(1) ²⁵⁹³	
Kustyer		1 ²⁵⁹⁴	
Tamasovci		1 ²⁵⁹⁵	
Bosnyák		1 ²⁵⁹⁶	
Hásságyi		1	
Latkfi		1 ²⁵⁹⁷	
Bakolcai		1 ²⁵⁹⁸	
Bikszádi		1 ²⁵⁹⁹	
Kerhen	1/3 ²⁶⁰⁰		1 ²⁶⁰¹
Prasovci		1 ²⁶⁰²	
Frodnohar		1 ²⁶⁰³	
Borotva		1 ²⁶⁰⁴	
Budor		1	
Vojkfi		(1) ²⁶⁰⁵	
Pataki		(1) ²⁶⁰⁶	
Mindszenti?	(1/2) ²⁶⁰⁷		
Jakószerdahelyi			1 ²⁶⁰⁸

The list of course suffers from several shortcomings. First of all, in a number of cases, especially in the lower regions of the list, it is impossible to indicate the time of the acquisition (or construction) of the individual fortifications, as well as of the market towns. Fortifications and market towns

²⁵⁹³ **Cirkvena** (Körös) (in case the castellum was indeed constructed by the Cirkvenai family.

²⁵⁹⁴ **Kustyerolc.**

²⁵⁹⁵ **Tamasovc** (Körös).

²⁵⁹⁶ **Businc** (Körös)

²⁵⁹⁷ **Mogor/Latkovina** (Körös) (1414 – 1475)

²⁵⁹⁸ **Bakolca** (Körös) (? - ?)

²⁵⁹⁹ **Bikszád.**

²⁶⁰⁰ **Berstyanóc.**

²⁶⁰¹ **Endrejevc/Szentendre** (Verőce) (DF 252251, see Adamček – Kampuš, Popisi 43, 70.).

²⁶⁰² **Csányó** (Körös).

²⁶⁰³ **Bednya** (Körös).

²⁶⁰⁴ **Tersztenice** (Körös).

²⁶⁰⁵ **Vojkkeresztúr**, if the erection of the castellum can indeed be attributed to Nicholas Vojkfi. I do not count the castellum of the Garázda of Istvándi family in the county of Somogy, for this branch of the kindred can no more be counted among the noble families of Körös.

²⁶⁰⁶ According to Tibor Koppány (Középkori kastélyok), who had received the information from Pál Engel, a castellum is mentioned in 1482 in the possession of Albert Pataki at **Vinarc**. Although I have not found the charter in question, the thing seems very probable.

²⁶⁰⁷ Half of **Dobrakucsá**. Although, as we have seen above, the acquisition of half of the estate of Dobrakucsá was an important step in the temporary rise of the Mindszenti, the preceding and consequent career of the family would by no means justify their inclusion in the first group (with castles).

²⁶⁰⁸ **Jakószerdahely.**

could also be lost in the course of time, thereby diminishing the wealth and status of a given family. Moreover, there could exist enormous differences between the fortifications and market towns themselves in terms of size, population, revenues and prestige. What is also impossible to indicate on the table is the division of wealth within the families, which sometimes resulted in huge inequalities; I will return to these later. Another difficulty stems from the problem of defining exactly what can be regarded as constituting a given family's property. For instance, I have adopted the *castellum* of Garignica among the fortifications of the Pekri family, on the assumption that Susan Pekri belonged to the family, and she not only possessed the fortification but also introduced her kinsmen of the other branch at least into portions of the estate of Garignica itself. Yet nothing proves beyond doubt that the latter had access to the *castellum*, even in periods when it was not possessed by the subsequent husbands of Susan. Moreover, considerable differences were caused by the number of individuals sharing one given object at a given time; that is, one market town owned by five close kinsmen simultaneously represented a lesser value than one owned by a single individual alone. The table, although thus unfit for showing more than the main trends, is nevertheless highly indicative in several regards.

To begin with, the possession of one or more castles (*castrum*), although predominantly a feature of aristocratic landholding, was in the county of Körös by no means restricted to persons of baronial status. Members of the families which fall in this group were as a rule accorded the *egregius* title, and, with two exceptions, all the families which gave barons in the course of the period of this study, also belonged to this group.²⁶⁰⁹ It is legitimate to ask, then, whether they are in fact to be treated as members of the aristocracy? If we take a closer look at the baronial career of the individuals concerned, we see that in each case there are anomalies which make it impossible to regard them as regular. Peter Bocskai, ban of Slavonia for some months in 1476, was accordingly titled *magnificus* then, but soon returned to office as the deputy of his successor, and was called *egregius* ever after. The Turóci gave even two barons, but, as we have seen, George continued to be titled *egregius* between the two terms of his office-holding, and so did his nephews and their sons before and after Mohács. A parallel case is that of the Csupor: neither the banate of Paul Csupor, nor the offices of his brother in the queen's court involved material acquisitions which would have definitively established the family's status among the aristocracy. As for Nicholas Csupor, he personally was beyond doubt one of the favourites of king Matthias, but his kinsman Stephen inherited neither his lands nor his prestige; while in some cases earned, at least locally, the *magnificus* title, he was generally titled a mere *egregius*. Again, Peter Pogány did become

²⁶⁰⁹ Batthyány, Bocskai, Csupor, Dersfi, Pogány, Tahi, Turóci. The Fánics may not be regarded as exceptional if we count their share in the two castles in the county of Pozsega. Thus the only case apart would remain that of the Dombai.

magnificus during his brief officeholding as master of the janitors, but none of his kinsmen ever received the title before or after.

The case of the Dersfi, while similar, again shows peculiarities of its own. Martin Ders, who had earned several merits in the first critical years of king Sigismund's reign as the deputy of several lords, was rewarded after the consolidation with a baronial post at the court, and, although he fell out of the circles of government only two years later, he counted among the barons until his death; yet his descendants were again only *egregii*, and his great-grandson returned to office as Slavonian viceban later. As regards the Batthyány, Francis was appointed as master of the cupbearers and then as ban of Slavonia at the very end of our period, and his baronial career leads us well beyond 1526, but there is no sufficient reason to treat his father, who held the office of viceban several times, although he was at least occasionally titled *magnificus*,²⁶¹⁰ and his brother, as members of the aristocracy.

There is, on the other hand, an intimate relationship between this group and the office of the Slavonian viceban. A look at the next table will certainly prove this:

Families/persons holding the office of viceban more than once 1400-1526		
NAME	NUMBER OF TERMS	YEARS OF OFFICEHOLDING ALTOGETHER
Ladislás Szencsei sen.	1	7
Ladislás Szencsei jun.	4	10
Adam Kasztellánfi	1	2
Peter Kasztellánfi	1	4
Gaspar Kasztellánfi	1	2
Nicholas Kasztellánfi	2	4
Akacius Kasztellánfi	1	2
George Kasztellánfi	1	1
Herman Grebeni	1	2
Ladislás Grebeni	2	5
Balthasar Battyányi	3	5
Ladislás Roh of Dégse	3	5
Bernard Roh of Dégse	1	1
Peter Bocskai	5	14

²⁶¹⁰ For the references see the relevant section of the chapter on the Grebeni/Batthyány.

Benedict Turóci	1	2
Bernard Turóci	3	6
Balthasar Alapi	3	11
Louis Pekri	3 (4)	3
Michael Kerhen	2	5
Sum	39	91

With one exception, all the families which gave more than one viceban to Slavonia, or at least one of whose members held the office several times, belonged to the group which is characterised by the possession of castles. If we add the Csupor and Predrihoi families, which also furnished vicebans, the relationship becomes even more evident. These families were interconnected by marriage relationships, to be analysed later, and the office was regularly transmitted from generation to generation. The term „dynasty of Slavonian vicebans”, used with reference to the Kasztellánfi family,²⁶¹¹ can thus justly be extended to almost the whole group. It should be remarked, however, that these families, with one exception, were also the greatest non-baronial landholders of the county, having roughly 200 to 600 tenant sessions, and at least one, but frequently more *castella* and market towns. The possession of castles was thus intimately linked to the size of land and involved in most cases to the possession of *castella* and market towns.

The relationship is not automatic, however. The Fánecs family, which, if we count its whole landed wealth in Slavonia and outside, was perhaps the greatest landowner among all the families examined in the framework of the present research, and even gave a baron during the reign of Sigismund, apparently never boasted a castle, and furnished only one Slavonian viceban. The situation is the same with the Dombai family. The family never had a castle either in or outside Slavonia;²⁶¹² Nicholas nevertheless temporarily rose among the barons in the early phase of king Matthias' reign, which surely played a role in the fact that during the 1470s he was apparently regarded as the most prestigious among the Slavonian nobility.²⁶¹³ The case of the Tahi family is also exceptional, and reveals some of the difficulties inherent to any similar approach: upon the death of his maternal uncle, Bartholomew Beriszló, John Tahi inherited all the castles of the priory of Vrana, which, however, he was forced to return to the king shortly thereafter. Consequently, he only possessed the estate of Gorbonok and the *castellum* there, until, some ten years later, he was able to acquire from another prior of Vrana two castles belonging to the priory by right of pledge. Nevertheless, although consequently appointed as ban of Slavonia in 1524, he was only partly recognised by the local nobility. So was, indeed, his fellow-ban, Francis Battyányi, even if after

²⁶¹¹ Mačcek – Jurković, Rodoslov plemića 23.

²⁶¹² The castle at Zákány is referred to for the last time in 1325: Engel, Archontológia, I. 464

²⁶¹³ In both 1474 and 1478 he is listed at the first place among the representatives of the Slavonian nobility.

Mohács both of them definitively entered the baronage. On the other hand, the Tulbert family, whose fortification at Berstyanóc was without exception referred to as a castle, but whose landed wealth certainly fell short of 100 tenant sessions, gave neither a viceban to Slavonia nor a baron to the royal court; yet if we have a look at their marriage relationships, and their service, which we will do in a moment, we find that they indeed belong to the same group as the Fáncs and the Dombai. A case apart is that of Michael Kerhen, alone holding the office of viceban twice without having a castle or at least a *castellum*; we shall later return to him.

Yet more castles did not automatically mean more authority. We have seen that for some time in the 1470s Ladislas Roh of Dégse possessed alone or jointly as many as four constructions constantly referred to as castles, that is, more than anyone else among his peers in Slavonia, and more than a good number of barons in 1490;²⁶¹⁴ however, unlike, for instance, Balthasar Batthyány, or Stephen Csupor, he was not even occasionally accorded the *magnificus* title,²⁶¹⁵ and, at least as far as we can know, he was never in the position to start a baronial career even in the limited sense analysed above. It is also highly indicative that on the only occasion that he was listed first among the Slavonian nobility in 1471 the reason seems to have been that he was viceban at that time, for he dropped back in 1474 and 1478, although his material wealth, and especially the number of castles he possessed, did not diminish. A similar example is that of the Pogány family: despite the number and, indeed, the importance of the castles acquired by hereditary right or that of pledge, with the brief and ephemeral exception of Peter Pogány, they proved unable to break out from the *egregius* group.

What is evident, then, is that the possession of a castle, although significant to a certain extent, cannot be regarded as a strict line of division within the nobility. Right below the possessors of castles comes a group of nobility which certainly falls into the same social category, owning as a rule one or more *castella*: members of these families were also regularly given the *egregius* title, and several among them also served as Slavonian vicebans.²⁶¹⁶ They were also united by multiple ties of marriage to the castle-possessing families, as we will see in another chapter below.

The possession of another type of fortification, referred to in our sources as *castellum*, seems to have been a much more widespread phenomenon. The form and function of this type of construction have been debated in modern Hungarian historiography,²⁶¹⁷ but its significance in

²⁶¹⁴ Engel, *Világi nagybirtok* 52-53.

²⁶¹⁵ Several years after the extinction of the family, in 1513, Stephen Rohfi did indeed receive the *magnificus* title (“*Katherine [...] filie [...] magnifici quondam Stephani Roffy de Deche*”, DL 94321); this, of course, does nothing to counter the fact that before 1495 no member of the family received the title.

²⁶¹⁶ Alongside the families listed in the previous paragraph, the Gudovci, Pozsegai, Gorbonoki, Herbortyai, Kapitánfi, Ervencei, Paschingar, Kerecsényi, Bosnyák and Bikszádi families certainly belong to this category.

²⁶¹⁷ Richárd Horváth, “Várak és uraik a késő középkori Magyarországon. Vázlat a kutatás néhány lehetőségéről” [Castles and their Lords in Late Medieval Hungary. On the Possible Directions of Future Research], in Tibor Neumann and György Rácz eds., *Honoris causa. Tanulmányok Engel Pál tiszteletére* (Budapest – Piliscsaba, 2009) with literature.

terms of social prestige is beyond doubt. It had very evident defensive functions,²⁶¹⁸ especially in case of Ottoman incursions, which obviously enhanced the local authority of their owners. At the same time, they were envisaged as centres of power from which the neighbouring countryside could be terrorised and even armed opposition to royal authority organised.²⁶¹⁹ It is no surprise, then, that only a handful among the families examined, and evidently those which were the less prominent among them by any standards, proved unable to acquire or build a *castellum* for themselves. The best proof of the social prestige which followed from the possession of at least one *castellum* is the fact that those persons who rose from the ranks of the conditional nobility (or the *prediales*) all helped themselves to one as soon as they were in a position to do so. This is clear in the case of Peter Gudovci and Stephen Prasovci, but also in that of Albert Pataki, if indeed he had a *castellum* built at Vinarc. The possession of a fortification can in this sense be regarded as the sign of an “accomplished rise”, which made it manifest to one’s neighbours that he had already entered the “upper regions” of the local nobility.²⁶²⁰ Along the same reasoning we may at least suspect that the motivation behind Andrew Kapitánfi’s marrying the widow of Nicholas Pozsegai was the desire to have a *castellum* of his own; after all, he had been viceban for several years, and, whereas his colleagues in the office, Ladislav Szencsei and Peter Bocskai, had more than one each, Andrew still had to share one single fortification with his brothers. It is, moreover, surely not accidental that Francis Nelepeci, who made his way back to the top nobility after the catastrophes which had befallen his family in the 1460s and 1470s, took to the construction of a fortification on the remaining portions of his family estate as soon as he had manoeuvred himself into a position to do so, and was willing to provoke resistance which reached the royal court and involved the greatest magnates of the neighbourhood in order to get it completed.

It should be remarked that the tripartite division of noble residences which can be observed in Hungary (*castrum – castellum – domus nobilitaris*) is far from isolated: in France, *château – maison forte – manoir* (Contamine, *Noblesse Française* 153-160), in England: *castle – moated site – manor house* (Michael Prestwich, *Plantagenet England 1225-1360* (Oxford: OUP, 2005) 18-19) seem to represent the same categories with the appropriate social patterns associated to them.

²⁶¹⁸ Already in the 1470s, when the Erveneci brothers made an agreement with Michael Oresjai and his wife and relatives, one of the stipulations maintained that “*quandocumque fuga generalis Turcorum hoc regnum invadencium contingerit*”, the Erveneci would be bound to let the other party into the *castellum* of Szvibovc “*pro personarum et rerum suorum profugio et salute*”: DL 103771. Such an agreement could also extend to the peasants, as happened in the case of Desnice between the Kapitánfi brothers and Ladislav Hermanfi (DL 107065.). That these agreements reflected real practice is proved by a case from 1494, when, in the course of an Ottoman raid, one of the tenants of Philip Businci indeed took refuge in Gudovc (“*cum omnibus rebus et bonis suis ad oppidum Gwdowcz sepeditum introisset*”), which then was already protected by a *castellum*. DF 231939.

²⁶¹⁹ See, for instance, the decree of the general assembly of Pest from 1448: “*nobiles regni Sclavonie rogat, ut castella et fortalicia ex quibus plurima spolia et furticinia perpetrata et commissa sint, precipue castellum Rachehe Johannis filii Juga, demoliantur*”. As early as 1408 the later Batthyány were acquitted of the charge of infidelity on grounds that at their estate of Szentjakab existed no fortification from where any act of infidelity could have been committed (Rácz, “Egy főnemesi család” 336. n. 186). In 1456 Simon Nagy and his companions were accused by the king of having committed all kinds of evil from the *castellum* of Garignica (Pálosfalvi, “Vitovec János” 438.), whereas in 1482 we see very much the same accusations in the charter of king Matthias with which he declared Andrew Kapitánfi guilty of infidelity.

²⁶²⁰ „For the gentry, manor houses and moated sites provided a means of displaying wealth and demonstrating a position in society”: Prestwich, *Plantagenet England* 19.

Somewhat in contrast to castles, numbers counted evidently, in striking accordance with the charter of 1490 cited above; otherwise it would be difficult to explain why Ladislas Hermanfi, who had possessed two *castella* since 1469, nevertheless rebuilt a third one, that of Újudvar, which had been in ruins at the time of its acquisition in 1456. Yet from the present point of view the most important is the undeniable correspondence between the *egregius* title and the possession of at least one *castellum*. With very few exceptions,²⁶²¹ all the *castella* in the late medieval county of Körös which were not owned by the families examined by the present dissertation, belonged to magnate families which otherwise also possessed castles there. And almost all those who did not possess any within our target group, belong to those whose rise into the *egregius* group proved ephemeral and did not involve substantial material acquisitions.²⁶²² The only real exception is the Kerhen family, which, to judge by the long and successful career of Michael Kerhen, surely did not lack the means to acquire or build a *castellum* of its own; if we are not facing a mere illusion caused by the lacunae of our sources, there is no plausible explanation for this fact.²⁶²³

As for the market towns, it seems that their possession reached less deep in the social ladder than that of *castella*. In general, it can be said that all those families with castles, and many of those with at least one *castellum* possessed at least one market town as well. These two groups roughly contain those families whose members were regularly titled *egregius* by our sources. In this sense, the joint possession of a fortification of whichever type, and of a market town, seems to be an important social marker within the leading nobility of the county. Then comes another group with a *castellum* without a market town, which is characterised by the irregular attribution of the *egregius* title. Yet, as usual, there are important exceptions to the rule: the Berivojszentiváni, for example, which boasted both a *castellum* and a market town, only received the title intermittently, whereas Elias Bosnyák, or the Kerecsényi, who are never recorded as having an *oppidum*, are titled *egregius* all the time nevertheless. Here, as elsewhere, one has to count with factors which are simply impossible to examine upon the surviving source material: the size of the market towns, and the eventual existence of fairs and markets and the revenues stemming from them,²⁶²⁴ which evidently

²⁶²¹ One of the few exceptions is the Moravci family: Paul was *szolgabíró* in Körös at the very end of the 15th century (DL 46406, DF 232029), and in 1524 a *castellum* is mentioned at Moravc owned by Paul and his two sons (DF 277175/166).

²⁶²² Fodorovci, Jakószerdahelyi, Kopinci, Orros, Pálfi, Tompa. The exception in this sense would be the Pataki family, which, despite the erection of a *castellum* at Vinarc, proved unable to remain a member of the noble elite.

²⁶²³ Sometime in the 1510s the son of Michael, Nicholas Kerhen, did begin the construction of a fortified house on his possession of Banc, which belonged to the castle of Berstyanóc. That it was intended to be fortified is implicitly proved by the protest of Balthasar Batthyány, who tried with all possible means to prevent Nicholas from finishing his house. The conflict ended with a compromise: Balthasar consented to the building, but with the condition that Nicholas Kerhen would never be allowed to erect a *castellum* at the same place to the detriment of his own *castellum* of Mogor (“*idem Nicolaus Kerhen aut sui heredes in eodem loco dicte domus et curie nobilitaris castellum sive fortalitium aliquod in preiudicium veteris fortalicii sive castelli eiusdem Balthasaris Mogor vocati, in cuius vicinitate possessio ipsa Bancz sita foret construere et erigere non valeat neque possint*”, DL 104538).

²⁶²⁴ The involvement of fairs into the analysis as a further factor of measuring noble wealth would probably not add too much new information to the discussion. On the one hand, references to fairs are even more sporadic than the mentions

influenced the social status of their owners and their capacities to dominate. In one sense the number of market towns seems to be an excellent and undeniable indicator of social stratification, nevertheless: namely in defining the line demarcating our group of well-to-do nobility from the aristocracy above. If one compares the list of aristocratic wealth expressed in terms of castles, *castella* and market towns in 1490²⁶²⁵ with the similar list above, it becomes evident that it is the number of the latter which marks most saliently the difference between the aristocracy and the rich nobility below: whereas, with but one exception, the number of market towns owned by the aristocracy was at least three, but in the majority of cases considerably more, the non-baronial Slavonian families generally had but one or two. The real exception to this rule is the Batthyány family, with as many as six market towns at the end of the Middle Ages; it is no surprise, then, that they were the only family within our target group to enter the aristocracy definitively in the very years around Mohács. The Csupor, Kasztellánfi, Dersfi, Fánecs, Pogány, Tahi, Turóci, Rohfi and Pekri families, each with three or four market towns at some time, are not so evident exceptions; it should be remarked, however, that either baronial office-holding, or aristocratic marriages or both likewise signal out the first seven, whereas Louis Pekri precisely rose to become a dominant figure of the Slavonian nobility after having united his own paternal lands with the heritage of Peter Bocskai and the *castella* and market towns belonging to it. Thus the only exceptional case would remain that of the Rohfi, which, as we have seen, also proved anomalous as regards their fortifications.

Here again, as with castles, we should avoid going too far in putting weight on numbers. The Kapitánfi brothers, having but one single *castellum* and one market town belonging to it, were as consequently titled *egregius* as the Dersfi with their two *castella* and three market towns. And they continued to be so even after they had been forced to share their possessions with Ladislas

of market towns; they most frequently turn up in connection with violent actions committed against people going to, or coming from, fairs. On the other hand, whatever information we have seems to prove that fairs were in fact a dominant feature of market towns, so that their investigation would lead to the same conclusion. In the period under discussion here, the following fairs are mentioned as held by landlords other than barons and ecclesiastical institutions (in brackets I indicate the reference, always only one, and the family, or the successive families, which owned the locality which hosted the fair): Bradna [Smičiklas, Codex Diplomaticus, XVIII. 294, Hássági]; Rojcsa [Lukinović, Povijesni Spomenici V. 171., Dersfi]; Szentbenedek [DF 282495, Dersfi]; Jakószerdahely [Lukinović, Povijesni Spomenici V. 171., Jakószerdahelyi, Kamarcai]; Ludbreg [Lukinović, Povijesni Spomenici V. 571., Turóci]; Szentmihály near Kemlék [Lukinović, Povijesni Spomenici V. 571., Alapi]; Sabaria/Szombathely [DF 255778, Szencsei]; Szencseszentdemeter [Csánki, Körösmegye 37., Szencsei]; Garignica [DL 107001, Pekri, Pozsegai, Batthyány]; Újudvar [Stefekfi, Grebeni/Batthyány]; Gordova [DF 255801, Fánecs]; Szentlélek [DL 103986, Kasztellánfi]; Dimicskfölde [DL 103989, Kasztellánfi]; Kutenya [DL 103828, Rohfi]; Dobrakutya [DL 103828, Nelepec]; Racciaszentistván [DF 282459, Gorbonoki, Dombai, Tahi]; Megyericse [DF 275023, Megyericsei]; Berivojszentiván [DL 107041, Berivojszentiváni]; Sabnिकासzentiván [DL 105675, descendants of Isaac]. Now, among all these fairs, only the locality of Sabnिकासzentiván is referred to as a simple possession, all the rest are hosted by *oppida*. Moreover, all the other fairs which turn up in our sources in the county of Körös are held in market towns. It is thus a very probable hypothesis that most of the market towns which were listed in the table above also boasted a fair, and they only remain unknown to us because of the silence of our sources. Thus, we arrive to the same sample as in the case of the *oppida* themselves, with the exception that this sample is a bit narrower and thus less fit for analysis.

²⁶²⁵ Engel, Világi nagybirtok 52-53.

Hermanfi and Balthasar Battyányi. All that can safely be stated is that in the absence of other, more refined means for measuring noble wealth, the possession of castles, *castella* and market towns, coupled with the attribution of the *egregius* title, can be an acceptable indicator of social stratification, provided it is consequently further refined by the application of other means of social analysis. We shall later return to this problem.

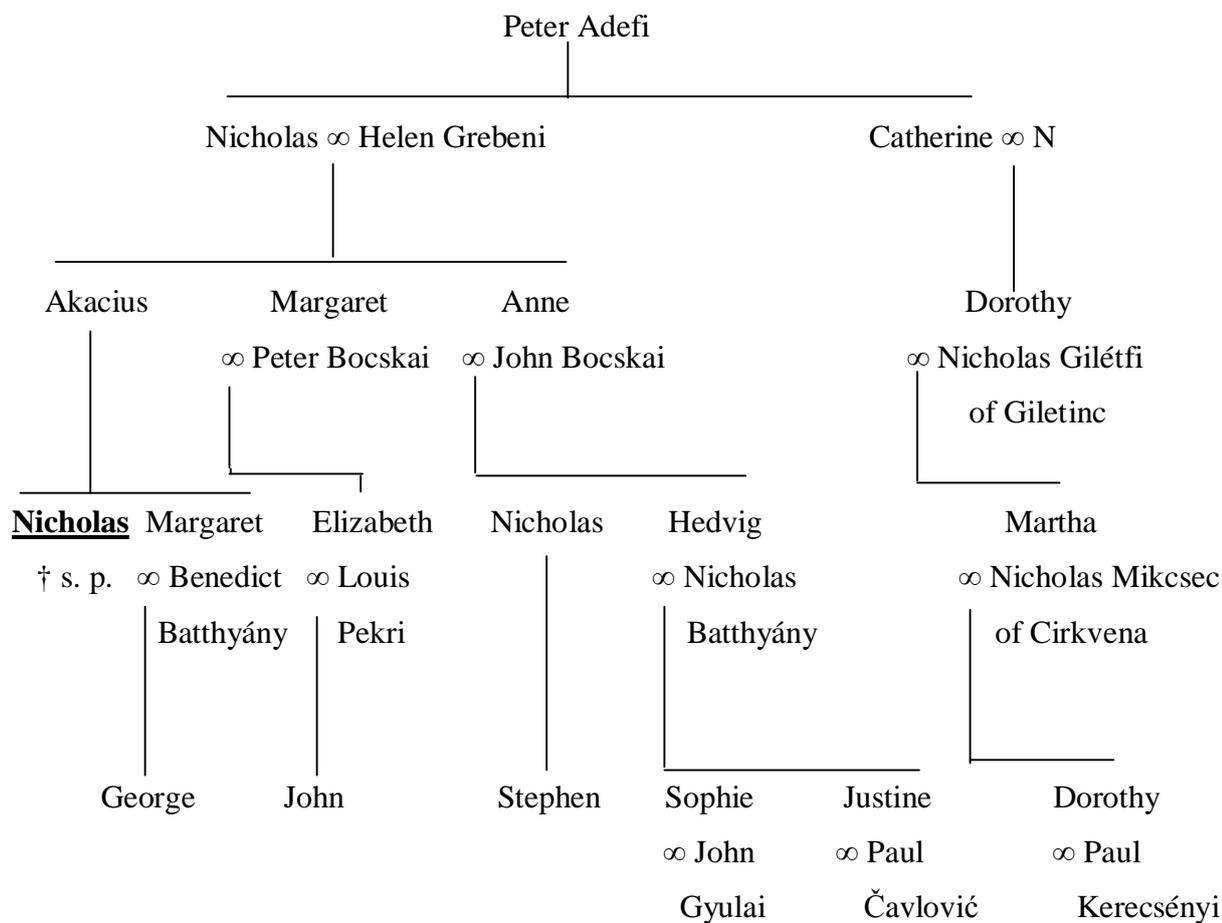
But at first we have to take a closer look at mobility within our target group, for such an analysis is the only means to refine the somewhat static picture drafted above. There were of course very important changes in terms of wealth within the individual families, both downwards and upwards. Of course, in some cases these changes are much better documented than in others, the general rule being, as usual, that the lower we descend on the social scale, the less information we have; but the general tendencies can nevertheless be fairly well reconstructed. We will start with the ways of land acquisition, a topic rarely discussed on the basis of such a wide sample, and then deal with the forms and causes of material losses which, at least in some cases, could go as far as to undermine the social position of a given family or at least of a branch of it.

Later on a whole chapter will be consecrated to the relationship between the nobility and the king, but it can safely be anticipated that, with the exception of the early phase of the reign of king Sigismund, and of very few later examples, royal power was not instrumental in the material advancement of the nobility. We have seen above that the confiscations which followed the revolts against Sigismund involved the last wave of considerable landed donations in Slavonia. And even these donations, just like those of king Matthias in the second part of his reign, were used not to reward Slavonian noble families but to implant non-Slavonian families there. The only exception is Nicholas Gereci (Kristallóci), who received the estate of Kristallóc already as an inhabitant of Slavonia, and, perhaps, Martin Ders, who received his Slavonian lands in two consecutive waves. There were, of course, important temporary concessions, such as the *pro honore* donation of Kristallóc to Nicholas Bocskai under Sigismund, or that of Atyina to Elias Bosnyák at the end of the century, which could mean an important source of revenue for a limited time. But the great majority of land transfers were caused by other reasons.

As already mentioned, marriage played an important part in the settlement of non-Slavonian families in the province. And it played the same important role in the devolution of landed wealth within the Slavonian nobility. It was by marriage that Louis Pekri acquired the most valuable part of the Bocskai heritage; that Christoph Paschingar and Nicholas Pozsegai successively put their hands on the estate of Garignica; Balthasar Batthyány inherited the whole landed wealth of Ladislas Grebeni by marrying his daughter (and by consequent paternal adoption), and Francis Nelepeci obtained at least part of the Bosnyák heritage with the hands of Barbara Bosnyák, whereas the Tulbert estates were divided between the husbands of the three daughters of Nicholas Tulbertfi. Yet

it was not only heiress-daughters who proved instrumental in the devolution of land: it was by marrying a widow that Michael Kerhen acquired parts of the Kamarcai lands, Ladislav Hermanfi obtained the estate of Mogor with the hands of Anne, widow of Ladislav Latk, and John Szencsei set foot in the estate of Desnice by wedding the widow of Sylvester Kapitánfi; the examples abound. In most cases such inheritance was quite natural: in the absence of direct and collateral male heirs, no dispute could emerge between claims of various legal justification. What is conspicuous, however, is the indifference of royal authority with regard to land which could be regarded as having escheated to the crown, as well as the importance of inheritance on the female line. With one outstanding exception, that of Garignica, in the case of which king Matthias was ready to put in the full weight of his authority in order to secure the estate for his own candidate, royal power did not show much interest in the devolution of non-magnate estates. For instance, after the extinction of the Slavonian branch of the Kapitánfi family, their inheritance could by all possible standards be regarded as having devolved upon the crown. And, indeed, Wladislaw II in 1515, and Louis II three years later, donated their portions first to Michael Pálóci and Ladislav Kanizsai, and then to Thomas Szécsi and the same Ladislav Kanizsai again. Introduction was hindered by contradiction in both cases, yet none of the grantees seems to have tried to assert his claims before the law, let alone get the lands by force. The estate was in practice shared by the Batthyány, who had a claim based on a treaty of inheritance, by John Szencsei, who had married the widow of Sylvester Kapitánfi, and by the non-Slavonian branch of the Kapitánfi, whose exact relationship to their dead kinsmen cannot be established, but was certainly very distant.

A similar example is offered by the case of the estate of Szentlélek. After the heirless death of Nicholas Kasztellánfi, the king granted his lands, together with the castle of Szircs and the *castellum* of Szentlélek, to the influential castellan of Buda, John Bornemissza. The introduction was impeded by the contradiction of John Kasztellánfi, a kinsman of the late Miklós by the fifth degree (5/5), and a great number of persons who had descended on the female line from Peter Kasztellánfi, great-grandfather of Nicholas. Their exact relationship to each other is the following:



As can be reconstructed from later documents, Bornemissza did not try to assert his claim, and, whereas from the estate of Szircs John Kasztellánfi paid the filial quarter in money, the inheritance of Nicholas at Szentlélek was eventually divided by a handful of his kinsmen on the female line. It is interesting that both John Pekri and Sophie Batthyány based their claim upon the rights of their respective maternal grandmothers, whereas Stephen Bocskai on that of his paternal grandmother. What is really conspicuous, however, is that even the rights of Dorothy Mikcsec were recognised as stemming from the right of descent (*jure generacionis*), although, as we see it on the table, she descended from Peter through three female ancestors. Which, it should be emphasised, supposes the exact knowledge of her maternal kin for several generations.

When Peter Bocskai died heirless, his closest kinsmen in the other branch of the family were either already dead, or beyond the fourth degree of consanguinity, the generally accepted limit of collateral inheritance, but no royal donation seems to have been made, and Peter's inheritance was apparently smoothly gathered in by his son-in-law, Louis Pekri; he only had to cede the estate of Szentlőrinc to Wolfgang Szencsei, who inherited it from her mother. And even if there was a royal donation, not even influential local families were always able to make good their claims based on it: as we have seen, Paul Pan of Kravarina managed to stay in possession of Temenice, which he had acquired by marrying the widow of its late owner, for several years, even though it had been

donated by Wladislaw II to Balthasar Batthyány and Peter Butkai, both well connected to the royal court. Roughly fifty years before, after the extinction of the Herbortyai family, the Ostfi family from the county of Sopron laid a claim to the inheritance by right of kinship, although the degree of consanguinity between John Ost and Francis Ostfi was merely 6/7; nevertheless, king Ladislas did comply with the demand and gave him the estate of Herbortya.²⁶²⁶ Finally, however, it was the Pogány of Cseb who prevailed through marriage. Of course, it could be argued that royal authority was on the wane in the first decades of the 16th century, but incidents such as that between Nicholas Székely and Francis Nelepeci show that even the Jagello kings were able to intervene locally with force in defence of the interests of their confidential men if judged necessary. In most cases, however, the devolution of noble lands below a certain level was left to be decided by the interplay of local interests and influences.

That it was indeed so is proved by the futile attempts of Nicholas Dersfi to get a share in the Töttös and Tuz inheritance by the right of his grandmother and mother respectively. His grandmother was Sophie Töttös, sister of Ladislas Töttös, with whose daughter, Dorothy, his lands had devolved upon the Várdai family. Yet the Slavonian estates, namely the district commonly referred to from the second half of the 15th century as Töttösevina, which lay astride the border between the counties of Körös and Zagreb, was not inherited by the Várdai, but was donated by king Matthias to Vuk Branković, titular despot of Serbia. Later on it was with the hands of his widow, Barbara Frangepán, that the estate was acquired by Francis Beriszló. After the death of Barbara Nicholas Dersfi seems to have made attempts in order to get the estate, with the castellum then called Razohatec, but apparently to no avail; the estate was retained by Beriszló, and then passed on with the hands of his widow, Margaret Székely, to John Bánfi. In the case of Sophie Tuz, Nicholas Dersfi wanted before all to put his hand on her movables by right of inheritance, but the fact that he was her closest surviving relative was certainly not unrelated to his wish to acquire the castle and estate of Zselin (Želin) in the county of Zagreb, which had been inherited by Sophie from her first husband. But even in this case, although Nicholas managed to procure for himself a letter of introduction by right of pledge, his efforts yielded no result, and the estate was apparently retained in royal hands.

Alongside marriage, a number of other means offered themselves for land acquisition. A similar but temporary form of expansion was guardianship, as when Peter Gudovci managed the Megyericsei estates in the name of his grandsons, or Ladislas Roh that of Berstyanóc for his stepson, Nicholas Tulbertfi. Ruthless and clever guardians could even profit from their situation to install themselves definitively in the lands they administered, such as Ladislas Hermanfi in the case of Mogor. Yet by far the most common forms of land accumulation were purchase and pledge. We have seen that

²⁶²⁶ Or, to be sure, the royal right in it: Sopron vármegye története II. 389-391.

those persons who disposed of considerable sums of money, that is, mostly the temporal administrators of the bishops of Zagreb, acquired most of their lands by these means. But others also spent a lot of money on getting more land. The best known case is, of course, that of Ladislav Hermanfi, whose charter legacy is full of such transactions normally extending to no more than a few parcels or a vineyard. But money also played a role in his bigger acquisitions. Although his stepson, Michael Latk designated him as his heir, Ladislav nevertheless gradually took into pledge almost the whole of his future inheritance. He managed to put his hand on the estate of Kristallóc by paying for the costly litigation that Ladislav Josafi pursued at Buda with the Vitovec brothers. Ladislav's heir, Balthasar Batthyány, continued the acquisition of land by purchase: he paid for both the estate of Garignica and that of Szvibovc. Ladislav Hermanfi and Balthasar Batthyány are exceptional not only because they are much better known than other persons: starting from the tiny inheritance of Ladislav's mother after 1445, the two of them had built up a landed wealth which included around 600 inhabited tenant sessions, spotted with several fortifications; yet it seems that people such as Peter Bocskai or Ladislav Roh or Peter and Sigismund Pogány were also great buyers. Others, such as Louis Pekri, pursued a real „marriage policy”: at some time in the second decade of the 16th century he controlled, thanks to his own marriage and to those of his children, one castle and six *castella*, not counting the family fortification at Petrovina.

As a result, the place of a given individual in terms of material wealth could vary widely as measured at different points of time. In the cases enumerated above, the differences are obvious. Ladislav Hermanfi or Louis Pekri were several times richer at the time of their death than at the beginning of their career. At some time in the 1470s Ladislav Rohfi, alongside having his share in the family patrimony, also possessed two castles by right of pledge and purchase respectively. But the material wealth of the Ervencei brothers was likewise at least doubled by the acquisition of Szobocsina, and Peter Mikcsec also became considerably richer after inheriting the entirety of the Cirkvenai lands. In other cases the lands of a given kin group were united in the hands of one of its members within circumstances which are unknown to us; apparently this is what happened to Vítus Garázda, who had aggregated most of the Kamarcai lands, a fact that surely played a role in the increase of his political importance. What should be emphasised in this respect, however, is that no matter how effectively these means of land acquisition were applied and combined, in themselves they offered no entry to the ranks of the magnates. At the start of his career Nicholas Csupor was roughly as rich as Balthasar Battyányi in 1490, and both members of the court. Yet, whereas Nicholas became a magnate, thanks to the favour of king Matthias, shortly thereafter, Balthasar and his son, Francis, had to wait almost a quarter of a century before the grant of the huge estate of Németújvár (Güssing, AU) finally opened the gate leading to magnate status. Thus, while it was apparently always possible for ambitious and talented persons to buy their way, definitively or

temporarily, into the *egregius* group, the further leap upwards was and remained dependent upon the royal will.

On the other hand, landed wealth was not only acquired but also lost. The most evident reason for losing estates was of course political misfortune. The political history of Slavonia and of the county of Körös within it reflects in its main lines the ups and downs of Hungarian history in general, with some important alterations nevertheless. The 15th century began with the revolts against king Sigismund, followed by a long period of peace. After the death of king Albert in 1439 there began a new „time of upheaval”, which in Slavonia drew on until 1447, when the counts of Cilli recovered officially their authority in the banate, and, in a sense, until as late as 1453. The accession of king Matthias was again followed by a short period of political breakdown in Slavonia, after two of its greatest magnates, Jan Vitovec and Nicholas Újlaki had deserted to emperor Frederick III. The last turbulent period referred to in the charters as „*tempora disturbiorum*” immediately followed the death of king Matthias and lasted until the consolidation of the authority of Wladislaw II.²⁶²⁷

All of these critical periods involved the risk for the nobility of losing some or even the majority of their lands. By far the biggest wave of confiscation followed the revolt against king Sigismund in 1403; most of the families which are studied in this dissertation and were already present in Slavonia at that time suffered its consequences in some form. Yet it must be emphatically stressed that in most cases the confiscations were either temporary or the beneficiaries belonged to different branches of one and the same family. Even the Szencsei were able to recover the estate of Fejérkő later. Perhaps the only real losers were the Pekri, whose ambitions to enter again the baronial elite were definitively undermined by the loss of the majority of their lands to John Maróti, and one branch of the Fánecs, which was forced to emigrate, and, if our hypothesis is right, the Mihalc branch of the Szencsei family. The latter two fell out definitively from the ranks of the leading nobility, despite the fact that their kinsmen continued to belong to it until the end of the period.

Forty years later it was the Grebeni family who lost their whole estate of Greben to Jan Vitovec, and the Szencsei who had to resign that of Fejérkő for all. Here it was not recovering royal authority but rather the absence of it and the consequent struggle between rival baronial fractions which played a dominant role. The Grebeni as well as the Kristallóci (2) had to suffer the loss of their respective estates because of the uncustomary greed and aggressivity of Vitovec backed by the uncontrolled influence of Ulrich of Cilli in the court of Ladislas V. The Fánecs, on the other hand, only temporarily lost their lands in the turmoil, and so did Stephen Dersfi after the death of king Matthias. The one and a half years which followed the passing of Matthias seems to have been a particularly agitated period in the history of Slavonia, but the attitude of the local nobility was much

²⁶²⁷ See Pálosfalvi, „Cilleiek és Tallóciak” for the civil war after 1440; Idem, „Vitovec János” for the breakdown after 1459; and Kubinyi, „Két sorsdöntő esztendő”, and Neumann, „Békekötés Pozsonyban” for the events in 1490-1492.

more prudent than in 1403, and, although accusations were frequent, David Dombai seems to have been the only one to lose his lands for infidelity. The difference with respect to the events nine decades earlier is probably to be explained by the punitive measures taken by Matthias in 1481 and the reappointment as ban of Slavonia shortly before his death of Ladislav Egervári, one of his most faithful and most talented barons.

Pure violence as the cause for the loss of property was not limited to periods of weak royal power. The Nelepec and the Mindszenti lost their share in the estate of Dobrakucsá in the mid-1470s, and the beneficiary was precisely one of the new favourites of king Matthias, John Ernuszt. A case apart is that of Andrew Kapitánfi, who ran into infidelity for having misjudged his own possibilities as measured against the royal will. Yet judgements involving the loss of property without political overtones were a common feature throughout the period. Gaspar Kasztellánfi (1465), the Kapitánfi brothers (1467), Dominic and Paul Nelepec (before 1470), Nicholas Pozsegai (1476), Francis Dombai (before 1490) and the Gereci (1518) were all sentenced to loss of property before the law, but such decisions were never put into effect, and generally ended with some kind of compromise. Only the Nelepec among those listed above had difficulties consequently to their conviction, but these difficulties were most probably the cumulative result of the various miseries that the family suffered simultaneously. The sentence taken against the Pekri and the Kasztellánfi and, perhaps, also the Szencsei in 1496, was of a different nature, for obstructing royal tax-collection was indeed a grave offence, and the sentence was in fact followed by the culprits' temporarily losing their lands. Yet they were also recovered some years later, with the exception, it seems, of George Szencsei alone.

Important pieces of noble property were alienated by peaceful means as well, mainly by sale and pledge. In some cases such deals were purely nominal and involved no real transfer of land; in other cases, however, they resulted in important modifications within the landowning structures of the nobility. Thus, when Gaspar Fáncs pledged all his portions to Andrew Alapi, or the Nelepec half of their estate to the Mindszenti, or Francis Dombai alienated his lands to his father-in-law, Peter Gudovci, these actions surely did not fail to affect their respective positions within the local nobility. Sometimes these alienations, originally surely destined to be temporal, resulted in the definitive loss of the majority of a family's lands. This is what happened in the case of the Tamasovci, whereas the Musinai had lost all their possessions in the county of Somogy by the second half of the 15th century. Others, such as the Erveneci and the Bakolcai, also belonged to the great losers. However, the social consequences of such losses and alienations apparently depended upon such hardly measurable factors as a given family's past and local prestige.

Thus, Ladislav Hermanfi for instance, was as consequently titled *egregius* in the early 1450s, when his possessions seem to have been restricted to the portions of his mother, as his father had been,

and as he himself would be in the 1480s after the acquisition of hundreds of tenant sessions. In the same way, George Szencsei continued to be reckoned as member of the leading nobility after his share at Szencse had been reduced to a handful of sessions in the late 1490s. Again, Francis Nelepec was offered the occasion of a new rise in the first two decades of the 16th century after the family lands had been reduced to trifles in the second half of the 15th, and also their family castle had been lost. In all these cases, it seems, it was the “social capital” accumulated by the preceding generations which helped them to survive the difficult periods. The same phenomenon also seems to have contributed to maintaining the social status of the Pekri in the 1440s, when the family was at its nadir, although, as we have seen above, even the remaining parts of their patrimony were considerable. A very interesting case is that of the Musinai, which, although their remaining lands in Körös were by no means in keeping with their illustrious descent, the latter nevertheless allowed them marriages which would certainly have been beyond their means otherwise. In other cases the losses had fatal consequences, however. The repeated alienations of Emeric Szász of Tamasovc relegated his son into the ranks of the petty nobility, and the Mindszenti also dropped from the top nobility after their losing half of Dobrakucsá and their portions at Garignica. So did the Kristallóci 2, after the estate of Kristallóc had been violently taken from them in the mid-1450s. The general rule seems to have been that those families were fatally vulnerable to such material losses which had recently entered the ranks of the leading nobility from below, and did not have enough time to build up sufficient social prestige through marriage or other means to secure their survival there in hard times.

3.3. Service, officeholding and familiaritas

Familiaritas was one of the basic institutions of late medieval Hungary, and its discussion as a form of vertical relationship within the nobility is an inevitable part of all works dealing with the medieval nobility. Consequently, many valuable insights into the structure and functioning of this institution have been offered since the almost hundred-year-old study of Gyula Szekfü.²⁶²⁸ Yet no effort has so far been done at analysing it at a regional level, upon the basis of the evidence offered by a cluster of families belonging roughly to the same social category, with a clear emphasis on the various forms and social effects of the institution.

„When you write to me that you have faithfully served all your lords in your youth, and now that you are old you do not want to do the contrary, we know and have learnt that you have served all those princes who have had you in their service so fervently that there is no room left for ignominy, and we do not think that you need any admonition. So if we prompted you for good, you should by no means take it as an offence, for certainly we have no doubts as to your person; yet you have to admit that you also have people at your service who, if you fall in strength and they get loose, can cause us harm.” It was with these words that ban Emeric Perényi responded to the letter of his indignant viceban, Balthasar Batthyány, in the critical days of March 1513.²⁶²⁹ This brief passage in itself reflects several of the basic features of the institution of *familiaritas* in the late medieval kingdom of Hungary. First of all, noble service, although generally rewarded in various ways, involved fidelity, and gave birth to a special ethos of service with mutual obligations of both lord and *familiaris*. Secondly, any given individual could serve a number of different lords during his career. Thirdly, some at least of the *familiares* had people at their own service, that is, they were lords and *familiares* at the same time, assuming both roles simultaneously. These aspects, however, cannot be all examined thoroughly here; what I would like to offer is some general patterns of the institution which regard to the group of nobility which is the object of the present dissertation.

We have seen in the biographies of the individual families that service played without exception some role in their history. In some cases at least the scene of this service could be the royal court; this will be a subject of a later chapter. But it was more frequently not, not even in the case of families which furnished barons, and this is an important marker which separated them from the aristocracy. Downwards, again, stratification is much more difficult to establish. To put it very

²⁶²⁸ Gyula Szekfü, *Serviensek és familiarisok* [Servientes and Familiares]. In *Értekezések a történeti tudományok köréből* 23/3 (Budapest, 1912). More recently: Rady, *Nobility, Land and Service* 110-131, with literature.

²⁶²⁹ „Deinde ubi scribitis omnibus dominis vestris (in juventute?) fideliter (in)servivisse, modo in senecta nolletis contra facere, scimus et experti sumus omnes eos principes qui vos quoque servitores habuerunt eo studio servivisse ut ignominie nullus sit locus relictus, neque nos dubitamus in vobis moneri nec debitis. Ubi hortati sumus vos ad bonum (hic) contra vos factum nihil debet, quia certe ad personam vestram nichil dubitamus; tamen admittatis vos quoque servitores habere qui si effaceres et liberi permittuntur dampna nos affici poterimus.” DL 107946.

simply, two basic patterns emerge. The first can be illustrated by the Kasztellánfi and Szencsei families, which flourished for a sufficiently long time to furnish much useful information.

Kasztellánfi

Name	Period	Lord(s)	Office
Adam	1404-1405	Paul Besenyő and Paul Pécsi	Viceban of Slavonia
Peter	1409	Andrew, bishop of Zagreb	Vicarius temporalis
	1417	John, bishop of Zagreb	Castellan of Orbász
	1427-1432	<i>Idem</i>	Vicarius temporalis
	1436-1440	Ban Matko Tallóci	Viceban of Slavonia
Gaspar	1443	Ban Matko Tallóci	
	1447-1449	Ban Ulrich of Cilli	Viceban of Slavonia
Sigismund	1440	Ban Matko Tallóci	Castellan of Béla
Nicholas	1458-1461	Ban Nicholas Újlaki	Viceban of Slavonia
	1466	Ban Jan Vitovec	Viceban of Slavonia
Akacius	1466-1468	Ban Jan Vitovec	Viceban of Slavonia
	?	The King	[in the castle of Novi]
Nicholas	1512 (1515)	Clara Rozgonyi [widow of Kanizsai]	Castellan of Vasmegyericse
George	1492	Duke Lawrence Újlaki	Castellan of Kontovc
	1496	Duke John Corvin	
	1498-1499	Ban George Kanizsai	Viceban of Slavonia
	1505-1512 (?)	Archbishop Thomas Bakóc	
	1512	[ban Emeric Perényi]	Tax-collector of Slavonia
John	1520	The King	Court <i>familiaris</i>
	1524	<i>Idem</i>	<i>Aulicus levis armature</i>
	1525-1526	<i>Idem</i>	Court hussar

Szencsei

Name	Period	Lord(s)	Office
Paul	1395-1401	Ban Nicholas Garai	Viceban of Croatia
	1402	The King	Member of the court
Ladislás, son of John, son of George	1417	Ban David Lack	Ispán of Zagreb
	1427-1434	Ban Herman of Cilli	Viceban of Slavonia
Ladislás, son of John, son of Tibold	1437	Ban Matko Tallóci	Castellan of Jajce
Ladislás jun.	1459-1464	Ban Jan Vitovec	Viceban of Slavonia
	1470-1471	Ban Blaise Magyar	Viceban of Slavonia
	1477-1479	Ban Ladislás Egervári	Viceban of Slavonia
	1482-1483	Ban Blaise Magyar	Viceban of Slavonia
John	[1469]	Bishop John of Pécs	
George	1492	Ladislás Egervári	Alispán of Pozsega
	1494	Bishop Oswald of Zagreb	
	[1496]	Duke John Corvin	
	[1507-1509]	Ban Andrew Both	
	1509	Bartholomew Beriszló, Prior of Vrana	
Francis	1496	Duke John Corvin	
Nicholas	1517	Ban Peter Beriszló	

The basis of qualification is the group of lords served: it is evident from the table that, apart from the king, these families served either the ban of Slavonia, or the bishop of Zagreb, or, eventually, one of the magnates having possessions in Slavonia. All the families with at least one *castrum*, and most of those with more than one *castellum*, who, as we have seen above, were regularly titled *egregius*, belong to this group. But not to the exclusion of others: Elias Bosnyák, for example, although having only one *castellum*, and even that not from the beginning of his career, makes part of this group nevertheless. Of course, comparison is difficult between families like the Kasztellánfi and the Szencsei on the one hand, and between the Pozsegai and Lónyai, on the other, whose career in Slavonia was restricted to one generation. In some cases, moreover, we have no reference at all to any service undertaken by any member of a given family, which, of course, can be a result of the nature of our documentation. It is thus, as in the case of the number of fortifications, no more than a very vague indicator; the concordance is nevertheless significant.

Below this large group another, much smaller one, can be identified, which can perhaps be characterised by the term of „mixed” *familiaritas*. Members of these families also turn up in the service of the leading political authorities of Slavonia, that is, the ban and the bishop, as well as of the local magnates, but they also engaged themselves to persons who can by no means be regarded

as magnates; indeed, some of them figure in the previous group, such as Nicholas and David Dombai in the following table, which shows the career of Michael Kerhen:

1468	Nicholas Dombai, castellan of Atyina	
1474	George Forster, castellan of Szentgyörgyvár	
1477	Sigismund Ernuszt, bishop of Pécs	Castellan of Kapronca
1483	Ban Blaise Magyar	Viceban of Croatia
1484-1489	Ban Matthias Geréb	Viceban of Slavonia
1487	Sigismund Ernuszt, bishop of Pécs	Castellan of Kapronca
1493	Ban Ladislas Egervári	Viceban of Slavonia
1494-1495	Bishop Oswald of Zagreb	Castellan of Garics
1504	David Dombai	
1504, 1511	Duke Lawrence Újlaki	Castellan of Racsá

Of course, it would be quite wrong to regard the career of Michael Kerhen as wholly representative of an entire group within the nobility. As in all similar cases, we must suppose the working of a whole series of personal motivations and considerations which surely played a role in forming the career of any given individual. After all, the initial position of Kerhen when he joined the family of Nicholas Dombai must have been quite different from his situation when, after three terms as viceban of Croatia and Slavonia, he returned to David Dombai a good thirty years later. This phenomenon of “long-term fidelity” is by no means exceptional: to give but one example, all the lords served by members of the Cirkvenai family belonged to the Csupor family, to whom they were evidently linked by special ties of affinity. In fact, their case, as that of Michael Kerhen, show the limits of the approach based on *familiaritas*. Despite the fact that he occasionally served lords who were never titled *magnificus*, he himself always received the *egregius* title, and, as his two terms in the office of (Slavonian) viceban, and his multiple commissions on behalf of the Slavonian nobility show, he was one of the most esteemed members of the latter.²⁶³⁰ Moreover, one of his kinsmen was member of the royal court under king Sigismund, which means that not even immediate royal service can be automatically treated as a demarcation line. Likewise, Peter Mikcsec, while serving Stephen Csupor as his castellan of Monoszló, was as consequently titled *egregius* as his lord. It should also be taken into consideration that this approach fails to reflect the important differences within the individual families: for instance, in the case of the Grebeni, Szencsei and Ervencei families, which I regarded as part of the first group, whereas at least one branch of each should in fact be counted in the second. Yet the very extent to which these branches

²⁶³⁰ In his case one could refer to a remark made by Tibor Neumann, according to which „even rich noblemen could begin their career in the service of lesser lords”. Yet even this will not account for the fact that he returned to David Dombai towards the very end of his career. (Neumann, Korlátköviek 123.)

should in fact be regarded as constituting the same family is a problem which deserves an analysis of its own. Nor is this approach fit for measuring differences between the statuses of individual members within the entourage of any great lord; the mere fact that two persons serve the same lord does not automatically mean that they occupy the same social standing within the nobility, of course.

The somewhat false view produced by this approach, which would put on the same footing, for instance, the Kasztellánfi and the Mindszenti families, on the sole basis of the lords served, can remarkably be improved by involving two more factors into the investigation. I have collected from the period envisaged all the *szolgabírák* in the county of Körös, and also, but not exclusively, those persons who turn up as designated royal (palatinal, banal) men. A brief analysis of these lists justifies the statement made by Pál Engel, according to which „the status of the royal man, at least socially, could not be very distant from that of the *szolgabírák*.”²⁶³¹ I also have gathered all those persons who were elected as noble jurors from 1486 until after the death of king Matthias, when the institution was abolished. Although impossible to prove in detail within the framework of the present dissertation, it is evident that, in the late middle ages, most of the *szolgabírák* and of the royal men, as well as the noble jurors, were elected from among petty nobility undistinguished by either wealth, title, or service. It is thus reasonable to suppose that those families on our original list, whose members at least sometimes turn up as either *szolgabíró* or royal man, functioned as a kind of intermediate link between the lower and upper strata within the nobility of the county, belonging in a sense to both, sometimes consecutively, sometimes simultaneously, along a division within the same family. I will return to this problem later on.

The Berivojszentiváni, Borotva, Budor, Fodorovci, Gereci, the Slavonian-based branch of the Garázda, Horzovai, Kamarcai/Jakószerdahelyi, Kerhen, Kopinci, Kristallóci (2), Kustyer, Megyericsei, Mikcsec of Cirkvena, Mindszenti, Musinai, Orros, Pálfi, Pataki, Raveni and Stefekfi families all fall within this group, and so do the poorer branches of the Grebeni, Szencsei and Ervencei families. Not surprisingly, several among them can also be found on the list of „mixed” *familiaritas*, which, as we have seen, largely covers the group of families variously titled *egregius/nobilis*. Here, again, there are important exceptions to the rule, which need to be assessed separately each.²⁶³² The situation is very similar to that observed by Engel in the county of Valkó: in some cases we find lists which contain “better” names.²⁶³³ Five cases are exceptionally

²⁶³¹ Pál Engel, “Királyi emberek Valkó megyében” [Royal Men in the County of Valkó], in Idem, *Honor, vár, ispánság. Válogatott tanulmányok*, ed. Enikő Csukovits (Budapest: Osiris, 2003), 587.

²⁶³² Of course, I do not count those references which regard certain families *before* they arrived to Slavonia: for instance, the Kerecsényi frequently appear as royal men in the county of Zala in the first half of the 15th century, and so do the Hásságyi, or the Kecser in Sáros later on; nor are they regularly titled as *egregius* then. When they appear in Slavonia, however, they are consequently accorded the title, and never (or only exceptionally, as György Kerecsényi) appear as designated royal men.

²⁶³³ Engel, *Királyi emberek*, 590.

conspicuous: those of George Dombai, Ladislás and Stephen Rohfi, Stephen Kapitánfi, George Kerecsényi and John Tahi, who turn up as royal men in the company of persons of an evidently inferior status; since they belong to the group constantly referred to as *egregius*, it is evident that their appearance should be explained by their special relationship to the petitioners. In the case of Dombai it is the magnate Marcali brothers, their neighbours in the county of Somogy, whereas for the Rohfi the neighbouring monastery of Garics; the situation must have been the same with regard to George Kerecsényi, who appears as a royal man for archbishop Bakóc and his relatives in his home county of Zala. The case of Stephen Kapitánfi, royal man for Stephen Csupor in 1484, is somewhat different; his emergence as such may be accounted for by the difficulties the family was going through after the infidelity of Andrew Kapitánfi, or by a special relationship to Stephen Csupor. As for John Tahi, his emergence as a royal man with regard to the Musinai family as late as 1519 may serve as a further indication of his “transitory” position shortly before his spectacular rise, and another possible explanation for his rejection as ban of Slavonia by at least a part of the Slavonian nobility. What has to be stressed, however, is that in these cases the appearance as royal man was strictly exceptional.

Apparently a case apart is that of Nicholas Fáncsi, who turns up both as a royal man and a noble juror; since, however, we have seen that, unlike his kinsmen, he was almost without exception titled simply noble, he represents the same „intrafamilial” division as the poorer branches of the Grebeni, Szencsei and Ervencei families. Conversely, there are cases where the „group” appearance of persons of a more elevated social status as royal men is accounted for by the special character of the occasion itself. Such, for instance, is the situation at the introduction of John Maróti into the confiscated lands of the Pekri in 1404, with Ladislás and John Roh, Ladislás Kristallóci, Egidius and Nicholas Gorbonoki, and Benedict Nelepeci among the designated royal men,²⁶³⁴ or of the Tallóci brothers into the estate of Szentgyörgyvár in 1439, where, alongside the Megyericsei brothers and Paul Garázda, Herman Grebeni and Briccius and Nicholas Gorbonoki appear in the same function; or, again, at the introduction of the Bánfi brothers into the estate of Orbona in 1476, where Peter Bikszádi and Emeric Pogány were designated: whereas John Maróti played a leading role in helping to consolidate the rule of Sigismund, the Tallóci brothers were key political figures during the reign of Albert of Habsburg, and Nicholas Bánfi was in the 1470s one of the most esteemed magnates in the court of Matthias, so the commission must in all three cases have been rather a matter of prestige, reflecting the authority of those involved. We do not have to suppose that all of them were linked by ties of service to the person(s) being introduced; it was rather their higher prestige which made them worth designating. It is even more obvious in 1481, when Ladislás Hermanfi, Peter Gudovci, Stephen Csupor, Ladislás Szencsei and Ladislás Roh were

²⁶³⁴ DL 8901.

designated as special royal men for the limitation of the estates of the bishopric of Zagreb from the royal castellany of Zagreb. After the fall of John Tuz and the congregation of Zagreb, this was a matter of utter political importance, and is thus to be regarded as exceptional. Yet the most important point is that, apart from these special cases, none of the persons constantly titled *egregius* ever turns up as either royal man or *szolgabíró*, and in this sense the concordance is complete. Consequently, there existed a group of rich nobility for whom both the office of *szolgabíró* and designation as royal men were evidently out of keeping with their social status, or only possible with regard to magnates; interestingly enough, all the families which moved to the county of Körös in the course of the period under investigation belong to this group.

There was of course much more to *familiaritas* than the social stratification it indicates; at least some of these need to be indicated here, for they clearly show both the limits and the possible directions of any approach based on this institution. First of all, we have seen above the important role that the institution played in geographical and, to a far lesser extent, social mobility. And here, there is an interesting observation to be made: whereas several families from outside Slavonia came to be rooted there due to baronial service, we do not find, with possibly the only exceptions being one branch of the Kapitánfi family, and the Garázda branch of the Vojk kindred, rich noble families from the county of Körös transferred through service and settled definitively in other regions of the Hungarian kingdom. It may be that possibilities of employment in the region were abundant, and if we look at the lords, we indeed find that the bans, the bishop of Zagreb and the local magnates offered more than enough possibilities for service; the cases for which we have enough evidence show that local magnates employed at least as many non-Slavonian noblemen, at least as castellans, as Slavonian ones. It does not of course mean that the nobles of Körös did not leave their native land on service, be it military or administrative in nature; it simply means that they regularly returned there, and do not seem to have ambitioned the acquisition of land elsewhere. Moreover, if we take into consideration how frequently estates in Körös were petitioned for from, and granted away by the ruler, frequently with no practical consequences, it is impossible not to draw the conclusion that, despite the evident and ever increasing Ottoman threat, the land south of the Drava must have seemed rich enough for settlement there.

Geographical relocation did not necessarily involve the reception of important land donation from one's lord: as stated above, a good marriage with a local heiress sufficed for self-establishment in the region. This solution, however, was only available for persons rich and respected enough at the time of their arrival to Slavonia, such as the *familiares* of the counts of Cilli, or the Rohonci, the Turóci or Nicholas Pozsegai and Francis Kecser. For these people *familiaritas* was but the way by which they crossed the Drava, not the means of getting rich there. It is thus important to examine the financial and economic background of *familiaritas*, especially since it is sometimes supposed to

have served as an important means of self-maintenance and of the struggle against impoverishment.²⁶³⁵

To start with, we have to distinguish between the military-governmental duties carried out in the service of lords, which made part of the nascent „state administration”, and the functions discharged in one lord’s estate management. The former comprise all the military posts, but also castellanships and the *vicebanatus* as well as *alispánságok* one held from lords, such as the ban or *ispánok* of the neighbouring counties, who in a sense represented state authority. The latter, on the other hand, cover all those posts, such as castellanships of privately owned castles and different functions within estate administration, which one assumed within the framework of a purely private engagement. It is of course still impossible in the late Middle Ages to draw a strict line between public and private administration, which considerably overlapped; yet in terms of remuneration it was a different thing to be the ban’s castellan in one of his Croatian castles, than to govern, for instance, one of the Újlaki castles in Slavonia. Whereas in the first case the payment of the *familiaris* depended, at least in theory, upon the sums allotted to his lord from the royal budget, in the second it depended on the sources available from estate management itself, and was at least partly conditional upon the effectiveness of the *familiaris* himself.

From the first half of the period our evidence is scarce, but from what we know about the constant penury of the bans of Slavonia, and also those of Jajce, in the second half of the 15th century and in the decades before Mohács, it seems very unlikely that their *familiares* were any more regularly paid than themselves. From the time of Ladislas Egervári on, banal salaries can be shown to have been on arrears constantly, if they were paid at all.²⁶³⁶ We do have evidence of sums paid to the ban’s men, but these amounts hardly did more than cover the expenses met in the course of the service itself.²⁶³⁷ And we have a lot more examples of unpaid services, such as in the case of Louis Pekri, who in 1512 refused to hand over the important castle of Bihać until his salaries and those of his own men were paid.²⁶³⁸ It is thus surely no accidental that we find very few Slavonian noblemen serving in the Croatian castles. The bans normally did not dispose of the tax of Slavonia, which seems to have been used for the most urgent needs of the royal treasury, and were allotted instead various other financial sources, such as the thirtieth of Zagreb. A more promising solution was the

²⁶³⁵ Fügedi, *Elefánthyak* 189, and following him Rady, *Nobility, Land and Service* 112-113.

²⁶³⁶ Teleki, *Hunyadiak kora* XII. 133; Šišić, *Rukovet spomenika* 321-323; DL 46234 (Egervári); DL 37721 (Kanizsai); DF 254494 (Duke Corvin); Andrew Both converted to the defence of the banate „*non solum privatas res et bona sua*” but also the dowry of his wife, Anne Csáki (DL 68171), and Peter Beriszló likewise „*varia et diversa debita hincinde contrahere et levare coactus sit*” for the same purpose (DF 219287); moreover, he had set into pledge several objects in the chapter of Csázma, evidently for the same reason, which were ordered to be redeemed by the treasurer (Tkalčić, *Monumenta* III. 112.); according to the words of Francis Batthyány, „*mihi ad rationem banatus huius regni Sclavonie nondum unum dederunt denarium*” (that is, the royal couple) (DL 104441); Thallóczy – Horváth, *Jajcza* 210-211 (the bans of Jajce).

²⁶³⁷ DL 104220; DL 104635.

²⁶³⁸ Pálosfalvi, *Bajnai Both András* 290.

joining in the hands of ban Peter Beriszló the bishopric of Veszprém and the priory of Vrana, but even he seems to have been in constant need of money. Since most of the bans did not have possessions extensive enough to put them into pledge in order to make money, or grant them straight away in return for service, this solution was not available either. The only exception was duke John Corvin, who pledged a good part of his immense possessions to pay his enormous debts; it is thus no wonder that his longtime, and unpaid, familiaris, Balthasar Alapi, was the only one in our period to rise into the richest nobility of Körös through service by getting the estate of Nagykemlék after more than a decade of service.

There were, of course, other ways by which an influential lord could proceed in favour of his *familiars*. The bans, for instance, could intervene at any time in the workings of the banal court, which were held by the vicebans in their name, as did Matko Tallóci in 1437, when he ordered his deputies and the *szolgabírák* of Körös to postpone the lawsuits of Ladislav Szencsei, who was then in his service at Jajce.²⁶³⁹ The same request was addressed by ban Emeric Perényi to the banal court in 1513 in favour of his own *familiars*.²⁶⁴⁰ Judicial assistance could assume other forms as well: ban Ulrich of Cilli played an instrumental role in Christoph Paschingar's acquisition of Garignica. In 1515, ban Peter Beriszló asked his viceban, Balthasar Batthyány, to intercede for Francis Nelepeci with duke Lawrence Újlaki, who wanted to demolish his newly constructed castellum. It was evidently ban Matko Tallóci who helped Demetrius Csupor to obtain the bishopric of Knin. The lords' influence should also be seen active in the background of cases of their *familiars* having access to the royal court, although our evidence here is anything but direct. In the same way, the „faithful men” mentioned in the royal authorisations of castle building, upon whose request the charter is accorded to the petitioner, seem to have been the very lord and, perhaps, his friends or allies at court.²⁶⁴¹ Lordly support (that is, the influence of cardinal Bakócs) was evidently in operation behind the efforts of the Musinai brothers to regain their family land in Somogy, and to oust their uncle from the estate of Musina, and it was in all probability frustration caused by the impotence in the face of pressure from upwards that manifested itself in the impetuous words of Bernard Musinai cited above in a different context.

Yet lordly protection had its obvious limits, and those who ignored them could get into serious trouble. The most outstanding example is that of Andrew Kapitánfi of Desnice, who, as we have seen above, married after the death of Nicholas Pozsegai his widow, and occupied the estate of Garignica. Having realised that king Matthias had plans of his own concerning the estate, he at first tried to come to terms with the ruler in person, then turned as a matter of fact to his lord, ban

²⁶³⁹ DL 74492.

²⁶⁴⁰ DL 107946.

²⁶⁴¹ „ad nonnullorum fidelium nostrorum humilime supplicacionis [...] per eos pro parte fidelium nostrorum egregiorum Stephani et Georgii filiorum condam Gaspar Chwpor de Monoslo nostre propterea porrecte maiestati”, as we read in the authorisation accorded to the Csupor brothers. Erdődy 11094.

Ladislas Egervári. The latter, by admitting that he personally did not object to his viceban's obtaining Garignica, which would make him „as happy” as if he received it himself, at the same time made it very clear that he would by no means counter the king's will; he refused to send his man to the king with the excuse that it is perilous to object the ruler „even for the powerful”.²⁶⁴² In the end, the obstinate Andrew Kapitánfi lost not only Garignica but also his portions of the family lands, and even fled the kingdom for some time. Yet it was again *familiaritas* which saved him a little later: he joined another local magnate, Nicholas Bánfi, at that time one of the dominant figures at king Matthias' court, and thanks to him at least the chance was given to him to win back some of his paternal lands by juridical process.

To oppose the royal will was dangerous even in times of peace, thus; it was even more dangerous to finish on the losing side in a civil war. And here *familiaritas* played its role as well. We have seen that several Slavonian noble families, whose members had joined either the bishop of Zagreb or the prior of Vrana, lost, at least temporarily, some or all of their lands in the troublesome years around 1400. As we have seen above, Nicholas Pekri lapsed into infidelity as the castellan of Ráholca of Ladislas Újlaki, and failed to regain his lands even after his lord had been granted pardon. A generation later the Pekri again shifted to the wrong side as *familiars* of Ladislas Garai, although this time some members at least of the family were saved by choosing a magnate protector from the other camp. Nor were these confiscations for infidelity limited to the stormy periods around 1400 and 1440. Ladislas Ervencei got into trouble in 1471 as one of the leading *familiars* of bishop John of Pécs. Although he seems to have got off unharmed then, ten years later was proscribed again by the nobility of Körös. He was immediately pardoned by the king, however, upon request „of many among our faithful men”, that is, in all probability upon the intervention of ban Ladislas Egervári, among whose followers both Ladislas and his brother turn up around this time. David Dombai was convicted of infidelity as a partisan of king Maximilian of Habsburg in 1491, and later on he followed his lord, duke Lawrence Újlaki, into rebellion and was accordingly deprived of his lands for some time. It should be remarked, however, that these confiscations normally did not have fatal consequences; sooner or later all delinquents were able to regain most of their lands. The only notable exception here is the Pekri family, which definitively degraded into the ranks of the common nobility thanks to their opposing king Sigismund in 1403.

To be a castellan in one of the Slavonian castles of the Újlaki or Garai family was in normal conditions a matter of private engagement, and only assumed political dimensions in times of crises. Unfortunately, we know almost nothing about the ways that noblemen in magnate service were remunerated. From other regions of medieval Hungary we do have such contracts of service, which

²⁶⁴² „malum tamen est cum regia maiestate contendere eciam potentibus [...] nobis enim summe placeret ipsam possessionem apud manus vestras permanere ac si proprie nostris manibus daretur”.DL 103869

show that rewards of castellans normally consisted of revenues in money and kind, completed by judicial fines.²⁶⁴³ From Slavonia the only detailed agreement that has come down to us is the contract between John Ernuszt and Balthasar Batthyány from 1505. Ernuszt entrusted to Batthyány the whole estate of Szentgyörgy with one castle and two *castella*; the latter was obliged to recruit and maintain the whole personnel of the three fortifications and the lands belonging to them, including a given number of horsemen and foot soldiers for each of them. For this purposes he was allotted 800 florins in ready money, 2000 *cubulos* of wine, 600 *cubulos* of oat, poultry, cheese, and other commodities. The estate of Szentgyörgyvár was surely the greatest in the county of Körös, and Batthyány was not an ordinary castellan but a kind of supreme estate administrator, and it is impossible even to gauge how much money he had left after he had discharged all his duties for Ernuszt.²⁶⁴⁴

We do know cases, however, when such service ended with evident losses. Shortly after the death of Nicholas Újlaki his son, duke Lawrence, appointed Ladislav Ervencei as his castellan of Raholca. When the contract expired, Ervencei found himself losing 160 florins „in ready money, other revenues and victuals”; moreover, the duke confiscated not only his movables but also his charters which he had taken to Raholca for safety’s sake.²⁶⁴⁵ Although it would be to go too far to conclude from one such example that magnate service was never lucrative, some considerations support indeed the view that *familiaritas*, whether „public” or „private”, in the service of lay lords, at least, was not an easily available means of getting rich. Namely, none of the two greatest gatherers of land in our period, that is, Ladislav Hermanfi and Peter Bocskai, can be shown to have been active in service other than as vicebans. We shall return to this institution in a moment, yet it can be stated in advance that it was not a well of money either. Since both of them had very considerable financial sources at their disposal, it is evident that they acquired the money they had by other ways; indeed, both Ladislav Hermanfi and Peter Bocskai can be shown to have been interested in trading activities,²⁶⁴⁶ which at least suggest that the key to understanding their success should be looked for in this direction, and not in terms of service. And they were surely not alone in engaging in economic activities: in 1495 Nicholas Tulbertfi received 400 florins for horses which were bought from him for the king; horses, that is, obviously bred for sale.²⁶⁴⁷

²⁶⁴³ Rady, Nobility, Land and Service 119.

²⁶⁴⁴ DL 102307.

²⁶⁴⁵ „in quadam convencione seu disposicione inter ipsum Laurencium ducem ab una et prefatum Ladislaum exponentem partibus ab altera racione castellanatus castri Rahowcza vocati facta et habita in promptis pecuniis ac aliis proventibus et victualibus eidem exponenti ad valorem centum sexaginta florenorum auri dampna intulisset” DL 103883.

²⁶⁴⁶ Ladislav Hermanfi referred in his last will to important sums which were owned to him by merchants who lived in nearby towns (DL 107608); In 1497, the wife of Peter Bocskai is providing market for the wines of her husband’s kinsman, Sigismund (DF 262304).

²⁶⁴⁷ Engel, Geschichte, 163.

Another phenomenon which seems to argue against the overall profitability of service, in terms of both revenues and influence, is the short term of contracts. Although, again, the evidence from the first half of the 15th century is meagre, thereafter a fairly quick rotation seems to have been the rule. We have seen that Balthasar Batthyány was hired for a year; in the 1520s his own son, Francis, employed Ladislav Erveneci for a period of two years as his castellan of Greben. In other cases, where the temporal sequence of officeholders can be established, the same phenomenon can be observed.²⁶⁴⁸ Quick rotation excluded as a matter of fact the *familiares* from the benefices of lordly protection enumerated above. The system employed on ecclesiastical lands, before all those of the bishop of Zagreb, seems to have been different: episcopal administrators were employed for several years, which must have played a key role in their enrichment.²⁶⁴⁹

Yet the management of great lay estates also became an increasingly complicated affair, as the growing number of seigniorial accounts from the 1470s on show. Most important of all, it involved at least an elementary level of literacy. Yearly written accounting, the written administration of royal and seigniorial taxes, meant that the office of castellanship assumed a more economic character. It is from around 1500 that the twin offices of castellan and *provisor*, the first of a military nature, the second an economic post, tend to be united in the hands of the same person, and the second office increasingly comes to the fore.²⁶⁵⁰ It is an evident sign of the fact that the military character of the office ceded before the more down-to-earth responsibilities of estate management; what the lords needed, then, was not soldiers but administrators, and a poor but literate nobleman could be more useful than a rich one who had his own lands to care for simultaneously. A case in point is that of George Kápolnai, a petty nobleman from Körös, who made his fortune as castellan-*provisor* of Velike, in the service of the Kanizsai family.²⁶⁵¹

It does not mean, however, that the old patterns of fidelity disappeared. Apart from his brief baronial career, Nicholas Dombai never served other lord than Nicholas Újlaki. In view of the fact

²⁶⁴⁸ Of course, a detailed analysis of this problem will only be possible after the complete archontology of medieval Hungary had been prepared. What we have now is but glimpses through especially well documented cases, such as that of the castle of Szentgyörgyvár. Here between 1474 and 1492 we have five sets of castellans (1474: George Forster [DL 103765.]; 1476: John and Emeric Zamárdi [DF 262134.]; 1479: John Földvári of Zubor, two persons with the same name [DF 255844.]; 1485: Stephen Néksei and John Losecki [DL 19408.]; 1492: Ladislav Daróci and Benedict Cseneházai [DF 255915.]), which certainly hints at a fairly quick rotation.

²⁶⁴⁹ Peter Gudovci was *vicarius temporalis* of the see of Zagreb for at least fifteen years, and Balthasar Hobetić acted as *provisor* of Csázma for seven. Stephen Prasovci also served from at least 1522 until well beyond Mohács, although in his case the information for the period after 1526 is very incomplete.

²⁶⁵⁰ DL 104058 (1497): *provisor castelli Zenthlelek*; DL 107119 (1498): *Luca fabro provisor curie [...] castri Pekrecz*; DL 26120 (1506): *Georgius provisor curie castri Zthenyznak*; DF 279477 (1512): *provisor castri Maioris Kemlek*; DF 256049 (1516): *Georgius Pyszacz provisor curie et castellanus [...] castri Zthenychnyak*; DF 252281 (1517): *castellani castelli Zoppya et provisoris curie de Zalathnok*; DL 34333 (1523): *castellano et provisoris curie castri Velike*. The examples abound, even restricted to Slavonia. It is worth remarking that the Lucas „faber” mentioned in 1498 was probably a peasant, as was, certainly, the *provisor* of Szentgyörgyvár in 1523, titled merely *providus* (DF 232660). It is also interesting to observe that both Elias Bosnyák and Balthasar Hobetić were merely *provisores* of Jajce and Csázma respectively.

²⁶⁵¹ DL 25657., DL 25690-691., DL 25713., DL 25721., DL 34333., DF 277175/210-211.

that his lands lay in the immediate neighbourhood of the Újlaki estates, this was nothing but natural. His son, David, was even brought up in the court of the Újlaki family, so it was no less natural that he not only served duke Lawrence but also followed him into rebellion twice, suffering as a consequence the loss of his patrimony. Nevertheless, in his testament he designed the duke as the chief protector of his goods and of the executors of his will, for „as I have trusted his lordship in my lifetime, so I continue to trust him after my death”. Such unbroken fidelity may have been rare and rooted in a special relationship the details of which remain hidden to us. We have seen that Sigismund Gereci had been brought up in the court of George Bátori, who then commended him as a matter of fact to the service of his brother, the palatine.

In other cases the motivations of service are fairly clear and hint at factors which are generally left out of consideration when the institution of *familiaritas* is treated. George Szencsei, for instance, is expressly stated to have been prompted to change his lords in order to recover his lost lands by whatever means possible.²⁶⁵² Similar reasons may have underlain the adherence of John Musinai to the archbishop of Esztergom. In 1517 Elias Bosnyák, in the course of an inquisition, was said by one of the witnesses to have perpetrated an act of violence „in order to extol his name and glory, as was his habit, with his lord the margrave”.²⁶⁵³ The envy of glory, then, and participating in the power and influence of one’s lord may have also been a strong stimulus, although difficult to grasp; in any case, something similar may have driven Louis Pekri when, in 1510, then in the service of ban Andrew Both of Bajna, he ordered to cut the arms of peasants who resisted forceful tax exaction. On the other hand, other persons’ apparent reluctance to enter any forms of service, if not simply a false image reflected by our sources, may be explained by the simple lack of drive. Or by a kind of division of labour: whereas, for instance, Peter Bocskai was in office almost without a break, his kinsmen, Sigismund and John (the latter with a brief exception in the 1460s) apparently assumed no office at all; generally staying at home, they could consequently be asked by their much travelling cousin to keep an eye on his lands and family. Such a reason may have played a role in the conspicuous inequalities in terms of service between the different branches of the Kasztellánfi, Rohfi and Fánics families, for instance; service meant almost continuous absence from one’s family estates, the management and supervision of which certainly necessitated some kind of intra-familial cooperation.

We should not forget, on the other hand, that the magnates were also interested in attracting the top layer of the nobility into their service, with the aim of enhancing their prestige and sphere of

²⁶⁵² DL 25510: „*Georgius Zemchey ante hac gessit se pro familiare Andree Both et eius viribus nitebatur possessiones et bona illa invadere et obtinere atque accipere, sed postquam apud eundem falx sua metere seu falcare non potuit divertit se ut fertur ad servicia domini prioris Aurane, cuius facultate huiusmodi invasiones et occupationes conatur attentare*”.

²⁶⁵³ DL 37949: “*volens ut consueverat extollere nomen et gloriam suam apud dictum marchionem dominum scilicet suum*”. (DL 37949)

influence.²⁶⁵⁴ This presented to the rich nobility favourable conditions for negotiation and offered choices which they were ready to exploit. Thus, in 1494, when duke Lawrence Újlaki approached George Kasztellánfi with an offer to confer upon him the castellanship of Raholca, one of the chief fortifications of the Újlaki family, an offer which Kasztellánfi seems to have turned down with excellent political intuition.²⁶⁵⁵ That such practice was common is proved by another letter from 1516, according to which the widow of George Kanizsai directed a similar offer to three among the leading noblemen of the region, Ladislas Bencsics, Louis Pekri and Sigismund Pogány; what the offer contained exactly is not known, but Louis Pekri responded that “had he not been detained by the urgent business of his lord he would come” to her service, which makes it evident that she had offered them some kind of leading position in her *familia*.²⁶⁵⁶ This demand on the part of the lords surely explains at least some of the shifts in the individual careers.

A special aspect of *familiaritas* in Slavonia should be given separate treatment because of its outstanding importance, namely the one concerning the office of viceban. It has been known for a very long time that the deputy of the county *ispán* was the *familiaris* of the latter, was appointed and dismissed by him at will, and, consequently, knowledge of the deputy can even be helpful in determining the person of the *ispán* himself. In many cases the *alispán* can be proved to have served his lord both before and after being his deputy at the head of a given county, which seems to support the view that it was the will of the *ispán* alone which determined the choice of his deputy, and the local noble community had no role to play in the process.²⁶⁵⁷ This traditional view has recently been partly questioned, at least with regard to the second half of the 15th century,²⁶⁵⁸ yet repeated protests by the nobility, and the consequent royal enactments prescribing that the *alispán* should be elected from among the nobility of the county where he would function (1486), and that he should belong to the well-to-do nobility of the same county (1492), attest that the problem was an acute one. There were, of course, important territorial differences; where the office of *ispán* was monopolised by local magnates, their deputies were as a matter of fact elected from the ranks of the local nobility, who gavigated around these magnate families. In other counties, however, where the

²⁶⁵⁴ The situation was very similar in late medieval England, see Given-Wilson, *English Nobility* 80.

²⁶⁵⁵ DL 108322: „*Scribit nobis dominus noster graciosus ut vobis intimaremus vosque interrogaremus si castellanatum castris sui Rahowcza ita habere vultis sicuti ipse dominus noster graciosus vobis dabat an non*”.

²⁶⁵⁶ DL 25574: „*Ludovicus de Peker respondit ad litteras v(estre) m(agnificencie) ut si nimium in arduis negociis domini sui non fuerit occupatus, constituetur in serviciis v(estre) m(agnificencie)*”.

²⁶⁵⁷ József Holub, „A főispán és alispán viszonyának jogi természetéről” [The Legal Nature of the Relationship between the *Főispán* and the *Alispán*], in *Emlékkönyv Fejérparaky László életének hatvanadik évfordulója ünnepére* (Budapest, 1917) 186-211, for the traditional view.

²⁶⁵⁸ Richárd Horváth, „A Felső Részek kapitánysága a Mátyás-korban” [The Captainship of the Upper Parts in the Age of Matthias], in *Századok* 137 (2003) 939; Norbert C. Tóth, *Szabolcs megye működése a Zsigmond-korban* [The Functioning of the Authorities of Szabolcs County in the Age of Sigismund] (Nyíregyháza, 2008), 38-39.

ispán himself had no lands, he could choose his deputy from his native region and impose him upon the nobility of the county he governed.²⁶⁵⁹

Slavonia, and the county of Körös, was in several regards a region with peculiar features. By far the most important difference was that the judicial authority of the Slavonian vicebans was much more considerable than that of the ordinary county *alispánok*. Whereas in Hungary proper the judicial competence of the county court, headed in practice by the *alispán*, extended to only minor criminal cases, and all cases concerning noble property rights were as a matter of fact transmitted to the central courts, or, more frequently, were initiated there,²⁶⁶⁰ the banal court enjoyed full authority to judge cases involving noble property, and could even pass judgments inflicting capital punishment.²⁶⁶¹ Although the judicial office of the judge royal functioned as a kind of court of appeal for suits from Slavonia, these were generally either confirmed there or relegated to the ban for final decision. By the 14th century at the latest, the Slavonian nobility had developed a complex system, which, based on the cooperation of the vicebans, the banal prothonotary, and the *szolgabírák*, guaranteed their control of the banal judicial machinery.

Although the Slavonian nobility maintained that it was the local noble community which had traditionally enjoyed the right of electing the banal prothonotary, we have reasons to suppose that in fact he was generally appointed by the ban. Consequently, in the course of the 15th century the system was further refined in order to better reflect the interests of the provincial nobility. Profiting from the troubles which followed the accession of king Matthias, the Slavonian nobility elected in the person of Paul Mikcsec the first prothonotary who was directing simultaneously both seats of Körös and Zagreb. Although some years later the king again forced them to accept his own candidate as the banal prothonotary, from the 1470s it became customary to elect a deputy prothonotary in case the prothonotary was not a local nobleman, and held a parallel position in the royal court. This deputy prothonotary, called *viceprothonotarius regni Sclavonie*, carried out virtually the whole judicial activity of the two banal seats, and was consequently one of the most influential members of the local nobility. In practice, he kept the official seals of the vicebans, and issued with them all kinds of charters both at home and at Körös and Zagreb.²⁶⁶² Most important of all, transactions of landed property were regularly put to writing before the deputy prothonotary.²⁶⁶³ Consequently, both he and the vicebans, whose seals he handled, had to enjoy the full confidence of

²⁶⁵⁹ In general, see Kubinyi, *Mátyás király* 34.

²⁶⁶⁰ C. Tóth, *Szabolcs megye működése* 97.

²⁶⁶¹ Pálosfalvi, „Grebbei Hermanfi” II. 281-282.

²⁶⁶² In 1493 ban Ladislas Egervári transcribed a charter allegedly issued by the former vicebans, Peter Bocskai and Michael Kerhen (*litteras egregiorum Petri Bochkay de Razyna et Michaelis Kerhen de Belosowcz alias dicti regni Sclavonie vicebanorum*); yet the transcribed charter was in fact issued in the name of the ban, Matthias Geréb (*Nos Mathias Gereb de Wyngarth regnorum Dalmacie, Croacie et Sclavonie banus*), and merely confirmed with the seals of his deputies. In reality, however, the place of issue of the charter, namely Gudovc, proves that neither the ban nor his vicebans had anything to do with it. DL 68717.

²⁶⁶³ On this process see Pálosfalvi, „Grebbei Hermanfi” II 284-290.

the entire Slavonian noble community. All the more so, since the judicial sessions of the banal seats, with very few exceptions, were in fact headed by the vicebans and the prothonotary, even if the charters were issued in the name of the ban. From the 1480s on the vicebans were always simultaneously counts of Körös and Zagreb as well, and were titled one or the other depending on the location of the piece of property involved. We have thus sufficient reason to suppose that the paramount influence of the vicebans was reflected in the way the office was filled.

In the 14th century we see the bans regularly taking to Slavonia their own *familiares* from different parts of Hungary proper.²⁶⁶⁴ The latter can be regarded as „typical” in the sense that they did serve the same lord in different posts both before and after the latter’s holding the banal office, such as Martin Ders, who followed Detre Bebek from Slavonia to the county of Temes, returning again to Slavonia two years later, finally to become his lord’s deputy after his appointment as palatine. Moreover, most of these vicebans do not seem to have owned any land in Slavonia, nor did they acquire possessions there during their office-holding. In the first half of the 15th century some important changes can be observed. Although the counts of Cilli did also import some of their own followers into Slavonia, all of them obtained lands in the province, and were thus as a matter of fact recognised as members of the local nobility. And, moreover, with one exception, one of their deputies was always a local nobleman. The last ban to appoint only one, non-Slavonian deputy was Denis Marcali, whose viceban was Ladislás Szöcsényi from the county of Somogy.²⁶⁶⁵

In the course of the 15th century we still find vicebans who were taken to Slavonia from different parts of Hungary, such as Nicholas Antimus²⁶⁶⁶ (1442-43), Peter Szerecsen (1461-64), Paul Perneszi (1464-65), John Macedóniai (1466), Ladislás Veres of Szepes (1470) and Oswald Polányi²⁶⁶⁷ (1493). Again, none of them seems to have obtained any land in Slavonia during their service there. Yet a very important difference with regard to the preceding period is that they never assumed the office alone: and their fellow viceban was without exception a Slavonian nobleman. In this respect it is highly illustrative to observe what happened in 1464/1466, for instance. Early in 1464 one of the vicebans was Ladislás Szencsei, evidently appointed by Jan Vitovec,²⁶⁶⁸ while his companion in the office was the non-Slavonian Peter Szerecsen, a *familiaris* of Nicholas Újlaki. When, after the coronation of Matthias, Újlaki reassumed the banate together with Emeric

²⁶⁶⁴ Engel, *Archontológia* I. 16-19., with the relevant sections in the second volume.

²⁶⁶⁵ In fact, the wife of Ladislás’s brother, Benedict, did hold part of the estate of Gerzence before 1425 (Erdődy 10093).

²⁶⁶⁶ The brother of the grandfather of Nicholas Antimus did have connections and possessions south of the Drava river, but we know of no land in Slavonia held by Nicholas himself when he was viceban.

²⁶⁶⁷ It is with Oswald Polányi, member of a family in the county of Vas which descended from the Hermán kindred, that I identify the deputy of ban Ladislás Egervári in the early 1490s. If this hypothesis is true, he was taken by his lord from Vas to Slavonia; yet, apparently, he was not completely unknown there at the time of his appointment as viceban. For his wife was Catherine Hásságyi, whom he had married before August 1484, and was thus related to a family already implanted in Slavonia in the 1490s. Oswald was later *szolgabíró* and then *alispán* in the county of Vas. See Gabriella Erdélyi, *Egy kolostorper története [The History of a Monastery Process]* (Budapest: MTA Történettudományi Intézete, 2005) 219-220, and DL 45990 (called in 1484 *frater* by Stephen Hásságyi)

²⁶⁶⁸ As we have seen above, in 1463 he was pardoned among the *familiares* of Vitovec.

Szapolyai, and the latter appointed Paul Perneszi as his deputy, Újlaki dismissed Szerecsen and chose the Slavonian Ladislav Rohfi. In 1466 Újlaki changed again and appointed John Macedóniai, from the county of Temes, but his new colleague, Jan Vitovec, appointed Nicholas Kasztellánfi for his part. It seems, thus, that the rule had been established by then according to which at least one of the bans' deputy should in any case be elected from the Slavonian nobility, and this rule was respected by the bans themselves. This fact certainly alludes to a certain influence which the local nobility exerted over the appointment of the vicebans, although the exact details of how it was exerted are impossible to establish. It is in the light of this development that the protest put forward by the Slavonian nobility against duke Corvin in 1495 is to be interpreted: for what they stated, namely that the bans could *ab antiquo* only appoint persons with lands in Slavonia, was definitely untrue.²⁶⁶⁹ Yet if we suppose that Corvin at first only appointed John Gyulai as his deputy, and it was under pressure from the local nobility that he associated to him the Slavonian Bernard Turóci, we certainly come closer to understanding the case.

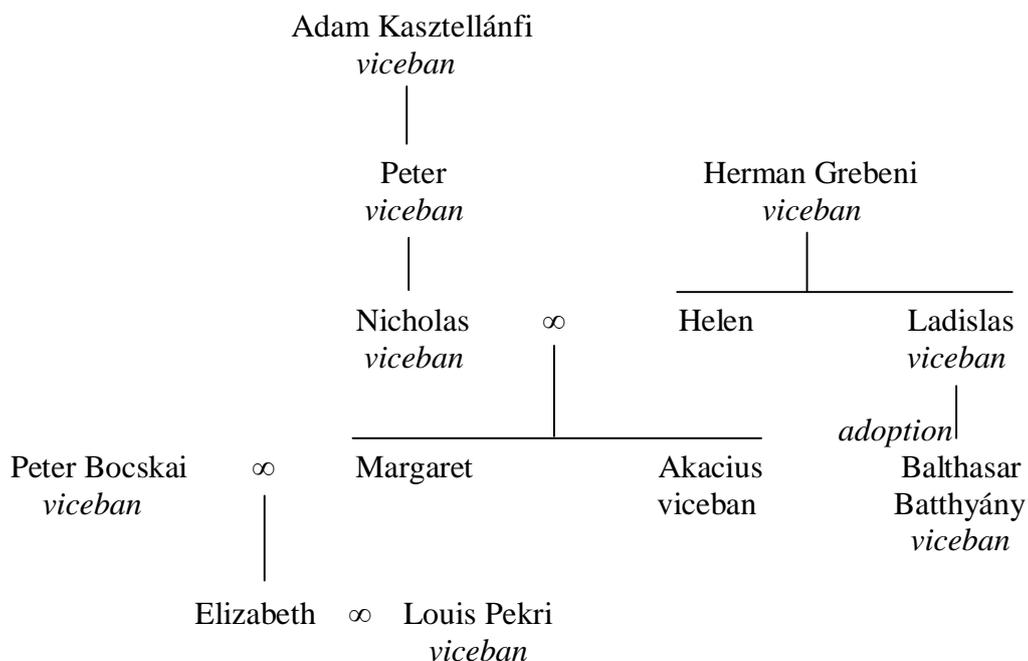
Other factors also deserve mention, however. From the second half of the 15th century the office of viceban was regularly assumed by the same persons returning to it under different bans. Thus, as we have seen, Peter Bocskai served as the deputy of bans John Ernuszt, Ladislav Egervári, Blaise Magyar, Matthias Geréb and John Corvin. Ladislav Szencsei, for his part, served Jan Vitovec, Blaise Magyar and Ladislav Egervári before returning for a second time as the deputy of Blaise Magyar. Other vicebans who returned to office at least twice are Ladislav Rohfi, Louis Pekri, Ladislav Hermanfi, Michael Kerhen, Bernard Turóci, Balthasar Alapi and Balthasar Batthyány. Perhaps even more important, some of them remained in office independently of the change of ban: the most outstanding example here is again Peter Bocskai, who in 1482 was taken over from Egervári by Blaise Magyar, and remained in office even after the place of Magyar had been taken by Matthias Geréb. But others, such as Bernard Turóci and Louis Pekri, were also left in place by subsequent bans of Slavonia. This phenomenon also argues strongly against regarding the vicebans as simple *familiars* of the bans, despite the fact that the wording of the only appointment which has come down to us, namely that of Ladislav Hermanfi, seems to underpin the traditional view.²⁶⁷⁰ Another case also deserves mention in this respect. As we have seen, Gaspar Kasztellánfi even suffered Ottoman captivity in the service of the Tallóci family, and played a part in getting the ransom for Frank Tallóci. This experience must surely have reinforced the link uniting him to the Tallóci; yet only two years after the death of Matko Tallóci, and during the quasi-exile of Frank Tallóci, we see him emerging as the viceban of the counts of Cilli, the arch-enemies of his former

²⁶⁶⁹ „in predicto regno Sclavonie semper et ab antiquo consuetudo per banos pro tempore constitutos observata fuisset, quod bani eorum officium vicebanatus aliis personis dare et conferre non potuissent nisi pocioribus nobilibus familiaribus scilicet eorum in eodem regno Sclavonie possessiones et bona habentibus” (Iura regni I. 230.)

²⁶⁷⁰ DF 268086. The wording of the appointment shows striking similarities with that of royal documents which notified the appointment of *ispánok* to the county communities concerned.

lords. In view of what has been said above it would be wrong to see his change of lords as an act of ingratitude; rather, as an important building-block in the process of consolidation which involved concessions on the part of both governor John Hunyadi and the counts of Cilli, and was apparently based on the consensus of the local nobility.²⁶⁷¹

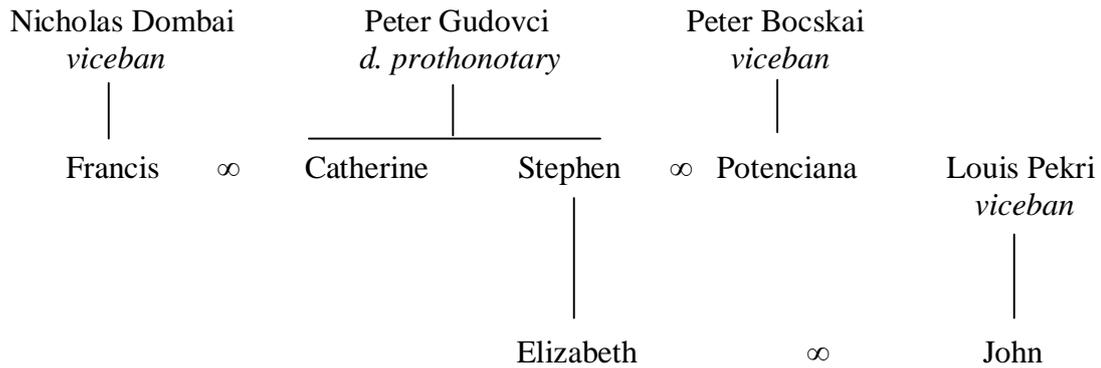
Equally important is the network of familial connections of which the most conspicuous illustration is the following graph:



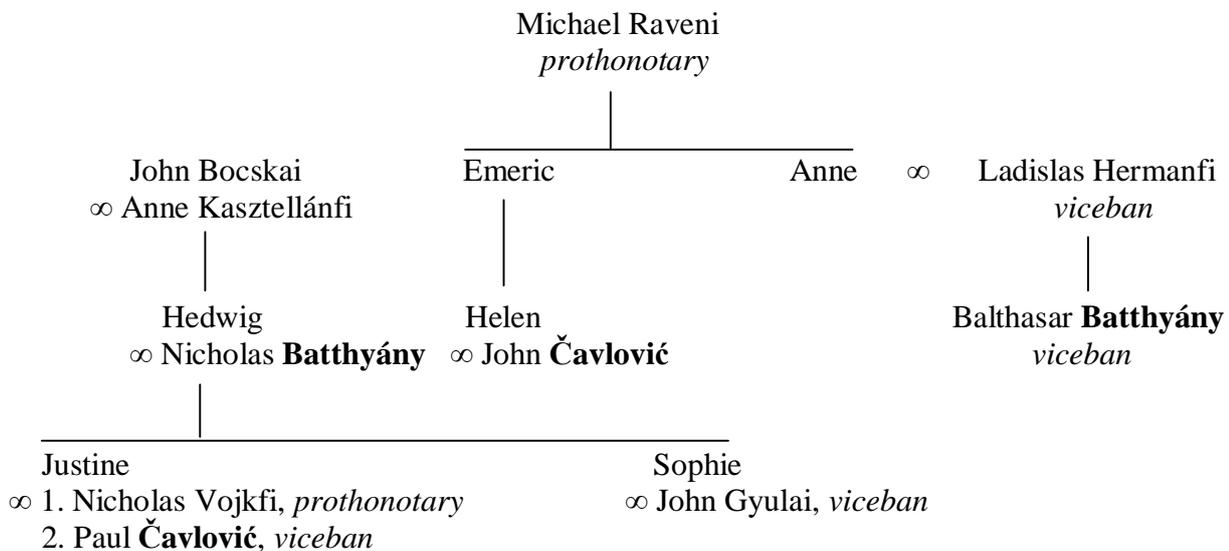
Four consequent generations of the Kasztellánfi followed each other in the office of viceban, and, in a sense, the tradition was continued on the female line, and even further than the graph shows, for Louis Pekri became the father-in-law of John Predrihoi, whose brother was also viceban. The same can be observed with regard to the Grebeni/Batthyány, where three generations succeeded to each other. Or even four, if we add that the second wife of Ladislás Hermanfi was Ursula Fáncs, cousin of Gaspar, who alone assumed the office of viceban in his family. And the example, while illustrative, is not unique: we have seen that Ladislás Szencsei junior followed in the footsteps of another Szencsei, and was himself the maternal grandson of Andrew Rohonci, viceban himself; the husband of another daughter to Andrew, Benedict Turóci, was also appointed as the ban's deputy. Bernard Rohfi „succeeded” to his uncle, Ladislás; Francis Nelepeci was the son-in-law of Elias Bosnyák, and Vitus Kamarcai became the father-in-law of Christine, sister of Paul Kerecsényi. This system of familiar interconnections involved also the more influential among the Slavonian prothonotaries, as the two graphs below show:

²⁶⁷¹ On this see Pálosfalvi, „Cilleiek és Tallóciak” 90-94.

1.



2.



This latter graph will become even more illustrative if we add that both parents of Hedwig Bocskai belonged to a family which also gave vicebans to Slavonia. Yet all this, of course, does not mean that marriage relationships necessarily played a role in the devolution of the office of viceban; what it does mean is that the office was from the second half of the 15th century virtually monopolised by a group of families which, as we have seen above, can also be distinguished in terms of their landed wealth. It is thus safe to say that the vicebans appointed from among this group of families cannot be regarded as *familiares* in the traditional sense of the word, but rather as representatives of an elite group within the top layer of the nobility from whose ranks the bans were obliged to choose their deputies; even such figures of authority as duke Corvin were apparently no exceptions to the rule. It is highly characteristic that Michael Kerhen, while he was the deputy of Matthias Geréb, also turns up as the castellan of John Ernusz: it seems as if his „public” activity as viceban was entirely separated from his „private” engagement to a local magnate. It should be seen as a consequence of the special position of the vicebans that, even if the ban was a landowner in

Slavonia, such as Ladislas Egervári, the two Kanizsai or duke Corvin, we never find any of their deputies simultaneously governing any of their local castles.

Needless to say, practically all the families which figure in this dissertation, while serving more powerful lords, had their own *familiars*, more or less depending upon their wealth and current social standing. Anyone who had at least one fortification and some villages belonging to it needed at least some followers to supervise them and the tenants living there. Unfortunately, the examination of this problem is so much hindered by the nature of our sources that no serious analysis based upon them can be offered.²⁶⁷² Even in the case of otherwise well documented families such as the Szencsei and the Kapitánfi we know extremely little about the persons whom they kept in their service; this phenomenon seems to be a general one.²⁶⁷³ It is obvious that lords with several fortifications and hundreds of tenant sessions needed a much greater number of *familiars* than their poorer fellows; indeed, as I was able to demonstrate on the example of Ladislas Hermanfi, the richest among them were able to draw the petty nobility living in the neighbourhood of their lands almost completely into their orbit.²⁶⁷⁴ Yet even persons like Michael Berivojszentiváni and John Stefekfi had at least a handful of noble followers in their service,²⁶⁷⁵ and it is evident that the number of *familiars* employed, although obviously a source of authority, was not a decisive factor in determining the local respect of a given person.

One last aspect of service should yet be treated briefly. We have already seen the importance of literacy in the social rise of Peter Gudovci. We have at least two families in our sample in the case of which literacy and service conditional upon it played a lasting, so to say hereditary role. The first of them is the Megyericsei. Conspicuously, the entire career of the family was launched by a banal prothonotary, George Megyericsei, and his example was followed in almost every generation right until the end of the middle ages. John Megyericsei started his career as a notary of the royal court, and later became an influential member of Sigismund's entourage. His brother, James, was later prothonotary of Körös, whereas in the next generation Emeric Megyericsei served the local nobility as *szolgabíró*. The series was finished by the other John, who, having served archbishop Ladislas Geréb as his secretary, briefly joined the court as royal secretary. The pattern is similar in the case of the Raveni. Here again, the example was set in the Angevin period by master John, notary of ban Nicholas, and maintained until beyond Mohács. Michael Raveni, royal attorney and prothonotary of Körös, was followed by Martin and Stephen Raveni, the latter serving as *szolgabíró*, then by John Raveni, notary and secretary of ban John Korbáviai, and finally by Michael, who rose to be

²⁶⁷² On this problem see Pálosfalvi, „Grebbei Hermanfi” II 274.

²⁶⁷³ Neumann, Korlátköviek 120-122.

²⁶⁷⁴ Pálosfalvi, „Grebbei Hermanfi” II. 275-278.

²⁶⁷⁵ They are generally mentioned without name, in cases of violent trespass, such as in 1477 with regard to Michael Berivojszentiváni: „*egregius Michael de Berywoyzenhiwan nescitur quibus respectibus missis et destinatis quibusdam certis familiaribus*” (DL 102200)

Slavonian prothonotary after Mohács. The extent to which literacy was instrumental in maintaining the social prestige of these families is impossible to tell, but it is reasonable to suppose that it did play some role.

3.4. The nobility and the king

The king was the focus of political life in the medieval realm of Hungary throughout the Middle Ages. Royal power remained relatively strong even under the supposedly weak and incompetent Jagello rulers. Wladislaw II proved powerful enough in 1495 to break with military force duke Lawrence Újlaki and his accomplices,²⁶⁷⁶ and as late as 1525 Louis II hoped that his personal presence would restore the order in the southern marches of the kingdom.²⁶⁷⁷ This is not to say, however, that nothing had changed. With regard to Slavonia only, on two occasions, in 1498 and 1508, the ban of Croatia and Slavonia revolted against the king, and at least in the last case the crisis drew on for years.²⁶⁷⁸ Such conflicts did take place before, as after the accession of kings Sigismund and Matthias, but always made part of a general political crisis, which involved more than one pretender to the throne. Even worse, in 1504 and 1524, the Slavonian nobility refused to accept the ban appointed by the king,²⁶⁷⁹ and on both occasions their efforts proved successful and ended with the election of another candidate. Such resistance would have been inconceivable during the reign of Matthias.

Yet it seems that the real ceasure in terms of the manifestations and functioning of royal power was the period following the death of Louis I. The model of the relationship between the royal court and the nobility in the Angevin period was elaborated by the late Pál Engel. This relationship was before all shaped and even determined by the immense royal domain and the revenues accruing thereof. All those persons involved in the government of the realm, either as barons or as knights of the court, were given a share of the produce of the royal estates, both in money and kind, for the time of their office-holding.²⁶⁸⁰ Even more important than the discovery of this somewhat archaic system was Engel's postulation of a fundamental break between those gaining access to the royal court and those noble masses whose life was regulated by the narrow and provincial rules of the „county” nobility. As Engel put it, the nobleman who entered the court and made his fortune there „broke out of the magnetic pull of his kin, from the simple member of a clan he became an individual, and the place of solidarity to the kin was taken by personal fidelity to the king or to one of his barons.”²⁶⁸¹

²⁶⁷⁶ Engel, *Realm of Saint Stephen* 360.

²⁶⁷⁷ DL 104452.

²⁶⁷⁸ On these political crises see Pálosfalvi, „Bajnai Both András” *passim*.

²⁶⁷⁹ Francis Balassa and John Tahi respectively.

²⁶⁸⁰ Pál Engel, „Honor, vár, ispánság. Tanulmányok az Anjou-királyság kormányzati rendszeréről” [*Honor, Castle, Ispánság. Studies on the Structure of Government in Angevin Hungary*] in Idem, *Honor, vár, ispánság. Válogatott tanulmányok*, ed. Enikő Csukovits (Budapest: Osiris, 2003)101-161.

²⁶⁸¹ Pál Engel, „Társadalom és politikai struktúra az Anjou-kori Magyarországon” [*Society and Political Structures in Angevin Hungary*] in Idem, *Honor, vár, ispánság. Válogatott tanulmányok*, ed. Enikő Csukovits (Budapest: Osiris, 2003) 302-319, the citation is from p. 317.

This system, at least as regards its material foundations, surely ceased to exist in the last decade of the 14th century, after the majority of the royal castles and their appurtenances had been granted away by king Sigismund. What remained was distributed after his death by his successor, Albert of Habsburg.²⁶⁸² Unfortunately, no intellectual model as profound as that of Engel with regard to the Angevin period has been established for the remaining section of the Middle Ages. What is certain is the enhanced political role of the magnates whose wealth had been established by Sigismund, and was finally translated into the language of privileges in 1498. This did not mean, however, that the royal court lost its attraction for other layers of the nobility; yet it is evident that the dichotomy of „court” and „provincial” nobility cannot be sustained any more as a conceptional tool for grasping a social and governmental system within which the king lacked the traditional means of rewarding services.

As regards Slavonia, the most important consequence of the reign of Sigismund was the dissolution of the once important banal *honor*.²⁶⁸³ Although the situation changed again after the Slavonian and Croatian banates had been definitively united in 1476, the maintenance of the Croatian castles was more a burdensome responsibility than a source of military might. The power of the individual bans depended consequently upon their landed wealth. In this respect the period of the counts of Cilli and of Jan Vitovec was the nadir of royal authority in Slavonia. In the possession of the Zagorje district with its several castles, completed by the fortifications in Körös and Zagreb, their influence was overwhelming in Slavonia. Moreover, both the counts of Cilli and Vitovec maintained a mercenary army of their own, completely independent of any royal authorisation, which they put to use unscrupulously to enhance their territorial power base. It is no wonder, then, that between 1445 and 1464 they succeeded in pulling most of the leading Slavonian nobility into their political orbit, isolating them in a sense from royal authority. This isolation, as we will see, was never complete, yet neither governor John Hunyadi nor the young king Matthias was able to intervene in Slavonia in the ways which were normal both before 1445 and after 1464. The situation changed radically from the late 1460s, for none of the bans appointed by Matthias and his successors enjoyed the territorial power in Slavonia once built up by the counts of Cilli and inherited by Vitovec. Some of them were given lands there by the king parallel to their appointment as ban, others already possessed estates in the province prior to obtaining the office, but Blaise Magyar, for instance, does not seem to have obtained a single parcel of land in Slavonia. And even magnates like Matthias Geréb, Ladislav and George Kanizsai and Emeric Perényi could not match the castle-based predominance of the counts of Cilli and of Vitovec.

²⁶⁸² Engel, *Realm of Saint Stephen* 280.

²⁶⁸³ On the fate of the banal honor see Engel, *Archontológia* I. 16, and the sections on the individual castles listed there.

Not even the counts of Cilli and Jan Vitovec were able, and perhaps they did not even want to, cut all contacts of the Slavonian nobility with the king or the governor. Both before and after the peace treaty between John Hunyadi and the counts of Cilli which was agreed to in January 1447 we find Slavonian noblemen petitioning favours from the governor, and after the beginning of the personal rule of Ladislas V in January 1453 things almost returned to their normal course. When count Ulrich of Cilli was allmighty in the court, that is, before September 1453 and after May 1455, all ways to the royal favour led through his person, and in this sense the situation in Slavonia was not different.²⁶⁸⁴ It is, however, surely not accidental that the Slavonian nobility only turned to the king as a corporation in defence of their privileges after the death of the count, and before the consolidation of Jan Vitovec's power in Slavonia, that is, in February 1457.²⁶⁸⁵ The Slavonian nobility also appeared, perhaps in great numbers, at the assembly held at Buda in May 1458,²⁶⁸⁶ and later on in that year in the king's camp at Szeged.²⁶⁸⁷ After the rupture between king Matthias and Vitovec in January 1459 contacts seem to have become more sparse, but we have evidence attesting the presence of Slavonian nobles at the diet of May 1462²⁶⁸⁸ and March 1463, and on the latter occasion they were even mentioned by the decree issued.²⁶⁸⁹

It is thus not surprising that the Slavonian nobility, among them those of Körös, were represented in great numbers at the coronation of Matthias in March 1464.²⁶⁹⁰ From this time on, and until the end of the Middle Ages, envoys delegated by the Slavonian nobility regularly visited the royal court in matters concerning their common interests. A detailed analysis of the development of the corporative identity of the Slavonian nobility cannot be carried out within the framework of the present dissertation; yet the persons who can be identified as acting on behalf of the local noble community before the king certainly merit a closer investigation. Their list, obviously far from complete, is as follows:

May 1465	Ladislas Hermanfi, Nicholas Szentléleki
August 1467	provost Vítus Bocskai, Frank Fácns
May 1474	Peter Bikszádi, Andrew Kapitánfi, John Vidfi of Korbova

²⁶⁸⁴ Pálosfalvi, „Vitovec János” 429-440, on the situation of Slavonia in the 1450s. It is to be remarked, however, that in 1456 count Ulrich of Cilli complained to the king that the Slavonian nobles had for some time petitioned for all sorts of legal documents not from the ban, that is, count Ulrich himself, but from the palatine and the judge royal, which is another proof that they still had the means of getting round the banal authority. DF 255750.

²⁶⁸⁵ DF 268080.

²⁶⁸⁶ „*nostrae maiestatis venientes in presenciam fideles nostri universi nobiles regni nostri Sclavonie*” (Ibidem)

²⁶⁸⁷ Iván Nagy and Albert Nyáry Br. eds., *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek Mátyás király korából I-IV* (Budapest, 1875-1877) I. 38.

²⁶⁸⁸ DF 231457.

²⁶⁸⁹ „*prelati, barones et nobiles regni Hungarie, Dalmaie, Croacie, Slavonie et partium Transsilvanarum*”. *Decreta regni* 134.

²⁶⁹⁰ DF 255770, DF 231486, DF 276966 (where the coronation is expressly referred to), DF 256101, DF 231491, DF 231492.

October 1477	Nicholas Dombai, Ladislav Hermanfi and Peter Bikszádi
January 1487	Ladislav Hermanfi, Peter Bocskai, Michael Kerhen, Peter Gudovci, George Kapitánfi, Anthony Gereci, Nicholas Orros of Orrosovc, Ladislav Simonfi of Miletinc, Nicholas Puneck of Punekovc, [...] Prasnicaí
July 1488	Michael Kerhen, George Kapitánfi, Nicholas Orros of Orrosovc
April 1489	Ladislav Hermanfi
June 1490	Ladislav Hermanfi, Paul Paksi, George Turóci, Stephen Dersfi, Peter Bocskai, Peter Gudovci, Bernard Rohfi, Nicholas Pekri
February-March 1492	Balthasar Battyányi, Peter Bocskai, Bernard Rohfi, Peter Pogány, Michael Kerhen, George Szencsei, Peter Gudovci, Christopher Subyth of Pernya, George Kasztellánfi, Nicholas Turbelt, Albert Lónyai, Nicholas Bocskai, Nicholas Herkfi, Emeric Hássági, John Mindszenti, Elias Bosnyák, Ladislav Sztubicaí, Ladislav Pekri, Nicholas Orros, George Orehovci, John Csersztveci, Peter Gereci, John Kernyak of Poljana, John Orehovci
March 1494	George Szencsei, George Kapitánfi
December 1496	Bernard Turóci, George Kapitánfi, Nicholas Vojkfi
February 1499	Bernard Turóci, Nicholas Vojkfi
October 1505	Emeric Hássági, George Kasztellánfi, Bernard Turóci, Elias Bosnyák
February 1517	Paul Nespesai
July 1524	Balthasar Battyányi, Nicholas Dersfi, Sigismund Pogány

The list is illustrative in at least two regards. Firstly, with very few exceptions, we find those persons who belonged by any criterion to the top layer of the Slavonian nobility. Secondly, almost all of them were predominantly possessed in the county of Körös, which proves beyond doubt that they played a decisive role in the formation of the corporate identity of the Slavonian nobility and in its representation towards the king. This is no matter for surprise: the nobility in the counties of Varasd and Zagreb was much less important both numerically and in terms of wealth than their peers in Körös.²⁶⁹¹ We do not know whether the envoys elected by the entire Slavonian nobility were paid by the community, but even if it was so, it was only natural to commission those who had the financial means anyway needed to undertake the expensive journey to Buda or wherever the king stayed. The attitude of the nobility of the county of Zagreb in 1524, when they simply confirmed the delegation of the envoys elected previously at the congregation of Körös with the justification that some of them also had lands in Zagreb, was surely not exceptional.²⁶⁹² What is interesting, moreover, is the fact that among the three envoys only Balthasar Batthyány seems then to have had possessions in the county of Zagreb. On occasions, the presence of Slavonian noblemen at court could be quite massive, such as in May 1475, when it was possible to carry out an

²⁶⁹¹ An even superficial examination of the tax lists from the three counties is enough to prove the point.

²⁶⁹² DL 102338: „*quia sunt certi ex e(gregiis) d(ominacionibus) vestris qui eciam in isto comitatu Zagrabiensi bona habent*”.

investigation among the nobility of Körös which gathered for the assembly of Buda,²⁶⁹³ but also in January 1487, when, however, no general assembly is known to have taken place.

And the appearance of the Slavonian nobility, predominantly those from the county of Körös, in the king's presence was by no means restricted to solemn embassies delegated by the noble *universitas*. They regularly attended the assemblies held by the king or his plenipotentiaries. Sometimes the two were linked: In February 1492 it was for the important assembly of Buda that many of them travelled to the capital, where the peace treaty of Pressburg was ratified, the so-called "Slavonian articles" enacted, and the Slavonian and Croatian nobility confirmed the Habsburg succession in Hungary.²⁶⁹⁴ One and a half year earlier, in June 1490, it was again an assembly, namely the one convoked for the election of the new king, which attracted many of them to Buda, where some or all of them also proceeded in the interests of their noble community. More generally, it seems that all the Slavonian counties regularly sent at least one or two envoys to the Hungarian diet, wherever it was held. Establishing the identity of the envoys is no easy matter, for they are extremely rarely if ever nominated in our sources. Yet identification is possible through different byways. For instance, we have the invitation sent by king Matthias in August to the nobility of Körös for the assembly to be held at Pressburg. During the assembly itself, two charters were issued in favour of Ladislas Hermanfi at Pressburg, which makes it highly probable that he was one of the two envoys sent by his native county. Using such concordances, I was able to identify eleven general assemblies where the participation of Hermanfi can be assured.²⁶⁹⁵ Unfortunately, none of his fellow noblemen can be followed with such details throughout his career; nevertheless, those who can be identified show that these envoys were regularly elected from the same group of persons who turn up as special delegates of the Slavonian noble *universitas*.

In the first years of the reign of Matthias, the Slavonian nobility, together with their Hungarian fellows, were regularly mobilised by the king. Mass mobilisation ended after 1466, when the Ottoman threat decreased, and Matthias turned his attention westwards. This change of attitude influenced as a matter of fact the relationship between the king and the Slavonian nobility. Matthias needed money and trained soldiers thereafter, and favoured those social factors from whom he could get them without the risk of running into resistance. This policy is best illustrated by his role played in the conflict which opposed the Slavonian nobility to the bishop of Zagreb in the matter of paying the tithe. The king, although making serious and unfeigned efforts at mediation between the

²⁶⁹³ DF 261839: „*nobilibus comitatus Crisiensis ad presentem congregacionem generalem prelatorum et baronum ac procerum et nobilium regni universonum confluentibus*”.

²⁶⁹⁴ On this assembly, and the participation of Slavonian noblemen, see most recently Tibor Neumann, "Békekötés Pozsonyban – országgyűlés Budán. A Jagelló-Habsburg kapcsolatok egy fejezete (1490-1492)" [Peace Treaty at Pressburg – General Assembly at Buda. A Chapter in the History of Habsburg-Jagello Relationship] II. part, in *Századok* 145 (2011) 309-324.

²⁶⁹⁵ Pálosfalvi, „Grebbei Hermanfi" II. 311-312.

two parties, as a rule took sides with the prelate, with one exception, which is all the more conspicuous. In January 1472, when bishop Oswald Tuz refused to send his troops for the royal campaign in northwestern Hungary, Matthias expressly prohibited the Slavonian nobility from letting their peasants pay the tithe.²⁶⁹⁶ But he reverted to his initial stance as soon as the prelate had submitted himself again to royal authority; this proves beyond doubt that he valued the bishop, who maintained his troops basically from his revenues from the tithe, more than a nobility unwilling either to fight or to pay instead. It is a sure indication of royal authority that the Slavonian nobility, with very few exceptions, remained faithful both in 1467, when they were afflicted by the royal reforms as harshly as their peers in Transylvania, and in 1471, when the leaders of the opposition were prelates of Slavonian origins.²⁶⁹⁷ Their attitude seems to have been exemplified by Ladislav Hermanfi, who was rewarded by Matthias in 1471 for having exhorted his fellow-nobles to remain faithful to the ruler.²⁶⁹⁸ Thirty years before, in 1441, Gaspar Kasztellánfi was rewarded in a similar way by Wladislaw I for having organised congregations throughout Slavonia, where the local nobility were offered an occasion to confirm their fidelity to the king.²⁶⁹⁹ In an inverse way, the case of Balthasar Batthyány, who was accused in 1491 of having tried to draw his Slavonian fellow noblemen to the camp of Maximilian of Habsburg,²⁷⁰⁰ and later acquitted of the charge and declared to have remained faithful throughout the crisis, also points in the same direction.

The situation changed again under Matthias' Jagello successors, who were unable to maintain a standing army on the scale done by Matthias, and thus lacked the most important means of political pressure so skilfully used by their predecessor. It is highly characteristic in this respect that Wladislaw II tried in vain to compel the Slavonian nobility to reassume their traditional obligation of personal military service again,²⁷⁰¹ and, as said above, both he and his son, Louis II, suffered the humiliation of having to revoke their appointees to the banal office because of the resistance of the

²⁶⁹⁶ DF 268092: „*nullus omnino vestrum prefato episcopo Zagrabiensi aut hominibus suis aliquas decimas et alios proventus qualescumque de bonis et possessionibus vestris [...] dare aut persolvere audeat*”.

²⁶⁹⁷ According to András Kubinyi (Mátyás király 64) the revolt of 1467 spread over Slavonia as well; I have not found any information supporting this view. On the conspiracy of 1471 with a focus on its Slavonian prelate-leaders see András Kubinyi, „Vitéz János és Janus Pannonius politikája Mátyás uralkodása idején” [The Policies of John Vitéz and Janus Pannonius during the Reign of King Matthias], in István Bartók, László Jankovits and Gábor Kecskeméti eds., *Humanista műveltség Pannóniában* (Pécs, 2000) 20-26. For the Slavonian rebels proscribed in 1481 see Tringli, *Szlavóniai közgyűlés* 314-317.

²⁶⁹⁸ DL 100816: „*ipse siquidem notabilis nobilis regni nostri Sclavonie non solum solus paratus esse sed etiam alios inducere videtur ad exhibenda opera fidelitatis in honorem nostre regie dignitatis et corone*”.

²⁶⁹⁹ DF 252397: „*tanquam vir animi constancia decorus fideliter nobis adherendo et constanter inter alios ipsam rem nostram dirigendo, adeo etiam apud nonnullos in illis partibus in fide nostra pusillanimitate vacillantes laudabiliter cum certis nostris fidelibus agendo, ut eos in nostram obedienciam convertit, in observandaque fidelitate solida roboracione reliquit*”.

²⁷⁰⁰ DF 255911: „*talem fecisset dispositionem et conclusionem ut ipse serenissimo principi domino Maximiliano regi Romanorum obedire sibi que inservire aliosque nobiles regni Sclavonie alloqui vellet ut et ipsi cum eo circa ipsum Romanorum regem audire sibi que obedire et inservire deberent*”.

²⁷⁰¹ *Iura regni*, 245-246.

Slavonian nobility.²⁷⁰² It is again surely not accidental that the period between 1490 and 1526 was decisive in the formation of the corporate identity of the latter, when the general assembly (*congregatio generalis*) of the Slavonian nobility became an almost permanent institution, and the prime means of communication with the ruler. It should be emphasised, however, that there was no massive defection on the part of the Slavonian nobility either in 1491 to king Maximilian, or in 1498 to duke Corvin, or in 1508-1510 to the revolting ban, Andrew Both. And in August 1526 the Slavonian nobility appeared in the royal camp at Mohács as they had done more than sixty years before for the anti-Ottoman campaigns of king Matthias.

Thus, the royal court remained a centre of political decision making and source of influence which, apparently, lost nothing of its importance right until 1526. The traditional role of those “notable nobles” such as Ladislas Hermanfi and Gaspar Kasztellánfi seems to have been a kind of mediation between the king and the local nobility. Unfortunately, we still know very little about the ways by which the court functioned and how it was transformed between 1400 and 1526. Thus the best way to approach the problem seems to examine the various forms of the interaction between court and nobility, of which representation at general assemblies or before the king was only one manifestation. Another, equally important was membership of the court itself, although it is one of the problems which are most difficult to examine, partly because no research concerning the later middle ages has been done on the scale undertaken by Pál Engel.

In the late Angevin period six among our families found their way to the royal court, and what is known about them confirms the picture envisaged by Pál Engel. Four of them belonged to the richest Slavonian families which had established themselves there for at least a hundred years then. The most “classical” career is that of Nicholas Pekri: the son of Paul, he joined the court in circumstances unknown to us sometime before the middle of the century. The grandson of ban Peter, still immensely rich, he belonged to that layer of the nobility for whom access to the court was more a question of personal determination than of chance. Although his career was restricted to the court of the queen, at that time baronial positions there apparently involved no less prestige than those in the royal court.²⁷⁰³ In the Fánics family, three brothers joined successively, or simultaneously, we do not know, the court, one of whom, John, died during one of the Italian campaigns of Louis I. The Fánics also belonged to the second rank of the aristocracy in the late Árpád age, as did the Grebeni, who likewise sent two brothers to the royal court. The office-holding of Paul Szencsei as deputy palatine represented a different pattern in that his access to the court was dependent upon the career of his lord, Nicholas Garai the elder. The remaining two to enter the

²⁷⁰² In fact, George Kanizsai was also appointed and then rejected as ban of Slavonia in 1498; yet in this case the revocation of the royal decision was caused not by the resistance of the Slavonian nobility but by the mere power and influence of duke Corvin south of the Drava. On the appointment and its revocation see DF 268136.

²⁷⁰³ When there is a regional court, its officeholders are recruited from the same circle as those of the royal court, at least up to the 1420s. See Engel, *Archontológia*, I. 54-61.

royal court were master Latk of the Hrvatinić family, and his cousin, master Gregory, brother of Nelipac, who, lords of the castle of Berstyanóc and that of Dobrakucsá respectively, belonged to the same social category as the other four. Another family, the Gorbonoki, joined them during the brief reign of Charles II: Ladislás, son of Stephen, seems to have joined the royal court as a *familiaris* of Stephen Lackfi; yet again, Ladislás belonged in terms of both descent and landed wealth to the top of the Slavonian nobility. The situation thus justifies the statement of Engel, according to which court career was then mostly dependent upon an initial amount of wealth, and was generally not open to the ranks of the poorer nobility.²⁷⁰⁴ That it could be lucrative, on the other hand, is proved by the success of the Grebeni in reobtaining their family castle and the expansion of the Fáncs lands in Somogy.

During the reign of Sigismund, at first the pattern seems to be the same, but important modifications took place in the 1420s and 1430s. We meet in the royal court the Fáncs, the Pekri and the Szencsei again, joined by such old Slavonian families as the Bikszádi, the Bocskai, the Csupor, the Ost of Herbortya and the Kasztellánfi, and by newly established ones like the Dersfi, the Dombai and the Rohonci. Two members of the Garázda family also joined the royal court, but, since none of them seems at that time to have still lived in Slavonia, nor did they later return there, their cases should probably be left out of consideration. Whereas in the case of the Pekri and the Szencsei their participation to the revolt of 1403 cut the way before all further rise, for the Fáncs, for instance, the seeds sown in the Angevin period seem to have yielded fruits in the first years of the 15th century in the form of the baronial offices of Ladislás Fáncs. Yet, as we have already seen, neither Ladislás himself, nor Paul Csupor, nor Martin Ders, nor Nicholas Bocskai, nor John Ost were able to establish themselves and their families among the barons. Both the sons of Ladislás Fáncs remained members of the court, as did the two sons of Paul Csupor, as well as George Dombai and Martin Ders, and, as far as we know, they took part in important political and judicial decisions. The brother of ban Paul Csupor was even a baronial member of the queen's court, although after 1423 its personnel was far less illustrious than before 1419.²⁷⁰⁵ They in a sense belonged to the "outer" circle of royal government, albeit not quite in the way it had been normal in the Angevin period. It is in this respect highly characteristic that George Bocskai, for instance, having been a member of the court in the years around 1400, disappeared from it completely and lived in provincial obscurity for several decades. The same is true of George Dombai, who is last referred to as participating to a governmental decision in 1416, and consequently disappears almost completely from our eyes, although he was still alive in 1439. Or George Bikszádi, who returned from the court to the service of the Tallóci and became first *ispán* and then viceban in Slavonia. Of

²⁷⁰⁴ Engel, „Társadalom és politikai struktúra” 316.

²⁷⁰⁵ Engel, Királyi hatalom 77-78. I do not count here Paul Turóci, for he was member of the queen's court before the settlement of the family in Slavonia.

course, purely personal decisions may have underlain such changes, yet it seems as if the importance attributed to membership of the king's or queen's court as a source of influence and advancement had decreased; the prestigious, yet minor favours that could be obtained apparently did not presuppose a constant personal stay there. An interesting and apparently anomalous occasion was the Roman coronation of Sigismund, when, however, it may have been the favours available in the papal court which accounted for the presence of an important number of Slavonian noblemen, many of them are referred to as members of the court on this occasion only.²⁷⁰⁶

Yet in the second part of Sigismund's reign we see some important changes in the functioning of the court, which had been examined by Elemér Mályusz but received no attention since.²⁷⁰⁷

Mályusz himself applied to these changes the term "centralisation", the most important element of which was the emergence around the ruler himself of a group of persons who had risen to prominence thanks to their legal knowledge and administrative expertise. Three persons from the county of Körös can be regarded as belonging to this intimate circle of advisers: Michael Raveni, John Megyericsei and Nicholas Gereci. The case of the latter is the simplest; as we have seen, thanks to his long Ottoman captivity, he had built up such an extensive knowledge of oriental affairs which made him an indispensable tool in diplomatic negotiations. He was consequently rewarded with the estate of Kristallóc in Körös, thus being the only non-baronial supporter of Sigismund to get such an important grant there. One is in a much more difficult situation in trying to assess the role of people like Raveni and Megyericsei. On the face of it, their role in the government can be fairly well grasped: master Michael represented his king as royal attorney in matters of great importance, sometimes together with Stephen Aranyi, one of the key figures of the government in the 1430s. Yet it seems that there had developed around Sigismund a group of intimate collaborators of non-baronial status who played a much bigger role in directing political affairs than is generally supposed. A letter written by John Megyericsei sometime in the early 1430s, at any case during the absence of Sigismund, shows him occupied in matters entrusted to him by the king, unfortunately undetailed in the letter,²⁷⁰⁸ but the fact that he settled a case between Ladislás Hagymás, the addressee of the letter, and the son of the Ottoman emperor,²⁷⁰⁹ as well as his obtaining a letter of prorogation directly from the deputy chancellor, shows him a person of considerable influence. Another letter from the same period, written by a man of similar social

²⁷⁰⁶ See Csukovits, „Nagy utazás”, where the Hungarian entourage of Sigismund is examined. In fact, it is open to doubt to what extent the members of Sigismund's entourage in 1433, and the participants of the 1402 assembly for that matter, can be regarded as members of the court in the traditional sense. Pál Engel counted them as such; I am not entirely convinced.

²⁷⁰⁷ Elemér Mályusz, „Zsigmond király központosítási törekvései Magyarországon” [The Efforts of King Sigismund at Centralisation in Hungary], in Idem, *Klió szolgálatában. Válogatott tanulmányok*, ed. István Soós (Budapest: MTA Történettudományi Intézete, 2003) 177-205.

²⁷⁰⁸ DL 48160: “*iam expeditis omnibus factis regalibus ad dominum regem transeundi sum positus in itinere*”.

²⁷⁰⁹ Ibidem: „*factum vestrum cum filio imperatoris Turcorum disposui*”.

standing, namely John Rudai from the county of Temes, to the same Ladislas Hagymás, then ban of Szörény (Turnu Severin, RO), is worth comparing from this point of view. Rudai had personal access to the emperor, had first-hand knowledge of planned appointments to important posts, and even of military operations considered in the court and the planned itinerary of the imperial couple, which are not known from other sources.²⁷¹⁰ Both he and Megyericsei called László Hagymás their lord, yet it is evident that they were closer to the most important centre of decision making than Hagymás himself, who held one of the key frontier posts, and were even in a position to be able to influence directly the process of decision making. Since neither Megyericsei, nor Raveni, nor Rudai are known to have received important donations, it is highly probable that they were allotted some kind of a salary which, however, was surely not enough to enhance their social position at home. Their position in the court seems nevertheless to represent something radically new with regard to the somewhat archaic structures of the Angevin kingdom.

In the twenty years which followed the death of Sigismund the structures of government elaborated by the king-emperor broke down and later reemerged completely transformed. Between 1440 and 1444 the almost constant civil war impeded the functioning of royal government, especially because both the magnates and the nobility, at least its richer members, had plenty of room for navigating between the competing pretenders and their representatives.²⁷¹¹ However, as the example of Frank Pekri, the only known Slavonian member of the entourage of queen Elizabeth, shows, it could be extremely dangerous to put in someone's lots too overtly with either of the pretenders. As for John Hunyadi, who governed the kingdom of Hungary in the name of young Ladislas V from June 1446 until January 1453, he did not even have a court of his own. Although after 1453 some kind of royal court was reorganised together with the chancelleries and the royal tribunals, Ladislas V did not have the time to establish a circle of confidential advisors in the manner of his grandfather, and his court remained dominated by magnates, before all by Ulrich of Cilli, who in fact governed in his name. This anomalous situation certainly refelected itself in the relationship between the nobility and the court.

Wladislaw I, in fact, who was elected as king of Hungary in March 1440, and arrived there as an unknown foreigner, had no option but to rely on the magnate families elevated by Sigismund and further enriched by Albert of Habsburg, and his efforts at reaching the lower layers of the nobility seem to have been restricted to holding general assemblies, and were anyway cut short by his untimely death at Varna in November 1444. His "successor", governor John Hunyadi, lacked both the means and respect to attract noble followers to his entourage, which seems to have consisted of persons originating from the territories under his personal domination. Consequently, with one

²⁷¹⁰ DL 44053.

²⁷¹¹ Pálosfalvi Tamás, „A Rozgonyiak és a polgárháború (1440-1444)” [The Rozgonyi Family and the Civil War], in *Századok* 137 (2003) 897-928.

exception, we find no Slavonian noblemen among them, which is not surprising in view of the almost unlimited domination of the counts of Cilli in the province. The exception is Akacius Csupor, who turns up as Hunyadi's "janitor" in 1448, and whose brother, George, had been his deputy in Transylvania before. The Csupor brothers had been the chief supporters of the Tallóci in Slavonia before 1445, Demetrius even forcefully elected as bishop of Zagreb, they consequently had no other option than to join Hunyadi and even leave Slavonia for some time. If we take into consideration that Hunyadi may even have served Sigismund together with Akacius Csupor in an early phase of his career, their decision to remain close to Hunyadi can be said to have been reasonable and, moreover, paid off abundantly a generation later.²⁷¹²

Between 1453 and 1457 four Slavonian noblemen turn up in the court of Ladislas V, but only two among them can be regarded as real newcomers: Christoph Paschingar, a foreign *familiaris* of the counts of Cilli, and Albert Pataki, presumably also a protégée of count Ulrich. Benedict Turóci could also thank his access to the court to the support of his lord, Ulrich of Cilli, and even began his baronial career there; yet in a sense he merely returned to the court, for a generation before his father and uncle had belonged to the "non-baronial" entourage of queen Barbara. The same is true of Frank Fáncs, who seems to have been a follower of palatine Ladislas Garai, another influential magnate in the court of Ladislas V: his kinsmen had been present in the court of Sigismund for two generations by then. We know nothing about the functions of these court knights in the 1450s, for it is in connection with royal grants made in favour of them that they come to the light; yet in view of the fact that they belonged to the intimate supporters of the magnates who dominated the court of Ladislas V it is highly improbable that they could have acted as independent agents for executing the royal will. This, the increased role of magnate service as a means of reaching the royal court, seems to have been an important transformation with regard to the Angevin period.

King Matthias is generally held to have followed the example of Sigismund in building out the channels of his policy.²⁷¹³ Yet if we look closely at the example of the nobility of Körös, quite different patterns emerge. Nicholas Csupor carried out a social rise which stands unparalleled in Slavonia for the whole period examined in this dissertation. His access to the court was evidently due to the services which his father and uncle had done to John Hunyadi, yet his further rise seems to have been the fruit of his military talents. He is the only Slavonian nobleman to have received immense landed wealth from the king, albeit not in his native province, and his offspring would surely have entered definitively the baronage had he not died prematurely. That his case was exceptional becomes evident if compared to those of Ladislas Hermanfi and Peter Bocskai. Hermanfi turns up together with Csupor as deputy master of the horse, that is, he also belonged to

²⁷¹² Pál Engel, „Hunyadi pályakezdése” [The Beginnings of the Career of John Hunyadi] in Idem, *Honor, vár, ispánság. Válogatott tanulmányok*, ed. Enikő Csukovits (Budapest: Osiris, 2003)516-517.

²⁷¹³ Engel, *Realm of Saint Stephen*, 317.

the court, but failed, or was unwilling, to pursue a similar career there. Since, as we have seen above, he remained in close contact with his ruler through different channels, this surely was not a sign of disgrace. The example of Peter Bocskai is revealing from another aspect. In 1476 he was very close to becoming a baron, yet the king opted for a non-Slavonian, Ladislás Egervári, whose material wealth was certainly not greater than that of Bocskai before he received the estate of Velike from his ruler.²⁷¹⁴ In this case the ruler's apparent reluctance to appoint as ban of Slavonia a local person with deep-rooted social connections there may have been accompanied by other considerations which remain hidden to us. It is certainly remarkable in this respect, however, that Nicholas Csupor was appointed voivode of Transylvania, and thus physically removed from Slavonia, a strategy that seems to have been consciously pursued by Matthias after his authority had been consolidated. The example of Martin Gereci could also be cited in this context: as mentioned above, he turns up once, in 1469, as a royal *familiaris*, receiving a minor grant from the king. But he disappears from our sources thereafter, which means that he may have perished in one of the subsequent royal campaigns, and therefore his case is not necessarily appropriate to prove the point. It may seem surprising that Benedict Turóci, one of the leading supporters of the Cilli family, who had started his baronial career under Ladislás V, continued to rise in influence after the accession of Matthias, and also his brother, Ladislás served for some time as a royal castellan. His baronial career may have been a deliberate measure to counterbalance the overwhelming influence of Jan Vitovec in Slavonia in the early 1460s, and it is in this respect certainly not accidental that when his son, George, returned as a baron in the 1470s, it was in a position without real governmental authority. The brief baronial career of Nicholas Dombai should apparently be regarded in the same light as that of Benedict Turóci: a leading *familiaris* of Nicholas Újlaki, he must have been simultaneously a means of control and communication with his former lord in the first critical years of Matthias' reign. These careers thus represent a pattern of policy applied by the king in a situation in which his freedom of action was seriously limited first by his dubious legitimacy, and later by the constant Ottoman menace.

Things changed radically from the 1470s. Alongside raising a handful of people "from the dust" to wealth on a scale which had been unknown since the early years of Sigismund,²⁷¹⁵ he also formed a wider group of persons of medium wealth upon whom the execution of his policies was increasingly based. Such persons belonged to his *aula*, and held important counties or castles, sometimes more than one, or carried out equally important domestic and diplomatic missions.²⁷¹⁶

²⁷¹⁴ On the Egervári lands see Csánki, *Történeti földrajz*, II. 820.

²⁷¹⁵ The most evident examples being, alongside the king's own distant relatives, the Pongrác of Dengeleg and the Geréb of Vingárt, Blaise Magyar, Paul Kinizsi and, of course, the Szapolyai brothers.

²⁷¹⁶ On this group see András Kubinyi, „Mátyás-kori államszervezet” 66-69.

Five persons in our sample belonged to this category: Balthasar Batthyány, Peter Pogány,²⁷¹⁷ Albert Lónyai and Michael Tompa. How these persons were chosen and how they grew in influence is impossible to tell: we have seen that the father-in-law of Batthyány, László Hermanfi, was in close contact with the court throughout the 1460s and 1470s, and one of the cousins of Peter Pogány worked as a notary in the chancellery. Batthyány and Pogány seem to have been predominantly soldiers, whereas Lónyai took on “foreign affairs”, as is proved by his subsequent career. Consequently, they did not constantly stay in the king’s entourage, and Lónyai, for instance, was convoked in 1489 by Matthias to Vienna from his home in the county of Körös. All of them were fairly rich already at the time of their joining the court, and in this respect the exception is certainly Michael Tompa. A person of considerably lesser status and wealth, it is almost certain that his access to the court was due to some kind of lordly support, and was certainly not unrelated to the canonries held by his kinsman, Thomas, in the churches of Zagreb and Esztergom. Yet the deferential tone used by viceban Andrew Kapitánfi towards him shows that he partook of the royal authority in the same way as did his richer colleagues. The examples of Akacius Kasztellánfi and George Pataki, on the other hand, clearly belong to another category, in so far as their employment in the border defence, although involving immediate royal service, did not imply any regular contact with the court itself.

It is uncertain what the status of Stephen Dersfi and the Dombai brothers was as court *familiars*, and whether they should be regarded as belonging to the same administrative group as the persons listed above. Since they turn up as such on a single occasion, it appears as if their role should be seen in a different light. We have seen above that, at least in the last years of Matthias’ reign, some at least among the Slavonian nobility, such as Balthasar Batthyány, Stephen Csupor and Ladislav Szencsei, received a salary from the royal treasury for the equipment of a certain number of cavalry. It is highly probable that these persons were obligated to follow the king for his military expeditions, and, since Stephen Dersfi appears as a court *familiaris* precisely on the aftermath of the siege of Sabać, he may have done so for the Sabać campaign. In so far as these persons were paid by the treasury, and were apparently regarded as belonging to the court, yet they continued to stay at home, they anticipate a model which became increasingly dominant in the Jagello period.

Yet before we leave the reign of Matthias, another phenomenon should be mentioned. It concerns the office of deputy-palatine held by Ladislav Hermanfi from 1486. This office, which was preceded by his holding two similar offices as deputy master of the horse and deputy *magister tavarnicorum* in the 1460s and 1470s respectively, involved no practical authority, neither at the palatinal court, nor in the county of Pest nominally headed by the deputy-palatine, and, moreover, it apparently

²⁷¹⁷ I do not count here the cousins of Péter, for although they are expressly mentioned as staying in royal service, they were subjected partly to Péter himself and partly to others and are thus not to be reckoned as belonging immediately to the court.

yielded no revenues.²⁷¹⁸ What, then, was the reason for assuming it? It seems very probable that it was the prestige that the office itself provided locally. In the case of Ladislás Hermanfi the augmentation of his prestige among the Slavonian nobility is evident, even if he was apparently not obliged to stay continuously in the capital. Yet such an office of high prestige but low responsibility was only available for the very top layer of the provincial nobility, and even in the case of Ladislás Hermanfi was preceded by two decades of repeated appearances at court and the establishment of fruitful relations there. It is thus surely not accidental that his stepson, Balthasar Batthyány, also emerged in a similar position, as deputy judge of the court, in the very last years of his life; interestingly enough, his own son, Francis, had already assumed a baronial office then.

After the death of king Matthias, as royal power declined, new patterns of contact between court and nobility emerged, some of which were at least the result of the growing sophistication of royal government. First of all, the group of confidential agents upon whose military talents the aggressive policies of Matthias were based in the last decade of his rule was dissolved or transformed. After 1490, with the dispersal of the standing mercenary army and the growing Ottoman pressure, expansion gave place to defence, which required a different governmental organisation. It is in this respect characteristic that Balthasar Batthyány, although still regarded as an *aulicus*, continued his career as twice ban of Jajce, and two among his colleagues, Stephen Gorbonoki and Balthasar Alapi, also turn up as *aulici*. The son of Stephen Dersfi returned as royally appointed captain of Slavonia. As for Elias Bosnyák, he was also member of the court, but he served continuously as *provisor* of Jajce and controlled other neighbouring fortifications. Peter Pogány continued his royal service as *ispán* of Pozsony, but it is in matters of administrative rather than military character that his activity can be grasped, and it was likewise in an office of administrative importance, as master of the court, that he finished his life. Very interestingly, Michael Tompa, the poorest among those whom we find in immediate royal service in the 1480s, is not referred to as an *aulicus* any more, although he continued to enjoy considerable respect in Slavonia, as his emergence there as tax-collector proves. In the case of Francis Pan of Kravarina, on the other hand, we do not know what his royal service consisted of, but it clearly shows that they were greatly valued, although we do not know whether because of the revenues it meant or simply because of the prestige it involved.

As the example of Elias Bosnyák shows, and especially his confiscation of the lands of George Szencsei, and his governing the royal castle of Atyina, *aulici* from Slavonia in the first half of the Jagello period could still discharge *ad hoc* administrative duties in the manner it had been usual under Matthias. Indeed, the old pattern of service, which manifested itself in a fairly close attachment to the royal court, seems to have survived, as the examples of Ambrose Kecer and Sigismund Pogány show. Yet most of those who turn up with regard to the court in the 1510s and

²⁷¹⁸ On the position of the deputy-palatine with regard to the county of Pest see Tringli, Pest megye 154-156.

especially in the 1520s, however, were but nominally connected to the court, and in fact served continuously in the southern marches of the realm. Balthasar Alapi had been captain of the royal light cavalry in Croatia before becoming ban of Jajce, and in 1520 he again seems to have stayed on the southern frontier and received money from the Slavonian tax upon royal orders. John Kasztellánfi is known to have participated in the Ottoman campaigns of 1524 and 1525, whereas Louis Pekri junior was captain of Slavonia in 1525, and John Szencsei was also paid as part of the royal light cavalry in 1525. It was thus merely in terms of pay that these persons made part of the royal court, and it was apparently the repeated difficulties of maintaining royal control over the banate of Croatia and Slavonia which made necessary such an organisation. To what extent the salaries of those serving along the southern borders were regularly paid from the royal treasury is another problem, of course.

From 1498 on the nobility was accorded the right to elect from their ranks *assessore*s who would sit both in the central courts and the royal council. The social and political implications of this measure were extensively examined by the late András Kubinyi, who stated that the persons elected into this group can be regarded in a sense as the political leaders of the nobility.²⁷¹⁹ For reasons related to the judicial organisation, the Slavonian counties elected no *assessore*s; yet we do find among them noblemen from the county of Körös, for those who had possessions in Hungarian counties were liable for election by reason of their non-Slavonian lands. Thus, Balthasar Batthyányi and Paul Čavlović were elected from the county of Fejér, George Kerecsényi and Sigismund Pogány from that of Zala. The elected *assessore*s could take part in important political decisions and discharged equally important diplomatic missions, yet the institution, as already seen by Kubinyi,²⁷²⁰ cannot be regarded as a decisive step towards the baronage: although the son of Balthasar Batthyányi did finish up as master of the cupbearers and later ban of Slavonia, none of the remaining three or their descendants did the same. Sigismund Pogány was later court *familiaris*, Paul Čavlović royal councillor, whereas the son of George Kerecsényi became the deputy of ban John Korbáviai. On the other hand, the other person to ascend the baronage from among the nobility of Körös in the period of Louis II, namely John Tahi, seems never to have belonged to the court in any form before his appointment as ban of Slavonia. This surely played no part in his failure to assert his authority in Slavonia, for, as we have seen, Francis Batthyány faced the same problem of legitimacy.

One more institution, that of the royal secretaries, should be briefly addressed yet, which is represented in our sample by John Megyericsei. Royal secretaries played an ever increasing role in the government during the Jagello period, discharging diplomatic missions, and, at least some of

²⁷¹⁹ Kubinyi, *Köznemesi ülnökök* 262.

²⁷²⁰ *Ibidem* 266.

them, having access to sessions of the royal council.²⁷²¹ Their role in this respect was analogous to that of the “experts” whom we had met in the court of Sigismund. Yet, besides the fact that we know nothing about the activities of John Megyericsei as a royal secretary, it was in fact not as a Slavonian nobleman that he joined the court: he had left his native county as a youth in the service of bishop Ladislas Geréb, and became a canon in Transylvania. Two decades later it was again a prelate, Francis Várdai, bishop of Transylvania, who helped him to become royal secretary, a post which he only held for a brief period before his death in 1517.

What is worth emphasising is that court service in the “traditional” sense of the word, that is, with the exclusion of non-governmental activities in the chancelleries and the central judicial courts, was and remained throughout characteristic of the “top group within the top group”. With very few exceptions this kind of attachment to the court was the privilege of those families whose members regularly received the *egregius* title and/or possessed more fortifications, and we find among them all the families which gave barons in the period between 1400 and 1526. In these families it was quite normal for court service to be inherited from generation to generation (Bocskai, Csupor, Dersfi, Dombai, Grebeni/Battyányi, Kasztellánfi, Kecser, Kerecsényi). Indeed, in one unique case, that of the Grebeni-Batthyány, the arch of courtly service links as many as five generations from Loránd Grebeni to Balthasar and Francis Batthyány; this, again, is a further element to consider in the definitive rise of the Batthyány to the baronial elite. Alongside title, local officeholding (vicebans and tax-collectors) and the possession of fortifications, attachment to the court through service can thus be identified as one of the major features of that group within the leading nobility which in a sense occupied an intermediate position between the barons and the lower ranks of the wealthy nobility, although was more closely linked to the latter than to the former. The analysis of marriages will soon confirm this picture.

One final remark should be made. We have seen above that, apart from periods of profound political crisis, such as that of 1403, royal power played a very limited role in the local distribution of landed wealth. This is not to say, however, that the royal favour was not looked for. Throughout the whole period we have instances of minor royal donations in favour of Slavonian noblemen, a sure sign that the latter laid emphasis on thus having access to the source of royal grace. In most cases these grants consisted of no more than tiny parcels of land and, even more frequently, merely confirmed possessions already owned. Although sometimes they were justified by services specified in the charter of donation itself, more frequently they alluded only vaguely to the merits of the recipients. Other grants, such as permissions to exact tolls or construct a bridge on one’s possessions, may have been more lucrative, but in material terms they certainly did not add

²⁷²¹ András Kubinyi, „A királyi titkárok II. Lajos király uralkodása idejében” [The Royal Secretaries during the Reign of King Louis II], in *Gesta. Miskolci történelmi folyóirat* VI (2006) 1. 3-22.

considerably to the existing wealth of those who received them. The same is true of royal authorisations to erect a fortification, especially as those who got it generally had one already at the time of petitioning the favour itself. These acts of royal favour, then, seem to have been principally asked to demonstrate the petitioner's closeness to court, and thus to augment his prestige locally. From the king's point of view such grants were an easy and cheap means of confirming the political ties which traditionally linked the nobility to the crown, and helped to maintain direct contact even in times of crisis.

As for more considerable royal grants, which involved important material gains and not merely the symbolic demonstration of royal grace, accession to the king was much more difficult and petitioners had to overcome the opposition of rival claimants. The case of George Turóci is worth citing here: although the king praised the many services he had done in the mastership of the cupbearers "to the honour of the royal dignity", it was apparently only the perfection of his spouse, Christine Csornai, that he was able to obtain from the king as a sign of his grace.²⁷²² In this respect, the example of the Batthyány, the only one to be sufficiently documented, is more revelative, however. Both Balthasar Batthyány the elder and his two surviving sons, Francis and Balthasar the younger stayed very close to the royal court from the last decade of Matthias' rule until 1526; indeed, Francis was even brought up together with the young Louis II. Yet if we have a look at the series of donations they received, and at the effectiveness with which they were followed up, the picture is rather negative. The first donation that Balthasar received from Matthias was the portion of Andrew Kapitánfi in the estate of Desnice, and although he managed to take it by force, and also underpinned his rights by a treaty of mutual inheritance, he had a lot of trouble both with the surviving Kapitánfi and other petitioners who turned up successively with royal letters of donation. A year later he received together with Nicholas Bánfi the lands of the Sárkány family with the castellum of Buzádszigete in the county of Zala, confiscated for infidelity, and, although they were formally introduced, the estate never seems to have become really theirs.²⁷²³ In 1492, as we have seen above, it was the inheritance of Andrew Stefekfi, with another *castellum*, in the county of Körös, which was donated by Wladislaw II to Balthasar Batthyány and Peter Butkai, yet it took more than a decade, and a new royal donation, for the first to overcome the resistance of rival forces, the greatest among which was surely Bartholomew Beriszló, prior of Vrana. All these grants concerned considerable landed wealth, yet by no means comparable with what the Batthyány already possessed. It was different with the huge estate of Fejérkő, with two castles, those of Fejérkő itself and of Újvár, the possession of which would have surely put the Batthyány on the same footing with neighbouring magnates such as the Bánfi or the Ernuszt. The two castles had

²⁷²² DL 100876: „in hoc suo honorabili pincernatus officio ad nostre regie dignitatis honorem”

²⁷²³ DL 18850. The estate is later attested in the hands of the Sárkány family.

been inherited by John Bánfi with the hands of the widow of Francis Beriszló, and then forcefully taken from him by Peter Beriszló, ban of Slavonia.²⁷²⁴ After the latter's death in 1520, it was Francis Batthyányi who upon royal orders redeemed the castles from the men of the late ban. Although the official view was apparently that the castles and their appurtenances should be regarded as having escheated to the crown, king Louis at first ordered that they should be restored to Bánfi. Later on, however, he changed his mind, and in April 1521 he promised them to Francis Batthyány, and even ordered the castellans to hand over the fortifications to the grantee.²⁷²⁵ Francis immediately urged his brother, Balthasar, to proceed to the occupation, and even sent him his own familiares to be appointed as castellans. In his letter to his brother, Francis advised him to act with the utmost prudence, for he had enemies at the court, before all the palatine, who opposed to the castles' being donated to Batthyány.²⁷²⁶ And he seems to have prevailed, for some weeks later the case took another turn, this time in favour of John Bánfi, who was again authorised to retain Fejérkő.²⁷²⁷ Although Francis Batthyány kept his hopes alive for some time,²⁷²⁸ in the end he had to give in. And not only in the case of Fejérkő: he also provided for a royal grant concerning the inheritance of Andrew Henning, but his efforts again shipwrecked on the opposition of palatine Bátori.²⁷²⁹ Three years later, Batthyány eventually succeeded, when he received the estate of Németújvár; by that time he had been a baron for almost ten years, and the family close to the court for almost forty. Things have moved a long way from the stormy career of Nicholas Csupor in the early 1470s.

²⁷²⁴ DL 34188. In 1515 the estates of Francis Beriszló had been donated by Wladislaw II to his heir, the future Louis II. DL 31006.

²⁷²⁵ The king „*castra Feyerkeu et Wywar [...] nobis et manibus nostris dare voluit et coram ore proprio regia maiestats castellanis istorum castrorum prescriptorum commisit ut ipsa castra nobis et manibus nostris dare et assignare deberent*” (DL 104403)

²⁷²⁶ Ibidem: „*dominus palatinus eciam dicta castra quod nobis et manibus nostris regia maiestas dedit non libenter voluit*”.

²⁷²⁷ DL 104405.

²⁷²⁸ DL 104406. Even after the king had expressly ordered Batthyány to restore the estates, the widow of John Bánfi had to complain that „*huc usque predictus dominus Bothyany facere minime voluit*”, and turned to Andrew Bátori for help. DL 94390

²⁷²⁹ DL 104406: „*Ex parte autem bonorum quondam domini Henyg hoc scribere possumus, quod regia maiestas nobis dedit sed nos nunc cum domino palatino non sumus bene concordēs*”.

3.5. Marriage patterns

We have already seen the importance of marriage alliances as a means of land acquisition and geographical mobility; now it is time to examine whether they can be used to refine the patterns of internal classification within the highest ranks of the nobility established on the basis of wealth, service and title. The task is again made difficult by the unequal repartition of the sources, as a result of which in some cases we can reconstruct whole networks of marriage alliances, but in others we have only bits and pieces of information,²⁷³⁰ upon which it is very difficult to base solid conclusions. Again, in the case of families/persons whose career in Slavonia extended to no more than a single generation, it is strictly impossible to establish long-term patterns. Altogether, however, the evidence is considerable enough for some interesting observations to be made, which could later be compared to similar analyses based on the material from other regions. The present investigation is not intended to be a thorough anthropological examination of noble marriages, of course; its basic aim is to identify some important links between wealth, status and marriage, and to find out to what extent the marriage alliances of a given family reflect changes in one or both of the first two aspects of their social history. For the sake of convenience, I analyse separately the two groups characterised by the regular and occasional attribution of the *egregius* title. Not surprisingly, data for the second group is much more sparse, in some cases practically nonexistent.

As for the first group, one pattern, which we could perhaps term “normal” in the sense that it is fairly stable for a relatively long time, is offered by the Bocskai family. In the period between 1400 and 1526 for more than half of the known members of the family do we have information on the identity of the consort, and daughters are uncommonly well represented in our sample.²⁷³¹ What is evident is that, despite obvious differences, all the families with whom the Bocskai came into contact by marriage during this long period belonged to the same social stratum as themselves, that is, the one titled regularly *magister* and then *egregius*. There is no divergence from this pattern either downwards or upwards. What is most interesting is that in the third generation both the two Ladislás and the only known woman, Margaret, daughter of Nicholas, married from distant Hungarian families with no connection to Slavonia; both Margaret Csire and Catherine Csornai descended from old and illustrious kindreds, although none of them belonged to the aristocracy any more. As for the Vince of Szentgyörgy, albeit their immediate ancestor was but a burgher of Fehérvár, by the time they married from the Bocskai family they had already risen to the ranks of the rich nobility through their service in the financial administration.²⁷³² Both Nicholas and Ladislás’s father George were members of the royal court, whereas in the case of Stephen, son of

²⁷³⁰ Or no information at all, as in the case of the Mindszenti, Orros of Orrosovc or Fodorovci families, for instance.

²⁷³¹ The reader is kindly asked to refer to the genealogical table in the annex for detailed information.

²⁷³² Erik Fügedi, „A Szentgyörgyi Vincze család” [The Szentgyörgyi Vincze Family], in *A Veszprém megyei múzeumok közleményei* 11 (1972) 261-269.

the other Ladislás, this can only be suspected; nevertheless, these marriages probably still reflect the wider horizons of the “court” nobility during the reign of Sigismund. Thereafter, that is, in the next two generations, consorts were chosen from Slavonian families or from those with strong social connections there, or, at least in the case of the three daughters of Stephen Apaj, from the counties bordering upon Slavonia from the north. The only exception is Anthony Sitkei, from the county of Vas, but his family was also closely connected to Zala and Anthony himself had possessions there. Most of the families belonging to the regularly *egregius* group, and for which we have sufficient amount of evidence (Pekri,²⁷³³ Fánecs, Nelepec, Szencsei, Rohfi, Gorbonoki, Tulbert, Bikszádi, Kerecsényi, Kecser, Rohonci, Hássági) reflect the same pattern: consorts were normally chosen from local or non-Slavonian families of roughly the same landed wealth and social prestige. To this group can be counted, in the absence of any better solution, those persons/families in the case of which only one (or at best two) marriage partner can be identified (Bosnyák, Lónyai, Pozsegai, Paschingar, Piers, Tahi) This is no matter for surprise, of course; the same phenomenon was registered by Erik Fügedi upon the example of the Elefánthy family in the county of Nyitra.²⁷³⁴ Moreover, these long-term marriage trends were at least to a certain extent immune to changes which affected temporarily the social or material position of a given family member or branch. Here again, however, exceptions to the rule are much more significant and tell us more about the working of noble society than any number of “routine” cases.

The first case in point is that of the Kapitánfi family. Although our evidence is far from complete, it seems that the consorts chosen by members of the family until the end of the 15th century fit in well with the pattern outlined above. In the early 16th century, however, the picture changes. Unfortunately, among the male members of the last two generations only the wife of Sylvester, son of Sylvester Kapitánfi is known, namely Catherine Bevenyöd, who belonged to a wealthy noble family from the county of Zagreb, apparently even richer than the Kapitánfi themselves. Yet the three daughters of Stephen Kapitánfi, himself always titled *egregius*, all married persons who came from families of an evidently inferior social status and accordingly called simply *nobilis*. In the case of Peter Simonfi of Tapolcaszentgyörgy and Ladislás Becsevölgyi of Szentiván this is beyond doubt, for none of them is ever titled *egregius*; but also Michael Dombai, from the Győr kindred, belonged to that branch of the Dombai family which was much poorer than the other which played such a prominent role in Slavonia. Although it may be hazardous to conclude from such meagre evidence, it seems as if the fall of Andrew Kapitánfi and the loss of much of the family property to the Batthyány first reflected itself in the social status of the marriage partners the Kapitánfi were able to find for their female kin.

²⁷³³ Of course, the three consecutive marriages of Susan Pekri, which clearly show a downward trend, make an exception, but do not profoundly alter the general trend.

²⁷³⁴ Fügedi, Elefánthyak 143.

The reverse example is offered by the Gudovci. Rapid enrichment within one generation could, albeit not frequently, produce the social prestige needed to contract marriage alliances with families of an incomparably more illustrious past. From this respect the fact that Peter Gudovci betrothed his son with Potenciana Bocskai is not really relevant, for, as we have seen, this marriage, although evidently a sign of prestige, was before all destined to counterbalance the pressure exerted by Thomas Bakóc in order to get the Gudovci inheritance. Yet Francis Dombai and Peter Megyericsei as consorts for the Gudovci daughters, joined by John Pekri in the next generation, as well as Barbara Kacor of Lak as the wife of Stephen Gudovci, are together the sign of a very rapid social rise. Although not as spectacular, a similar phenomenon can be observed with regard to most of the other successful social climbers: Michael Tompa (Christine Garázda), Nicholas Vojkfi (Justine Batthyány?), Stephen Prasovci (the sister of a Croatian viceban) and Balthasar Hobetić (Catherine Bevenyöd) all managed to find consorts from families which were socially considerably above their own starting level.

Another sizeable subgroup within the constantly *egregius* group is characterised by one or more marriages which stand out “upwards” from an otherwise classic chain of family alliances. It is of course, very difficult to determine the lines along which a marriage can be judged to be unusually illustrious with regard to the social status of one of the marriage partners. For instance, at the time Bernard Rohfi of Déce was betrothed with Agnes Erdódi, the latter’s uncle, Thomas Bakócz, had been bishop for seven years and royal chancellor for three years; yet his kinsmen were still, and continued to be, titled merely *egregius*. Moreover, Thomas himself was of peasant origins, whereas the mother of Bernard, as we have seen, descended on his mother’s side from the Kórógyi family which had belonged to the kingdom’s aristocracy from the early Angevin period until its extinction in 1472, and his maternal uncle, Nicholas Csupor, was one of the favourite barons of Matthias. Nevertheless, the Erdódi were already richer and immensely more influential in 1493, which means that the marriage can be regarded as advantageous from the perspective of the bride.

With these inevitable uncertainties, altogether five other families can be treated as belonging to this subgroup. The wife of Ders Szerdahelyi, Ursula Töttös, was the sister of Ladislas Töttös, who, although his family had not held any baronial office since the Angevin period, certainly belonged to the narrow political elite of the kingdom in the 1440s and 1450s. The situation is somewhat complicated with Stephen Dersfi in the next generation. The father of his wife, Nicholas Tuz of Lak, was an *egregius* nobleman from the county of Somogy; yet his nephew rose to become master of the janitors in 1465 and ban of Slavonia a year later, and as such was one of the most powerful barons of Matthias. The problem is that we do not know whether the marriage preceded or followed the promotion of John Tuz. Whatever the case, this marriage surely enhanced the prestige of Stephen’s son, Nicholas, which manifested itself in his marriage with Catherine Bánfi of

Alsóindva. Catherine, the daughter of James Bánfi and Catherine Szécsi, descended on both lines from families which had held baronial positions since the Angevin period and were enacted as *banderiat* in 1498. Interestingly enough, after the death of his first wife, Nicholas chose again from the *egregius* group by marrying the daughter of Balthasar Batthyány, who only became a “baronial” consort after her brother had been appointed as master of the cupbearers and then ban of Slavonia. Then, however, this alliance certainly yielded fruits, for among the three daughters of Nicholas two were brought up in the court of Batthyány, one of whom was commended into the queen’s court, whereas the thirs seems to have lived in the entourage of palatine Bátori’s wife.²⁷³⁵ All this certainly played a role in the post-Mohács career of the Dersfi and in paving their way into the titular aristocracy.

George Dombai married from the same Töttös family as Ders Szerdahelyi, and one of his daughters was married by Simon Móroc, whose grandfather had been ban of Croatia under Louis I. Their case again is a dubious one, for the Móroc never held a baronial office again until their extinction in 1493, yet by reason of their lands they were considered as belonging to the aristocracy. With their two castles, one of them precisely Zdenc in Körös, they were certainly socially superior to the Dombai.²⁷³⁶ The wife of Nicholas Dombai, on the other hand, can by no means be regarded as aristocratic: although related to the Korbáviai, the Zákányi never held a baronial office and nor was their landed wealth superior to that of the Dombai. In the second half of the 15th century, moreover, the families of all the known consorts of the Dombai (Gudovci, Kapitánfi, Garázda of Keresztúr) belonged to the same *egregius* group as the Dombai themselves.

In the case of the Kasztellánfi a long series of “ordinary” marriages was broken when George Kasztellánfi married Helen Korbáviai, the daughter of count Charles and Catherine Újlaki. The maternal grandfather of Helen was Nicholas Újlaki, king of Bosnia himself. Yet, as in the case of Nicholas Dersfi, after the death of his first wife George stepped back again one category, and married from the *egregius* Ostfi family, and so did his son John despite the aristocratic background of his mother. As for the Pogány, all the known marriage partners belong again to the constantly *egregius* group; the only apparent exception is Euphrosyne Várdai, the wife of Sigismund Pogány. By the time of the marriage, the various branches of the Várdai family had held at least four baronial offices, and had furnished one archbishop and two bishops; moreover, after the acquisition of the Töttös inheritance they were certainly a lot richer than the Pogány. And finally the Batthyány, whose marriage partners until the 1520s seem to have belonged to the same social group as those of the Grebeni before, made a leap when Francis Batthyány married a lady-in-waiting of queen Mary and his nephew was betrothed with Magdalena Kanizsai.

²⁷³⁵ DL 104464. Letter of Perpetua Batthyány to her daughter. The mistress of the latter is called „*graciosa ac serenissima domina tua*”, whom I identify with duchess Sophie, the wife of palatine Bátori.

²⁷³⁶ Engel, „Világi nagybirtok” 48, 53.

These families, as we have seen, all belonged to the very top layer of the nobility by any possible standards, and four among them also produced at least one baron in the course of their history. What should be emphasised, however, is that these extraordinary marriages apparently failed to have any long-term consequences with regard to the social position of the families concerned. In this respect they form an interesting parallel with the likewise ephemeral nature of the baronial career which also characterised the history of these families. The exception in this case is the Batthyány family: the two marriages just referred to in the 1520s in a sense both completed and symbolised the family's arrival into the ranks of the aristocracy of which they remained members thereafter.

Two further families, which apparently belong to the same category, should be treated separately nevertheless. One of them is the Csupor. Unfortunately, their marriage alliances are known far less completely than those of the Bocskai or Kasztellánfi, for example. Although we do not know the wife of ban Paul Csupor, we have no reason to doubt the statement of his son Akacius according to which he had descended on both lines from baronial families. Since Akacius himself married Mary Kórógyi, we have two successive aristocratic marriages which, apparently, yielded fruit in the baronial career of Nicholas Csupor. On the face of it, a third marriage, that of Stephen Csupor with Elisabeth Pető of Gerse, should also be termed as aristocratic: Elisabeth was the daughter of John Pető and Anne Szécsényi. The cousin of John, Nicholas, had held the office of master of the cupbearers for some time under Matthias, and John himself became master of the janitors after the death of his son-in-law, yet most members of the populous family remained *egregius* before 1526, and they were certainly not richer than the Csupor themselves.

The case of the Turóci is interesting from another point of view. George Turóci, the son of Benedict and Anne Rohonci, spent the most time in a baronial office among all the persons treated in this dissertation. Yet, as we have seen above, his situation remained closer to the *egregius* level in several regards, one of them being that of his marriages. Christine Csornai came from a family which remained on a purely regional level throughout, while Catherine Zalai (of Monostor) seems to have originated from the much lower regions of the nobility. On the other hand, Bernard Turóci, although never holding any baronial office, married the much more illustrious Helen Székely of Kövend, and thus came into affinity with the Bánfi, Perényi and Szécsi families,²⁷³⁷ while his sister, evidently thanks to the marriage of his brother, married into an influential Austrian noble family. This is an important warning against treating marriage alliances as an independent indicator of social standing, a warning which will gain further support below.

As stated above, we are in a much more difficult situation with regard to those families which belong to the variously *nobilis/egregius* group. Our sources only rarely permit the reconstruction of

²⁷³⁷ DL 94890; Engel, *Középkori magyar genealógia*, Székely (kövendi)

marriage alliances over several generations, which makes generalisations difficult. Not surprisingly, in cases when we have enough evidence, we find that spouses are chosen from the same social group and from within a more confined area. At the same time, alliances with families of the constantly *egregius* group are fairly common. A relatively clear pattern emerges from the example of the Megyericsei, for instance. Three among the known consorts belong to the upper group (Bocskai, Gudovci, Pekri), whereas other three belong to the same group as the Megyericsei as well (Szász, Pálfi, Kamarcai). Somewhat similar is the situation with the Raveni: here the *egregius/nobilis* group is represented by three families (Pálfi, Gereci, Latkfi), whereas the Grebeni (Hermanfi) and the Čavlović belong to the upper one.

In general, it seems that intra-familial divisions, individual careers and the varying fortunes of the families concerned played a more important role than in the case of the top families. For example, after the whole Cirkvenai wealth had been united in the hands of Peter Cirkvenai, he found a spouse from a constantly *egregius* family from the county of Pozsega (Gilétfi), and his daughter was also married with a man of the same category (Paul Kerecsényi). Again, whereas the most successful member of the Ervencei family, Ladislav, managed to marry from the *egregius* Sulyok family, the daughter of his brother had to content herself with a totally insignificant local nobleman called Matthias Vecseszlavci. As for the Kamarcai, we find that three among the known spouses belonged to the upper group (Ostfi, Kerecsényi, Kéméndi); since all three marriages date from the period after 1500, they may be connected to the careers of bishop John and Vitus Garázda; yet, since we have no evidence for the preceding period, there is nothing to compare with.

Nevertheless, some interesting comparisons can be made even at this level which, again, argue against overemphasising the importance of marriage alliances in measuring social position without involving other indicators. The Szász of Tamasovc and Musinai families started from roughly the same position at the beginning of the 15th century, and both lost the majority of their possessions in the course of the century. In the case of the Szász the declining fortunes of the family clearly reflected themselves in the marriage alliances of the successive generations: whereas Matthias married from the important Szigeti family, and either his son or grandson, perhaps, from the equally significant Matucsinaí family, the daughter of John in the fourth generation ended up with the poorer branch of the Megyericsei family, and her daughter married a simple local nobleman. Unfortunately, we do not know the consort of George Berzencei; yet his son, Sandrin, surely contracted a very good marriage despite the fact that his lands had already been shrunken to the county of Körös. Since the father of his wife, Ladislav Balassa, married for the second time the widow of Damian Horvát, formerly ban of Slavonia, she may have been the link between the two families. In the next generation, the wife of Nicholas Musinai is unknown to us; what is certain is that the landed wealth of the family remained limited to the estate of Musina, and yet the son of

Nicholas managed to marry the sister of Simon Erdődi, bishop of Zagreb. This, of course, was surely connected to the fact that his brother, John, had served as the secretary of archbishop Bakócz; yet it remains true that this marriage was certainly out of keeping with current social position of Sandrin Musinai.

3.6. The nobility and the church

As in the case of *familiaritas* and marriage, there can be no place here for an extensive analysis of the multiple ties which existed between the nobility and the different local ecclesiastical institutions.²⁷³⁸ Therefore, I only propose to examine the role of ecclesiastical careers from two, closely connected, points of view: their place within the history of the individual families, and, secondly, the potential they had, if at all, in promoting upward social mobility. Unfortunately, this aspect of noble life is as unresearched as the rest, so no comparisons can be made; the patterns we can identify, on the other hand, will hopefully be useful for others.

Pál Engel, studying the 14th and early 15th centuries, found a clear correspondence between the group he called *nagybirtokosok*, court career and the middling positions (provostries/canonries) within the ecclesiastical hierarchy.²⁷³⁹ This pattern, if the role of court career is left out of consideration, can also be observed in the county of Körös in the 14th and early 15th centuries. Altogether seven cases can be treated as belonging to this pattern, involving the Bocskai, Cirkvenai, Csupor, Dombai, Kristallóci (Szerecsen), Megyericsei, and Pekri families.²⁷⁴⁰ The basic feature of this pattern is that it is a member of a family which already belongs, without any further qualification, to the highest ranks of the nobility of the county, who receives a middling position in the church, in our cases a canonry. The church is normally one of the two local institutions, the bishopric of Zagreb or the chapter of Csázma, but, as the examples of John Megyericsei and Michael Pekri show, churches outside Slavonia were by no means excluded. With the exception of Demetrius Csupor, to whom I will return in a moment, canonry was the endpoint of church career. It should be added immediately, however, that provost Vitus was not born Bocskai, so his case may even be treated apart. But even if he is included, when we compare our handful of families with the great number of those where no similar pattern can be identified, it becomes evident that church career played no important role in terms of career possibilities, which may be in connection with the limited political role of the church itself in general below the level of the prelates. The church can certainly not be regarded as a means of getting rid of at least some of the offspring, for the practice cannot be observed even in cases when the existence of several sons can be established.²⁷⁴¹ In view of this fact it is at least reasonable to suppose that in the background of such careers there stood

²⁷³⁸ On these see Fügedi, *Elefánthyak* 161-162; Pálosfalvi, "Grebeni Hermanfi" II. 278.

²⁷³⁹ Engel, *Ung megye* 103.

²⁷⁴⁰ I leave out of consideration both those positions which preceded the 15th century, such as the canonry of Imre Kasztellánfi, for instance, and those which a given family member held before the family itself came to Slavonia, which is the case with provost István Botos. I have also ignored the canonry held by Stephen Hásságyi, which was evidently no more than a sort of salary. See Köblös, *Egyházi középréteg* 328-329.

²⁷⁴¹ This confirms the view of Pál Engel, who stated, with regard to the late middle ages, that „the Hungarian nobility were for some reason unwilling to give their younger sons to the Church, though it would have provided a much better living for many of them” (*The Realm of Saint Stephen* 335). The latter half of this statement can be doubted, however, in view of the rather modest landed wealth of the lesser chapters and collegiate churches.

personal inclination. That it may have been so is also proved by the isolated nature of these church careers within the history of the individual families. The only exception here is the Cirkvenai family, unique in the sense that in no other family do we find two parallel church careers in one and the same generation.

On the other hand, the Cirkvenai already take us down to that region of the leading nobility which, as we have already seen, was characterised by the non regular or merely temporary attribution of the *egregius* title. The first point to emphasise is that clerical office does not seem any more frequent here than in the previous group, but the pattern is certainly more varied. On the one hand, multiple church careers within the individual families seem more frequent, and, on the other hand, their role with regard to the general course of the history of the individual families appear to have been more decisive. We find at least three families, the Kamarcai, the Jakószerdahelyi and the Tompa of Horzova, in which two, or even three, persons join the church in successive generations. Although impossible to prove, it is probable that the career of Thomas Tompa as canon of Zagreb and Esztergom played a role in the rise of Michael Tompa, and the same influence can be supposed to have worked in the case of Peter Gudovci and his brother Matthias, who should certainly be regarded as members of this inferior group before the rapid rise of Peter began in the 1460s. On the other hand, the two canonries held by members of the Jakószerdahelyi family, one of them even a royal chaplain, does not seem to have had bettered to any considerable extent the position of the family itself. This situation is even more conspicuous in the case of the Kamarcai, where neither the career of bishop John, nor that of provost Michael involved any improvement with regard to their family in the form of royal grants or other patronage.²⁷⁴² It is of course possible, although impossible to demonstrate, that these humanist prelates separated themselves so completely from their own family background that they did not even make any effort at enlarging the family wealth through royal favour. It is much more probable, however, that they were neither politically influent nor socially important enough for the ruler to feel the necessity of reinforcing their position, and especially their fidelity, through sizeable grants. It is, unfortunately, one of those aspects which are bound to remain beyond our comprehension.

Interestingly, we can observe the same phenomenon in case of the other bishop produced by the families under investigation, namely Demetrius Csupor. His appointment as bishop of Knin and then of Zagreb was the result of the dominant influence of the Tallóci brothers, whereas his translation to the see of Győr the result of a compromise worked out by Matthias and his

²⁷⁴² It is possible that bishop John played some role in the career of Vitus Garázda, but even if it was so, it was certainly not the kind of patronage which regarded as its aim the extension of family patrimony.

advisers.²⁷⁴³ Yet again, although as a bishop he was member of the royal council, and thus supposedly close to the source of royal patronage, he does not seem to have received considerable donations for his family, and apparently was unable to save at least elements of the immense landed wealth conferred upon his nephew, Nicholas, after the death of the latter. The accumulation of family wealth for churchmen was not uncommon, though, as the examples of clerics such as Oswald Tuz, Gabriel Matucsinaï or Thomas Bakóc show; yet the decisive element here seems to have been not the intent to accumulate but the royal will to promote it. If we look at those Slavonian prelates who rose from the lower ranks of the nobility, such as Matthias Gatalóci, John Vitéz (the elder) and Janus Pannonius, we likewise see that their career remained an intermezzo in the history of their respective families, and was not enough even to establish them within the higher ranks of the nobility in their native region. Why it was so should necessitate further research; yet the limited role of church career in social advancement is evident.

There are some persons in our sample for whom even the middle ranks of the church hierarchy remained unattainable, or simply undesired. Of course, in trying to judge these cases we again struggle with the painful lack of sources. Thus, it is far from certain that the career of Gregory Megyericsei, presumably the son of John, once mentioned as a simple cleric, ended because his influential father died, or because he was not talented or ambitious enough; he may have simply died. The two other examples are more revelative, however. Ladislás Grebeni, parish priest of the Saint Martin church at Kemlék, came from one of the most influential noble families of Körös. Yet he belonged to that branch of the family which definitively lost its landed wealth after 1445, and thus seems to have lacked the support, or the means to fund his education, which would have been necessary to further ascend the church hierarchy.²⁷⁴⁴ The same may apply to Ladislás Raveni, parish priest of Raven itself, although his family belonged to the second rank of the leading nobility; but, since the Cirkvenai, who belonged to the same social niveau, gave nevertheless two canons, it seems more probable that in the case of Ladislás it was a matter of personal decision that he remained parish priest of his native settlement.

One more hypothesis should at least be risked. In view of the fact that, unlike provostships in the major chapters, a simple canonry was in all probability not an important source of revenue,²⁷⁴⁵ and the way to prelatures was generally subjected to all sorts of political considerations, it is possible that the educated members of the nobility preferred the possibilities offered by lay literacy. We have seen that literacy played a role in almost all cases in which we experienced either durable or

²⁷⁴³ Also politically motivated was the appointment of Francis Tahi as prior of Vrana at the very end of the period examined here, and simply served to confirm the authority of his father, John, and legitimise his possession of the castles and possessions of the priory. I have therefore left him out of consideration.

²⁷⁴⁴ We have seen above that it was Ladislás Hermanfi who financed the schooling of at least one of his distant kinsmen, after he had accumulated again a very sizeable landed wealth.

²⁷⁴⁵ Mályusz, Egyházi társadalom 119.

temporary social rise, and we have also seen that the number of those Slavonian noblemen who became involved in some way or another in the work of either the local or the central law courts and the chancelleries was considerably greater than of those who entered the Church. Not all of them made their fortune there, of course, but it seems nevertheless that the prospects offered by lay literacy outshined in the eyes of the nobility those presented by the Church. If, as it seems indeed to be the case, Nicholas Orros started his career as a cleric, and then shifted to a lay intellectual career, this would be at least a further indication that this hypothesis is worth further investigation.

The role of the monastic orders seems to have been even more limited than that of the secular clergy. Of course the nobility in the county of Körös maintained manifold contacts with the local monastic establishments, offering considerable donations for the preservation of their and their ancestors' memory, as the surviving testaments amply prove. Yet we have only two instances within our sample of noblemen taking the habit. In both cases, that of Blaise Bocskai and George Csupor, we seem to deal with a decision taken late in life to leave the world. George, on the other hand, seems to have entered his own foundation. That in both cases it was the Franciscan order which was preferred, bears testimony to the continuing influence and popularity which the mendicant orders enjoyed.²⁷⁴⁶ To Blaise and George can be added three noblewomen, Helen Bocskai, Dorothy Kakas (the widow of George Kapitánfi), and Sophie Grebeni (the widow of Peter Bikszádi), all of whom joined the Dominican cloister on the Island of the Rabbits, again an indication in the same direction. In the case of Dorothy and Sophie it is evident that the decision was taken after becoming widows, whereas Helen Bocskai, who even became head of the nunnery, may have been the only one to have lived throughout in the cloister.

²⁷⁴⁶ Engel, Szent István birodalma 278.

3.7. Elite or not? Internal stratification and definition

Having carried out the social analysis, grouped around certain key topics, of the families chosen, it is time to answer two questions of fundamental importance: can this group of families be regarded as a separate social entity within noble society at all? And, secondly, can it be regarded as comprising elements of roughly the same worth, so that the group itself can be clearly distinguished from groups situated above and below? The answer to this question is hindered by a number of obstacles, the two most important being the long time-span of the inquiry, the other the lack of clear markers. For, as it must already have become obvious, while it is relatively easy to speak about different layers within the nobility in general, the same task becomes all the more difficult when trying to interpret a definite sample which stretches to four, or even five generations. Comparisons need to be done simultaneously but also long-term structures reconstructed, and the two often give contradicting results. To give but one example, so far I have treated as members of the same layer within the nobility both the Grebeni and the Ervencei families, while emphasising that in terms of title, officeholding and landed wealth the Grebeni were situated higher on the social ladder than the Ervencei. In fact, in the beginning and the end of the 15th century, the Grebeni were indeed much richer and enjoyed much more prestige than the Ervencei; yet there was a period in the middle of the century when the Ervencei were certainly richer and probably more influential than the Grebeni. But the main problem is that, at least in the second half of the century, both families had branches which shared this wealth and influence only partially or not at all. Thus, it would probably be more correct to say that in the 1450s and early 1460s *Ladislav Ervencei* was more influential than *Ladislav Grebeni*, whereas around 1490 *Ladislav Grebeni* was immensely richer than the Ervencei; on the other hand, the latter were surely richer and more prestigious than the other branches of the Grebeni. Consequently, at first we have to deal with these internal divisions, to be able to address the first question formulated above.

The first problem is what exactly can be regarded as a family; more exactly, to what extent can a group of families descended from a common ancestor be taken as a social unit with a common identity. With regard to the end of the 14th century, Pál Engel offered the following definition: “Family [...] should be regarded as a group of persons mutually tied to each other by links of land ownership and blood. Within this community relationships based on land and blood both presuppose and define each other. Those people are considered as members of the same family who own land together by virtue of common origins, and family property is what belongs all the descendants of a common ancestor.”²⁷⁴⁷ Equally importantly, he found that name, be it that of a piece of land or a “family name”, is still almost never the distinctive feature of any noble family. As

²⁷⁴⁷ Engel, Ung megye 23.

for Erik Fügedi, he got round the problem by inventing the term clan (basically a term for the Hungarian *nemzetség*), and spoke about its various branches as if they indeed constituted a recognisable unit. In his interpretation, the clan comprised “several interrelated families, in some cases whole blocks of families, whose members were tied together by a patrilinear relationship”. This horizontal patrilinear kin-group, moreover, could extend over several generations in time, thus constituting an apparently unlimited network both horizontally and vertically.²⁷⁴⁸

To enlighten the problem we are facing with regard to the 15th-16th centuries, it is worth citing the case of the Szencsei. Hitherto, I have always referred to them as *the Szencsei family*. In fact, however, the ancestors of the two branches within the family whose members belong to the constantly *egregius* group, that is, masters Kakas and Lökös, had divided their family lands as early as the middle of the 14th century, and the sons of John Szencsei in the late 15th century were merely related to viceban Ladislav Szencsei in the 6th degree of consanguinity. The distance in terms of kinship of the members of the supposed branch of Mihalc from both the other branches was even greater. Yet all three branches were called constantly of Szencse, and, moreover, the two branches descended from Kakas and Lökös shared the family’s main symbol of power, the castle of Szombathely. So should we continue to speak about one Szencsei family, or should we distinguish among three different families? Did the various branches of the Szencsei constitute a unit, a clan in the sense of Fügedi, whose analysis as a block is meaningful? The same problem emerges with regard to several families which had already been implanted in the county of Körös for a long time at the time when our inquiry starts, and proved prolific enough to split into several branches: the Bocskai, Ervencei, Fánecs, Gereci, Gorbonoki, Grebeni, Borotva, Kamarcai, Kapitánfi, Kasztellánfi, Pekri, Rohfi families and the whole Vojk kindred all belong to this category.

The question has some important implications. For the two branches of the Szencsei which descended from Kakas and Lökös would both qualify for membership of the noble elite by any standard: each gave a viceban, possessed land well in excess of a hundred tenant sessions, all members were constantly titled *egregius*, and none of them ever served a lord below the rank of baron or bishop, not to speak about the king. If we involved the supposed Mihalc branch as well, on the other hand, the picture would be considerably different, and classification much more problematic. At the very beginning of our period, viceban Paul would obviously qualify as a member of the elite, but, consequently, none of his supposed descendants would. According to the definition offered by Fügedi, in the case of the Szencsei, for instance, all the branches of considerably different wealth and prestige should be regarded as parts of the same unit, thus making classification extremely difficult.

²⁷⁴⁸ Fügedi, *Elefánthyak*, 7.

In some cases the answer to the problem looks obvious. The Grebeni, as mentioned above, were split so completely by the aggression of Jan Vitovec in 1445/46, that the surviving branches apparently gradually lost almost all contacts with each other. Vitovec forced them one by one to abandon their claims to the family castle of Greben, and thus the most important focal point for the family was lost. There remained only the name, but even that began to change in the case of John Grebeni, already called of Miketinc as well. It is different with the Fánacs, however. Nicholas Fánacs was more distantly related to the descendants of Ladislav, son of Fánacs, than Ladislav Hermanfi was to John Grebeni of Miketinc, and his forbears had even been removed from Slavonia for some time; yet he did continue to possess a good portion of the Fánacs lands in Körös after his return there, and was constantly called Fánacs of Gordova. But his office (*juratus*) and title (*nobilis*) clearly exclude his putting in the same category to where his kinsmen in the other branch (court knight, viceban, *alispán*, *egregius*) belong. The example of the Kasztellánfi is somewhat similar to that of the Szencsei. In the late 15th century, the descendants of Ladislav and Adam, the sons of Peter Castellan, possessed their lands dividedly: whereas George owned the castellum of Bikszád and half of the castle of Zselnyak, Nicholas, son of Akacius, owned the estate and castellum of Szentlélek together with the other half of Zselnyak. Again, we see that one fortification is held jointly, and the two distant kinsmen are sometimes seen as acting together. Yet the names are changing: whereas Nicholas is often called son of Akacius (Akacii, Akacfi), George is constantly mentioned as Kasztellánfi, but frequently as of Bikszád. His son, on the other hand, is never called of Bikszád, but always of Szentlélek again.²⁷⁴⁹ Yet, as in the case of the Szencsei, since both branches of the family apparently enjoy roughly the same wealth and prestige throughout the 15th century and beyond, there is no problem in placing them simply as “the Kasztellánfi” into the elite.

Defining what a family was, however, is not the only problem to be solved when trying to establish an internal classification within the group of nobility studied here. For it was not only the various branches within a given family, but also various individuals or entire generations within a given family, which differed from each other in terms of landed wealth, career, prestige, influence to the extent that their belonging to the same category can be questioned. It is evident that Vitus Garázda of Kamarca, for example, belonged to the top layer of the nobility of Körös in the years around 1500: leading *familiaris* of the bishop of Pécs, then viceban, always titled *egregius*, marrying from one of the richest families in the neighbouring county of Baranya, and possessing land in the region of a hundred tenant sessions, his place is evident even if he personally is not attested to have possessed any fortification. His son, Akacius, is already a dubious case, however: variously titled *nobilis* and *egregius*, holding no office at all, but turning up as a royal man with simple *nobiles*, it is only his marriage which argues for his inclusion into the elite. And the kinsmen of Vitus in the

²⁷⁴⁹ On the names see Maček – Jurković, Rodoslov plemića, 174-175., 131-133., 153-157.

other branches of the Kamarcai family seem fairly below the mark as well. Again, there is no doubt that the three sons of Stephen Kapitánfi, George, Stephen and Andrew, all belonged to the elite of the nobility in Körös: service, officeholding, marriages, landed wealth, title (*egregii* without exception) and the possession of a fortification all support this. In the next generation, however, the picture changes: the three sons of Stephen shared but a portion of the ancient family estate, apparently held no office at all, and were no more titled consequently *egregius*. Moreover, the marriages of their sisters show that their local prestige fell accordingly.

Problems are the same obvious in the families which descended from Isaac. At the beginning of our period, John Borotva and his sons evidently enjoyed considerable prestige locally, the roots of which reached back to the late Árpád and early Angevin period. Thereafter, however, it is only viceban Nicholas and his descendants who can be regarded as belonging to the noble elite in terms of title (sometimes titled *egregius*), office (viceban, tax-collector) and landed wealth (including the possession of a *castellum*). Michael Raveni, the prothonotary, surely counted among the most prestigious members of the nobility in Körös thanks to his very office, but also to his closeness to the king and emperor; his prestige, or the memory of it, must have played a role in the marriages his daughter and granddaughter contracted. But it is very dubious whether his son, Stephen, who was a mere *szolgabíró*, can still be counted as belonging to the elite. As for the Cirkvenai, the “distribution of social prestige” is more even: Ladislav, as *ispán* of Zagreb, and in the next generation Paul, as prothonotary, should probably be reckoned among the noble elite of the county, and in the next generation their prestige was maintained by the two canons, perhaps playing a role in the marriage of Peter Cirkvenai, and in that of the latter’s daughter. The case of the Berzencei/Musinai introduces another problem: in the first two decades of the 15th century, George Berzencei, *alispán*, owner of a castle and two *castella*, certainly belonged to the noble elite, but it is dubious whether he can be counted among that of Körös, as the majority of his lands, together with two of his fortifications, lay in Somogy, and he was not even called of Musina. His grandsons, Nicholas and Bernard, on the other hand, who surely resided south of the Drava, did not belong to the same category as their grandfather: holding no office, turning up as simple royal men, it is only the *castellum* at Musina and the family of their mother which elevate them above the petty nobility. By now it may seem that, *mutatis mutandis*, we are very close to the situation observed with regard to the elites of early medieval Europe: “What I mean by an aristocrat is a member of a (normally landed) political elite, someone who could wield some form of power simply because of who [...] he was. [...] status was seldom precisely defined, whether we see a given local leader as “aristocratic” or not depends largely on our own decisions about where to draw the line in any given

period or region.”²⁷⁵⁰ Of course, late medieval Hungary cannot be compared to early medieval Europe; yet, in the absence of clearly defined markers it is indeed a matter of decision where we draw the dividing lines within the nobility. That Ladislav Hermanfi stood higher in the social hierarchy than, let's say, Nicholas Borotva or Michael Berivojszentiváni, may seem obvious; it is still possible, however, that from a certain perspective they were all perceived as belonging to the same category within the nobility.

The problem, however, is not limited to either the earlier middle ages or to late medieval Hungary, and here it may be worth returning to the example of late medieval England, already referred to in the opening chapters. There, by the end of the 14th century, three different ranks had established themselves within the class of landowners below the peerage, the members of which “styled themselves as knights, esquires or gentlemen, in that order.” These three layers were clearly distinguishable from each other by certain outward marks. On the other hand, however, “difficulty comes with trying to view the esquires as a homogeneous group. Some of them are not realistically distinguishable from the gentlemen, while others seem to be of much the same status as the knights.”²⁷⁵¹ That is, if we disregard titles, the same difficulties emerge as in Hungary, where no titles exist at all in the English sense. Another, but partly overlapping, approach distinguishes within the gentry between a upper stratum called ‘county gentry’, and a much wider lower stratum referred to as ‘parish gentry’. Their distinguishing characteristics in social and political terms are as follows: the “county gentry” increasingly monopolises certain offices, eventually coming to form “the real ‘political community’ of the shire”, while leaving other, inferior offices to the ‘parish gentry’; members of the upper stratum “usually found service with the king or with the great local lords”, whereas those of the lesser gentry families “tended to be attached to the lesser barons”; the families belonging to the upper group “tended to marry each other, to conduct their legal and familial transactions with each other”, the ‘parish gentry’ also moving “within their own social and business circles”, while “kinship ties sometimes cut across these distinctions”. And, finally, the “county gentry not only held substantially more land, but they often held land throughout their counties and in other counties as well”; whereas the “landed interests of the parish gentry were much more localised.”²⁷⁵²

This approach can, with some modifications of course, be used with regard to the late medieval Hungarian nobility, as it seems. The following table will serve as a useful starting point. In the first days of June 1510, an assembly was held at Martinyanc, one of the possessions of the Hásságyi

²⁷⁵⁰ Chris Wickham, *Framing the Early Middle Ages. Europe and the Mediterranean, 400-800*, Oxford: OUP, 2005. 153. In fact, the criteria elaborated by this author in order to recognise and identify members of the aristocracy are not very far from those used for later periods and also here: „distinction of ancestry; landed wealth; position in an official hierarchy; imperial or royal favour; [...] recognition by other political leaders; and lifestyle.” *Ibid.* 154.

²⁷⁵¹ Given-Wilson, *English Nobility*, 70.

²⁷⁵² *Ibid.* 71-74.

family in the county of Körös. The persons who gathered there, considering in their minds the ways and means by which their ancestors had maintained themselves in the midst of all sorts of misfortunes, before all by joining each other in perfect friendship (*amicicia*), adopted a whole series of measures in order to protect themselves and their offspring from the evils of the time.²⁷⁵³ The assembly came together in a critical period, during the revolt of ban Andrew Both against royal authority, when justice was indeed suspended in the province. Yet those present made no reference to the *universitas* of the Slavonian nobility as was customary in documents issued by similar gatherings; they only emphasised that their alliance was not directed against either the king or the prelates and barons, to whom they were keen to preserve all the fidelity that was due to them. Consequently, the gathering and the charter issued by it is much more similar in its nature to the sworn leagues so common in the second half of the Jagello period than to the periodical assemblies of the Slavonian nobility and the documents drafted in the name of its *universitas*. The list of those present at Martinyanc, with three exceptions,²⁷⁵⁴ is the following;²⁷⁵⁵ in the five columns I give the available information with regard to five features of social prestige, which have all been examined in the course of the present dissertation.²⁷⁵⁶

	Office	“Community”	Title	Fortification	Court connection
Bernard Turóci	viceban	Slavonian envoy	egregius	castle	baron
George and Nicholas Kasztellánfi	viceban	Slavonian envoy	egregius	castle	court fam.
Stephen Gorbonoki	ispán of Zagreb		egregius	castle	aulicus
Stephen, Louis and John Pekri	viceban	Slavonian envoy, captain	egregius	castle	court fam.
George and Paul Kerecsényi	viceban	Slavonian captain	egregius	castellum	assessor
Francis Kecer	(alispán)		egregius	castle	aulicus

²⁷⁵³ DL 94734.

²⁷⁵⁴ I did not count Nicholas Székely of Kövend, John Gyulai and Benedict Rátkai. On the first two see the justification at the beginning; as for Rátkai, he had no land in Körös.

²⁷⁵⁵ The names follow each other in the same order in which they are listed by the charter itself. In fact, George and Nicholas Kasztellánfi are mentioned separately, and so are George and Paul Kerecsényi, and Stephen and Louis Pekri on the one hand, and John Pekri on the other; for the sake of convenience, I have united them in the same cell.

²⁷⁵⁶ The information concerns in all cases the whole family and not necessarily the person mentioned. Thus, if any member of the family was viceban in the period between 1400 and 1526, I wrote viceban in the second column, and so on. As for castles, I followed the method explained above, that is, put castle in the fourth column if at any time within the period between 1400 and 1526 the family had one by whatever title.

Stephen Gudovci	prothonotary	Slavonian envoy	egregius	castellum	
Elias Businci	viceban	Slavonian envoy	egregius	castellum	(provisor of Jajce)
Francis Nelepeci	viceban		egregius	castle	
Stephen Hásságyi	prothonotary	Slavonian envoy	egregius	castellum	prothonotary, judge royal
Stephen and Pangracius Szencsei	viceban	Slavonian envoy	egregius	castle	court fam.
Sigismund Pogány		Slavonian envoy	egregius	castle	assessor, etc.
Nicholas Dersfi	viceban	Slavonian envoy, captain	egregius	castle	court knight
Paul Čavlović	viceban		egregius	castellum	royal councillor
Gregory Simonović	viceban		egregius	castle	
Michael and Nicholas Kerhen	Viceban	Slavonian envoy	egregius	(1/3 castle)	

The table is highly illustrative. Applying the criteria listed above with regard to the ‘county gentry’ in late medieval England, we can conclude that 1. the families listed here did in a sense dominate the more important local offices (before all of those of viceban and prothonotary, but also captain of Slavonia, and I count here designations as envoys elected by the noble *universitas*); 2. all of them belonged to the category of *familiaritas* characterised by the service of either the king or the magnates and prelates (although the latter is not indicated here, we have seen it in the chapter on *familiaritas* that it was indeed so; the only exception being, again, the Kerhen); 3. all of them belonged to the top layer of non-baronial landowners, the majority among them possessing, if only temporarily, a fortification generally referred to as a castle; 4. the great majority among them owned land in more than one county;²⁷⁵⁷ 5. finally, as the charter itself shows, they indeed formed in a sense the “real political community” of the county. There is one important difference, however: whereas in England “it was the families who had been established in the shire longest who tended to belong to the county gentry”,²⁷⁵⁸ in our case the duration of settlement in Körös does not seem to have played any role: seven among the families can be regarded as “newcomers” in Slavonia.

Of course, the list is not complete even if we keep to the very period around 1510. To start with, Balthasar Batthyány and Balthasar Alapi surely belonged to the same group then; the reasons of

²⁷⁵⁷ The exceptions here are Stephen Gudovci and Francis Nelepeci; but, as we have seen, the Nelepeci themselves possessed outside Körös as well before the 1460s, and Stephen Gudovci is reasonably supposed to have acquired some land with the hands of his wife in the county of Zala.

²⁷⁵⁸ Given-Wilson, *English Nobility* 74.

their not joining the “league” may have been purely practical. Nicholas Tulbertfi had died without a male heir by this time, and John Tahi was yet to enter this group. Other absences are more indicative, however: the Fánecs, the Bocskai, the Kapitánfi and the Musinai families were still represented in Körös, and, although they too may be missing for some trivial reasons, it is interesting that three of them were in a clearly descending phase in terms of landed wealth and social prestige, and we have seen above that the Fánecs also “disappear” from the political scene by the 1510s. If we could make the picture some twenty years before, we would certainly have to count as members of the ‘county nobility’ not only the Fánecs, the Bocskai and the Kapitánfi, but also the Csupor, the Rohfi of Décs, the Dombai, Albert Lónyai, and Nicholas Tulbertfi. Or, rather, in view of what was said about the problems around the notion of family itself, it is perhaps more correct to say that among the three branches of the Szencsei, two belonged to this elite group, and the Fánecs were also split by internal divisions; on the other hand both branches of either the Rohfi or the Kasztellánfi should be counted as parts of this narrow elite.

The problem is that no similar list can be prepared a hundred years before. There are basically two reasons for this, and they are connected to each other. Firstly, we have no similar sources to work with, and, secondly, it is so because there existed neither “monopoly of offices” nor “real political community” of the county around 1400. As we have seen above, it was only from the 1440s that the Slavonian nobility began to have a decisive influence upon the election of the ban’s deputy, and in the 1460s that they finally succeeded in controlling through the office of (deputy-)prothonotary the process of justice. It was also from the 1440s on that envoys elected by the Slavonian nobility were sent regularly to the king. Nevertheless, a closer analysis of the lists we do have from the 1430s on does yield some interesting results, and helps us in discovering some longer trends in social development.

If we look at the list of 1439, which is the oldest of its type, we find there from the county of Körös the Csupor (baron), Dombai (baron), Fánecs (baron), Kasztellánfi (viceban), Grebeni (viceban), Rohfi, Bikszádi (court knight), Bocskai (court knight), Ludbregi, Gereci, Megyericsi (court fam.), Kustyer and Kapitánfi (Croatian viceban, *alispán*) families; that is, the great majority among them are already singled out by office-holding and close connections to the court. Moreover, probably eight among them had been established south of the Drava since the 13th century,²⁷⁵⁹ and thus belonged to the most “ancient” layer of the local nobility. If we add to them those families from the list of 1510 which already flourished in Körös already in the beginning of the 15th century (Dersfi, Gorbonoki, Latkfi), and those which appear in the upper section of the later lists (such as Nicholas Pozsegai, for instance,) we come as close as possible to grasp what can be regarded as the early

²⁷⁵⁹ I also count here the Kustyer by virtue of their attachment to the descendants of Isaac, and the Gereci, although, as we have seen above, the presence of the latter in Slavonia can only be dated to the 14th century with certainty.

form of the ‘county nobility’. This observation can safely be extended to all the similar lists which have come down to us: in all of them the first places of the list are occupied by families which belong by any measure to the top layer of the nobility. The close connection between office and position is evident, as the following table shows:

	1439 ²⁷⁶⁰	1471	1474	1478	1490	1492
Dombai	1		1	1		
Bocskai	7		8	4	2/4	2
Grebeni	4	2	3	2	1	1 ²⁷⁶¹
Rohfi	5	1	4	7	8	3
Szencsei			2	3	5	6
Gudovci		8	14	9	3	7

The place occupied by the Dombai in the middle section of the 15th century is conspicuous, but wholly understandable: the career of George Dombai, and then that of his son, Nicholas, make it evident that they were then the leading members of the ‘county nobility’ in Körös. On the other hand, it is the same conspicuous that the leading position of Ladislás Rohfi, and the equally illustrious ranking of Ladislás Szencsei, coincide with their officeholding as viceban. By the late 1480s, however, it was clearly deputy-palatine Ladislás Hermanfi of Greben who had emerged as the leading figure within the local nobility. It is interesting to observe in this respect the position of the Bocskai brothers in 1474. At first sight, they are fairly pushed to the background; on closer observation, however, it appears that they are preceded by five “vicebanal” families (Dombai, Szencsei, Grebeni, Rohfi, Bikszádi), the acting deputy of ban Ernuszt (Nicholas Pozsegai), and the deputy prothonotary (Clement Paulovci); all officeholders, whereas the Bocskai would only join them a year later with viceban Peter. As for the figures of Peter Gudovci, they clearly indicate both the initial difficulties he is supposed to have faced in the beginning of his career (as a consequence of his origins), and the spectacular social rise he accomplished thereafter.

Below this group, fairly distinguishable, there comes another, represented by families such as the Gereci, Kopinci, Ervencei, Kamarcai, Jakószerdahelyi, Borotva, Raveni and Budor. No member of these families ever climbs into the first ranks of the scale, and, as we have seen in the chapters above, they differed in several regards from the families belonging to the first group: their service was mostly limited to *familiaritas*, and were for the most part excluded from the most important

²⁷⁶⁰ In the case of the 1439 list, I do not count the Tallóci brothers, counting them among the barons, and bishop Demetrius Csupor. The list thus effectively starts with George Dombai. As for the other lists, I have only counted the nobility of Körös; consequently, the numbers given here may actually differ from the position within the complete list.

²⁷⁶¹ Balthasar Batthyány

local offices (if they do appear as vicebans or prothonotaries, it is always exceptional).²⁷⁶² Their members frequently turn up as designated royal men in ordinary cases, in the company of the petty nobility, and, accordingly, are at least as frequently titled simply *nobilis* as *egregius*; although by no means excluded from the workings of the royal grace, they normally do not appear in functions more specifically connected to the court (such as the various forms of royal *familiaritas*, for instance); their landed wealth is of more limited extension, and mostly confined to the county of Körös.

It happens sometimes, however, that a single individual from this group produces a social rise which clearly elevates him into the upper group, without exerting a lasting influence upon his kin. Thus, as mentioned above, Vitus Garázda of Kamarca certainly belonged to the ‘county nobility’ around 1500, and so did Ladislas Erveneci in the 1460s; if nothing else, their respective marriages would clearly prove it. Yet, apparently, neither the son of Vitus, nor the collateral relatives of the Erveneci brothers managed to maintain themselves within the ranks of the upper group. Very much the same happened in the case of Michael Tompa, whose “ingression” into the elite, again completed by a marriage, seems to have remained without consequence. It is in this respect that the exceptional success of Peter Gudovci and Stephen Prasovci is worth emphasising again, both of whom succeeded in transmitting their newly established prestige to the next generation(s).

It is, consequently, extremely difficult to demarcate clearly this intermediate group, especially from the great masses of the petty nobility downwards. Again, the problem is very much the same as that with regard to the definition of the ‘parish gentry’ in England’: “for there is no very obvious place to draw the line at the bottom end of the scale”.²⁷⁶³ For, to take but one example, whereas Michael Berivojszentiváni stands out fairly clearly in terms of title and social connections in the 1470s, we have no means, other than the fact that they did belong to the same family, to distinguish his kinsmen in the other branch from the dozens of neighbouring families about we known nothing beyond their mere existence. If we look at the list of 1474, we can observe there a second divisive line, albeit very vaguely, below master Nicholas Kamarcai. Six among the persons listed there, thus, roughly the half, were active as *szolgabírák*, among them the very son of Master Michael Raveni.²⁷⁶⁴ Yet we also find there not only a Raveni but also members of the Tompa of Horzova family, then sometimes already titled *egregius* and having a canon in the church of Zagreb. This second, intermediate group is thus much more fluid both horizontally and vertically than the other;

²⁷⁶² Thus, in the case of Blaise Jakószerdahelyi, the briefness of his officeholding, but also its circumstances (the confusion surrounding the banate of Jan Vitovec); in the case of Nicholas Borotva and Ladislas Cirkvenai, the particular governmental position of Slavonia itself due to the queen’s presence there.

²⁷⁶³ Given-Wilson, *English Nobility*, 72.

²⁷⁶⁴ Alongside Stephen Raveni, Benedict Posa of Tapolcaszentgyörgy (DF 231436, here as *vicecomes*, but Stephen Posa is *szolgabíró*: DL 34800, DL 100645), Benedict Prezecsnafoi (DF 276866, DL 94537), Nicholas Puneck of Puneckovc (DF 277009), Paul Botos of Doklina (DF 231445, DL 34882), John of Csersztvecszentpéter (DL 86415, DF 218995), and Matthias Iso of Palicsna (DL 33695, DL 107021).

besides those already enumerated, I would also count here, with all the necessary limitations, the Cirkvenai, Kristallóci 2, Latkfi, Megyericsei, Mindszenti, Musinai, Orros, Pálfi, Pataki, Stefekfi, Pan of Kravarina, Szász of Tamasovc, Frodnohar and Fodorovci families.

Even so, there will remain cases which defy all categorisation; the most conspicuous being that of the Bakolcai, of course. Originally a landed wealth amounting to almost two hundred tenant sessions (when it becomes measurable), supposedly fairly illustrious origins, court connections, a fortification attested in the early 16th century, and certainly the most outstanding marriage in our whole sample: all this would argue for including them in the upper category; yet the fact that they apparently played no significant role in the local political community, and not because they were occupied elsewhere, and that they had lost much landed wealth to other families in the course of the 15th century, warns us against treating their case as clearcut.

Now, there remains one question to be answered: can this noble elite, defined before all in terms of title, wealth and service, be regarded as a meaningful social phenomenon? Was it an elite in the real sense of the word, with clear contours, and, if yes, with regard to what? In legal sense it was certainly not, if we accept the approach of Stephen Werbőczy from the very end of the period examined here, according to which no differences existed within the ranks of the nobility in terms of liberty, privilege and exemption. (Trip. I. 2. 3.).²⁷⁶⁵ The fiction of legal equality was shaken by the law of 1498 and its corollary of 1500 (concerning the *barones banderiat* and the *decempersone*), but below that level the theoretical equality of the nobility proved more persistent. Viewed in terms of landed wealth, the picture is considerably different. The families listed in the charter of 1510, plus Balthasar Batthyány and Balthasar Alapi, possessed together some 3000 inhabited tenant sessions of the county of Körös alone; if we add their landed wealth outside the county, the total number would certainly surpass 5000. This is not much when compared to the immense wealth accumulated by duke Corvin, the Szapolyai brothers of the Geréb family;²⁷⁶⁶ nor does it look very high when compared to the more than 1600 sessions owned by duke Lawrence Újlaki in the county of Körös alone.²⁷⁶⁷ If we consider, however, that all the remaining nobility in the county of Körös together possessed much less than that,²⁷⁶⁸ and add what we have seen above with regard to the possession of fortifications and market towns, the monopoly of certain offices, and the multiple ties created by marriage alliances, we can say that by the latter part of the period examined by the present dissertation there existed a group of nobility which can indeed be termed as an elite. This elite consisted of a handful of families most of which had belonged to the top layer of the nobility,

²⁷⁶⁵ Cited by Fügedi, *Elefánthyak* 56.

²⁷⁶⁶ Engel, *világi nagybirtok* 17.

²⁷⁶⁷ Adamček- Kampuš, *Popisi* 4.

²⁷⁶⁸ This estimate is based on the figures of the same tax lists.

either in Körös itself or in the county where they lived before their transfer to Slavonia, since at least the Angevin period, but frequently since the 13th century.

That an “elite of wealth and prestige”, that is, a group of nobility superior in terms of landed wealth and social influence to the lower strata of the noble class existed before the second part of the 15th century as well is obvious; to what extent this group could be regarded as a political elite as well is very difficult to tell in the absence of sources. If we take a look at the families which I have identified above as belonging to the leading ranks of the nobility in Körös already in the first decade of the 15th century (Bikszádi, Borotva, Kustyer, Grebeni, Bocskai, Ost, Gorbonoki, Dombai, Dersfi, Kamarcai, Jakószerdahelyi, Ervencei, Megyericsei, Musinai, Fánecs, Berivojszentiváni, Csupor, Rohfi, Latkfi, Kapitánfi, Pekri, Szencsei, Kasztellánfi, Nelepec, Kristallóci 1, Bakolcai, Cirkvenai, Raveni, Gereci, Tamasovci, Garázda, Stefekfi), we can see a similar division among them as roughly a hundred years later. With regard to the Angevin period, and up to around 1420, nine among them can be shown to have been connected to the court in the “traditional sense”, that is, either through a baronial office or through membership of the court itself (such as a court knight, for example): the Gorbonoki, Dersfi, Grebeni, Bocskai, Ost, Fánecs, Latkfi, Csupor, Pekri, Szencsei and Kasztellánfi families belong to this category. Seven among them (Dersfi, Grebeni, Bocskai, Csupor, Rohfi, Szencsei, Latkfi) boasted a castle already that time. Members of the same families also acted as the deputy of county *ispáns* either in Slavonia (Grebeni), or, the great majority among them, in various Hungarian counties. This latter category comprises also the Dombai, Musinai, Kapitánfi, Kasztellánfi, Nelepec, Gereci, Tamasovci and Garázda families, which, however, apparently had no connections to the court, while the Musinai and the Nelepec also owned a castle of their own. These families could thus be counted as constituting an elite of wealth and office, but certainly not a political community in the sense we can identify it a century later. That these families were already interconnected by marriage alliances we can only surmise, but not prove. As for the remaining families, it is with regard partly to the supposed size of their landed wealth, and partly to the *magister* title that they are decorated with in the 14th century, that I regard them as belonging to a category distinguishable from the nobility below. It is certainly remarkable, however, that, with the possible exception of the Kamarcai, the Ervencei and the Megyericsei, they originally all came from the ranks of either the *várjobbágyok* or the castle nobility. In a sense, they can be regarded as a social reservoir from which the “transitory members” of the noble elite in the strict sense were recruited before 1526.

4. CONCLUSION

In order to summarise the findings of the dissertation, it would be worth to return to the conclusions of Pál Engel with regard to the nobility of Ung around 1400, and contrast with it what I have discovered; this approach is justified in so far as Engel himself anticipated that the model he had elaborated would not necessarily be valid for the subsequent period, that is, for a socio-political structure commonly referred to as “corporate” (*rendi* in Hungarian) and supposedly characterised by the overwhelming influence of the estates.²⁷⁶⁹ Of course, not all points can directly be compared, for Engel refrained from investigating certain aspects (such as that of marriages), and, moreover, his inquiry comprised the entire nobility of a given county, whereas mine was limited to the upper section of it. Nevertheless, this approach can yield useful results, especially for similar research in the future.

To begin with, however, it is necessary to emphasise once more the difficulties one is bound to encounter in trying to establish the internal stratification of a noble society in case no tax-lists furnishing the necessary figures of tenant plots are available. The method of Engel, in fact, consisted in preparing at first a hierarchical list of landowners based on the number of plots owned, and then identify internal categories in terms of distinguishing features, mainly connected to service and relationship to the court. In the case of the county of Körös, where no early tax lists have come down to us, no similar approach is possible; I have therefore adopted one based on title, and used the amount of landed wealth only as a supplementary means of determining social standing. The use of a honorific title (*egregius* as compared to *nobilis*), although by no means official and regular, was widespread and consequent enough to allow the identification of a group within the nobility which can be made the object of an investigation along several criteria. Although in most cases the connection between title and landed wealth is very obvious, in other cases it was only a research starting from the honorific title of a given individual which made it possible, working backwards, to discover the real amount of land a given family or kin group possessed. This, I think, is a very important point.

As for the origins, two things need to be repeated here; although both only concern the upper layer of the nobility in Körös who were active there by the early 15th century and later, they do seem revelative nevertheless. The first is the dominant role of royal power in relocating noble land until the early 15th century; this observation is entirely in keeping with the findings of Engel in the county of Ung. Thereafter, however, two other factors, service and marriage came to the fore and remained decisive in the emergence of new families within the ranks of the leading nobility in Körös. This leads us to the second point, namely to the dominance of non-Slavonian families in

²⁷⁶⁹ Engel, Ung megye 109-115.

providing a “recruitment area” for the nobility in Körös: that is, the regular arrival of already well-established families from other regions of Hungary, but also from abroad, and their rapid integration into the top layer of the local nobility through marriage. This point is far from unproblematic, however, for the evaluation of the exact social position of a given individual or family at the time of their arrival to Körös is frequently hindered by the absence of parallel research on the regions of origin; the importance of horizontal mobility is beyond doubt, however. Vertical mobility, on the other hand, was rather sporadic, and in most cases only temporary; this fact puts into relief the achievement of those few who did manage to rise definitively into the top ranks of the nobility from below.

In the absence of exact numbers of tenant plots, and in view of the difficulties inherent in an approach based exclusively on the amount of tenant plots, the use of fortifications and market towns as indicators of status has proved rather helpful, although the problematic points are several here as well. Practically all the entities chosen on the basis of title can be shown to have possessed either a fortification or a market town, more frequently both, and several among them more than one of each, either constantly or at least temporarily. Since outside the group of families identified by title, very few other noble families had any fortification, and none had a market town, this line of demarcation seems a very clear one in trying to distinguish between different levels within the nobility. Moreover, the possession of castles and/or several *castella* very evidently correlated with the group of nobility regularly decorated with the *egregius* title, and is thus a useful indicator of a further break within the top group of the nobility generally characterised by the possession of fortifications and/or market towns. A further point to emphasise is the function of erecting or obtaining a fortification in indicating an “accomplished social rise”, and, inversely, the loss of it as a cause or symptom of social decline.

The examination of the ways and means of acquiring and losing landed wealth yielded several important conclusions. The most important, probably, concerns the role of royal authority in the transmission of noble wealth below the level of barons, or, rather, the lack of it. For, as we have seen, it was basically without royal intervention that noble wealth circulated among the local nobility, mainly through marriage and alienations of various forms. The exceptions, such as the cases of Nicholas Csupor or Andrew Kapitánfi, are all the more revelative. Another important conclusion is that, whereas alienations of land could profoundly alter the relations of wealth within the nobility, above a certain level these changes rarely proved irreversible; it was generally the families which had recently joined the top group of the nobility for whom the loss of property proved fatal. Others, such as Ladislav Hermanfi or Francis Nelepeci, were able to produce a comeback from a situation which would certainly have been hopeless for others.

In terms of service, some fairly clear patterns have emerged, but, here again, the picture is not as clear as in the Ung of Pál Engel. The clearest divisive line seems to separate those families which never appear in subaltern positions such as royal men, elected jurors and *szolgabírák*, and only take on service for the king or the barons and magnates. This group comprises mostly those families which are also distinguished by the regular application of the *egregius* title and the possession of castles and/or several castella. But the relationship is not automatical, and the status of an individual family can change a lot in the course of a long period of time. Since *familiaritas* itself could be conditioned by a great number of individual considerations, some of which were at least mentioned above, the exceptional cases are especially numerous here, and the underlying motivations very difficult to examine. A crucial point to emphasise is the decisive influence that the rich nobility in the county of Körös had built up over the appointment to the office of viceban from the middle of the 15th century; this influence had gradually turned into a virtual monopoly, to the point that the assumption of the office of viceban could be no more regarded as a “traditional” form of *familiaritas*.

As regards the relationship between the court and the nobility, the strict opposition between “court nobility” and “provincial nobility” is not a working model for the period after 1437. Certainly not in the sense that “the personal fortunes of individuals [were] best advanced by kings and by those around kings”.²⁷⁷⁰ The king and the court did continue to matter, of course, but the kind of radical separation, in terms of both space and social prestige, of a so-called court nobility from the noble masses which would have remained isolated from the centre of power back in their homeland, is out of place. After the dissolution of the immense royal domain the favours available *only* through the court shrank as a matter of fact, and the competition for what was still available became ever more acute. Apart from the case of Nicholas Csupor, we have no example of rapid social rise based on the royal favour alone, and even his rise involved no consequences for his kinssmen. On the other hand, new forms of participation in the workings of the royal court appeared, while others (such as court *familiaritas*) were transformed as the country came under increasing Ottoman pressure. Some of these court functions, especially under king Matthias, involved very real governmental powers; others, on the other hand, served merely to demonstrate the incumbent’s closeness to the court and thus increase his prestige locally.

The analysis of marriages has generally confirmed the traditional picture of “like with like”, that is, families of roughly the same social standing married with each other. We have encountered, however, some interesting exceptions to the rule, which are worth emphasising again. Firstly, in the top level of the local nobility there are more or less clear examples of upward marriages, with

²⁷⁷⁰ Ralph A. Griffiths, „The King’s Court during the Wars of the Roses. Continuities in an Age of Discontinuities”, In Asch, R. G. and Birke, A. M. eds., *Princes, Patronage and the Nobility: the Court at the Beginning of the Modern Age*, Oxford, 1991. 41.

women who came from families we can label as aristocratic. However, with the possible exception of the Batthyány, none of these cases can be regarded as marking the definitive adoption of the given family into the ranks of the aristocracy; as the possession of castles, such a marriage is rather a mark which helps to distinguish them from the nobility below. Secondly, “downward” marriages in an otherwise socially constant series of alliances can sometimes indicate a clear decline in the history of a family (Kapitánfi). And, inversely, a marriage with a consort from a family above may be, like the construction or acquisition of a fortification, the sign of a successful “social climb”, in a sense marking the end of the journey.

What could be learnt about the role of the Church in terms of career possibilities has confirmed the traditional view about the meagre importance of it in late medieval Hungary. On the one hand, we have seen that the situation was very similar to that reconstructed by Engel in Ung for an earlier period: it was generally the middling offices in the ecclesiastical hierarchy that were available for the leading nobility in the county of Körös. On the other hand, in the few cases when someone managed to make his way to rank of prelates, church career apparently remained isolated and involved no consequences at all for the family of the cleric concerned.

And, finally, to the question of whether the group of families analysed from various standpoints in the dissertation can be regarded as an elite within the nobility or not, the answer may seem rather elusive. In fact, I have apparently raised more problems than I have solved. What seems certain is that, in terms of title, landed wealth, service, officeholding and marriage alliances it is possible to identify at any given moment within the period between 1400 and 1526 two groups of differing sizes within the upper ranks of the nobility, the contours of which, however, cannot be established with absolute certainty. Nor it is possible to draw the demarcation line below, for it is always a matter of personal decision of what to regard as a feature which allows to count someone as “outstanding” from the noble masses undistinguished in any respect. Classification, moreover, is hindered by intrafamilial differences, and by factors which cannot be measured at all on the basis of the source material we have.

One approach, however, and one following an English model, has proved fairly fruitful. By adopting the two-layer division elaborated with regard to the late medieval gentry, and the criteria upon which it was based, most of which are, indeed, similar to those used in the present dissertation, it was possible to identify, from the second half of the 15th century, the formation of a family group which, by the turn of the 15th and 16th centuries, can be seen as constituting a fairly homogenous elite in terms of social and political dominance. Richest in land, monopolizing local offices, interconnected by marriage alliances, and their political horizons extending far over the limits of a single county, this group, although far from stable, stands out clearly from the local noble society. Recruitment to this group generally came from outside; some of the families, on the other

hand, which have been identified as constituting a second, much more vaguely defined layer within the higher rank of the nobility, locked into the elite temporarily, either through office-holding, or through marriage, or through the acquisition of landed wealth. The number of the families constituting the this group, which surely deserves the name of elite, was nearing twenty; it was thus considerably more than “two or three”. But the county of Körös was one of the biggest, and its nobility, apparently, very numerous. To what extent the rather tentative observations offered here can be extended to other counties of medieval Hungary has yet to be tested.

APPENDIXES

1. Persons listed as representatives of the Slavonian nobility

(underlined are those persons, in the county of Körös, from whose families vicebans or *ispánok* of Zagreb were appointed, and the (deputy) prothonotaries of Körös/Slavonia).

March 1439 DF 268079²⁷⁷¹	Jan. 1471 DF 252051	May 1474 DF 252056	Jan. 1478 DF 252069	Jan. 1490 DF 252108	March 1492 DF 287346
Matko, Peter, John Tallóci	<u>Ladislav Roh</u> of Dégse	<u>Nicholas</u> <u>Dombai</u>	<u>Nicholas</u> <u>Dombai</u>	<u>Ladislav</u> <u>Hermanfi</u> deputy palatine	<u>Balthasar</u> <u>Batthyány</u>
Demetrius Csupor bishop of Knin	<u>Ladislav</u> <u>Hermanfi of</u> <u>Greben</u>	<u>Ladislav</u> <u>Szencsei</u>	<u>Ladislav</u> <u>Hermanfi of</u> <u>Greben</u>	<u>Peter Bocskai</u>	<u>Peter</u> <u>Bocskai</u>
<u>George</u> <u>Dombai</u>	<u>Peter</u> <u>Bikszádi</u>	<u>Ladislav</u> <u>Hermanfi of</u> <u>Greben</u>	<u>Ladislav</u> <u>Szencsei</u>	<u>Peter Gudovci</u> deputy prothonotary	<u>Bernard</u> <u>Roh of</u> <u>Dégse</u>
<u>Bartholomew</u> <u>Fáncs of</u> <u>Gordova</u>	<u>George</u> <u>Turóci</u>	<u>Ladislav,</u> <u>Stephen and</u> <u>John Roh of</u> <u>Dégse</u>	<u>Peter</u> <u>Bocskai</u>	<u>Sigismund</u> <u>Bocskai</u>	<u>Peter</u> <u>Pogány</u>
Ladislav and John Tót of Szomszédvár	<u>Frank Fáncs</u> of Gordova	<u>Nicholas</u> <u>Pozsegai of</u> <u>Garignica</u>	<u>Nicholas</u> <u>Pozsegai of</u> <u>Garignica</u>	<u>Francis</u> <u>Szencsei</u>	<u>Michael</u> <u>Kerhen</u>
<u>Peter</u> <u>Kasztellánfi</u>	George Farkas of Ebres	<u>Peter</u> <u>Bikszádi</u>	Gregory Horváth of Gáj	<u>Michael</u> <u>Kerhen</u>	<u>George</u> <u>Szencsei</u>
<u>Herman</u> <u>Grebeni</u>	<u>Master Albert</u> <u>Pataki</u>	<u>Master</u> <u>Clement</u> <u>Paulovci</u>	John Gyepüi	<u>Francis Pekri</u>	<u>Peter</u> <u>Gudovci</u>
Stephen, John and Ladislav Bicskele of Zelna	John Gyepüi	<u>John and</u> <u>Sigismund</u> <u>Bocskai</u>	Ladislav Bicskele of Zelna	<u>Bernard Roh of</u> <u>Dégse</u>	<u>George</u> <u>Kasztellánfi</u>
<u>Stephen and</u> <u>Ladislav Roh</u> <u>of Dégse</u>	Stephen, Ladislav and Nicholas Bicskele of Zelna	<u>Master Albert</u> <u>Pataki</u>	<u>Ladislav,</u> <u>Stephen and</u> <u>John Roh of</u> <u>Dégse</u>	<u>George</u> <u>Kapitánfi of</u> <u>Desnice</u>	<u>Nicholas</u> <u>Tulbert</u>
<u>Nicholas and</u> <u>George</u> <u>Bikszádi</u>	<u>Peter</u> <u>Konszkai</u>	Stephen and Ladislav Bicskele of Zelna	<u>Andrew</u> <u>Kapitánfi of</u> <u>Desnice</u>	Mark Gereci	<u>Albert</u> <u>Lónyai</u>

²⁷⁷¹ In all cases I give the archival number, for none of these charters is available in an up-to-date edition.

<u>3 Ladislav Bocskai</u>	Anthony Kopinci	<u>Gaspar Fancs of Gordova</u>	<u>Master Peter Gudovci</u>	Nicholas Orros of Orrosovc	<u>Nicholas Bocskai</u>
<u>Gaspar Csupor of Monoszlo</u>	<u>Master Peter Gudovci</u>	Nicholas and Francis Pekri	<u>Ladislav and Stanislas Ervencei</u>	Nicholas Mikulasics of Palicsna	<u>Elias Bosnyak</u>
George Ludbregi	<u>Master Clement Paulovci</u>	Anthony Kopinci	Master John Vidfi of Korbova	Blaise Budor of Budroc	<u>Ladislav Pekri</u>
Nicholas (2) and John Gereci	Gregory and George Sztubicai	<u>Ladislav and Nicholas Ervencei</u>	<u>Nicholas Kamarcai</u>	Andrew Simonffy of Miletinc	Nicholas Orros
Majos Gereci	John Stefekovics of Szentandras	<u>Master Peter Gudovci</u>	Anthony Kopinci	Demetrius Porkolab of Miletinc	John Csersztveci
Frank, James and George Megyericsei	Ladislav of Pezerio	John Gyepui	<u>Blaise Briga of Szerdahely</u>	Ladislav Huzarcz	Peter Gereci
<u>Stephen and Nicholas Kapitanfi of Desnice</u>	Paul Botos of Doklina	<u>Nicholas Borotva of Tersztenice</u>	Michael Szentivani	George Ablancz of Mindszent	John Kernyak
Matthias and John Kustyer	Ladislav Bisztricei	Mark Gereci	<u>Nicholas Fancs of Gordova</u>	Stephen Puchych of Rakonok	John Orehovci
John Progovci	George Ablancz	<u>Thomas Vitez of Kamarca</u>	Blaise Budor of Budroc	George of Toyssouc	
<u>Sigismund Kasztellanfi</u>	Paul Nespesai	Martin and Emeric Raveni	<u>Nicholas Pekri [son of Michael]</u>	George Plawychewych	
Sigismund of Kladusa	Fabian Sztubicai	<u>Master Nicholas Kamarcai</u>	<u>Nicholas Pekri [son of Lawrence]</u>	Stephen Pozopchych	
Nicholas Palosaych of Klokoch	Stephen Lodomerycz of Adamovc	Benedict Posa of Szentgyorgy	George and Gregory Sztubicai	Simon Myhowlych	
	Benedict Swpan of Prezecsnafo	Nicholas Kerhevinai	<u>Nicholas Borotva of Tersztenice</u>		
	Stephen of Woynowcz	Stephen Ficsor of Farkasovc	John Kamarjai		

	John, parish priest of Kemlék	Benedict Swpan of Prezecsnafo	George Laczovich of Laczovelcz		
	Clement of Sabnycza zenthiwan	Nicholas and John Punek of Punekovc	<u>John, Andrew and Thomas Vitez of Kamarca</u>		
		Ladislav Bisztricei	John of Csersztvec-szentpeter		
		Ladislav Pezerio	Ladislav Simonfi of Miletinc		
		Paul Magnus of Mateovc	Stanislav Butkafoldi		
		James and George Tompa of Horzova	Matthias Soo of Gataloc		
		Paul Botos of Doklina	Emeric Zebenyec of Zebenyanc		
		Stephen Pataki	<u>Peter Bikszadi</u>		
		Stephen Raveni	Nicholas Erdelyi of Hathko		
		John of Csersztvec-szentpeter	Peter Salfar of Gataloc		
		Matthias Iso of Palicsna	Janko of Csazmafö		
			<u>Nicholas Vitez of Kamarca</u>		
			<u>Peter Kerhen of Belosovc</u>		
			Stephen Peres of Gerec		

2. Bans, vicebans and ispánok of Körös and Zagreb 1423 – 1526

The present table is only intended to facilitate the comprehension of the text, and is thus offered without references. It is based on my own research, and will make part of the general archontology of late medieval Hungary which is currently being prepared. Up to 1423 the reader is asked to refer to the often-cited book of Pál Engel (Archontológia I. 19-20.)

BAN	VICEBAN, ISPÁN OF KÖRÖS	ISPÁN OF ZAGREB
HERMAN OF CILLI	Andrew Rohonci <i>Feb 14 – 27 Aug 1423</i>	George and Bartholomew
	Sigismund Hanchihar <i>1423 – 12 May 1431</i> Stephen Vitéz of Kamarca <i>1 July 1424 – 17 Jan 1427</i>	Matthew of Mácsó
	Ladislás Szencsei <i>19 March 1427 – 5 Aug 1435</i>	Stephen Kuhinger of Batina
MATKO and FRANK TALLÓCI	Peter Kasztellánfi of Szentlélek <i>14 May 1436 – 30 March 1440</i>	George Bikszádi
	Herman Grebeni <i>27 Jan 1439 – 7 March 1440</i>	Nicholas Gyepűi, then John Tót of Szomszédvár
	Akacius Csupor of Monoszló <i>14 Nov 1440 – 2 June 1441</i> viceban, ispán of Zagreb [together with Ladislás Bicskele of Zelna, only ispán]	
	Akacius Csupor of Monoszló <i>12 Oct 1442</i>	
	Nicholas Antimus of Tapsony <i>17, 24 July 1443</i>	Nicholas Gorbonoki and Dominic Miletinci
	Thomas Ciráki of Szobocsina <i>17 July 1443 – 22 Jan 1446</i>	
		Ladislás Bicskele of Zelna
ULRICH and FREDERICK OF CILLI	George Bikszádi <i>8 Oct 1445 – 22 Jan 1446</i>	George Glaynar
	Gaspar Kasztellánfi of Szentlélek <i>29 Apr 1447 – 17 Oct 1449</i>	
	Benedict Turóci <i>12 May 1447 – 17 Oct 1449</i>	
	Jan Vitovec of Greben <i>11 Apr 1450 – 11 Sept 1456</i>	George Ebresi
	<i>Gaspar Kasztellánfi and Benedict Turóci ?</i>	
	Nicholas Dombai <i>4 March 1452 – 8 Jan 1453</i>	

JAN VITOVEC and NICHOLAS ÚJLAKI [THOMAS SZÉKELY OF SZENTGYÖRGY]		Nicholas Kasztellánfi of Szentlélek <i>10 March 1458 – 23 Feb 1461</i>	Nicholas Kasztellánfi and George Ebresi
		Blaise Briga of Jakószerdahely <i>10 March – 3 June 1458</i>	
		Domozlaus of Atak <i>10 March – 22 Sept 1458</i>	
		Ladislás Szencsei <i>5 Jan 1458 – 8 Jan 1464</i>	
		Peter Szerescsen of Mesztegnyő <i>19 May 1461 – 8 Jan 1464</i>	
EMERIC SZAPOLYAI JAN VITOVEC	NICHOLAS ÚJLAKI	Paul Perneszi <i>30 July 1464 – 15 June 1465</i>	Stephen Bicskele of Zelna and Augustine Porkoláb
		Ladislás Roh of Déce <i>30 July 1464 – [25 Jan] 1466</i>	John Gyepűi
		Nicholas Kasztellánfi of Szentlélek <i>23 May – 18 Oct 1466</i>	
		John Macedóniai <i>23 May – 14 June 1466</i>	
JAN VITOVEC JOHN, BISHOP OF PÉCS	JOHN TUZ OF LAK	Akacius Kasztellánfi of Szentlélek <i>6 Feb 1467 – 20 Apr 1468</i>	John Gyepűi and John of Palathya
		Ladislás Hermanfi of Greben <i>20 March 1467 – 14 Feb 1470</i>	
		John Mindszenti <i>21 Jan 1469 – 14 Feb 1470</i>	John Mindszenti and John of Polyacha
BLAISE MAGYAR		Ladislás Szencsei <i>19 Jan 1470 – 22 Feb 1471</i>	
		Ladislás Veres of Szepes <i>19 Jan 1470 – 26 Sept 1471</i>	
BLAISE MAGYAR	DAMIAN HORVÁT OF LITVA	Ladislás Roh of Déce <i>31 May 1471 – 22 Nov 1473</i>	Ladislás Roh and John Gyepűi
NICHOLAS ÚJLAKI		Nicholas Dombai <i>10 Feb 1472 – 22 Nov 1473</i>	Nicholas Dombai and John Gesztí
		John Gesztí <i>10 Feb 1472 – 30 July 1473</i>	

JOHN ERNUSZT	Ladislav Hermanfi of Greben 3 Feb 1474 – 24 June 1475	Peter Bocskai, with interruptions
	Nicholas Pozsegai 3 Feb 1474 – before 6 May 1476	
	Peter Bocskai 7 July 1475 – before 6 May 1476	
PETER BOCSKAI		
LADISLAS EGERVÁRI	Peter Bocskai Oct 1476, 18 Sept 1479 – Sept 1482	
	Ladislav Szencsei and Andrew Kapitánfi of Desnice 10 Jan 1477 – 24 Jan 1479	
	Peter Bocskai and Andrew Kapitánfi of Desnice 18 Sept 1479 – 8 Apr 1482	
BLAISE MAGYAR	Ladislav Szencsei and Peter Bocskai 15 Sept – 16 Dec 1482	
MATTHIAS GERÉB OF VINGÁRT	Peter Bocskai and Ladislav Roh of Déce 29 Sept 1483 – 19 May 1484	
	Peter Bocskai and Michael Kerhen of Belosovc 22 March 1485 – 26 Oct 1489	
LADISLAS EGERVÁRI	Gaspar Fánecs of Gordova and Oswald Polányi 15 Dec 1489 – 8 Sept 1490	Thereafter all the vicebans are simultaneously <i>ispánok</i> of Körös and Zagreb
	Oswald Polányi 6 Jan 1491 – 16 Dec 1492	
	Michael Kerhen and Oswald Polányi 20 Jan – 15 July 1493	
JOHN DERENCSENYI and JOHN BOTH OF BAJNA	Bernard Roh of Déce and Louis Pekri 8 Aug – 24 Aug 1493	
LADISLAS KANIZSAI	Bernard Turóci and Louis Pekri 12 March 1494 – 18 Apr 1495	
JOHN CORVIN	Bernard Turóci and John Gyulai 14 May – 10 Dec 1495	
	John Gyulai and Stephen Bradać of Ladomerc 18 March – 30 Oct 1496	
	Balthasar Alapi and Marcinko Predrihói 9 Jan – 31 Dec 1497	

GEORGE KANIZSAI	George Kasztellánfi and John Mindszenti of Orehovc 20 March 1498 – 6 Jan 1499
JOHN CORVIN	Balthasar Alapi and Marcinko Predrihói 27 Dec 1498 – 25 Feb 1500
	Balthasar Alapi and Peter Bocskai 21 July 1500 – 3 May 1502
	Balthasar Alapi and Bernard Turóci 13 Aug 1502 – 3 Nov 1504
ANDREW BOTH OF BAJNA and MARK HORVÁTH OF KAMIČAC	Vitus Garázda of Kamarca and Elias Bosnyák of Businc 4 Feb 1505 – 20 Apr 1506
	Louis Pekri and Francis Nelepeci of Dobrakucsa 8 Feb – 30 Dec 1507 [29 Dec 1510 – 3 Sept. 1511]
GEORGE KANIZSAI and JOHN ERNUSZT	Balthasar Batthyány and Paul Čavlović of Gyurkovc 17 Nov 1508 – 27 Feb 1510
EMERIC PERÉNYI	Balthasar Batthyány 14 Sept 1512 – 11 July 1513
PETER BERISZLÓ	Balthasar Alapi 13 Dec 1513 – 11 Dec 1514
	Balthasar Alapi and Balthasar Batthyány 17 July 1515 – 3 Jan 1518
	Nicholas Dersfi of Szerdahely and Emeric Bradać of Ladomerc 4 Dec 1518 – 17 May 1520
JOHN KORBÁVIAI	Paul Kerecsényi of Kányafölde 30 Jan 1522 – 29 Aug 1524
FRANCIS BATTHYÁNY and JOHN TAHI	

3. Genealogical trees

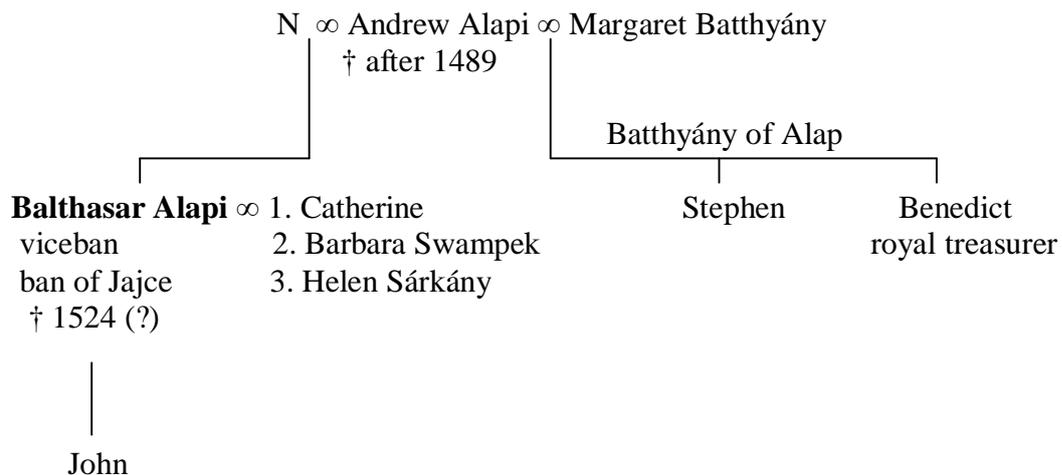
The genealogical trees are simplified as much as possible up to cca. 1400. For the period before, I generally have taken over the family trees prepared by Pál Engel (Középkori Magyar Genalógia, op. cit.)

The references can be found in the chapters dealing with the individual families. I only give references whenever the relevant piece of information cannot be found in the text.

I have prepared no family tree of the Budor of Budrovc and Kristallóci (1) families, for those made by Géza Pálffy (Budróci Budor op. cit.) and Pál Engel respectively are in no need of correction. Among the other families treated in „full biographies, I have omitted Nicholas Pozsegai, for practical reasons (his being a nuclear family, identifying its members is easy); but also the Garázda, for the numerous fragments could not be linked together to give at least a probable result.

I only indicate females in case the husband is known, for otherwise they add no new information from the point of view of social history. I also have omitted males who died in infancy or about whom nothing is known but their names.

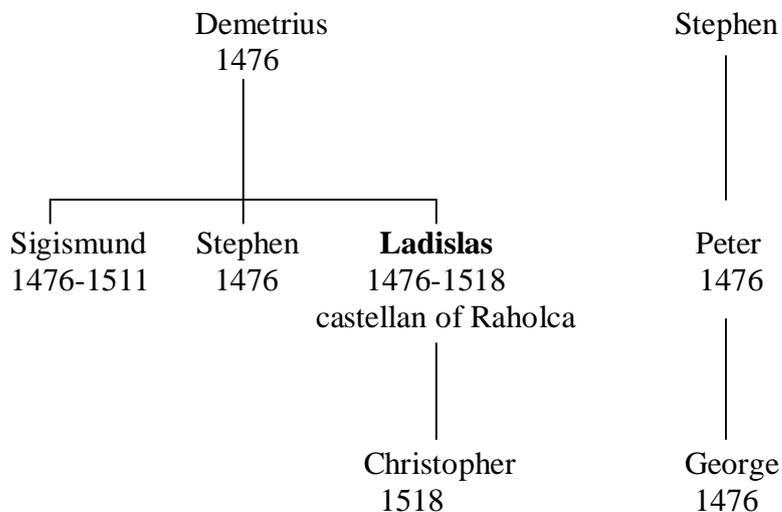
ALAPI family



BAKOLCAI family

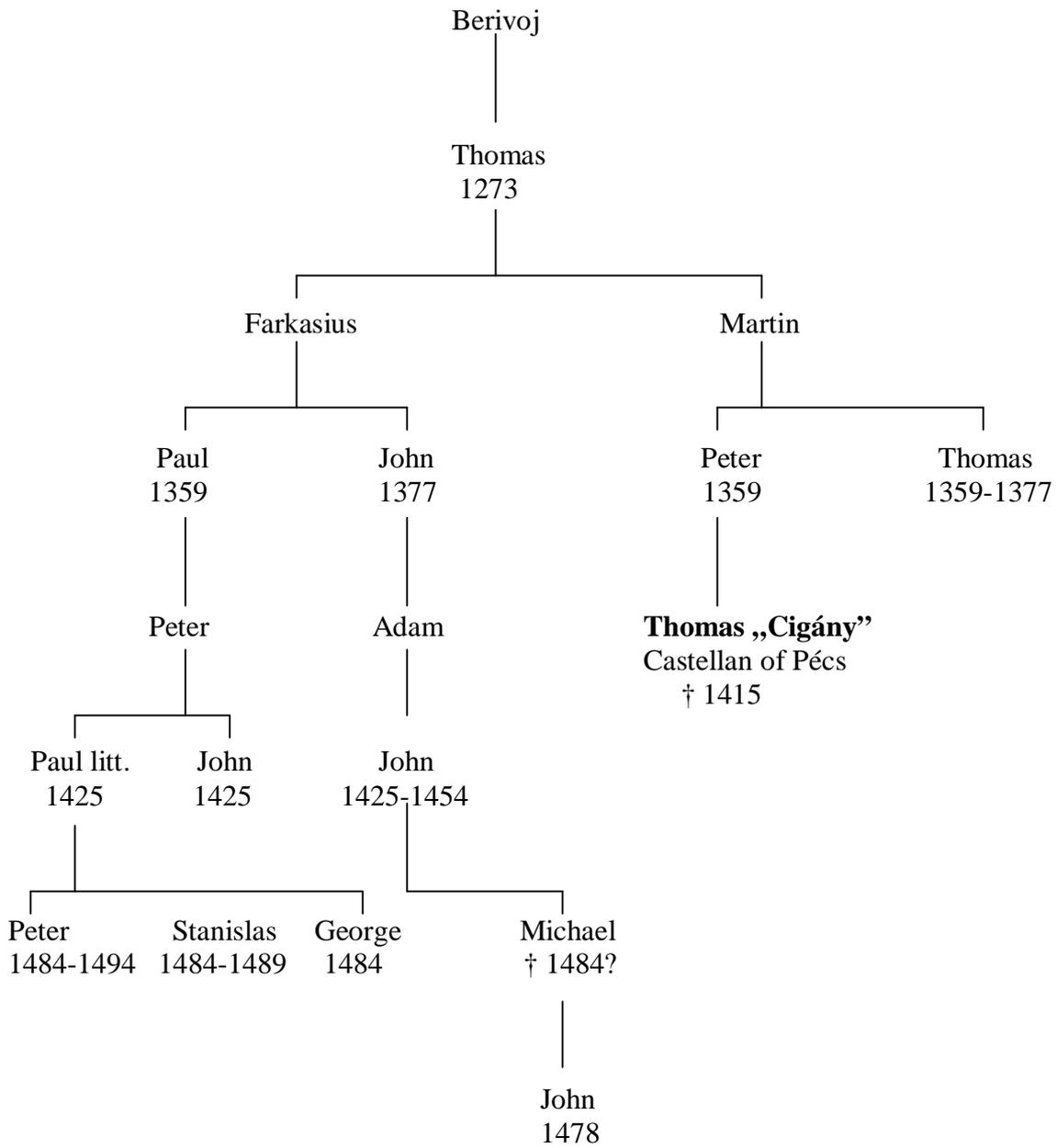
Stephen

Sigismund
 1410-1433
 court familiaris

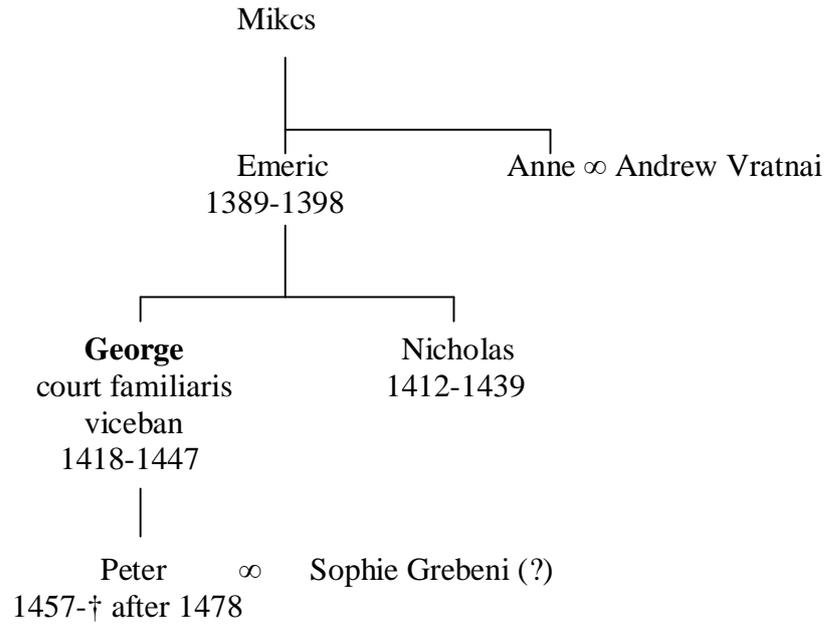


Fragm.: Magdalena ∞ duke Lawrence Újlaki

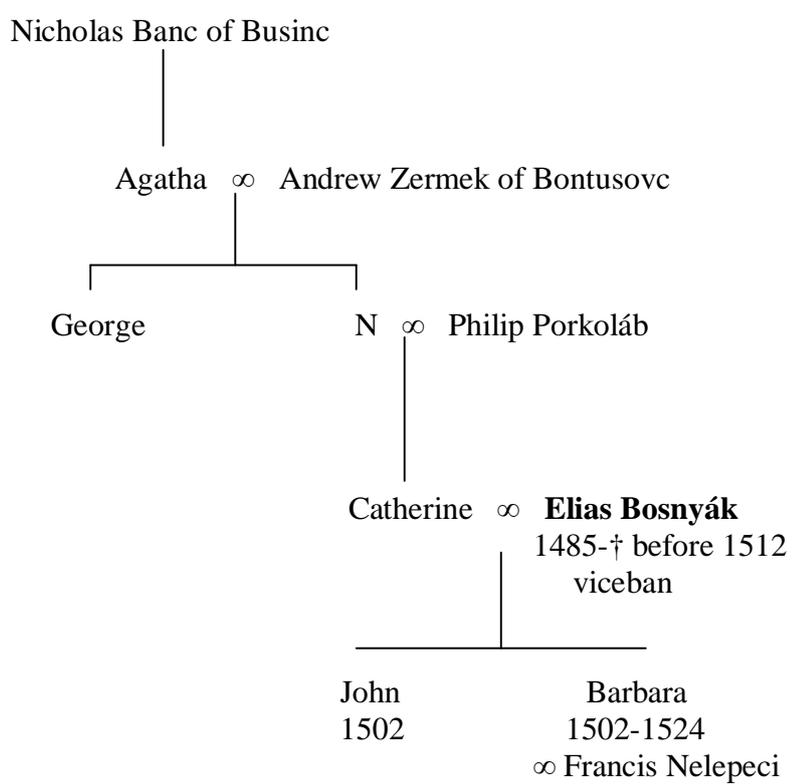
BERIVOJSZENTIVÁNI family



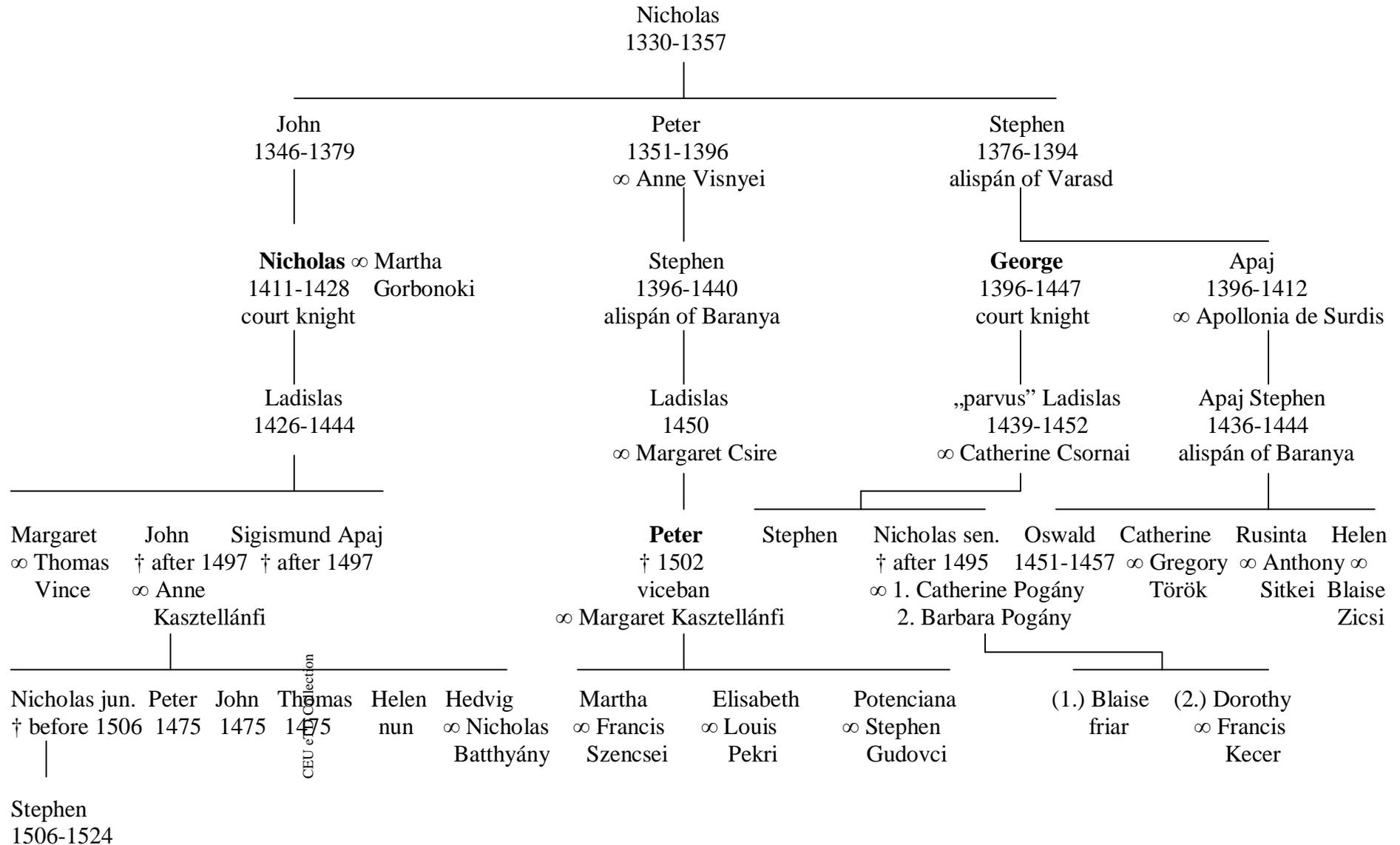
BIKSZÁDI family



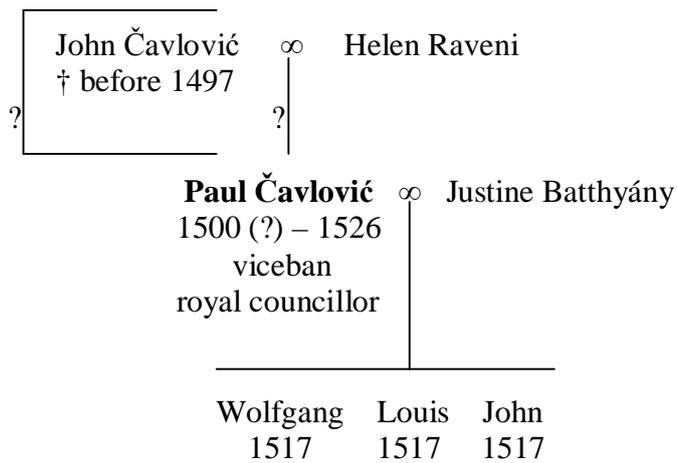
BOSNYÁK family



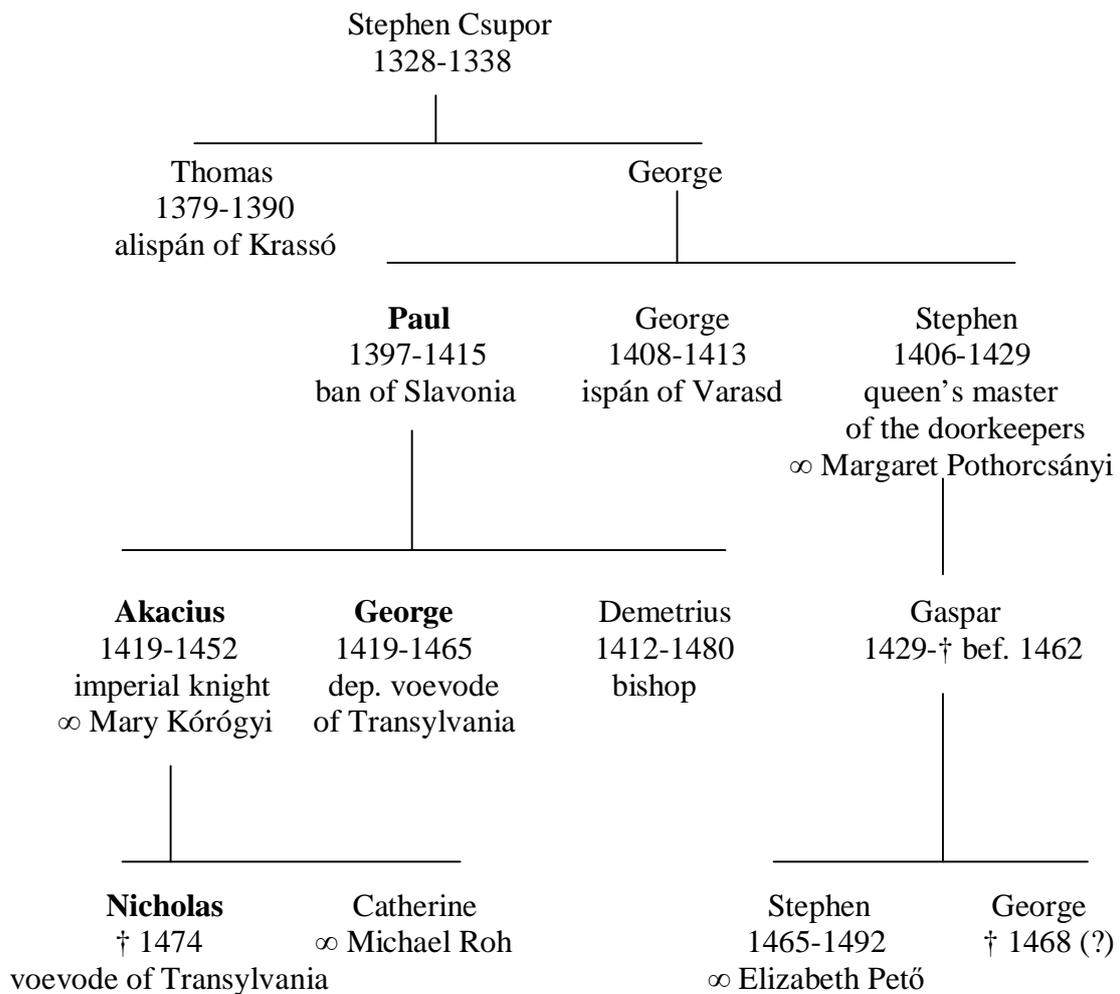
BOCSKAI family



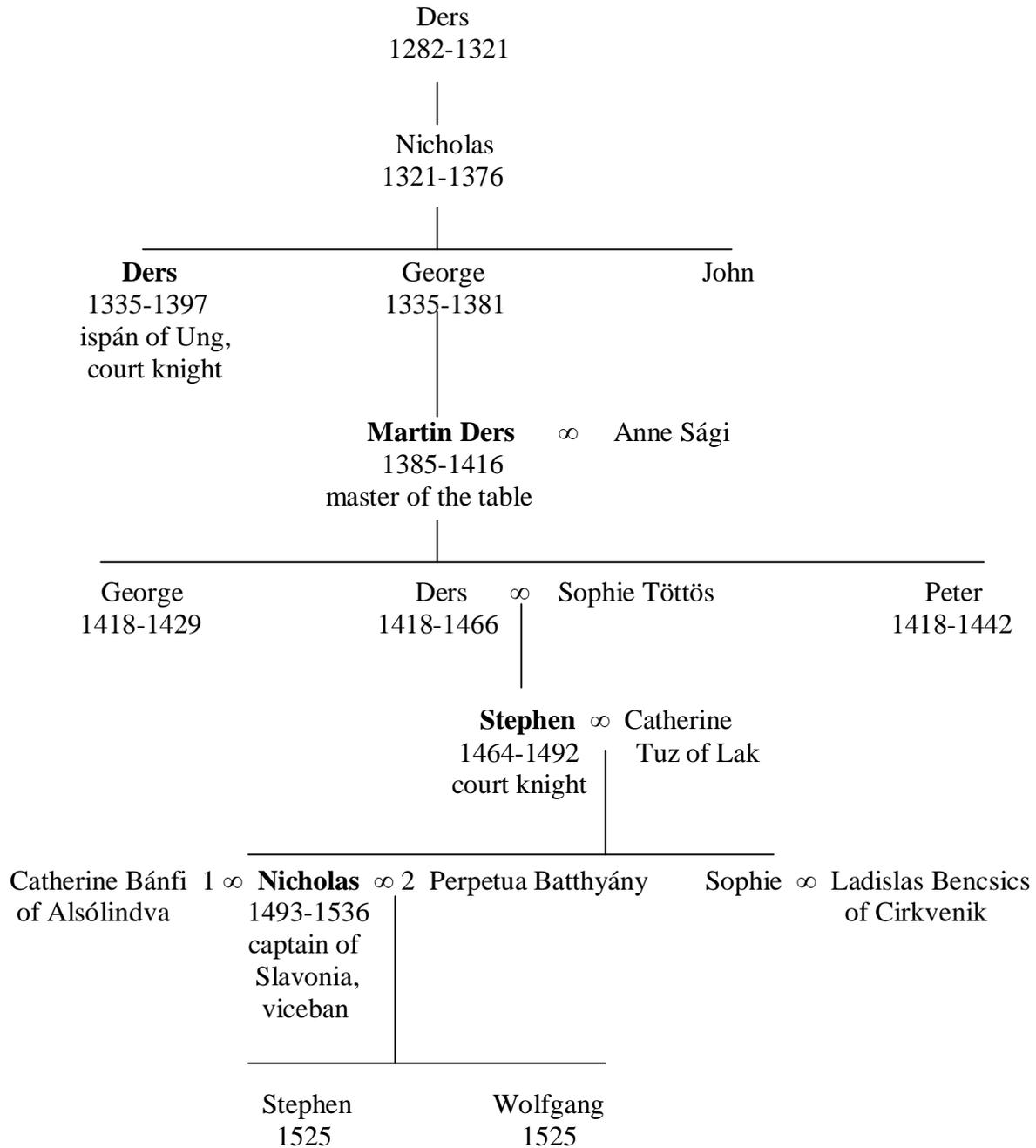
ČAVLOVIĆ family



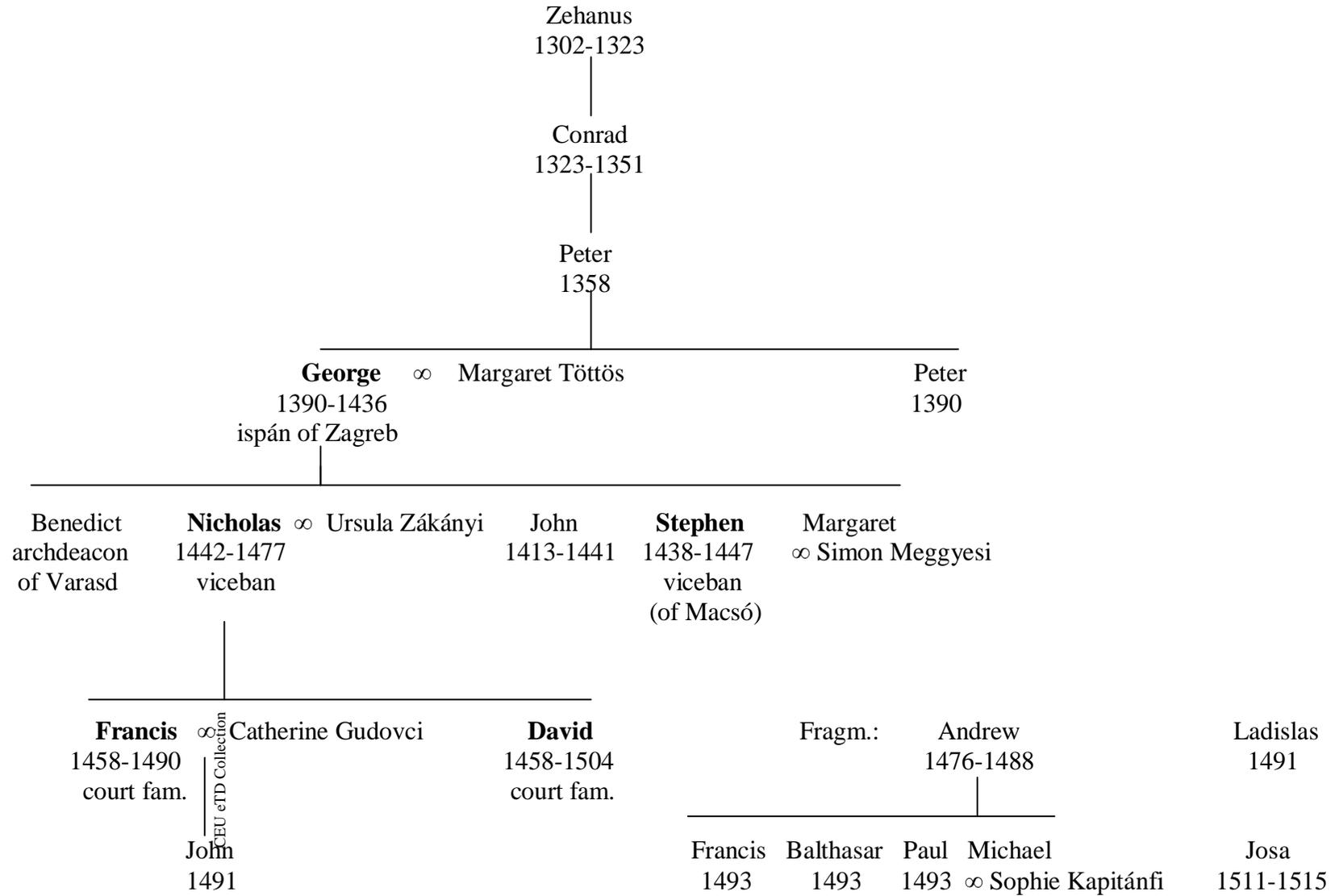
CSUPOR family



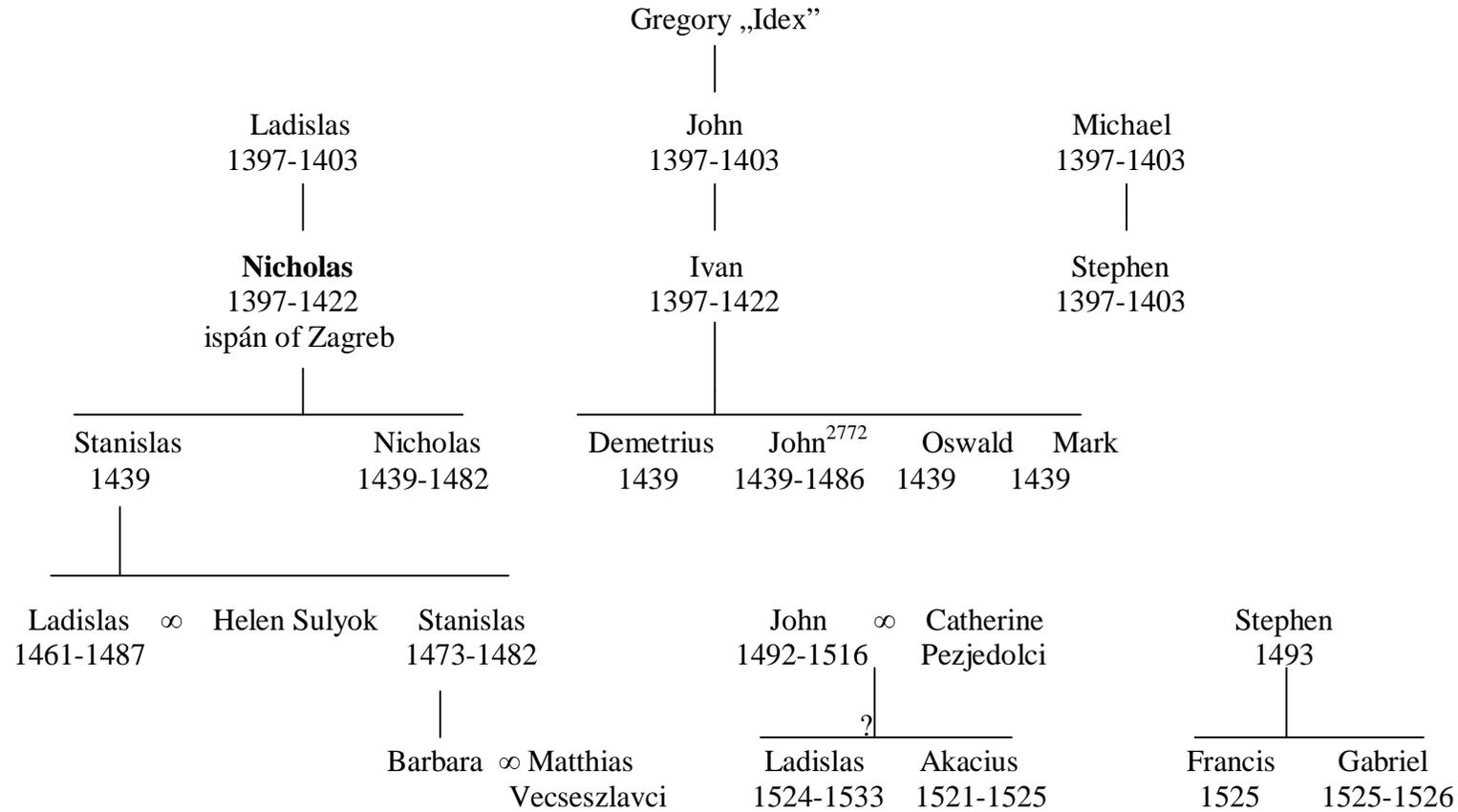
DERSFI family



DOMBAI family



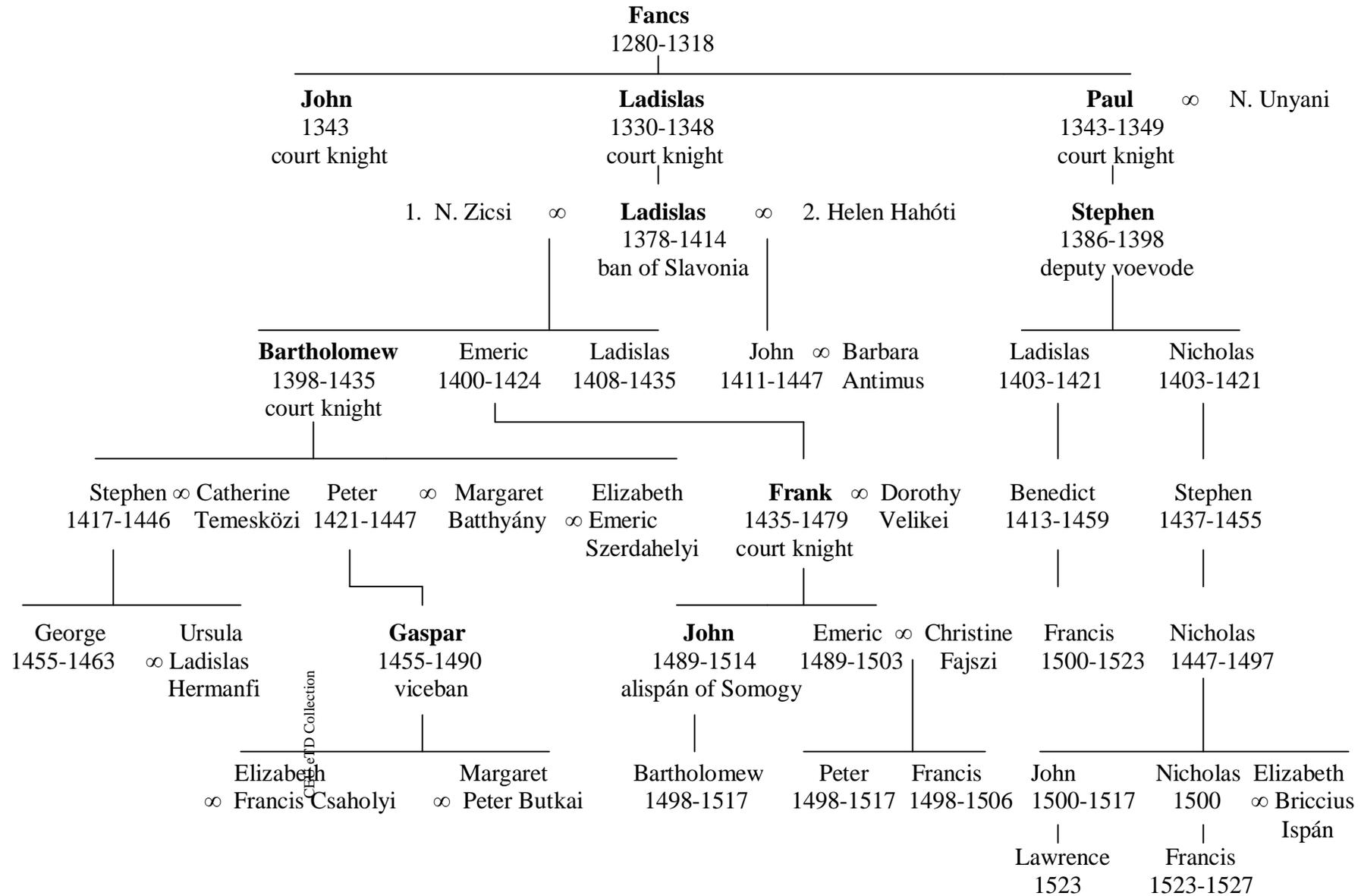
ERVENCEI family



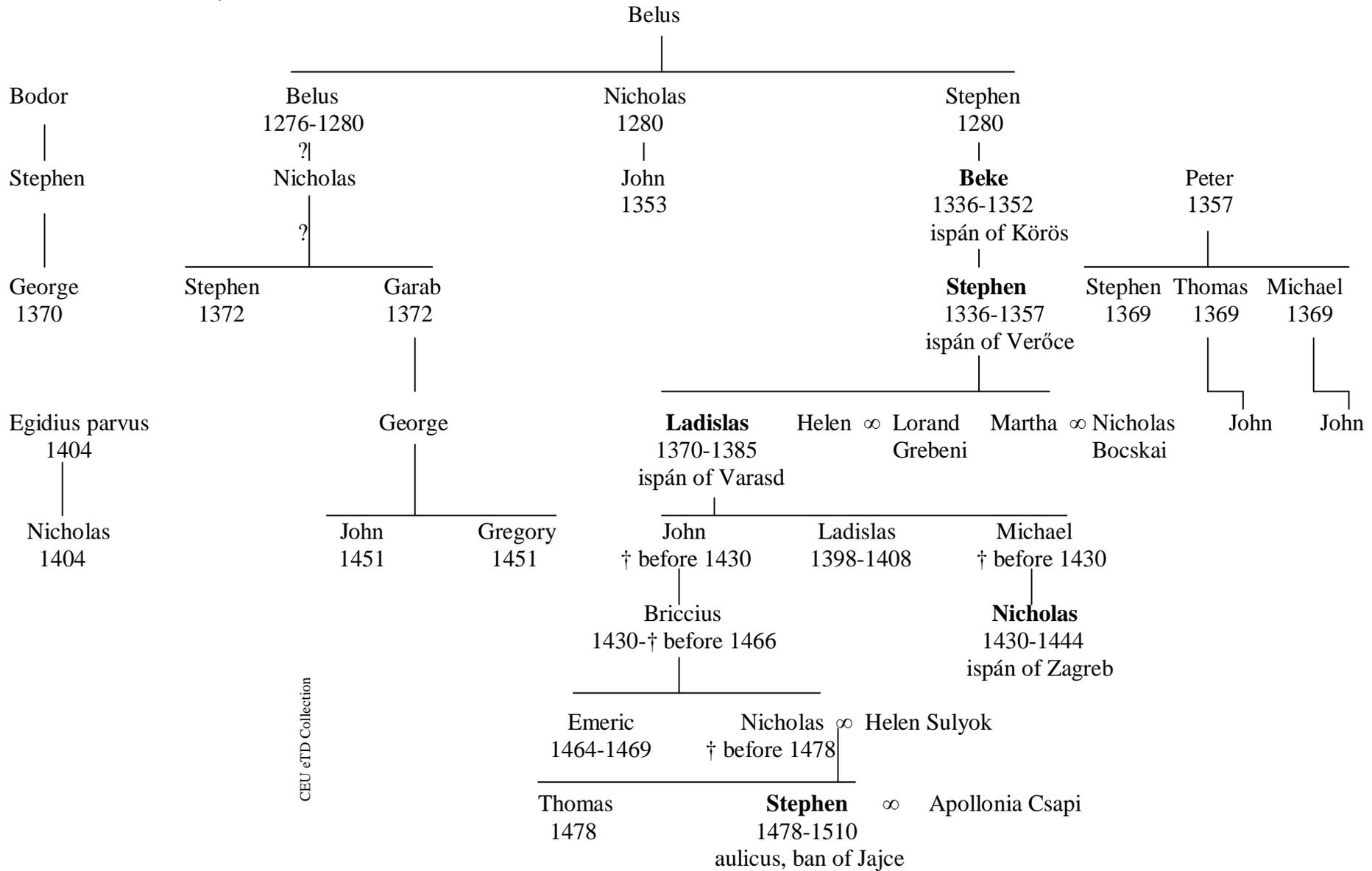
CEU eTD Collection

²⁷⁷² In fact, the John who turns up in 1486 may already be identical with the other John. We have no means to distinguish between them.

FÁNCs OF GORDOVA family

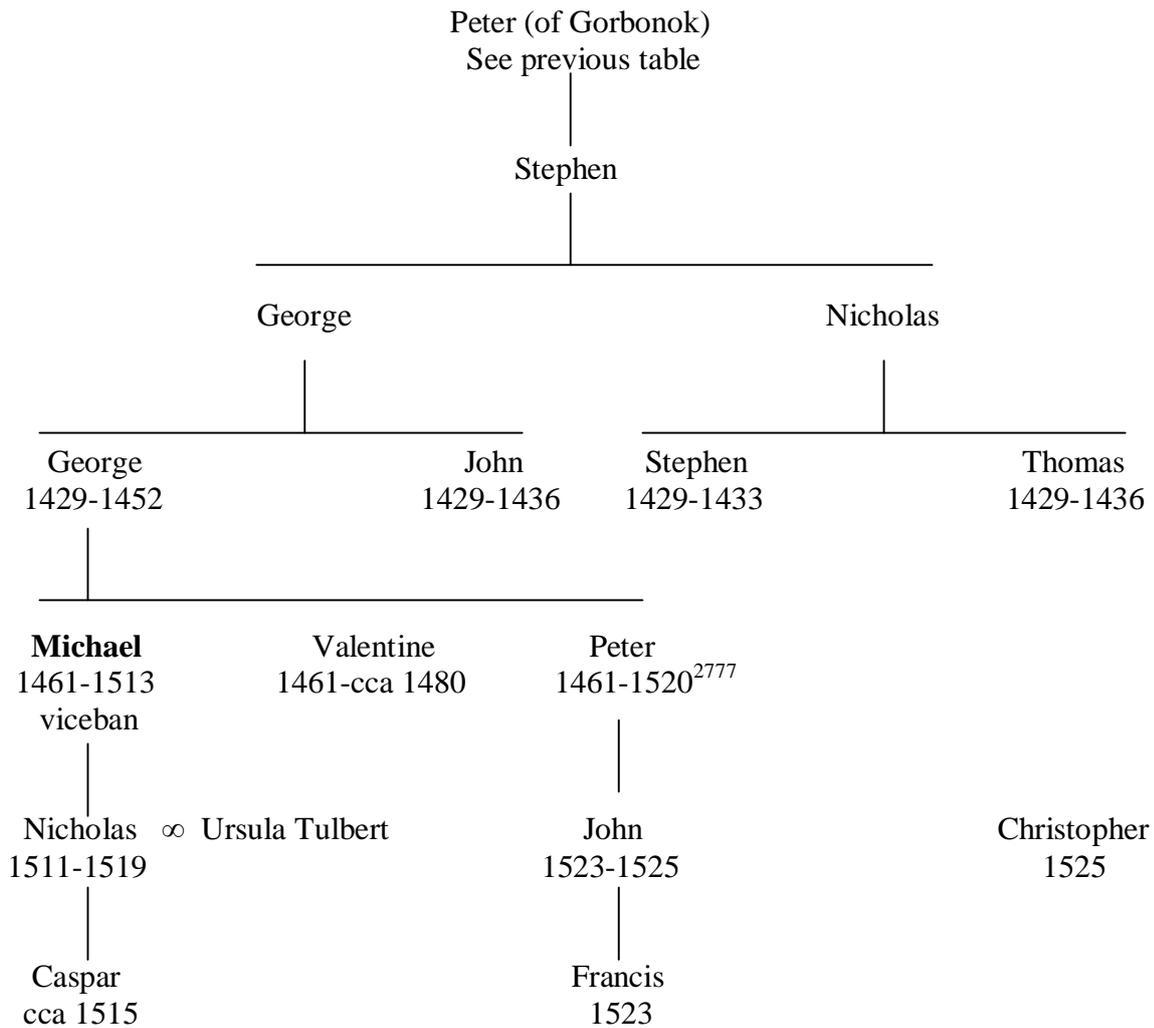


GORBONOKI family



CEU eTD Collection

KERHEN of BELOSOVC family

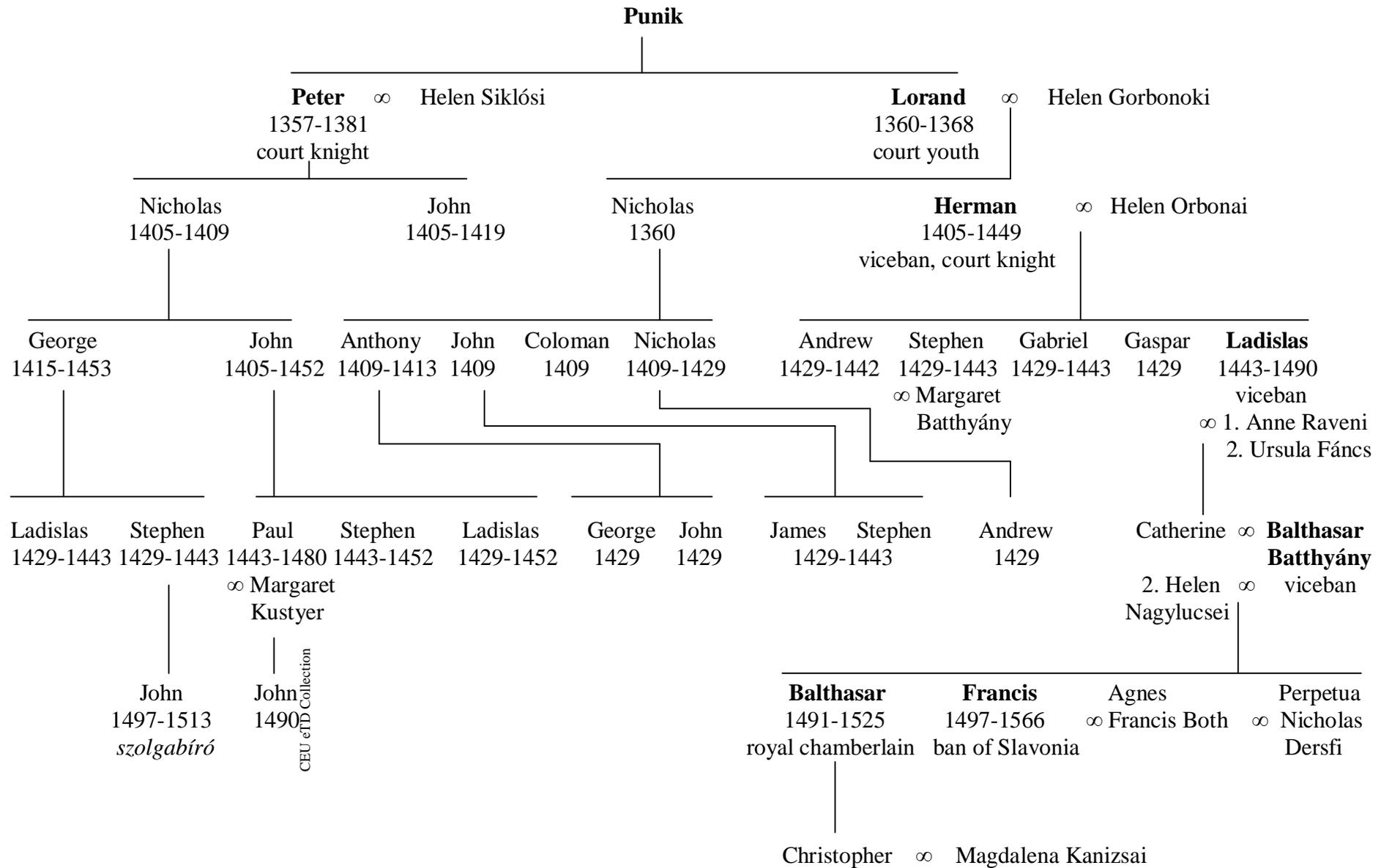


[BUDOR family]

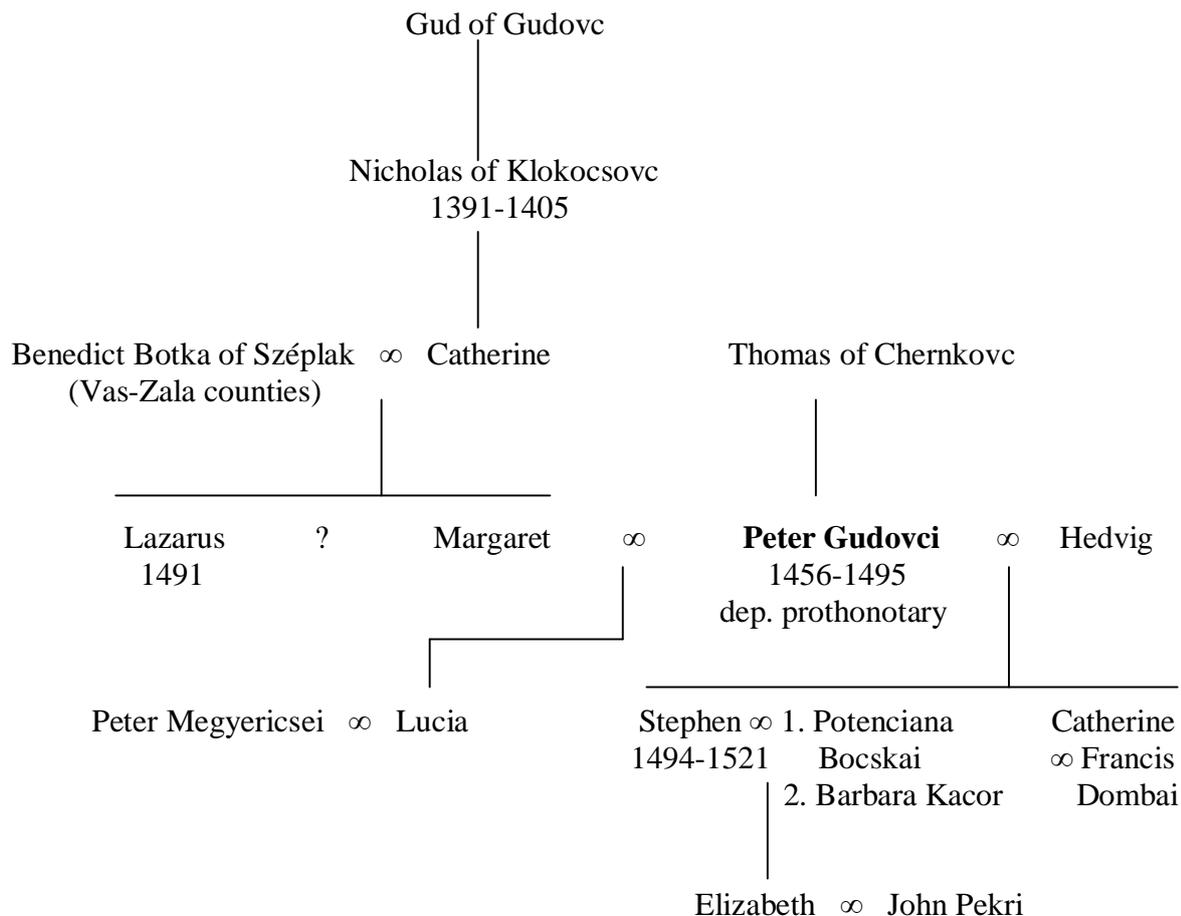
See Géza Pálffy, „Egy szlavóniai köznemesi família két ország szolgálatában: A budróci Budor család a XV-XVIII. Században”, in *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 115. (2002) 4. 930-931.

²⁷⁷⁷ He was certainly not the son of John, as on the table published by Borsa („Belosovci Kerhen család”)

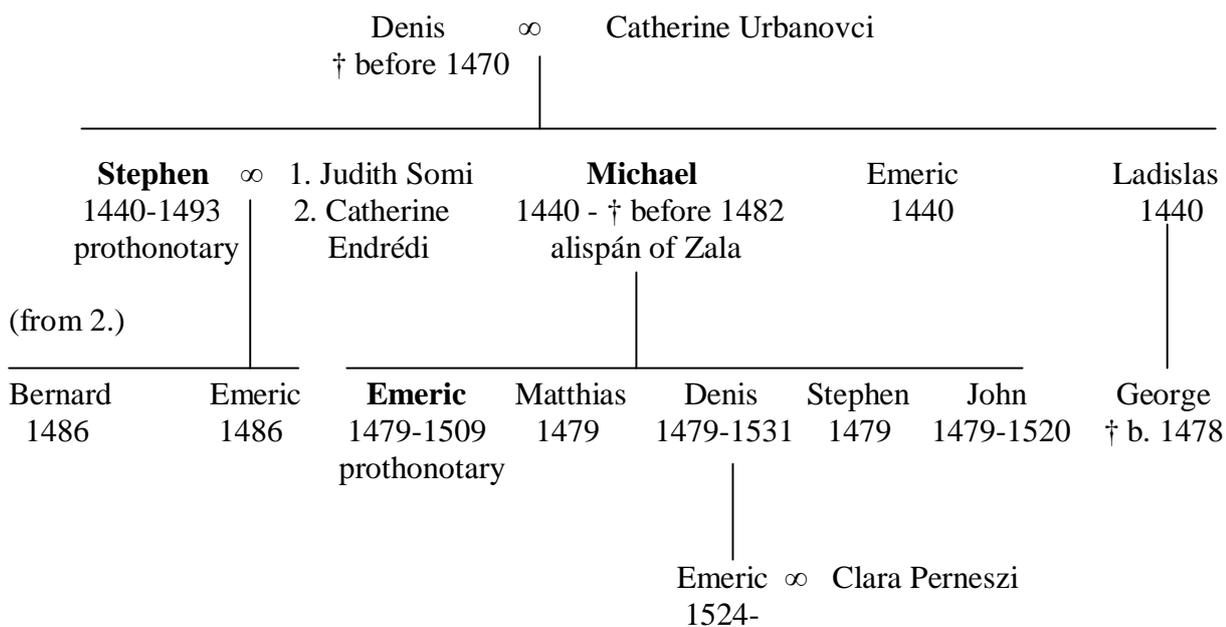
GREBENI/BATTHYÁNY family



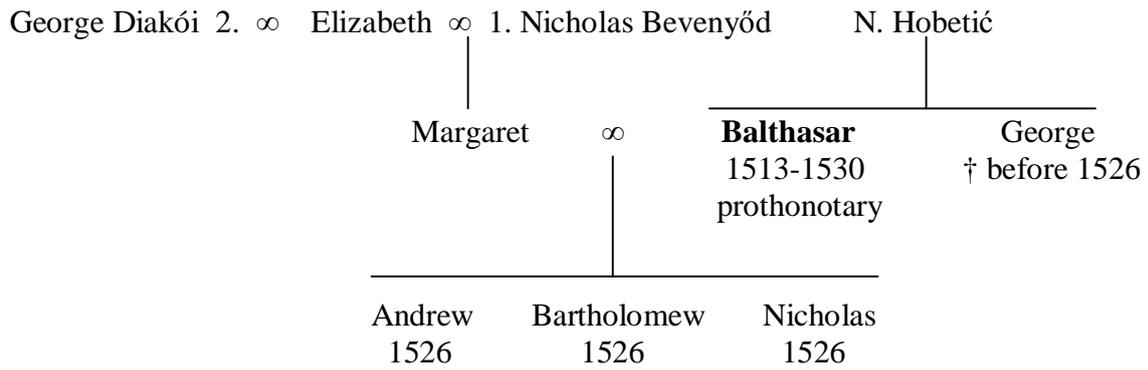
GUDOVCI family



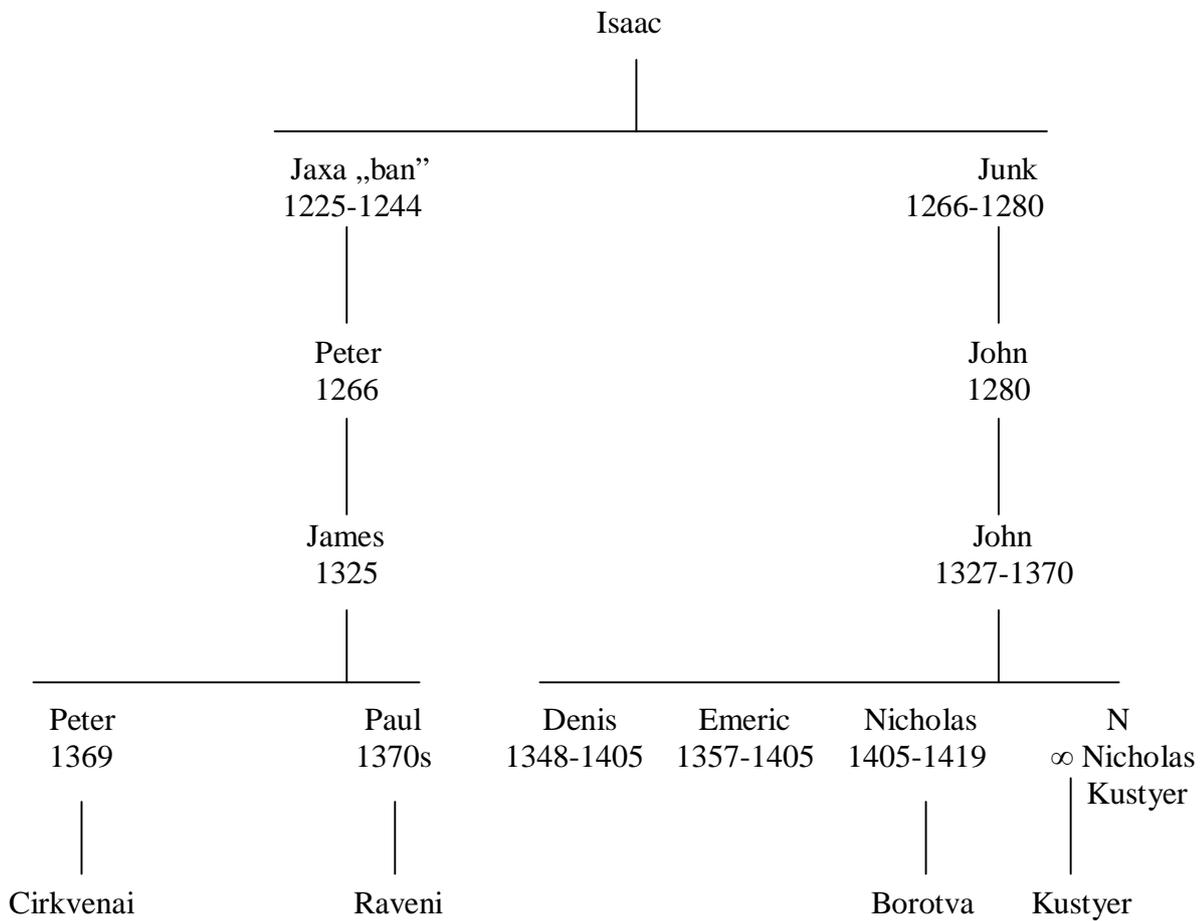
HÁSSÁGYI family



HOBETIĆ family

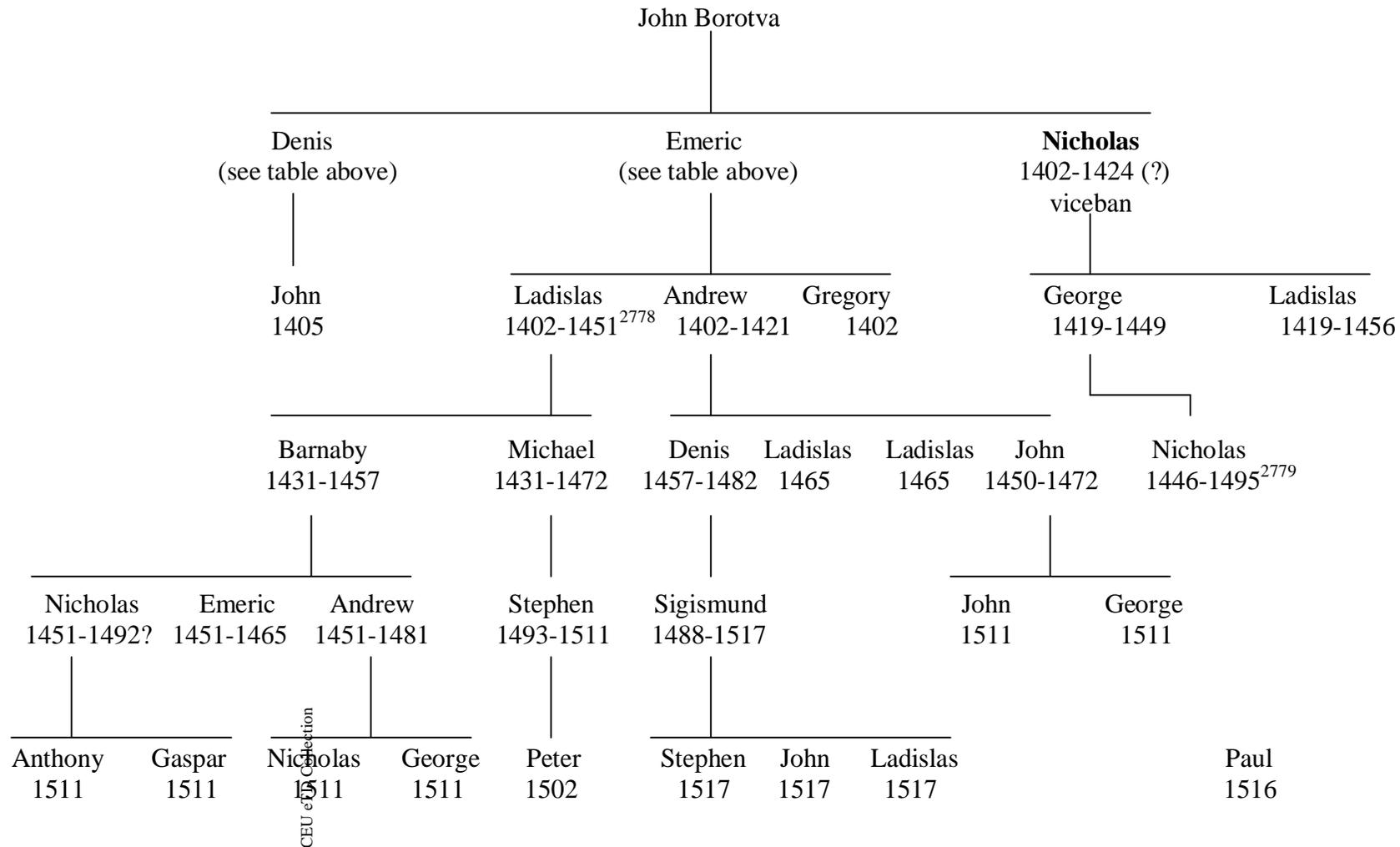


THE DESCENDANTS OF ISAAC



BOROTVA family

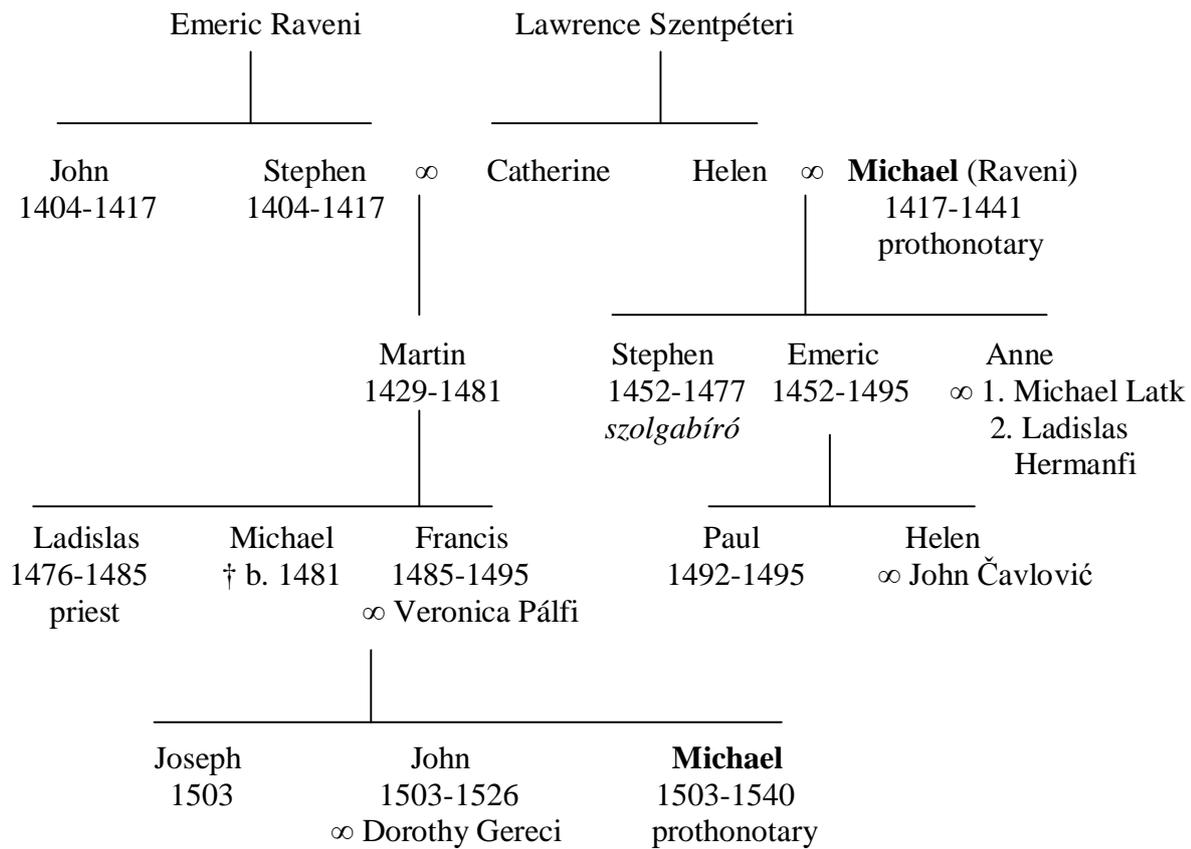
(of Vrbovc, Szendienes, Tersztenice)



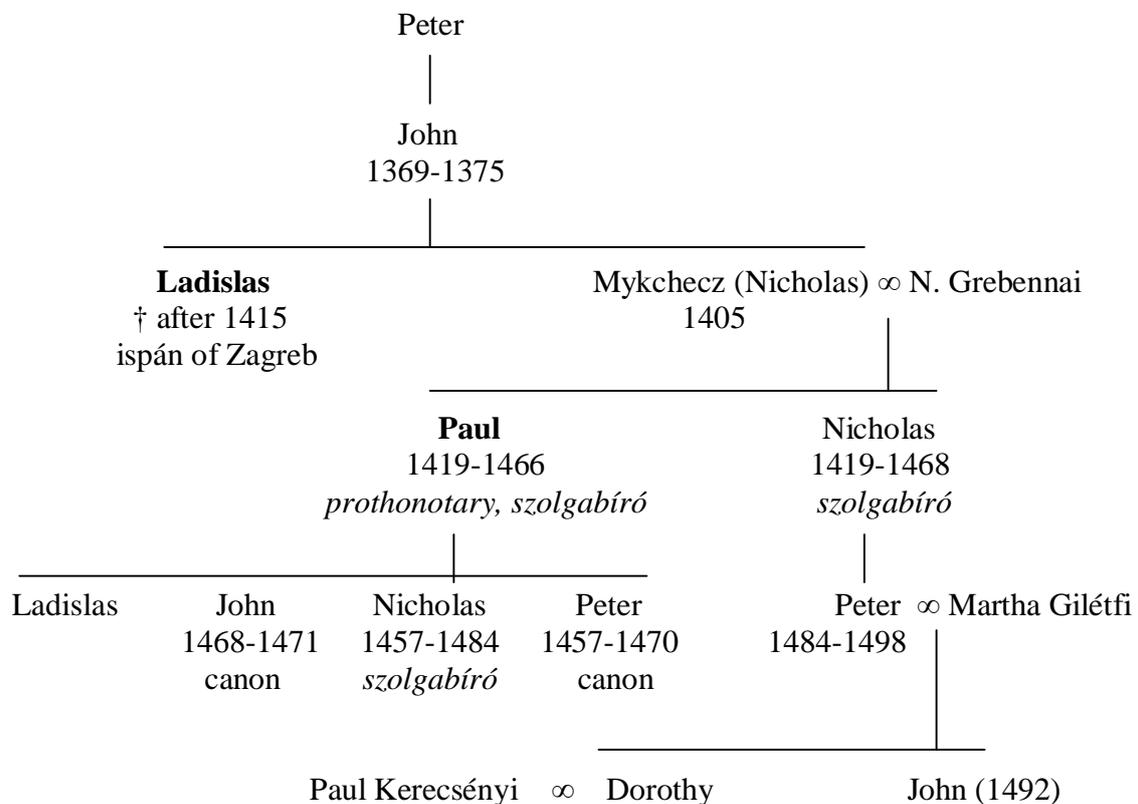
²⁷⁷⁸ This Ladislav is impossible to be distinguished from either the Ladislav son of Nicholas, or from his nephews, the sons of Andrew.

²⁷⁷⁹ The same applies to the two Nicholas; the dates are accordingly uncertain.

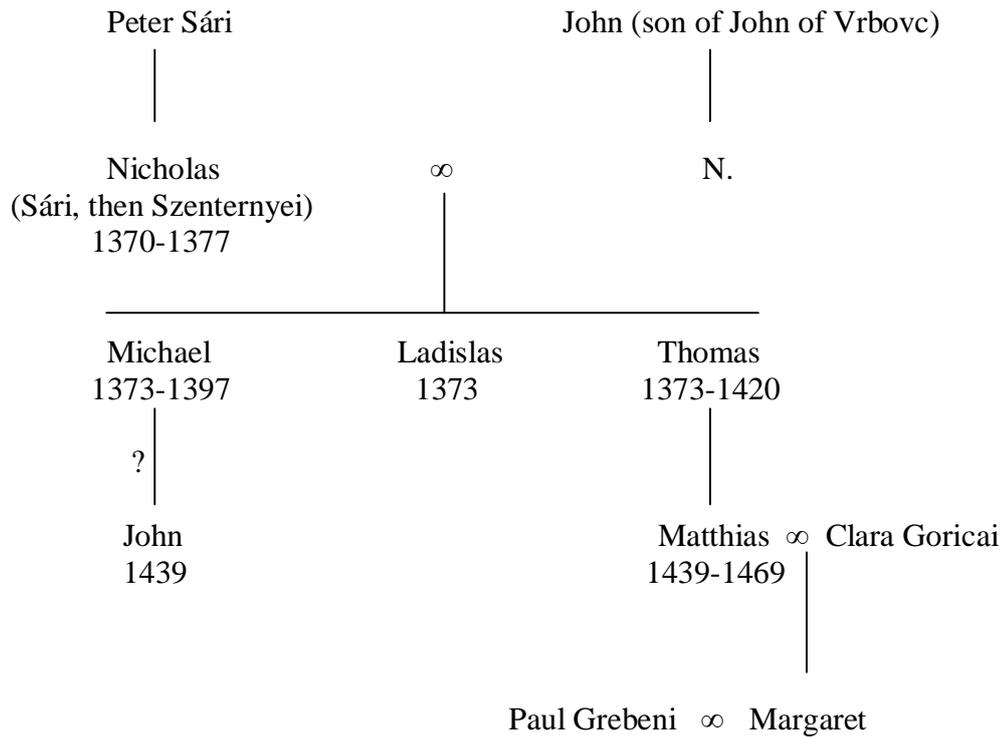
RAVENI family



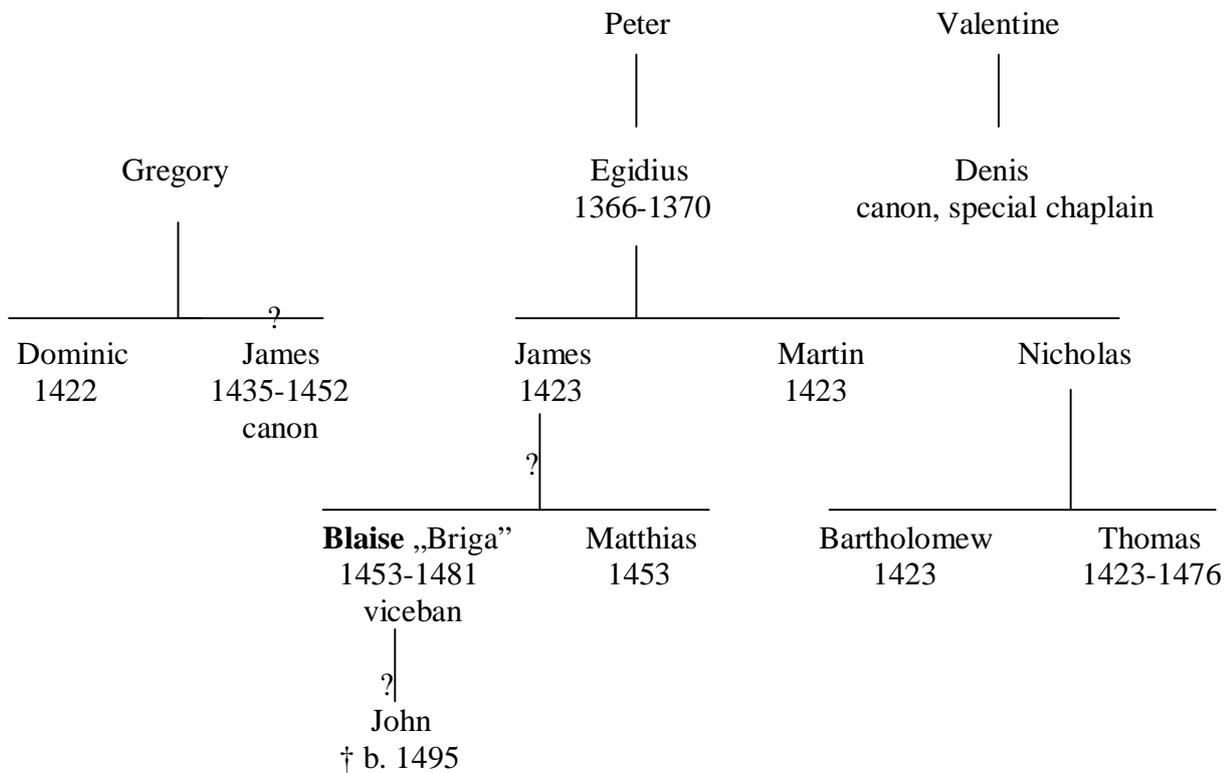
CIRKVENAI family



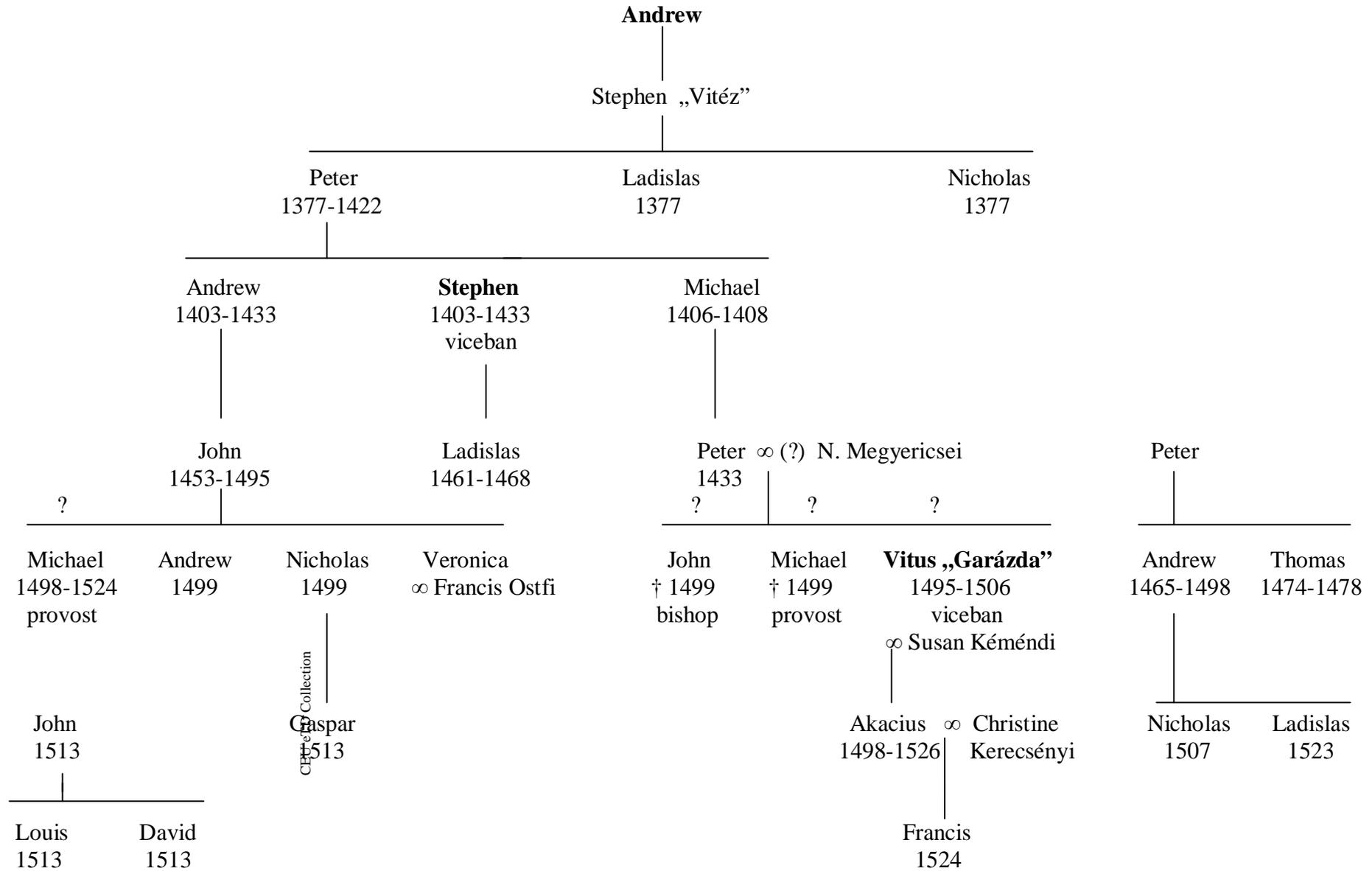
KUSTYER family



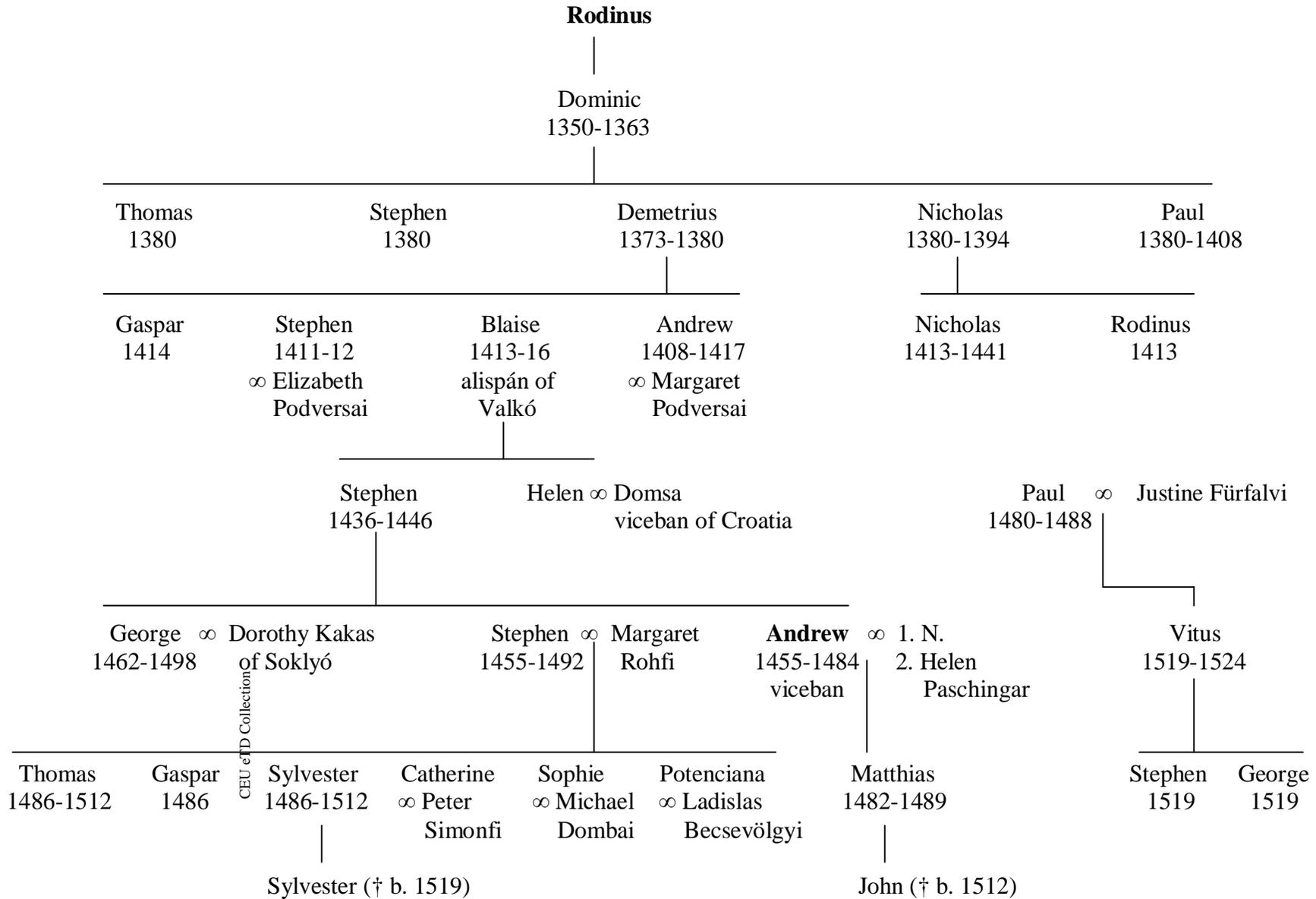
JAKÓSZERDAHELYI family



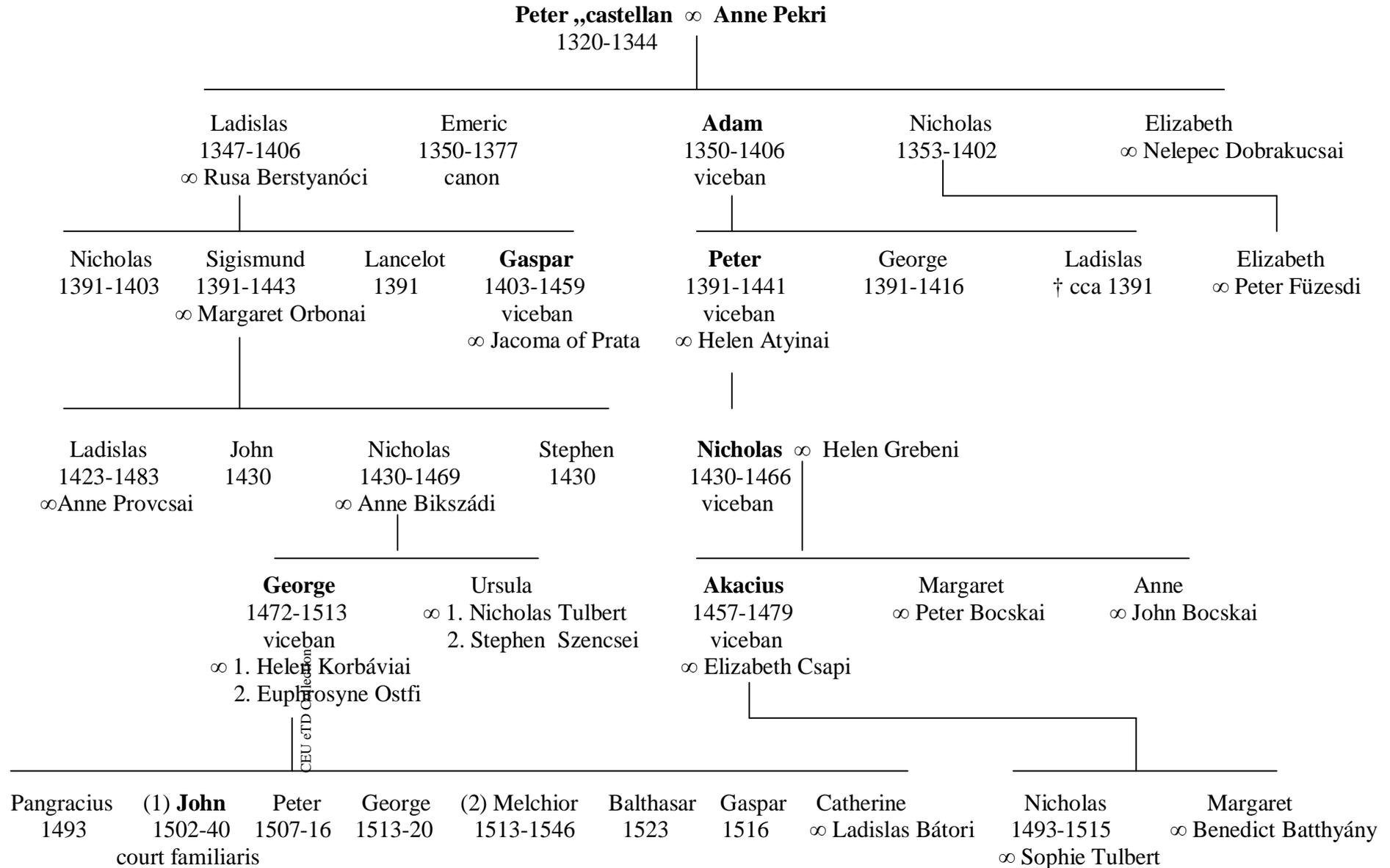
KAMARCAI VITÉZ family



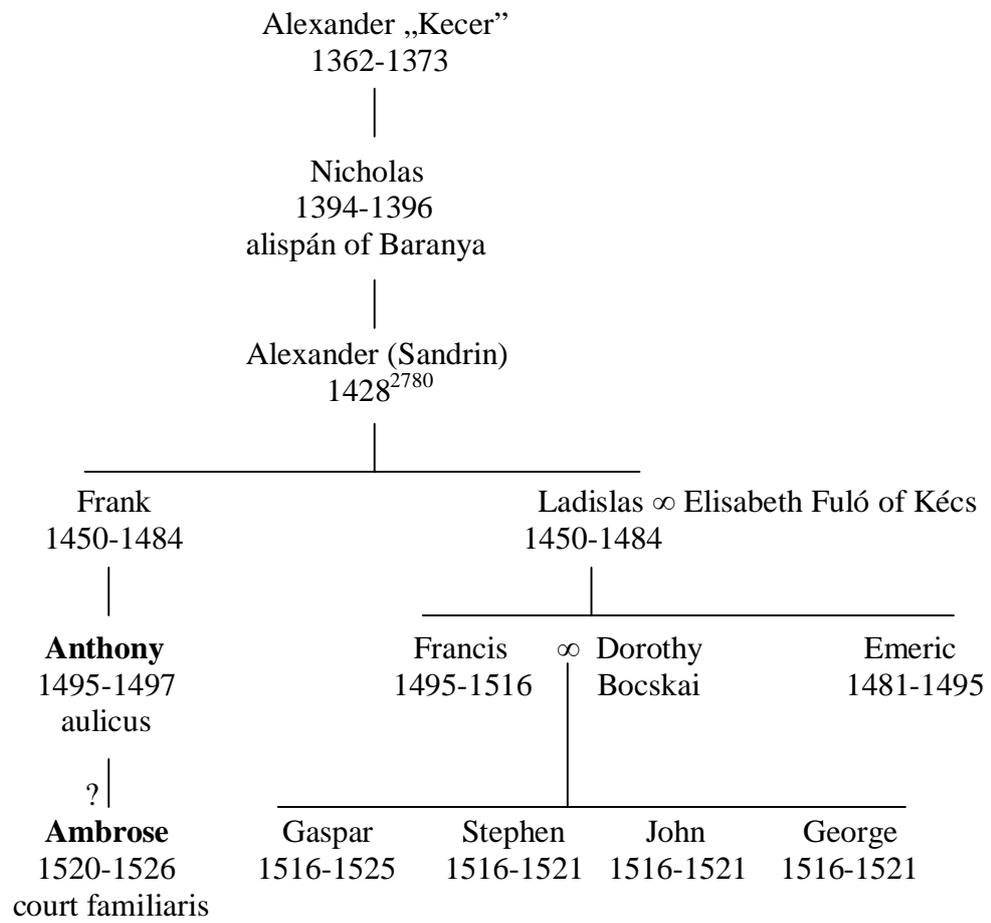
KAPITÁNYI family



KASZTELLÁNYI family

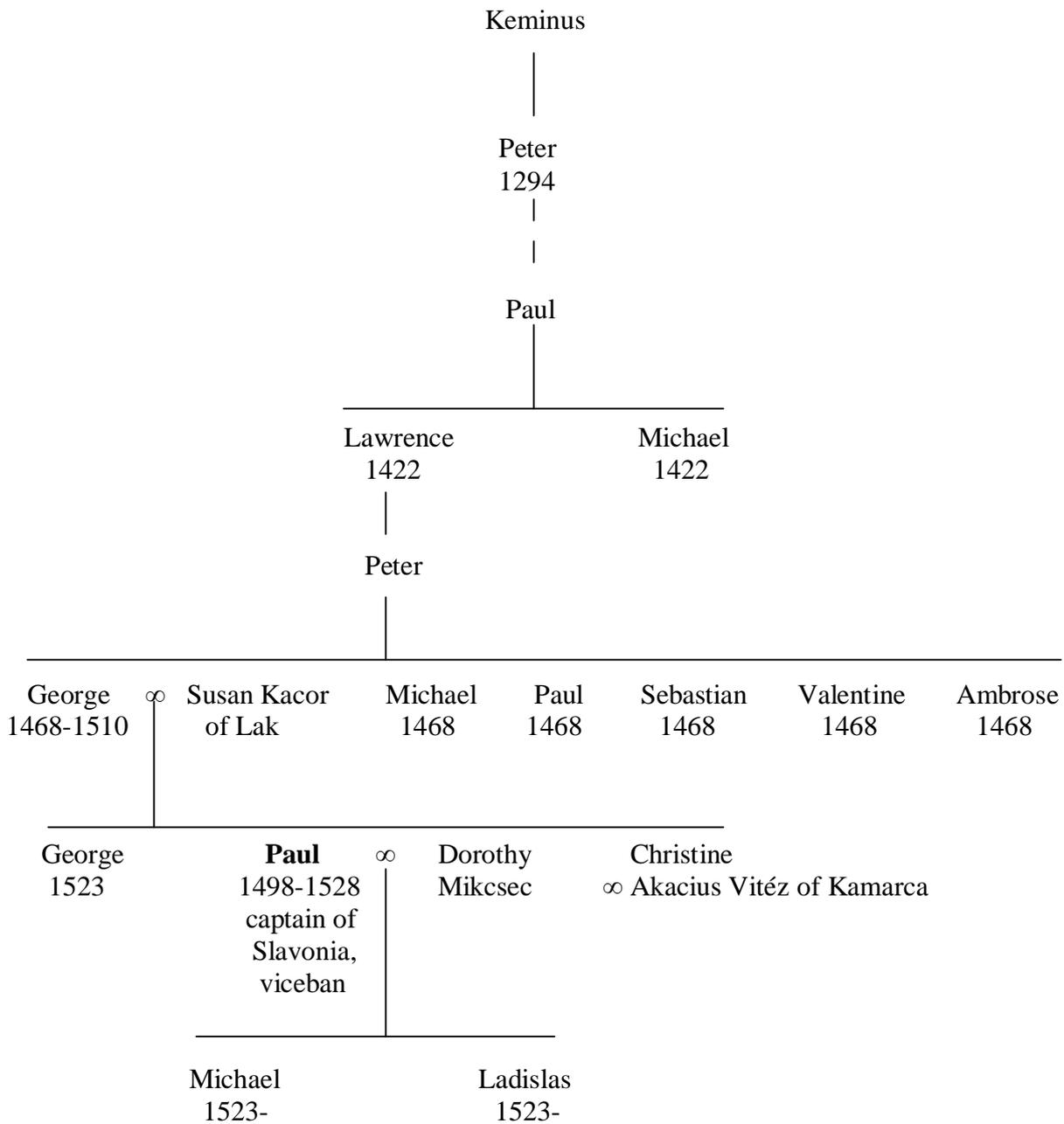


KECER family

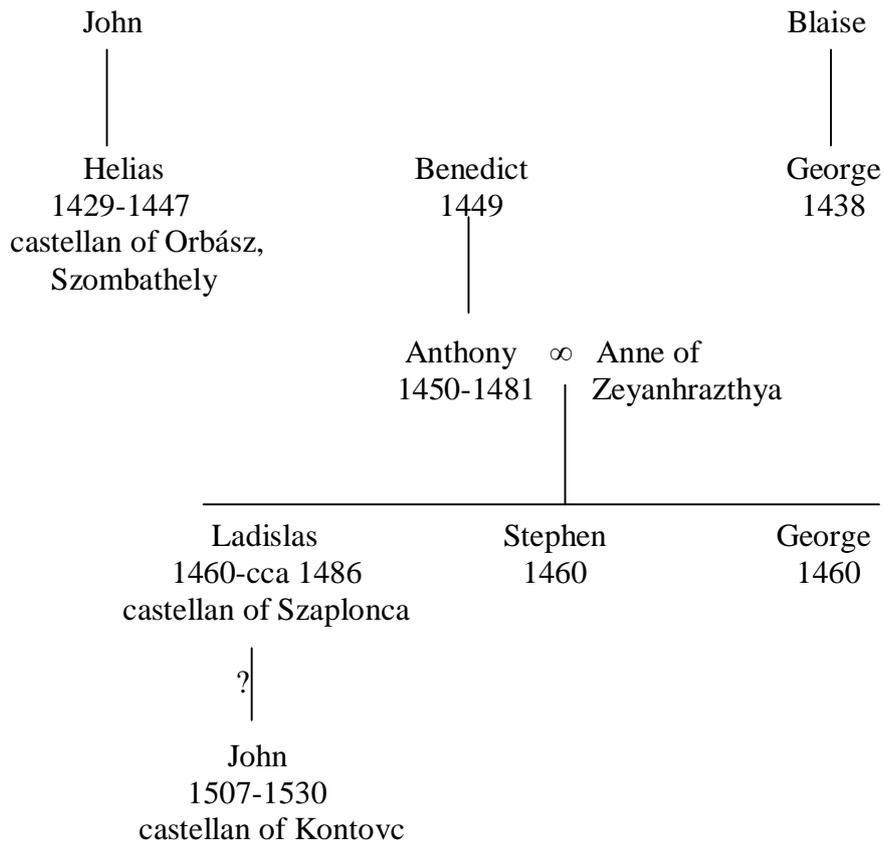


²⁷⁸⁰ DL 12001

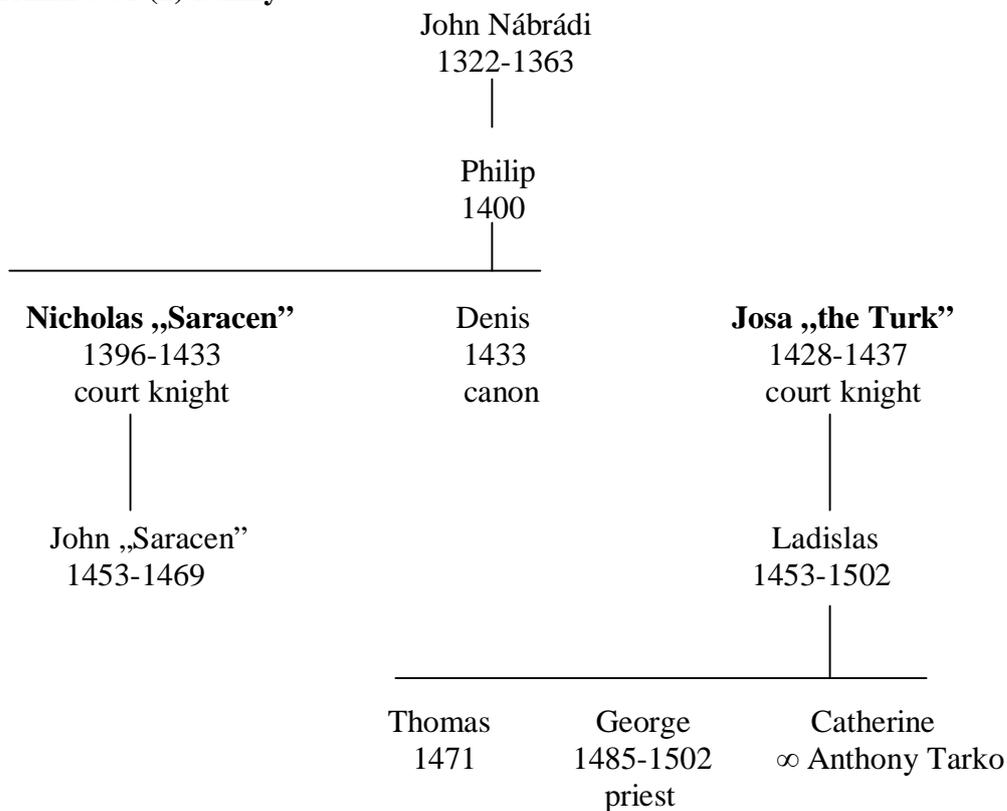
KERESÉNYI family



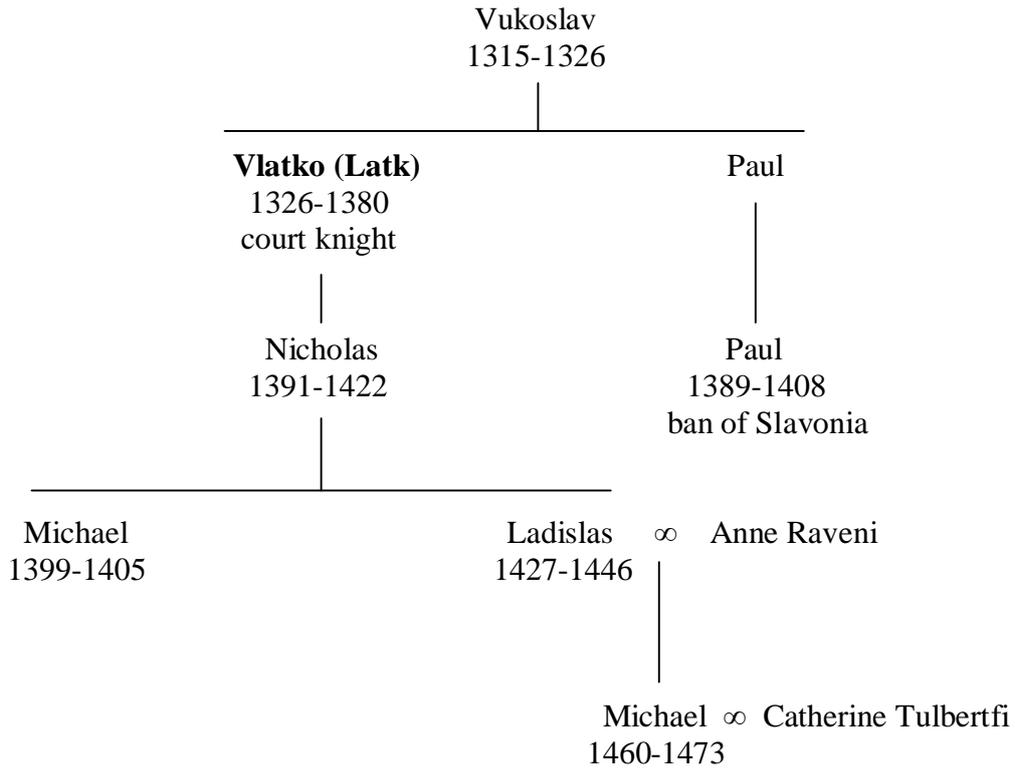
KOPINCI family



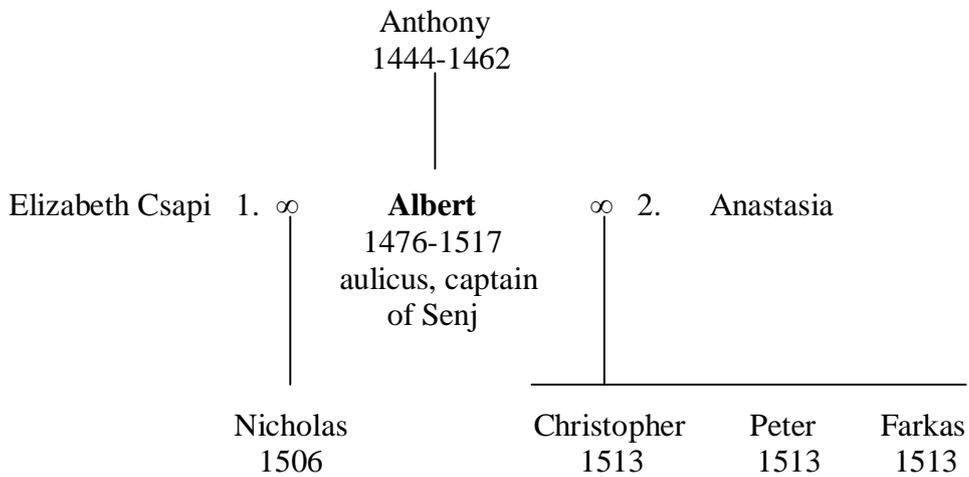
KRISTALLÓCI (2) family



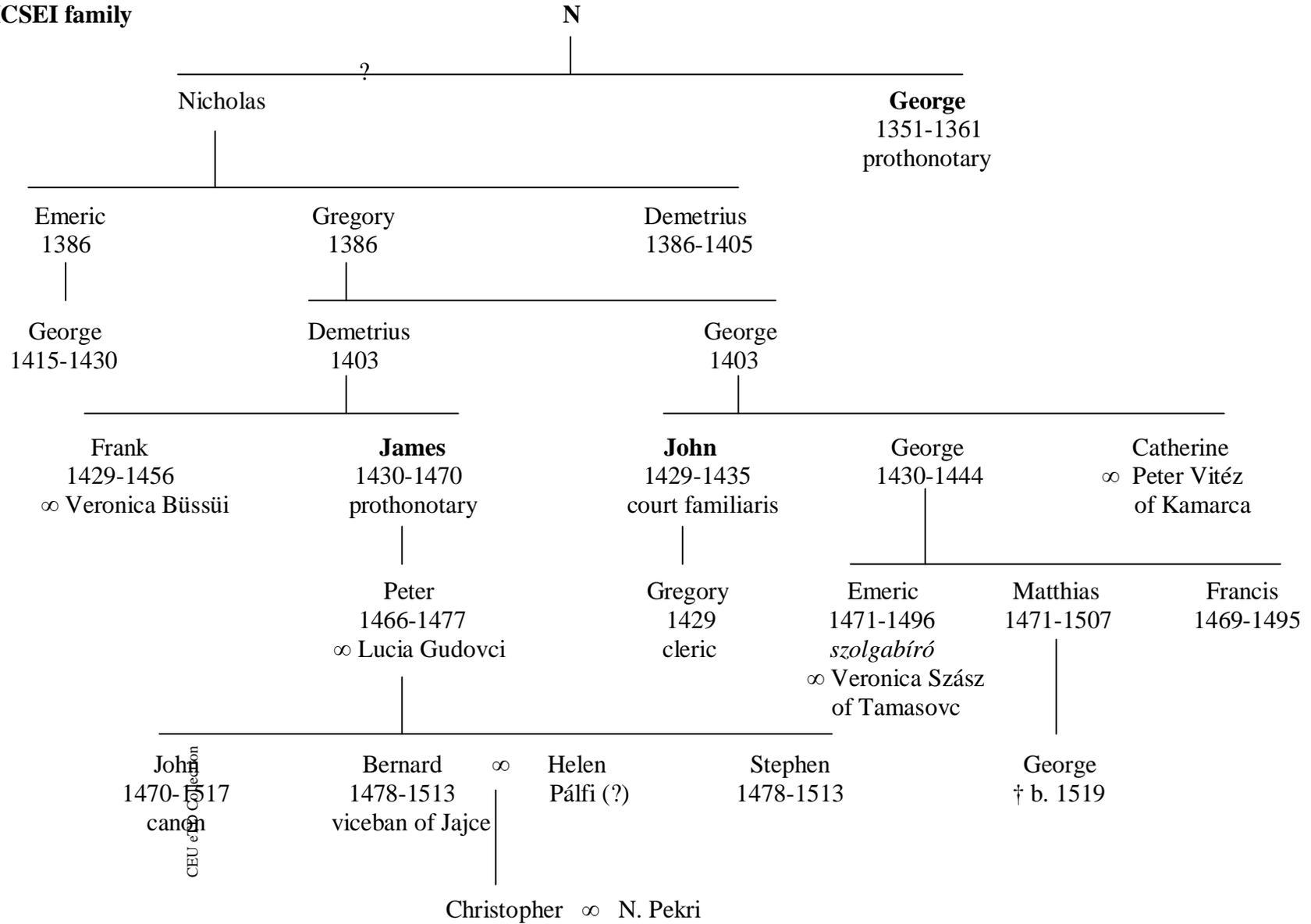
LATKFI family



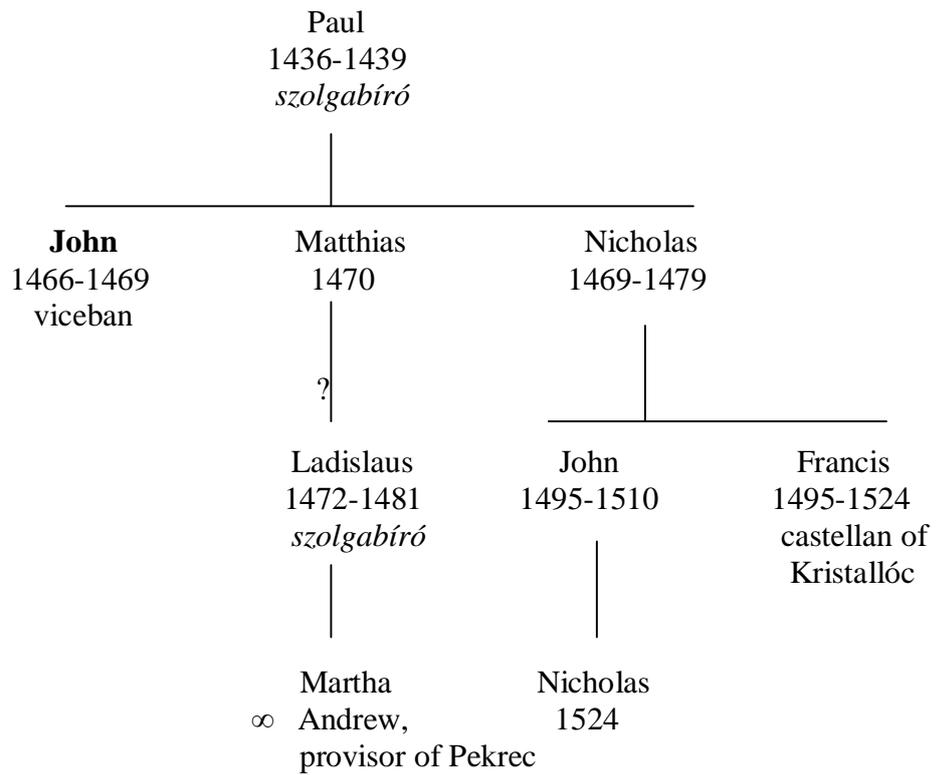
LÓNYAI family



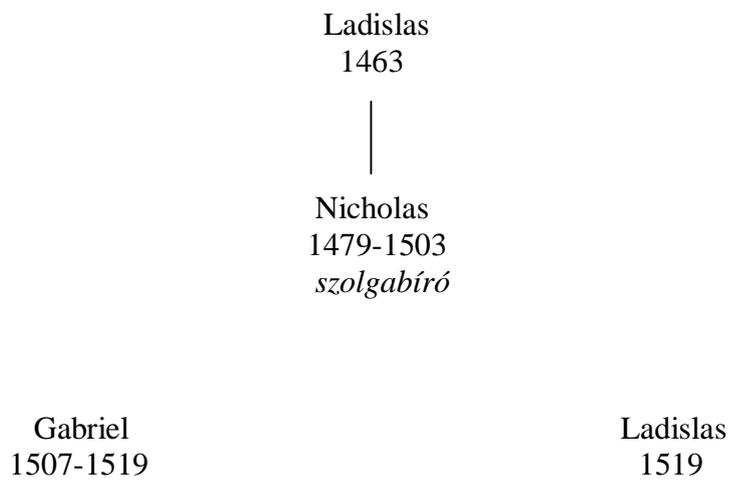
MEGYERICSEI family



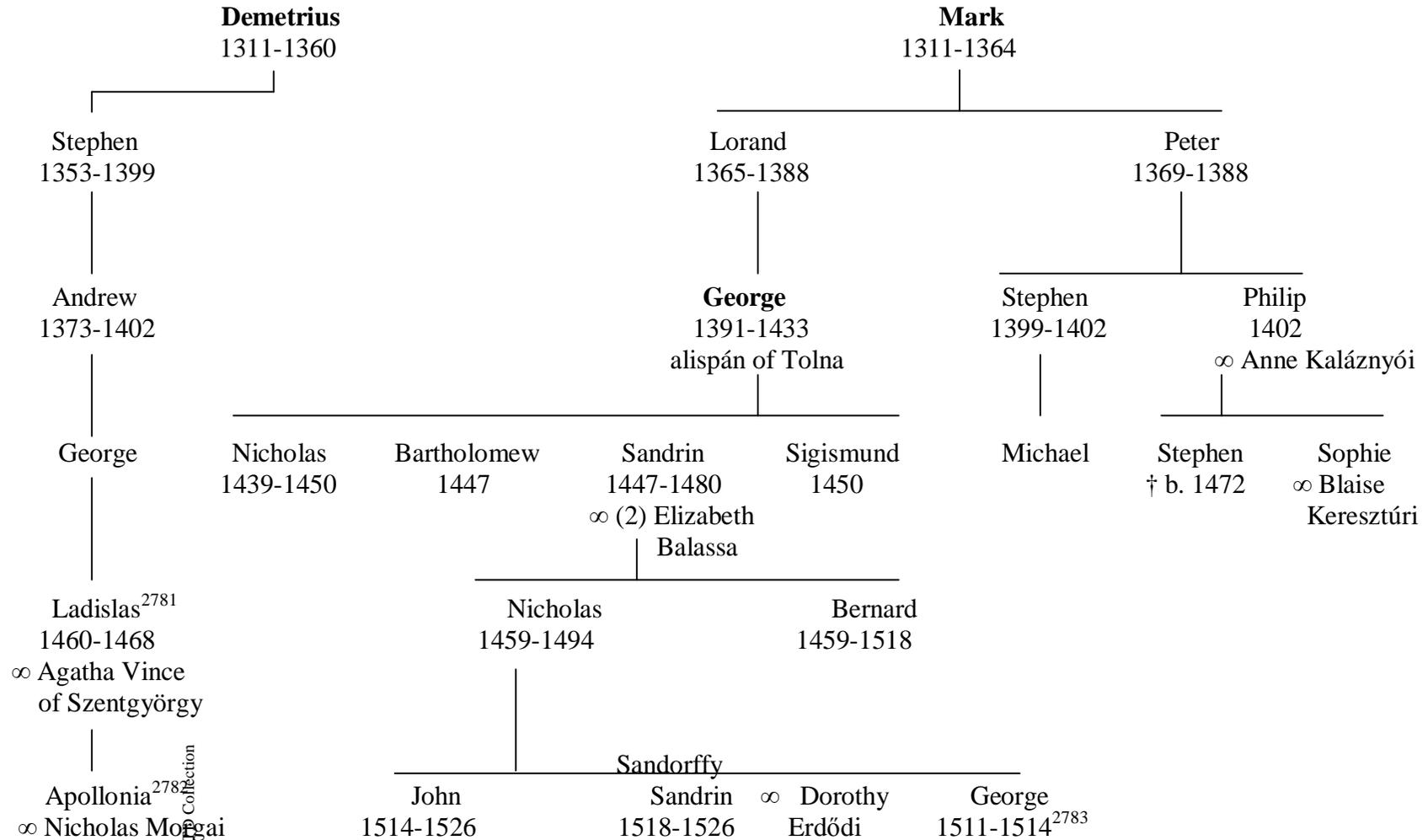
MINDSZENTI family



ORROS of Orrosovc



MUSINAI family

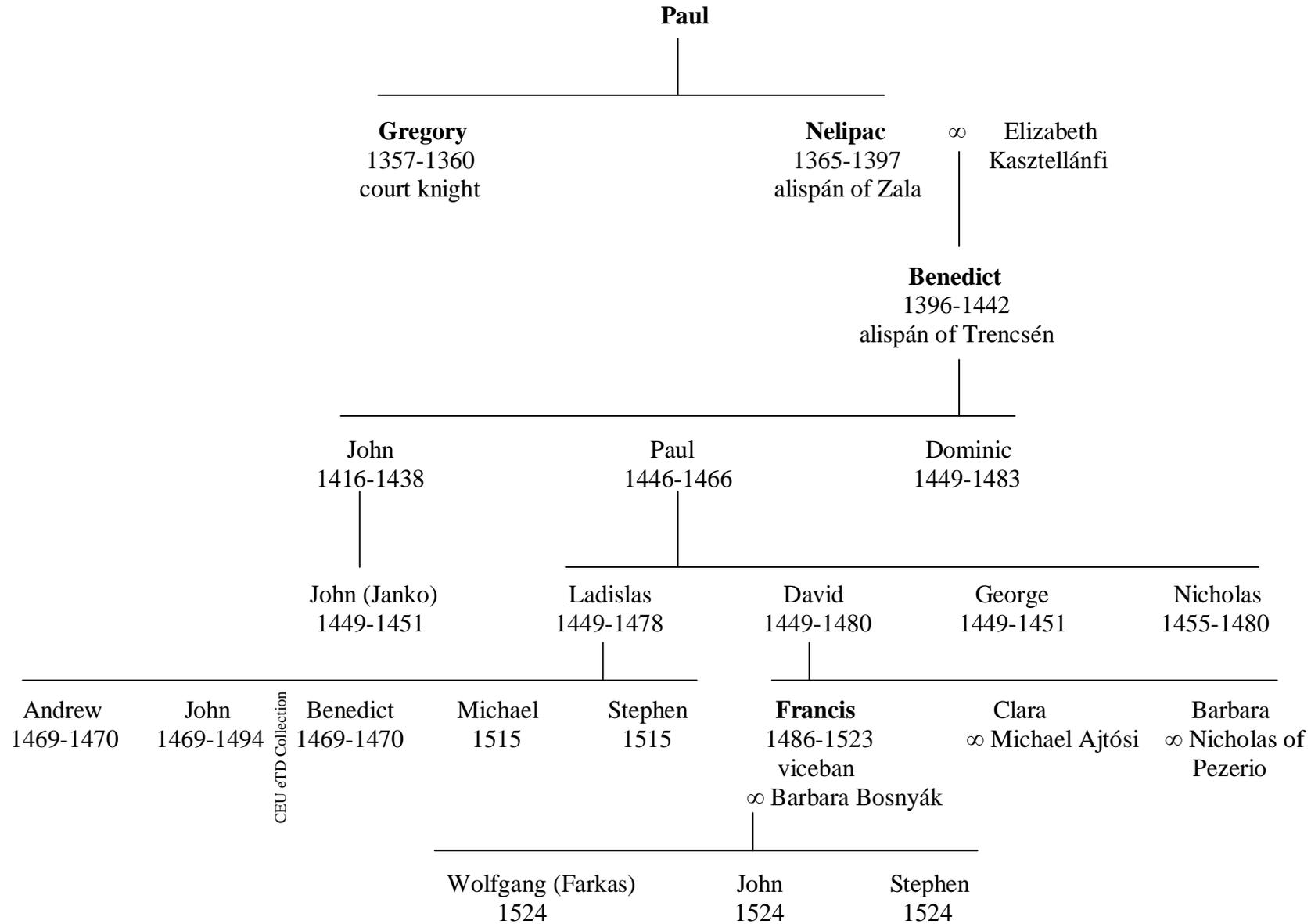


²⁷⁸¹ This Ladislás is twice said to have been the son of George, son of Lorand (DL 70406, DL 98002), and in the first case he was actually the source of the information. Yet he could not be the brother of Sandrin, with whom he was only *frater generacionalis*. I therefore accepted the reconstruction of Pál Engel, although the charter upon which it is based (DL 15881) is actually damaged, and the name of the grandfather of George cannot be read any more.

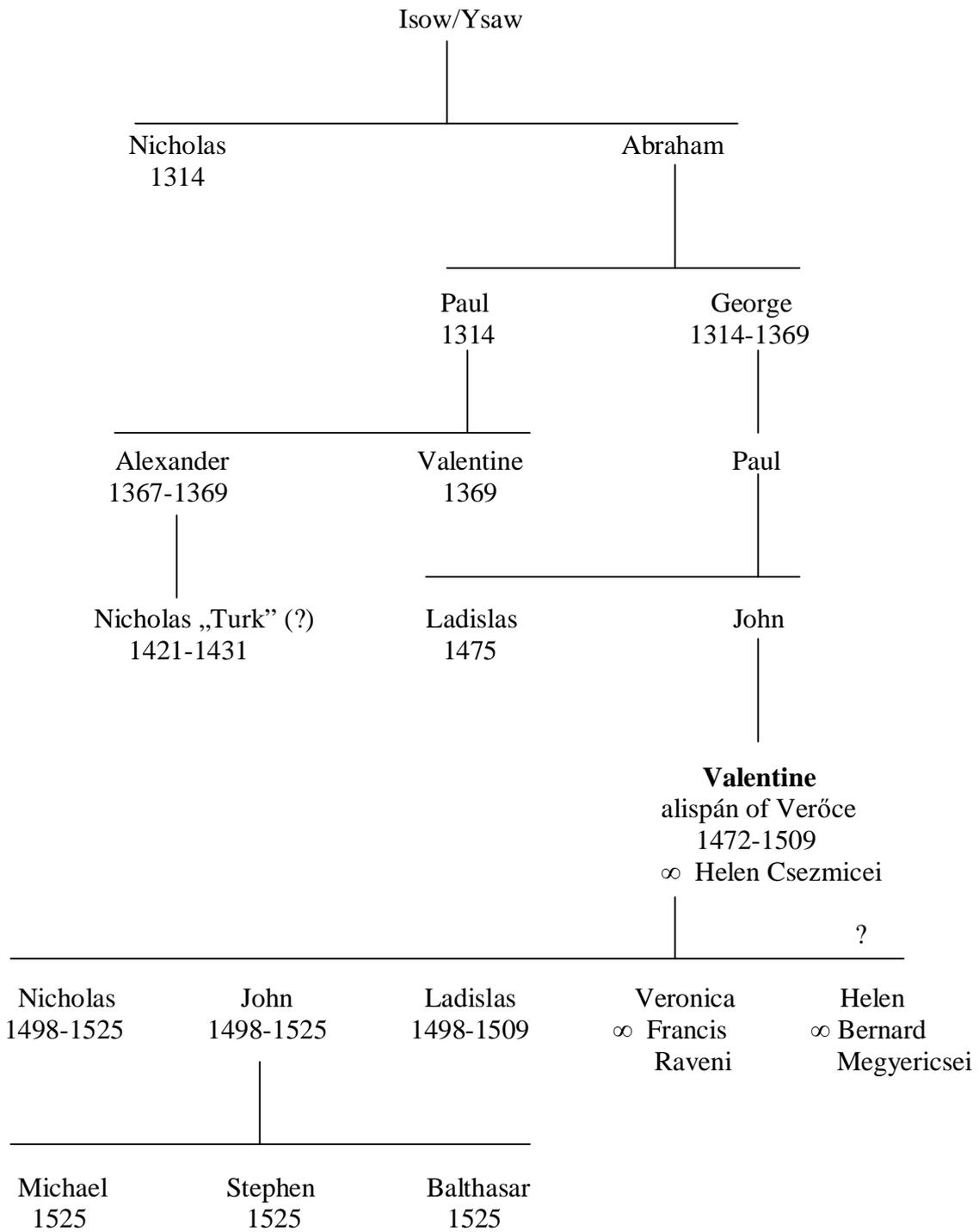
²⁷⁸² Her mother was a woman called Catherine, not Agatha Vince. DL 9800.

²⁷⁸³ DF 209446.

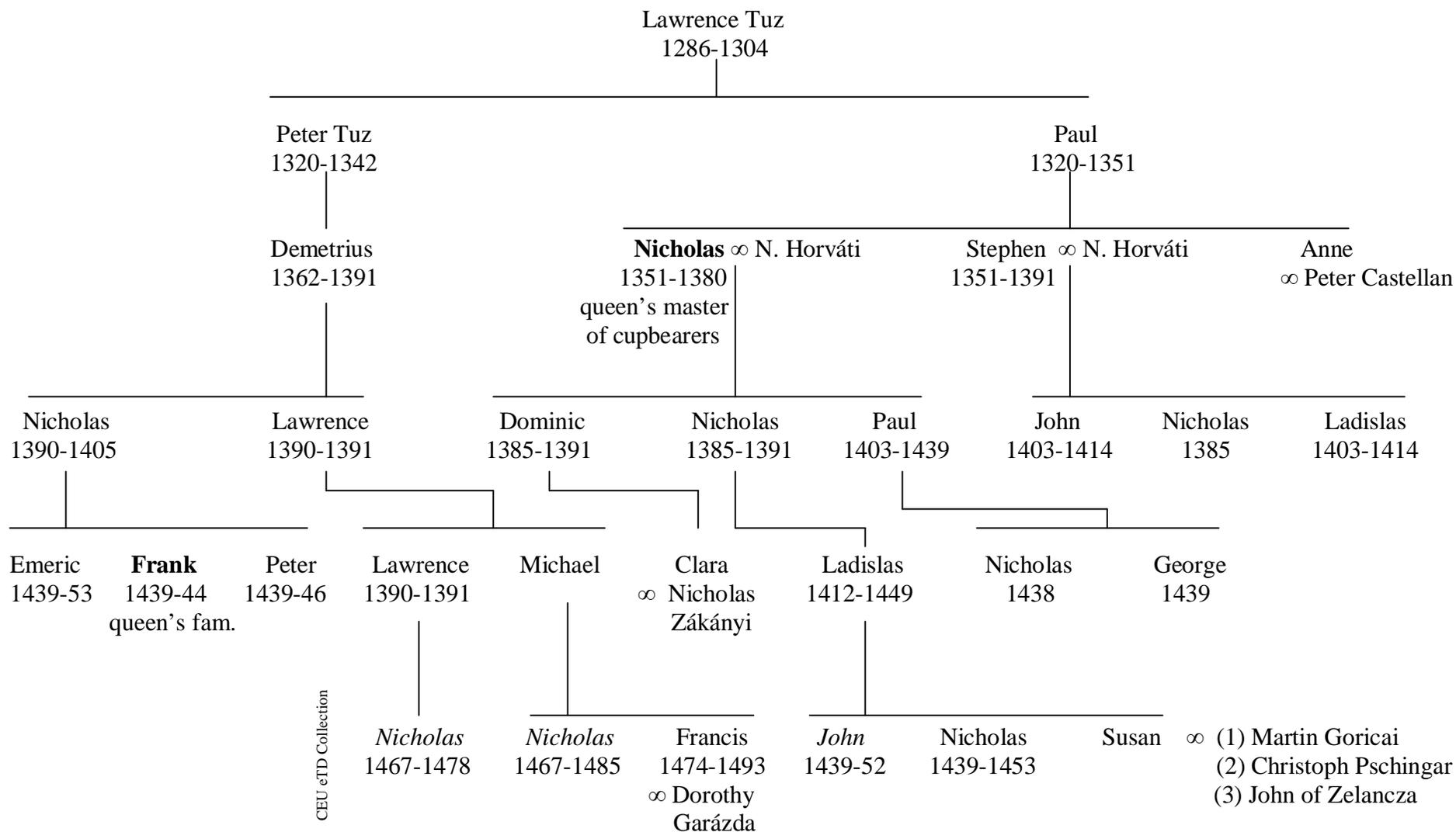
NELEPEC family



PÁLFI of Szentmihály family

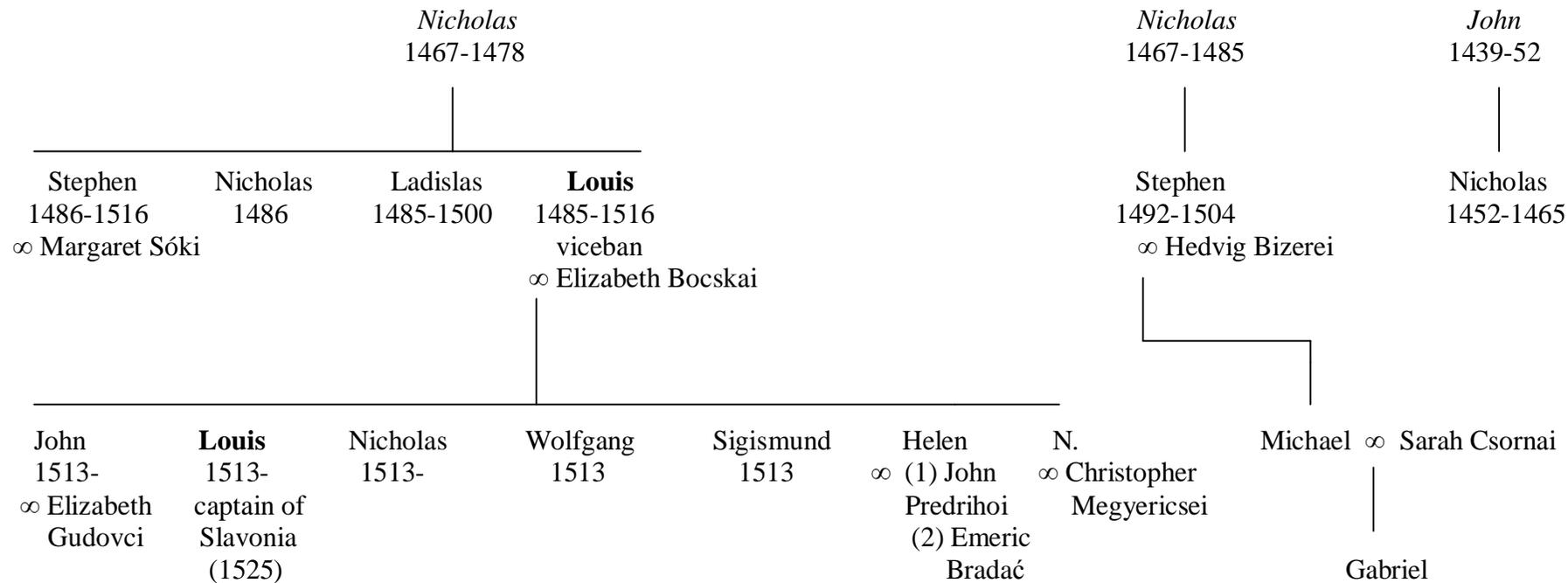


PEKRI family



CEU eTD Collection

(See next table)



Fragm.
(Pekri of Chyl)

CEU eTD Collection

Nicholas²⁷⁸⁴
 1465

Peter
 1465

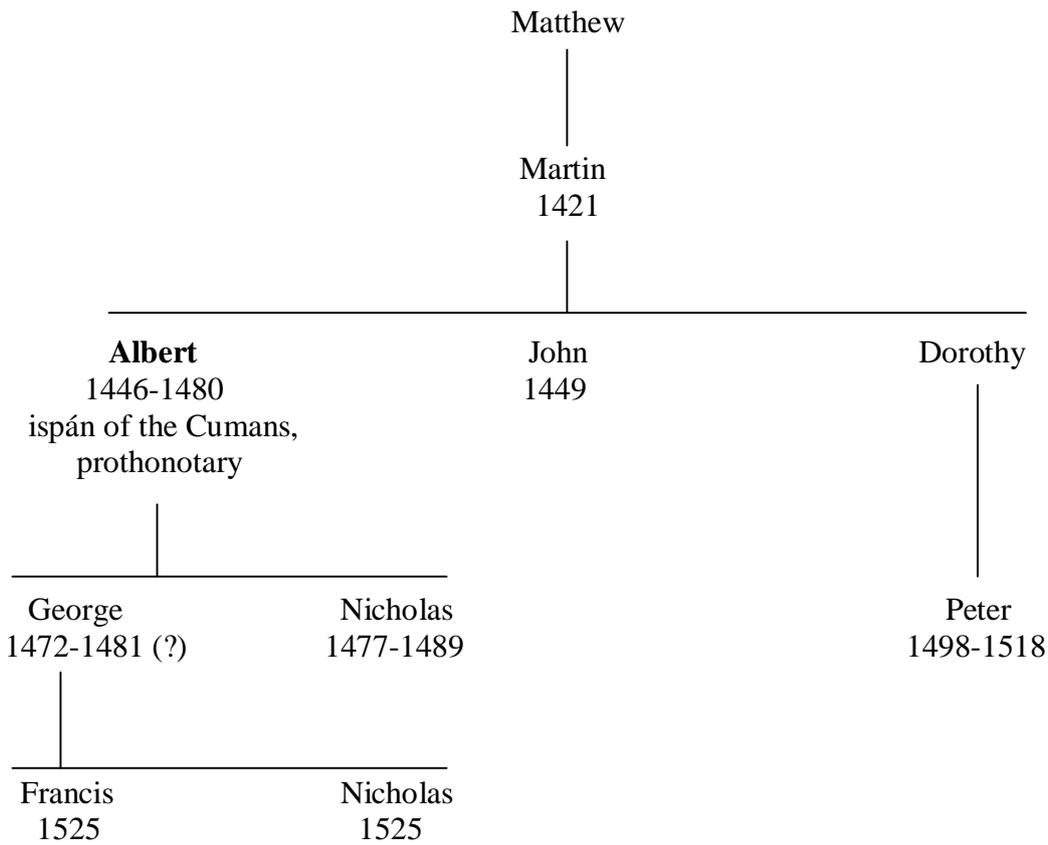
Michael
 1513-1521
 canon

Paul
 1513

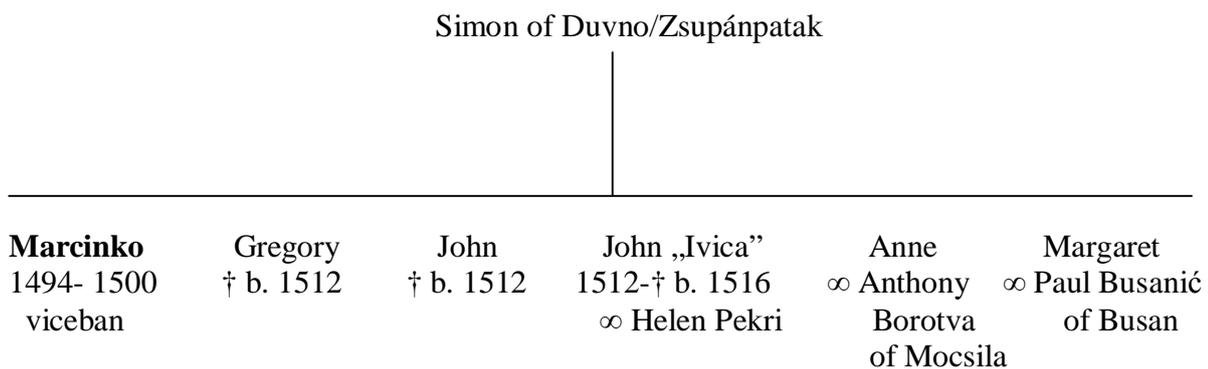
Nicholas
 1513

²⁷⁸⁴ He may be identical with the son of Paul, son of Nicholas on the previous table)

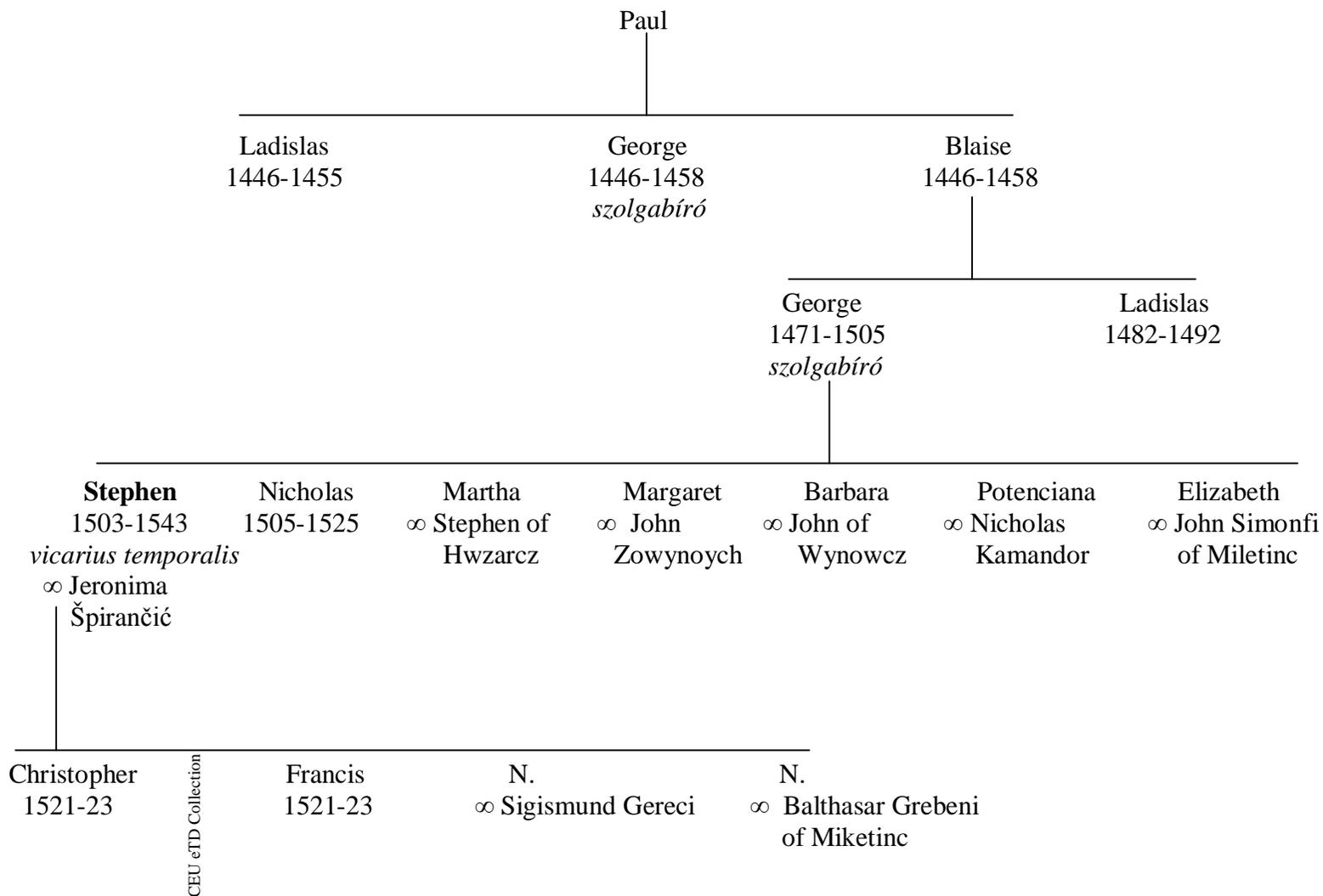
PATAKI family



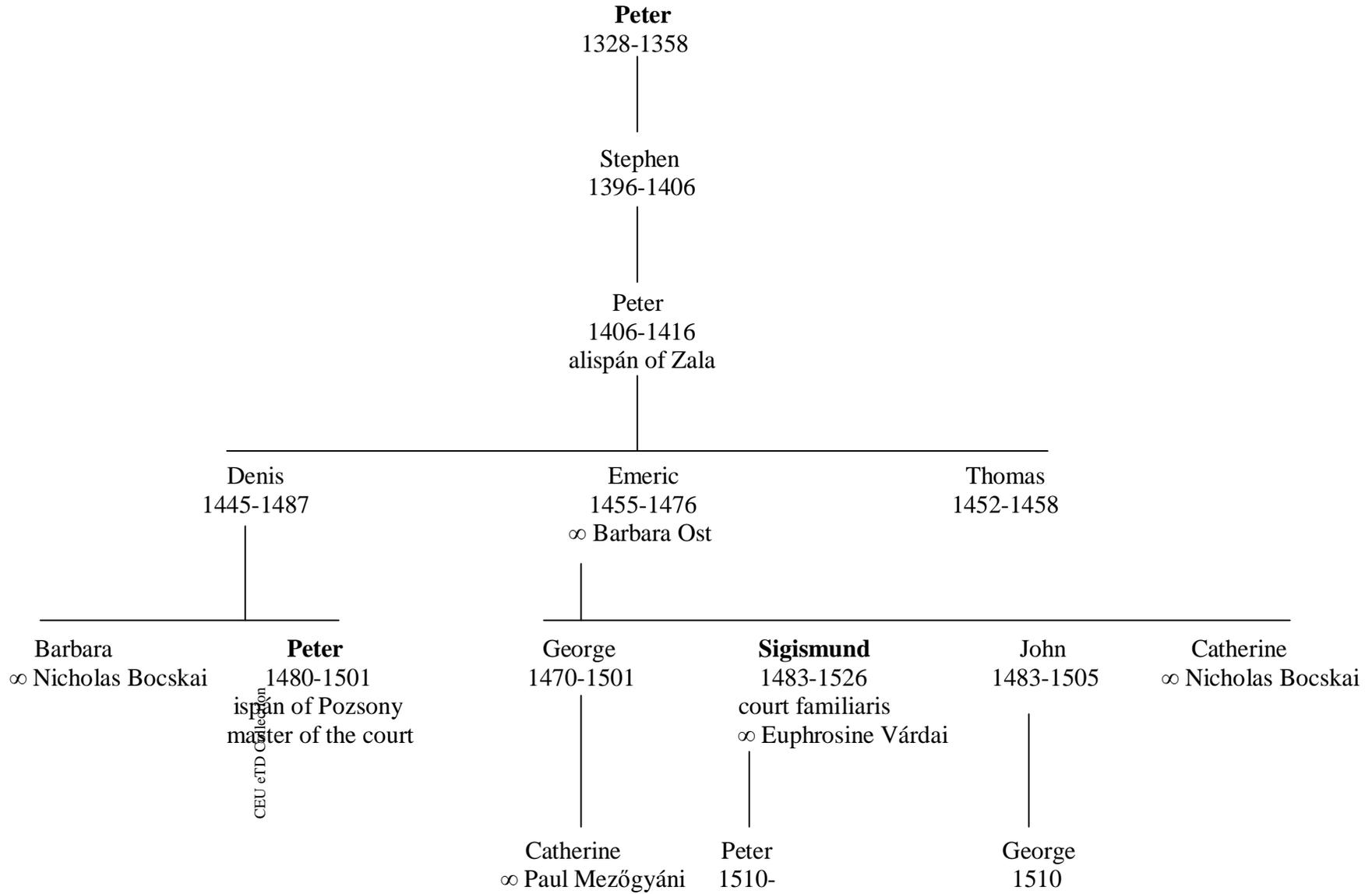
PREDRIHOI family



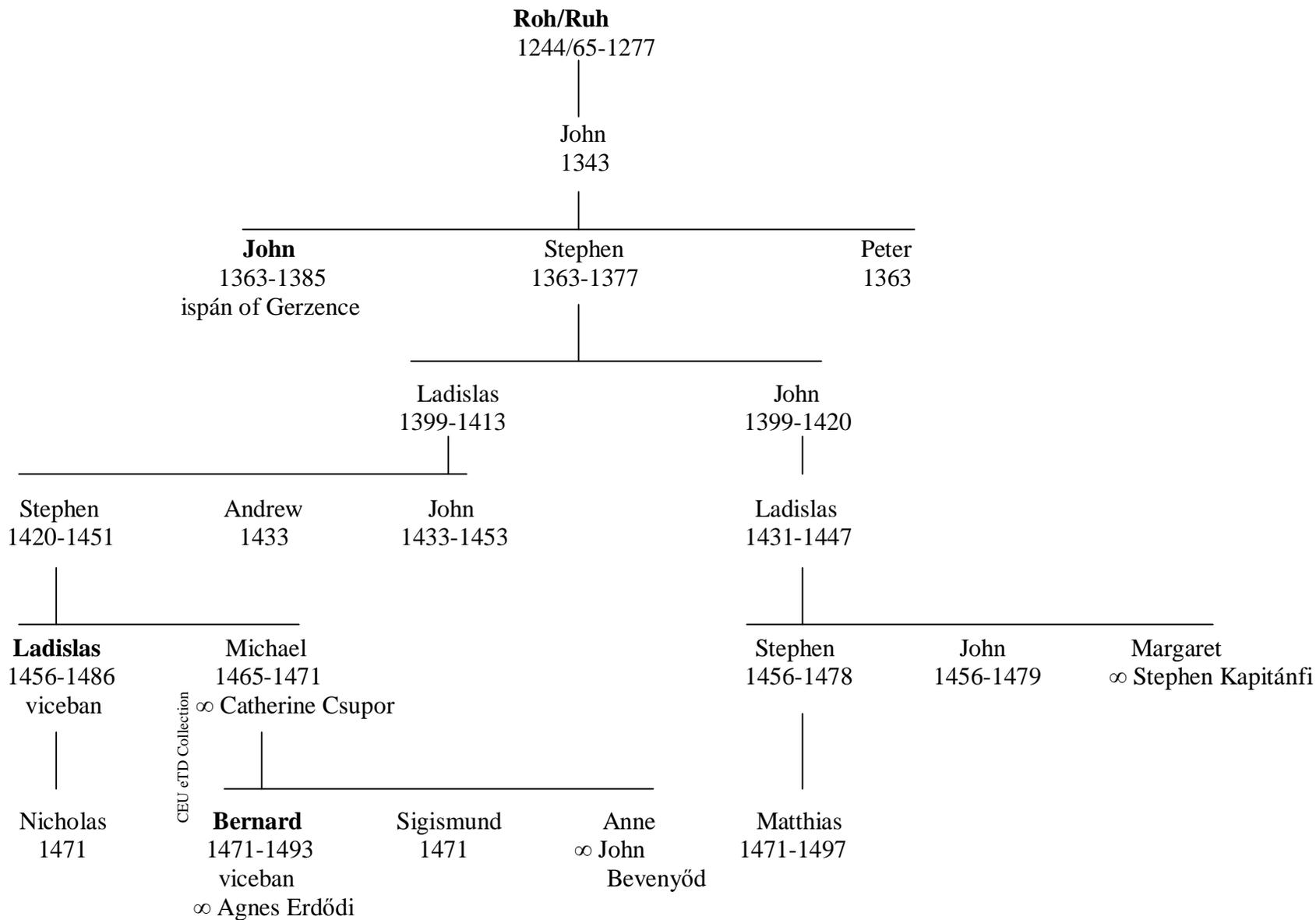
PRASOVCI family



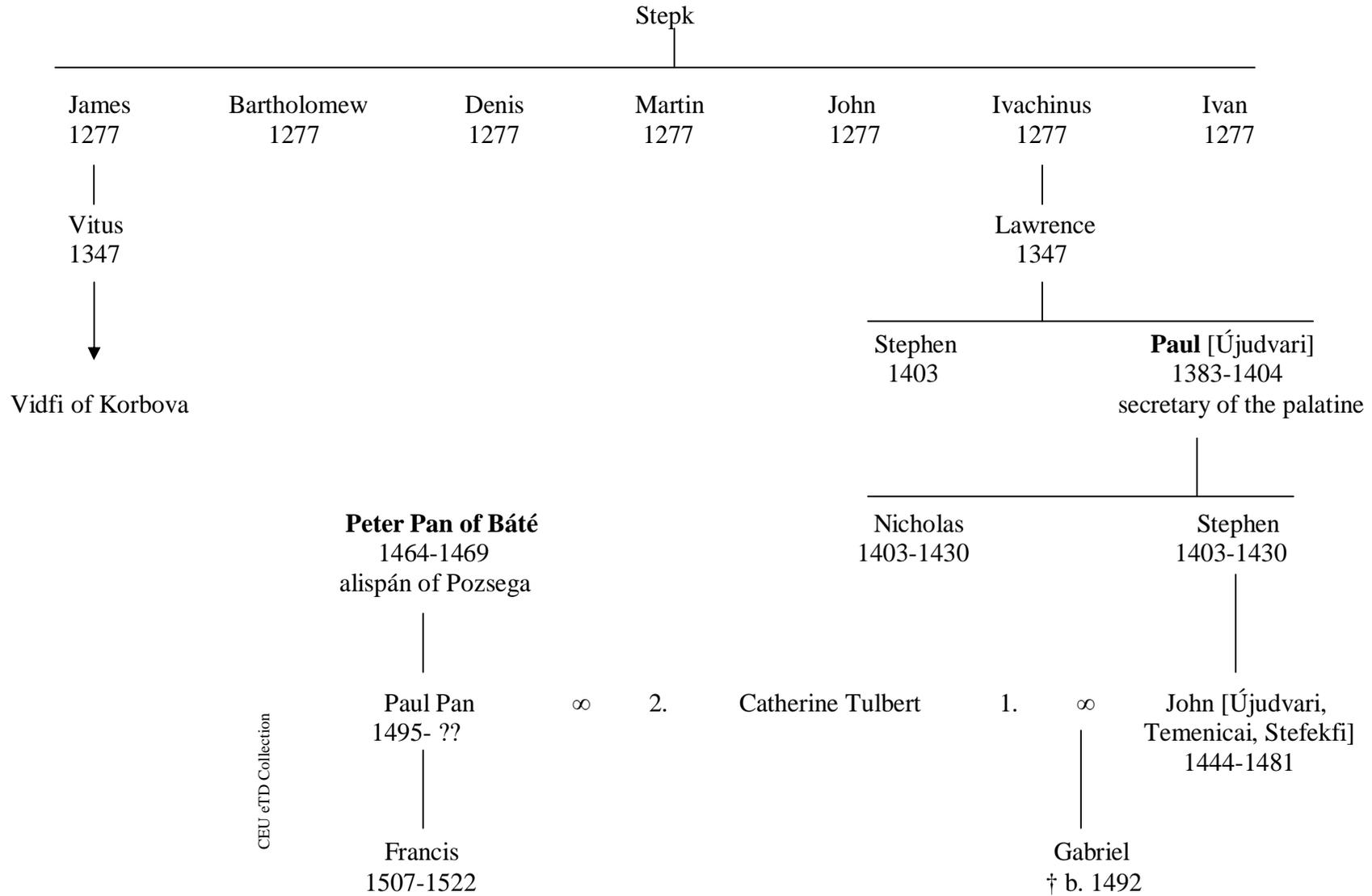
POGÁNY family



ROHFI of Décese family

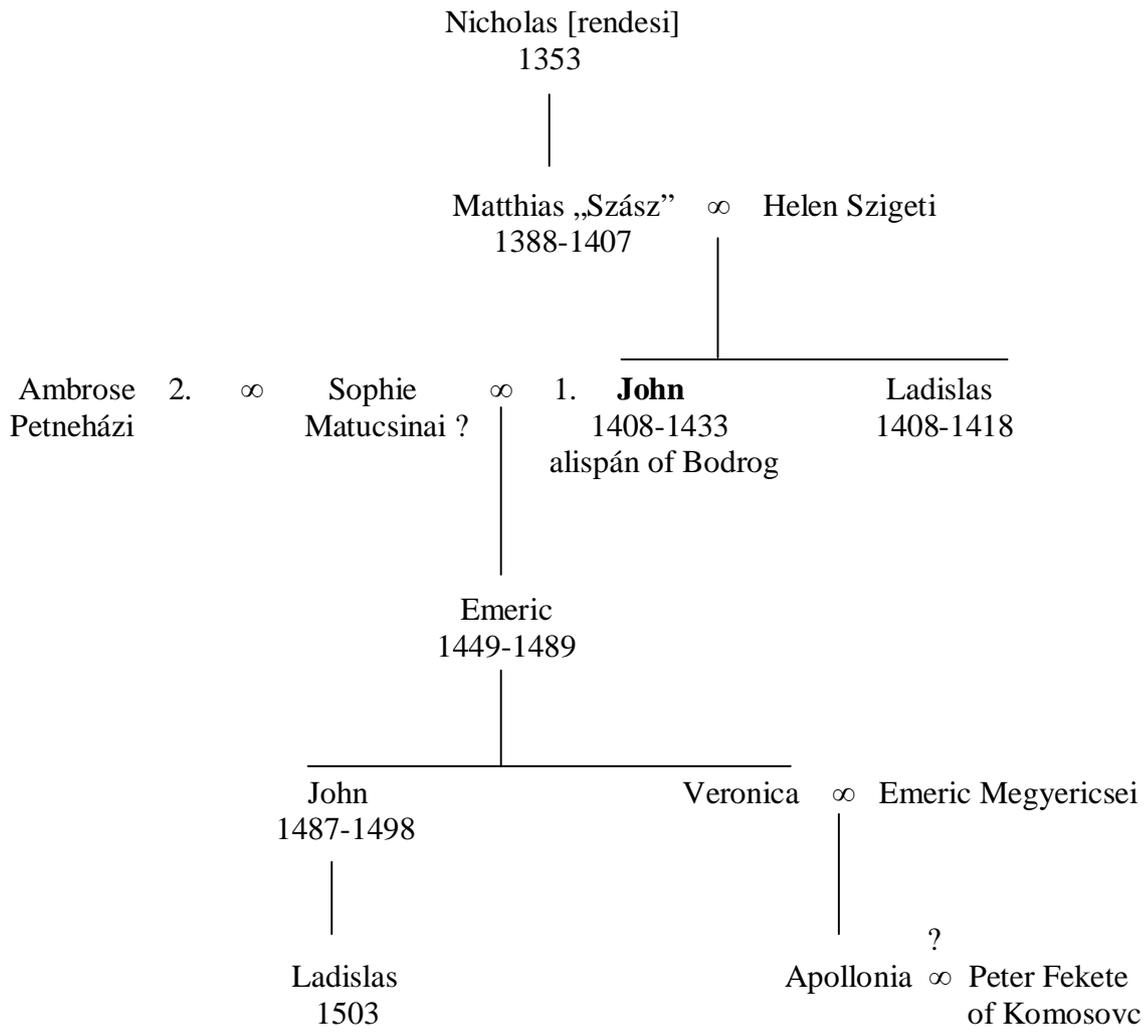


STEFEKFI/PAN OF KRAVARINA

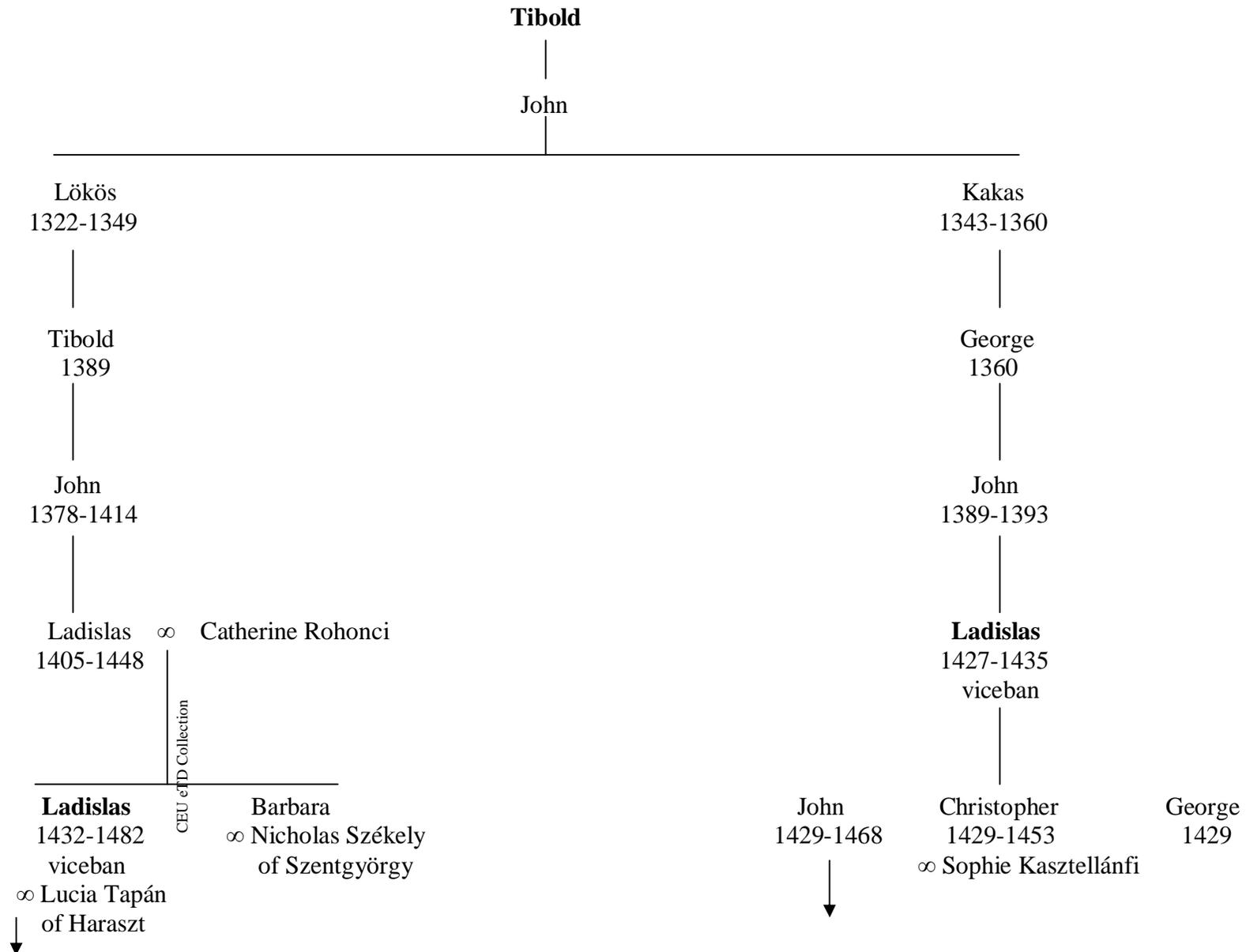


CEU eTD Collection

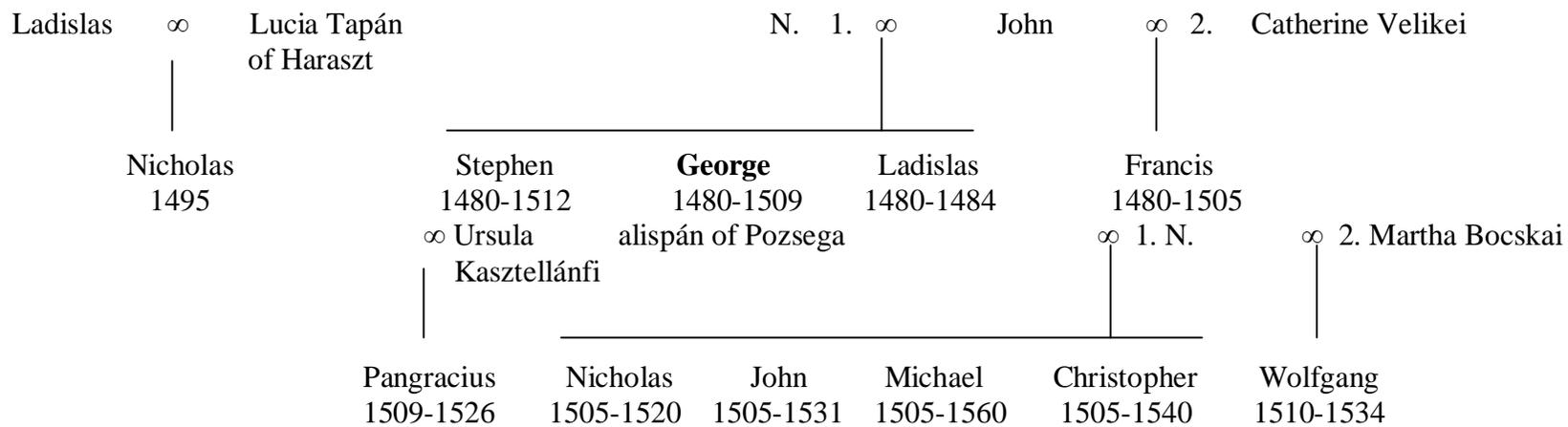
SZÁSZ of Tamasovc family



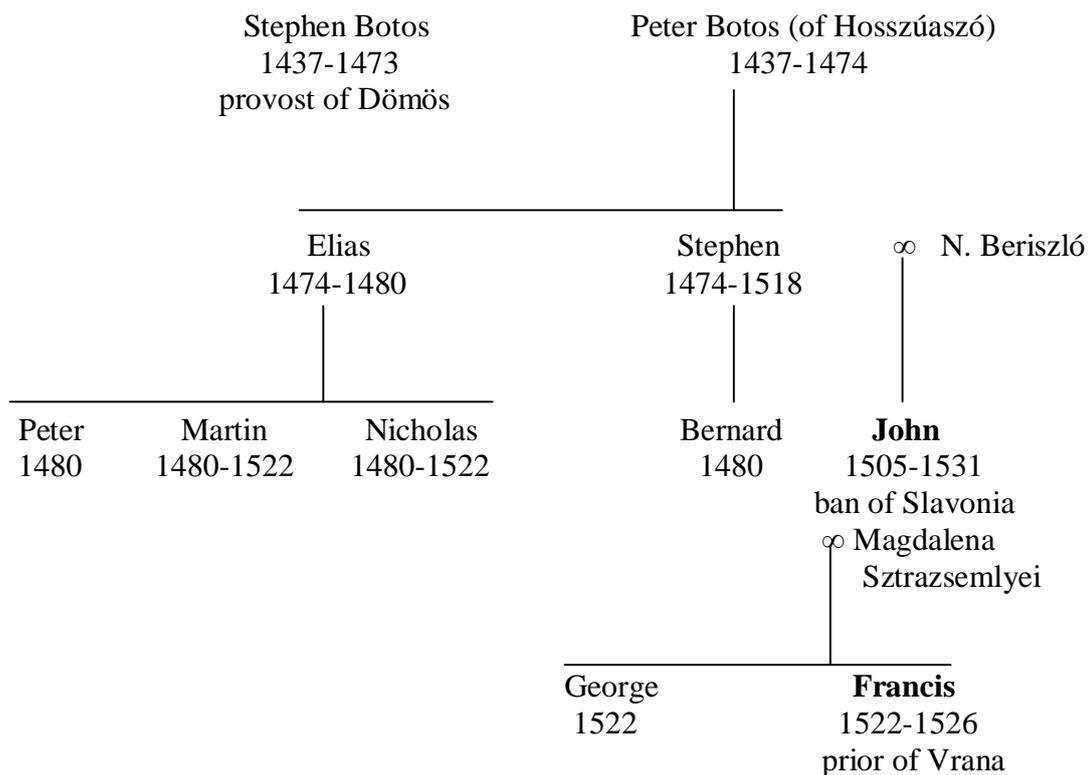
SZENCSEI family 1.



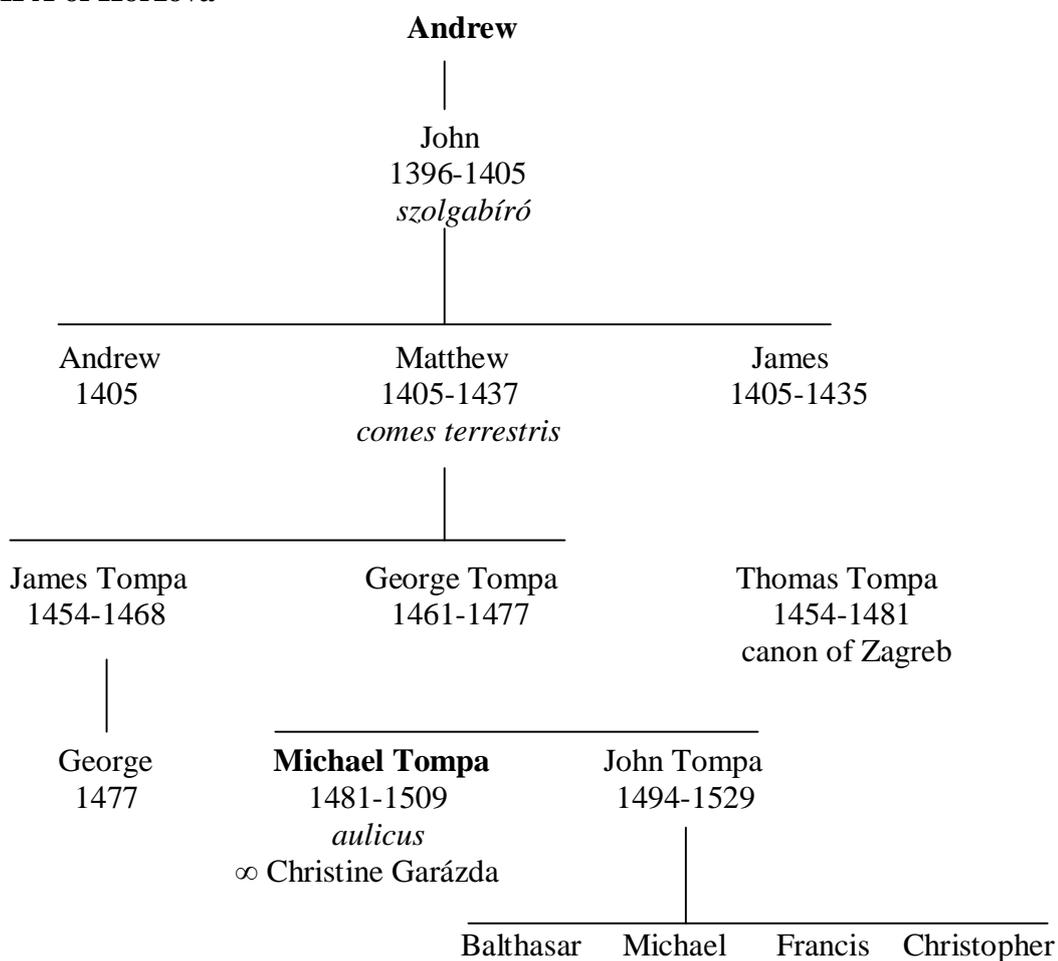
SZENCSEI family 2.



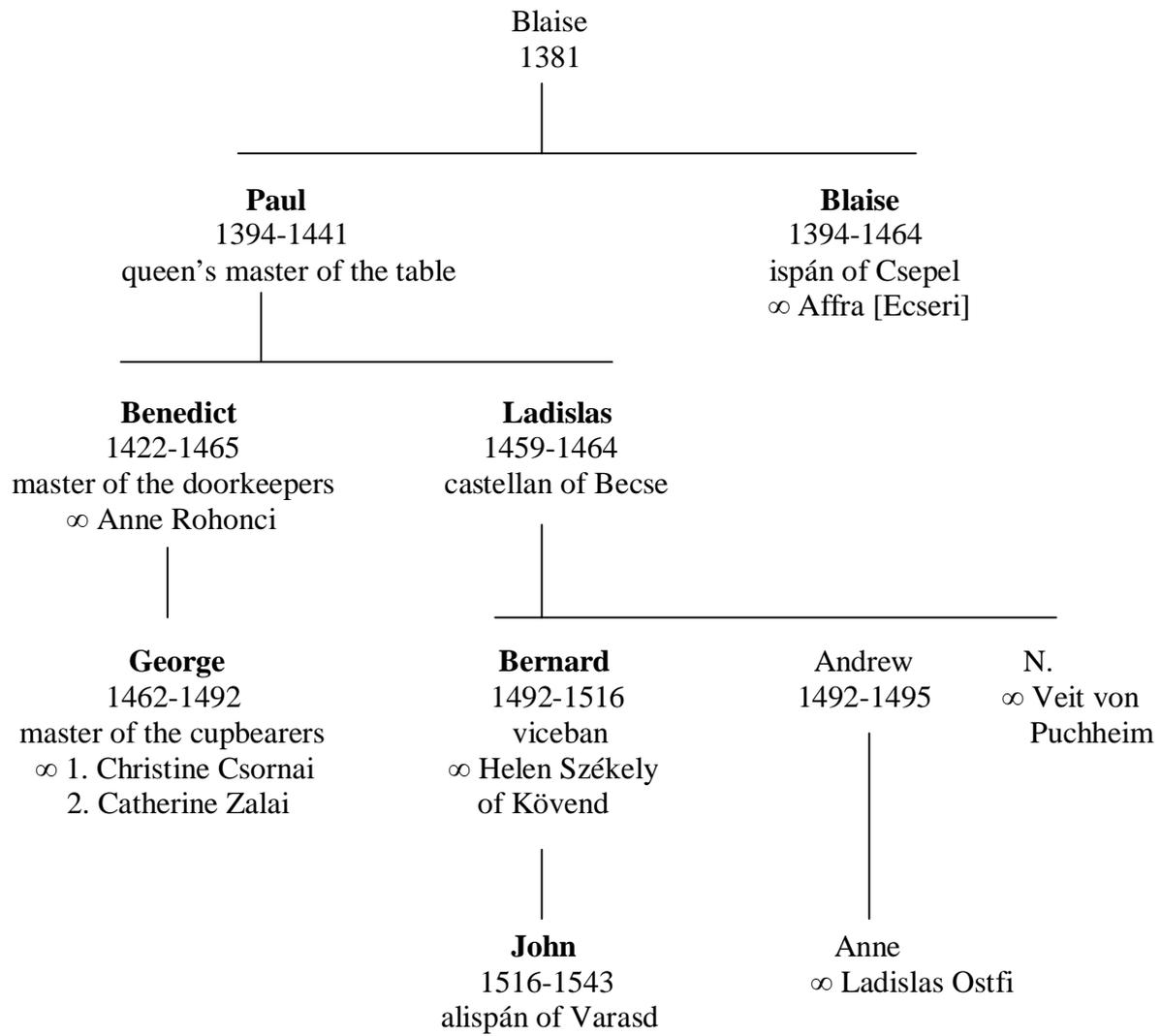
TAHI family



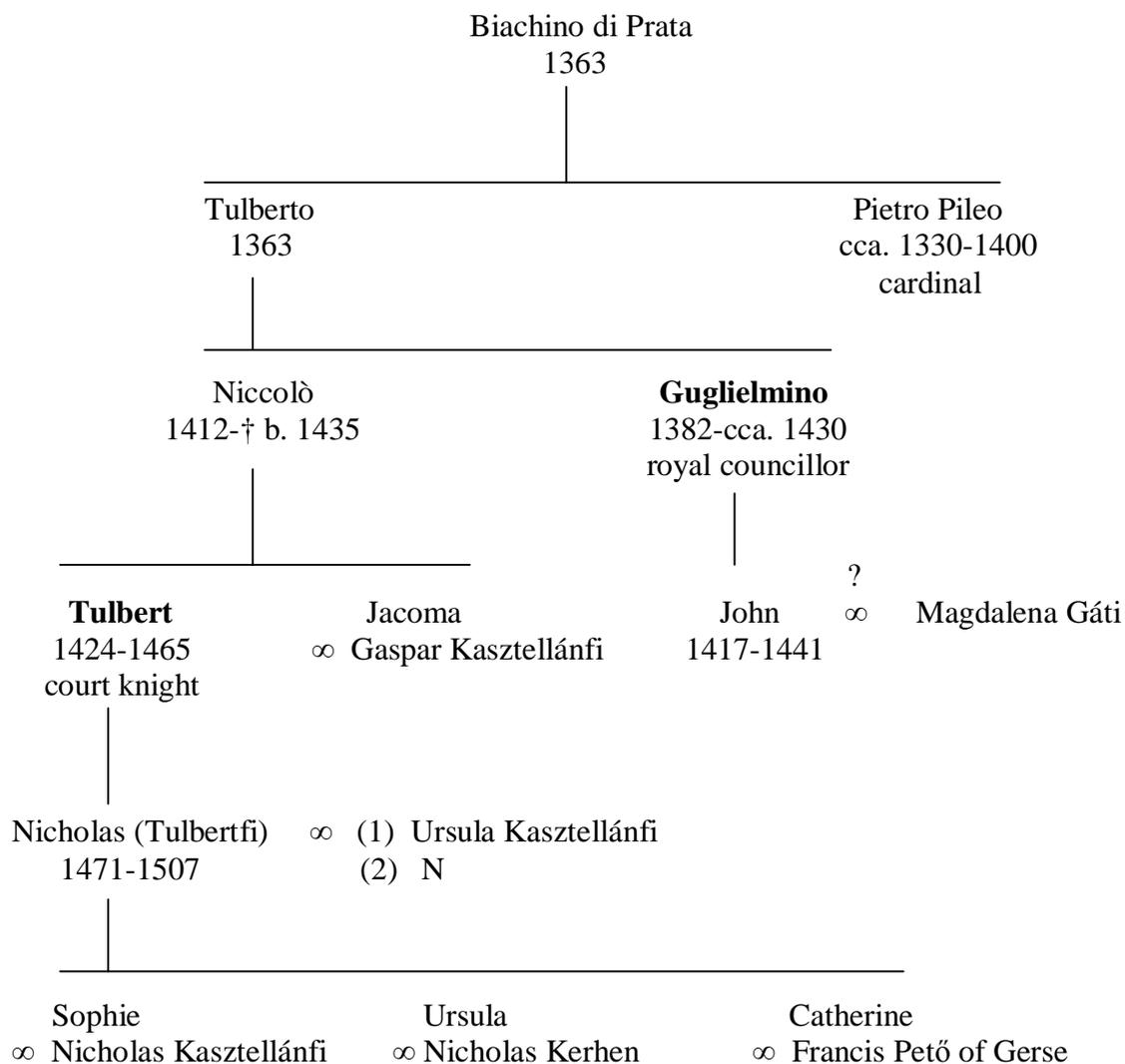
TOMPA of Horzova



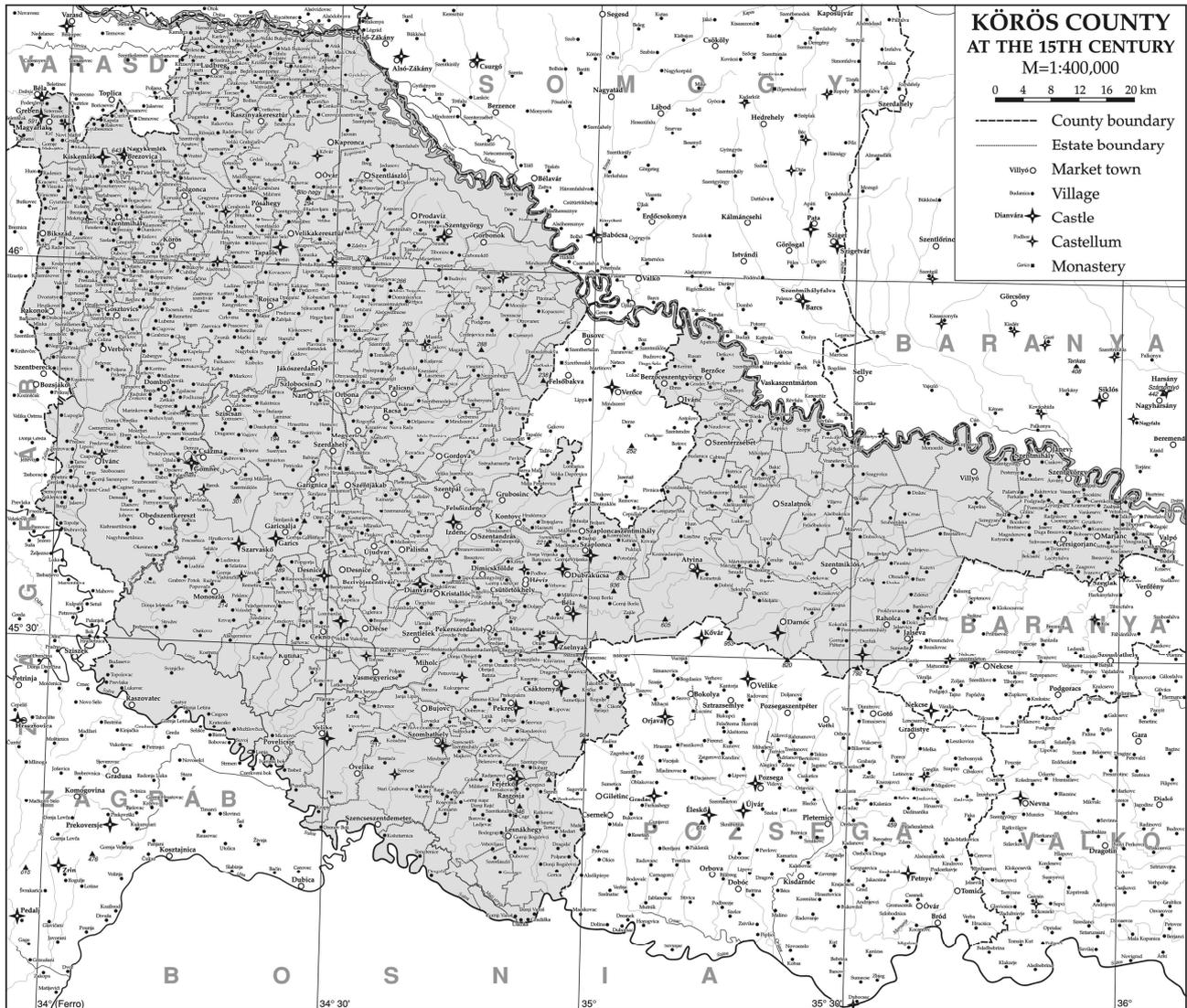
TURÓCI family



TULBERT of Prata/Berstyanovc



4. Map of the County



5. Gazetteer of place names

The following list contains only the names of places in historical Slavonia, mentioned in the text, which can still be identified. Identification is based on Pál Engel, *Magyarország a középkor végén [Hungary at the End of the Middle Ages]*, CD-ROM, Budapest: Térinfó Bt. and MTA Történettudományi Intézet 2001.

Atyina = Voćin (Cro.)
Bakolca (Donja/Nova Bukovica, Cro.)
Bednya(szentpéter) = Petar Ludbreški (Cro.)
Berstyanóc = Bršljanica (Cro.)
Berzóce = Stara Brezovica (Cro.)
Bikszád = Bisag (Cro.)
Bozsjákó = Božjakovina (Cro.)
Bradna = Trema (?)
Budrovc = Budrovac (Cro.)
Csányó = Čanjevo (Cro.)
Cirkvena = Cirkvena (Cro.)
Csáktornya (Zala) = Čakovec (Cro.)
Csáktornya (Körös) = Čaklovac (Cro.)
Csázma = Čazma (Cro.)
Csersztvec = Čvrstec (Cro.)
Csütörtökhely = Daruvar (Cro.)
Darnóc = (Slatinski) Drenovac (Cro.)
Desnice = Dišnik (Cro.)
Diankovc = Diankovec (Cro.)
Dianvára = Turski grad (?)
Dobrakucsá = Dobra Kuća (Cro.)
Dombró = Dubrava (Cro.)
Dubovc = Dubovac (Cro.)
Fejérvő = Bijela Stijena (Cro.)
Gerec = Stari Gradac (Cro.)
Gerzence = Gračnica (Cro.)
Gojl = Gojlo (Cro.)
Golgonca = Glogovnica (Cro.)
Gorbonok = Kloštar Podravski (Cro.)
Gordova = Grđevac (Cro.)
Greben = Madžarevo/Grebengrad (Cro.)
Gudovc = Gudovac (Cro.)
Herbortya = Veliki Poganac (Cro.)
Heresinc/Galovc = Galovac (Cro.)
Hévíz = Daruvar (Cro.)
Horzova = Hrsovo (Cro.)
Hrasztovica = Hrastovica (Cro.)
Ivanc = Kloštar Ivanić (Cro.)
Izdenc = Zdenci (Cro.)
Jakószerdahely = Sredice (Cro.)
Kamarca = Novigrad Podravski (Cro.)?
Kamenica = Kamenica Ivanečka (Cro.)
Kapronca = Koprivnica (Cro.)
Kéthely (Kedhely) = Koledinec (Cro.)
Kontovc = Kontovac (Cro.)

Kopacsovc = Kopačevac (Cro.)
 Korbova = Grbavac (Cro.)
 Kotnyak = Kutnjak (Cro.)
 Kravarina = Grahovljani (Cro.)
 Kristallóc = Kreštelovac (Cro.)
 Kustyerolc = Gušćerovec (Cro.)
 Kutenya = Kutina (Cro.)
 Ludbreg = Ludbreg (Cro.)
 Lukavec = Lukavec (Cro.)
 Martinyanc = Martijanec (Cro.),
 Mártonpataka = Martinpotok (Cro.)
 Medve = Medvedgrad (Cro.)
 Megyericse = Međurača (Cro.)
 Miglec = Maglenca (Cro.)
 Monoszló (Csupor) = Moslavina
 Monoszló = Podravska Moslavina (Cro.)
 Musina = Šandrovac (Cro.)
 Nagykemlék = Kalnik (Cro.)
 Nagytábor = Veliki Tabor (Cro.)
 Novaszentmárton = Martinac Trojstveni
 Orbona = Obrovnica (Cro.)
 Orehovc(szentpéter) = Orehovec (Cro.)
 Oslovc = Oslavica (Cro.)
 Oszterc = Oštre (Cro.)
 Palicsnaszentpéter = Severin/Polična (Cro.)
 Palisna = Palešnik (Cro.)
 Patak = Potok Kalnički (Cro.)
 Pekerszerdahely = Sredjani (Cro.)
 Peklence = Paklenica (Cro.)
 Pekrec = Pakrac (Cro.)
 Pestenye = Pistana (Cro.)
 Plavnicaszentbenedek = Stare Plavnice (Cro.)
 Podversa = Podvrško (Cro.)
 Polositica = Stara Plošćica (Cro.)
 Prasovc = Prašćevac (Cro.)
 Predrihó = Gornje Predrijevo (Cro.)
 Prodaviz = Virje (Cro.)
 Progovc = Prugovac (Cro.)
 Racsa = Rača (Cro.)
 Raholca = Orahovica (Cro.)
 Rakonok = Rakovec (Cro.)
 Raszinyakeresztúr = Rasinja (Cro.)
 Raven(szentlászló) = Raven (Cro.)
 Repinc = Repinec (Cro.)
 Rojcsa = Rovišće (Cro.)
 Rosecsnik = Roždanik (Cro.)
 Sabnicaszentiván = Žabno (Cro.)
 Szagyolca = Čađavica (Cro.)
 Szalatnok = Slatina (Cro.)
 Szamobor = Samobor (Cro.)
 Szaplonca = Stupčanica/Veliki Baštaji (Cro.)
 Szászovc = Sasovac (Cro.)

Szentbenedek = Babinac (Cro.)
Szenterzsébet = Jugovo Polje (Cro.)
Szentgyörgy = Đurđevac (Cr.)
Szentlélek = Duhovi (Cro.)
Szentlőrinc = Gostović (Cro.)
Szircs = Sirač (Cro.)
Szlavina = Slanje (Cro.)
Szobocsina = Slobošтина (Korenovo, Cro.)?
Szobotica = Subotica Podravska (Cro.)
Szombathely = Subocki grad (Cro.)
Szomszédvár = Susedgrad (Cro.)
Sztenicsnyak = Steničnjak (Cro.)
Sztrazsemlje = Stražeman (Cro.)
Sztreza = Pavlin Kloštar (Cro.)
Sztrigó = Štrigova (Cro.)
Sztubica = Stubica (Cro.)
Szuhamlaka = Suha Mlaka (Cro.)
Tapalóc = Topolovac (Cro.)
Terbenye = Turbina/Slatina (Cro.)
Trakostyán = Trakošćan (Cro.)
Urbanovc = Vrbanovec (Cro.)
Valkó = Vukovar (Cro.)
Valpó = Valpovo (Cro.)
Varasd = Varaždin (Cro.)
Vaska = Vaška (Cro.)
Vasmegyericse = Međurić (Cro.)
Vecseszlavc = Večeslavec (Cro.)
Velike (Körös) = Kraljeva Velika (Cro.)
Velike (Pozsega) = Velika (Cro.)
Verbovc = Vrbovec (Cro.)
Veróce = Virovitica (Cro.)
Vertlin = Vrtlinska (Cro.)
Vinarc = Vinarec (Cro.)
Vinica = Vinica (Cro.)
Vokovina = Vukovina (Cro.)
Zajejda = Zajejda (Cro.)
Zamlachya = Zamlače (Cro.)
Zengg = Senj (Cro.)
Zselnyak = Sirač (Cro.)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary sources – unpublished

Magyar Országos Levéltár, Budapest [Hungarian National Archives, Budapest]

Q szekció: Mohács előtti gyűjtemény [Q section: Pre-Mohács collection]

Diplomatikai levéltár (DL) [Original charters]

Diplomatikai fényképgyűjtemény (DF) [Photo collection]

Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Wien:

Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv:

Familienarchiv Erdődy, Urkundenreihe

Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Citta di Vaticano:

Sacra Poenitentieria Apostolica:

Registra Matrimonialium et Diversorum

Primary sources – published

Adamček, Josip and Ivan Kampuš, eds. *Popisi i obračuni poreza u Hrvatskoj u XV i XVI stoljeću* [Tax Lists and Accounts from Croatia in the 15th and 16th Centuries]. Zagreb 1976.

Barabás, Samu, ed. *A római szent birodalmi gróf széki Teleki család oklevéltára II. 1438-1526*. Budapest: Athenaeum 1895.

Beke, Antal. “Római emlékek a magyar egyház XV-ik századi történetéből [Roman sources for the history of the Hungarian church in the 15th century].” *Magyar Történelmi Tár* 1900: 1-15.

Berzeviczy, Albert, ed. *Aragoniai Beatrix magyar királyné életére vonatkozó okiratok*. Budapest: MTA 1914.

Bónis, Georgius and Vera Bácskai, eds. *Decreta Regni Hungariae. Gesetze und Verordnungen Ungarns 1301-1457*. Budapest: Akadémiai 1976.

Borsa, Iván, ed. *A Balassa család levéltára 1193-1526*. Budapest: Akadémiai 1990.

Borsa, Iván ed. *A Justh család levéltára 1274-1525*. Budapest: Akadémiai 1991.

Borsa, Iván. “A Somogy Megyei Levéltár Mohács előtti oklevelei [The pre-Mohács charters preserved in the archives of Somogy county].” In *Somogy Megye Múltjából. Levéltári Évkönyv*. 14. Edited by József Kanyar. 3-81. Kaposvár 1983.

Csánki, Dezső. *Magyarország történelmi földrajza a Hunyadiak korában [The Historical Geography of Hungary in the Age of the Hunyadis]*. I-V. Budapest: MTA 1890-1913.

Döry, Franciscus, Georgius Bónis, Geisa Érszegi, and Susanna Teke, eds. *Decreta Regni Hungariae. Gesetze und Verordnungen Ungarns 1458-1490*. Budapest: Akadémiai 1989.

Engel, Johann Christian von. *Geschichte des Ungrischen Reichs und seiner Nebenländer. 1. Theil*. Halle 1797.

Érdújhelyi, Menyhért. "Kutatásaim a római levéltárakban [Researches in the Roman archives]." *Katholikus Szemle* 10 (1896): 605-646.

Fejér, Georgius, ed. *Codex diplomaticus Hungariae ecclesiasticus ac civilis I-XI*. Budae 1829-1844.

Fraknói, Vilmos. „II. Lajos király számadási könyve 1525. január 12 – július 16 [The Account Book of King Louis II from 12 January to 16 July 1525]." *Magyar Történelmi Tár* 22 (1877): 45-236.

Fraknói, Vilmos. "Tomori Pál kiadatlan levelei [The Unpublished Letters of Paul Tomori]." *Magyar Történelmi Tár* 1882: 78-95.

Gelcich, József, ed. *Ragusa és Magyarország összeköttetéseinek oklevéltára [Charters concerning the Relations between Ragusa and Hungary]*. Budapest: MTA 1887.

Györffy, György. *Az Árpád-kori Magyarország történeti földrajza I-IV [The Historical Geography of Hungary in the Árpád Age]*. Budapest: Akadémiai 1966-1998.

Hegedűs, Attila and Lajos Papp, eds. *Középkori leveleink (1541-ig) [Medieval Letters until 1541]*. Budapest: Tankönyvkiadó 1991.

Iványi, Béla Dr., ed. *A körmendi levéltár memorabiliái [The Memorabilia of the Archives of Körmend]*. Körmend 1942.

Iványi, Béla Dr. ed. *A római szent birodalmi széki gróf Teleki család gyömrői levéltára*. Szeged 1931.

Karácsonyi, János. „Oklevélkivonatok a szentmiklósi és óvári gróf Pongrác család levéltárából [Abstracts from the Archives of the Pongrácz Family, Counts of Szentmiklós and Óvár]." *Történelmi Tár* 1896: 505-528.

Kiss, Anita. A monoszlói Csupor család osztálylevele 1422-ből. *Fons* 12/1 (2005): 89-121.

Komjáthy, Miklós. "A somogyi konvent II. Lajos-kori oklevelei az Országos Levéltárban. 3. közlemény [The Charters of the Convent of Somogy from the Reign of Louis II in the Hungarian National Archives. 3rd Part] *Somogy Megye Múltjából*. (Levéltári Évkönyv) 3. Edited by József Kanyar. 47-73. Kaposvár 1972.

Komjáthy, Miklós. „A somogyi konvent II. Ulászló-kori oklevelei az Országos Levéltárban. 1. közlemény [The Charters of the Convent of Somogy from the Reign of Wladislaw II in the Hungarian National Archives. First part]" *Somogy Megye Múltjából* (Levéltári évkönyv) 4. Edited by József Kanyar. 45-53. Kaposvár 1973.

Miklós Komjáthy, "A somogyi konvent II. Ulászló-kori oklevelei az Országos Levéltárban. 2. közlemény. *Somogy Megye Múltjából*. (Levéltári Évkönyv) 5. Edited by József Kanyar. 7-12. Kaposvár 1974.

Komjáthy, Miklós. „A somogyi konvent II. Ulászló-kori oklevelei az országos levéltárban. 6. közlemény". *Somogy Megye Múltjából* (Levéltári évkönyv) 9. Edited by József Kanyar. 47-55. Kaposvár 1978.

Komjáthy, Miklós. „A somogyi konvent II. Ulászló-kori oklevelei az országos levéltárban. 7. közlemény”. *Somogy Megye Múltjából* (Levéltári évkönyv) 10. Edited by József Kanyar. 51-57. Kaposvár 1979.

Komjáthy, Miklós. „A somogyi konvent II. Ulászló-kori oklevelei az országos levéltárban. 11. közlemény” *Somogy Megye Múltjából* (Levéltári évkönyv) 14. Edited by József Kanyar. 83-88. Kaposvár 1983.

Kristó, Gyula et al., ed. *Anjou-kori Oklevéltár I-XV, XVII, XIX, XXIII-XXVIII, XXXI*. Szeged – Budapest 1990-2010.

Kukuljević, Joannes aliter Bassani de Sacchi ed. *Jura regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae. Pars I-III. Zagrabiae* 1861-1862.

Laszowski, Emilij ed. *Monumenta Habsburgica Regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae. Vol. I (1526-1530)*. Zagreb: JAZU 1914.

Laszowski, Emilij ed. *Monumenta Habsburgica Regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae. Vol. II (1531-1540)*. Zagreb: JAZU 1916.

Lukcsics, Pál, ed. *XV. századi pápák oklevelei [Papal Charters from the 15th Century]. I-II*. Budapest, MTA 1931-1938.

Lukinović, Andrija, ed. *Povijesni spomenici Zagrebačke biskupije V. 1395-1420*. Zagreb: Kršćanska Sadašnjost/Arhiv Hrvatske 1992.

Lukinović, Andrija, ed. *Povijesni spomenici Zagrebačke biskupije. VI. 1421-1440*. Zagreb: Kršćanska Sadašnjost/Arhiv Hrvatske 1994.

Mályusz, Elemér, ed. „A szlavóniai és horvátországi középkori pálos kolostorok oklevelei az Országos Levéltárban [The Charters of the Medieval Pauline Monasteries of Slavonia and Croatia in the Hungarian National Archives].” *Levéltári Közlemények* 3 (1925): 100-191; 5 (1927): 136-209; 6 (1928): 87-203; 7 (1929): 278-311; 8 (1930): 65-111; 9 (1931): 284-315; 10 (1932): 92-123, 256-286; 11 (1933): 58-92; 12 (1934): 111-154; 13 (1935): 233-265.

Mályusz, Elemér, Iván Borsa, Norbert C. Tóth, and Tibor Neumann, eds. *Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár I-XI*. Budapest: Akadémiai 1951-2009.

Marsina, Richard, ed. *Codex diplomaticus et epistolaris Slovaciae I-II*. Bratislavae 1971-1987.

Mayer, Antun et al., eds. „Regesti isprava 16 stoljeća iz Arhiva Hrvatske Akademije Znanosti i Umjetnosti 1538-1545 [Abstracts of the Charters from the 16th Century in the Academy of Sciences of Croatia].” *Zbornik odsjeka za povijesne znanosti* 27 (2009): 331-365.

Nagy, Imre, Farkas Deák, and Gyula Nagy, eds. *Hazai Oklevéltár (Codex diplomaticus patrius Hung.)* Budapest 1879.

Nagy, Imre, Iván Paur, Károly Ráth, and Dezső Véghely, eds. *Hazai Okmánytár I-VIII*. Győr-Budapest 1865-1891.

Nagy, Imre, Dezső Véghely, and Gyula Nagy, eds. *Zala vármegye története. Oklevéltár I-II*. Budapest 1886-1890.

Nagy, Imre et al., eds. *A zichi és vásoneői gróf Zichy család idősb ágának okmánytára I-XII*. Budapest 1871-1931.

Nagy, Iván and Albert Nyáry Br., eds. *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek Mátyás király korából I-IV*. Budapest: MTA 1875-1877.

Neumann, Tibor, ed. *Bereg megye hatóságának oklevelei 1299-1526*. Nyíregyháza 2006.

Pray, Georgius. *Epistolae procerum regni Hungariae. Pars I. Posonii MDCCCVI*.

Radvánszky, Béla and Levente Závodszy, eds. *A Héderváry család oklevéltára. I-II*. Budapest: MTA 1909-1922.

Šišić, Ferdo, ed. *Acta comitialia regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae. Vol. I (1526-1536)*. Zagreb 1912.

Šišić, Ferdo, ed. *Rukovet spomenika o hercegu Ivanišu Korvinu i o borbama Hrvata s Turcima (1473-1496) s dodatkom (1491-1498) [A Handful of Sources on Duke John Corvin and the Struggle of the Croats with the Turks (1473-1496), with Additions (1491-1498)]*. Zagreb 1936.

Skorka, Renáta, ed. *Eberhard Windecke emlékirata Zsigmond királyról és koráról [The Memoirs of Eberhard Windecke on King Sigismund and his Times]*. Budapest: MTA Történettudományi Intézete 2008.

Smičiklas, Tade et al., eds. *Codex diplomaticus regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae I-XVIII. Zagrabiae 1904-1990*.

Sörös, Pongrác. "A Pannonhalmán őrzött Guary-levéltár Mátyás-kori kiadatlan iratai [The Unpublished Charters of the Guary Archives from the Age of Matthias]". *Magyar Történelmi Tár* 1910: 270-291, 405-429.

Stipišić, Jakov and Šamšalović, Miljen, eds. „Isprave u Arhivu Jugoslavenske Akademije”. *Zbornik Historijskog instituta JAZU* 2 (1959): 289-379; 3 (1960): 563-643; 4 (1961): 465-554; 5 (1963): 533-578.

Szakály, Ferenc. *Ami Tolna vármegye középkori okleveleiből megmaradt (1314-1525) [The Remaining Medieval Charters of the Authorities of Tolna County]*. Szekszárd 1998.

Szentpétery, Imre and Borsa, Iván, eds. *Az Árpád-házi királyok okleveleinek kritikai jegyzéke I-II*. Budapest: Akadémiai 1923-1987.

Thallóczy, Lajos and Samu Barabás, eds. *A Blagay-család oklevéltára*. Budapest: MTA 1897.

Thallóczy, Lajos and Samu Barabás, eds. *A Frangepán család oklevéltára I 1133-1453*. Budapest: MTA 1910.

Thallóczy, Lajos and Antal Hodinka, eds. *Magyarország melléktartományainak oklevéltára I. A horvát vég helyek oklevéltára I. 1490-1527*. Budapest: MTA 1903.

Thallóczy, Lajos and Sándor Horváth, eds. *Alsó-szlavóniai okmánytár (Dubicza, Orbász és Szana vármegyék) 1244-1710*. Budapest: MTA 1912.

Thallóczy, Lajos and Sándor Horváth, eds. *Jajcza (bánság, vár és város) története 1450-1527*. Budapest 1915.

Theiner, Augustinus ed. *Vetera monumenta historica Hungariam sacram illustrantia. I-II*. Romae 1859-1860.

Tkalčić, Ioannes Baptista, ed. *Monumenta historica liberae regiae civitatis Zagrabiae I-XIV*. Zagrabiae 1889-1932.

Tóth, Péter, ed. *A Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén Megyei Levéltár Miskolcon őrzött középkori oklevelei*. Miskolc 1990.

Tringli, István, ed. *A Perényi család levéltára 1222-1526*. Budapest: Magyar Országos Levéltár – MTA Történettudományi Intézet 2008.

Valentinelli, Joseph, ed. *Diplomatarium Portusnaonense*. Fontes Rerum Austriacarum. Zweite Abteilung. Diplomataria et Acta. XXIV. Band. Wien 1865.

Varjú, Elemér and Béla Iványi, eds. *Oklevéltár a Tomaj nemzetségbeli losonczi Bánffy család történetéhez I-II*. Budapest 1908-1928.

Wenzel, Gusztáv, ed. *Árpádkori új okmánytár I-XII*. Pest – Budapest 1860-1874.

Wenzel, Gusztáv, ed. „Marino Sanuto Világkrónikájának Magyarországot illető tudósításai”. I-III. *Magyar Történelmi Tár* XIV (1869): 1-282., XXIV (1877): 1-300., XXV (1878): 1-390.

Zahn, J(osef) v(on), ed. *Austro-Friulana. Sammlung von Actenstücken zur Geschichte des Conflictes Herzog Rudolfs IV von Österreich mit dem Patriarchate von Aquileja 1358-1365*. Fontes Rerum Austriacarum. Zweite Abteilung. Diplomataria et Acta. XL. Band. Wien 1877.

Zimmermann, Franz, et al. eds. *Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der Deutschen in Siebenbürgen I-VII*. Hermannstadt 1892-1991.

Secondary literature

Áldásy, Antal. “Batthyány Boldizsár és Benedek címeres levele 1500-ból [The Coat-of-Arms of Balthasar and Benedict Batthyány from 1500]”. *Turul* 12 (1894): 94-96.

Andrić, Stanko. „Benediktinski samostan Svete Margarete u Bijeli [The Monastery of Saint Marguerite et Bela]”. *Tkalčić*. Godišnjak društva za povjesnicu zagrebačke nadbiskupije 9. Zagreb, 2005: 9-122.

Andrić, Stanko. „Klaićev udio u rasprama Hrvatske i Mađarske historiografije [The Part of Klaić in the Field of Croatian and Hungarian Historiography]”. Posebni otisak iz zbornika radova Vjekoslav Klaić život i djelo. Zagreb – Slavonski Brod, 2000.

Andrić, Stanko. „Podgorje Papuka i Krndije u srednjem vijeku: prilozi za lokalnu povijest (prvi dio) [The Region at the Feet of the Papuk and Krndija Mountains in the Middle Ages: Contributions to Local History (First part)].” *Scrinia Slavonica* 8 (2008): 55-112.

Andrić, Stanko. „Podgorje Papuka i Krndije u srednjem vijeku: prilozi za lokalnu povijest (drugi dio).” *Scrinia Slavonica* 9 (2009): 57-98.

Bakács, István. *Hont vármegye Mohács előtt [The County of Hont before Mohács]*. Budapest: Akadémiai 1971.

Balog, Zdenko. *Križevačko-kalnička regija u srednjem vijeku [The Region of Körös-Kemlék in the Middle Ages]*. Križevci 2003.

Bedić, Marko. „Čupori Moslavački [The Csupor of Monoszló].” *Kaj – časopis za književnost, umjetnost i kultura*, 28/3 (1995): 53-67.

Békefi, Remig. *A pásztói apátság története 1190-1702 [The History of the Abbey of Pásztó]*. Budapest 1898.

Blazovich, László. „Szabadka földesurai a középkorban [The Lords of Szabadka in the Middle Ages].” In *Szabadka igazgatástörténetéből 1428-1918*. Edited by László Magyar and József Szabó. 33-44. Szabadka: Pannon Press, 1996.

Bónis, György. *A jogtudó értelmiség a Mohács előtti Magyarországon [The Juristic Elite in Hungary before 1526]*. Budapest: Akadémiai 1971.

Borsa, Iván. „A Gorbonoki, majd Belosovci Kerhen család történetéhez [On the History of the Gorbonoki, later Kerhen of Belosovc Family].” *Somogy megye múltjából. Levéltári Évkönyv* [separatum]. Kaposvár, 1991: 5-12.

Borsa, Iván. “Somogy középkori alispánjai. A Mohács előtti megyei archontológia ügye [The Medieval Alispánok of Somogy County. The Problem of County Archontologies in Pre-Mohács Hungary].” *Somogy megye múltjából* (Levéltári Évkönyv) 13. Edited by József Kanyar. 9-14. Kaposvár 1982.

Buturac, Josip. „Feudalna gospoštija i plemićki rod Budor [The Feudal Lordship and Noble Family Budor].” *Podravski zbornik* 15 (1989): 99-103.

Contamine, Philippe. *La noblesse au royaume de France de Philippe le Bel a Louis XII: Essai de synthese*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France 1999.

Csánki, Dezső. *Körösmegye a XV-ik században [The County of Körös in the 15th Century]*. Budapest: MTA 1893.

Csukovits, Enikő. „Egy nagy utazás résztvevői (Zsigmond király római kísérete) [The Participants of a Great Journey. The Entourage of King Sigismund at Rome]”. In *Tanulmányok Borsa Iván tiszteletére*. Edited by Enikő Csukovits. 11-35. Budapest: Magyar Országos Levéltár 1998.

Čuk, Juraj. „Podravina od Bednje do Vočinke i susjedna područja do polovice četrnaestoga vijeka (plemstvo – posjedi – uprava) [The Region along the Drava from Bednya to Atyina and the Neighbouring Territories until the Middle of the 14th Century (Nobility – Possessions – Administration)].” *Vjesnik Kraljevskog hrvatsko-slavonsko-dalmatinskog zemaljskog arkiva* 18 (1916): 169-232.

Dočkal, Kamilo. „Srednjovjekovna naselja oko Dobre Kuće [Medieval Settlements around Dobrukača].” *Starine JAZU* 48 (1958): 85-167.

Dočkal, Kamilo. „Srednjovjekovna naselja oko Streze [Medieval Settlements around Streza].” *Starine JAZU* 46 (1956): 145-202.

Draskóczy, István. *A tizenötödik század története [The History of the 15th Century]*. Budapest: Pannonica 2000.

Dvořáková, Daniela. *A lovag és királya. Stiborici Stibor és Luxemburgi Zsigmond [The Knight and his King. Stibor of Stiboric and Sigismund of Luxemburg]*. Pozsony: Kalligram 2009.

Dyer, Christopher. *Making a Living in the Middle Ages. The People of Britain 850-1520*. New Haven and London: Yale U. P. 2009.

Engel, Pál. „A magyar világi nagybirtok megoszlása a 15. században [The Distribution of the Landed Wealth of the Secular Nobility in 15th-Century Hungary] I-II.” In *Honor, vár, ispánság. Válogatott tanulmányok*. Edited by Enikő Csukovits. 13-72. Budapest: Osiris 2003.

Engel, Pál. *A nemesi társadalom a középkori Ung megyében [Noble Society in the County of Ung]*. Budapest: MTA Történettudományi Intézete 1998.

Engel, Pál. “A 14-15. századi bosnyák-magyar kapcsolatok kérdéséhez [On the Problem of Hungaro-Bosnian Relations in the 14th-15th Centuries].” In *Honor, vár, ispánság. Válogatott tanulmányok*. Edited by Enikő Csukovits. 494-511. Budapest: Osiris, 2003.

Engel, Pál. „Az ország újraegyesítése. I. Károly küzdelmei az oligarchák ellen (1310-1323) [The Reintegration of the Country. The Struggles of Charles I against the Oligarchs (1310-1323)].” In *Honor, vár, ispánság. Válogatott tanulmányok*. Edited by Enikő Csukovits. 320-408. Budapest: Osiris, 2003.

Engel, Pál. „Honor, vár, ispánság. Tanulmányok az Anjou-királyság kormányzati rendszeréről [Honor, Castle, Ispánság. Studies on the Structure of Government in Angevin Hungary].” In *Honor, vár, ispánság. Válogatott tanulmányok*. Edited by Enikő Csukovits. 101-161. Budapest: Osiris 2003.

Engel, Pál. „Hunyadi pályakezdése [The Beginnings of the Career of John Hunyadi].” In *Honor, vár, ispánság. Válogatott tanulmányok*. Edited by Enikő Csukovits. 512-526. Budapest: Osiris 2003.

Engel, Pál. “Királyi emberek Valkó megyében [Royal Men in the County of Valkó]. In *Honor, vár, ispánság. Válogatott tanulmányok*. Edited by Enikő Csukovits. 494-511. Budapest: Osiris, 2003.

Engel, Pál. *Királyi hatalom és arisztokrácia viszonya a Zsigmond-korban [The Relationship between the Royal Power and the Aristocracy in the Age of Sigismund]*. Budapest: Akadémiai 1977.

Engel, Pál. *Magyar középkori adattár. Középkori magyar genealógia [Hungarian Medieval Database, Medieval Hungarian Genealogies]*. CD-ROM. Budapest 2001.

Engel, Pál. *Magyarország világi archontológiája 1301-1457 [The Secular Archontology of Medieval Hungary]. I-II*. Budapest: MTA Történettudományi Intézete 1996.

Engel, Pál. „Néhány XIV. századi erdélyi alvajda származása [The Origins of Some Deputy Voevods of Transylvania]”. In *Emlékkönyv Jakó Zsigmond születésének nyolcvanadik évfordulójára*. Edited by András Kovács, Gábor Sipos and Sándor Tonk. 176-186. Kolozsvár/Cluj-Napoca 1996.

Engel, Pál. „Ozorai Pipo [Pipo of Ozora].” In *Honor, vár, ispánság. Válogatott tanulmányok*. Edited by Enikő Csukovits. 247-301. Budapest: Osiris 2003.

Engel, Pál. „Társadalom és politikai struktúra az Anjou-kori Magyarországon [Society and Political Structures in Angevin Hungary].” In *Honor, vár, ispánság. Válogatott tanulmányok*. Edited by Enikő Csukovits. 302-319. Budapest: Osiris 2003.

Engel, Pál. *The Realm of Saint Stephen. A History of Medieval Hungary 895-1526*. London, New York: I. B. Tauris 2001.

Engel, Pál, Gyuka Kristó, and András Kubinyi. *Magyarország története 1301-1526 [The History of Hungary 1301-1526]*. Budapest: Osiris 1998.

Erdélyi, Gabriella. *Egy kolostorper története [The History of a Monastery Process]*. Budapest: MTA Történettudományi Intézete 2005.

Fedeles, Tamás. „Az 1494/95-ös királyi büntetőhadjárat előzményei [The Precedents of the Royal Punitive Expedition of 1494/95].” In *Aktualitások a magyar középkorkutatásban*. Edited by Márta Font, Tamás Fedeles and Gergely Kiss. 277-291. Pécs, 2010.

Fógel, József. *II. Lajos udvartartása 1516-1526 [The Court of Louis II 1516-1526]*. Budapest 1917.

Fraknói, Vilmos. *Erdődi Bakócz Tamás élete 1442-1521 [The Life of Thomas Bakócz of Erdőd 1442-1521]*. Budapest 1889.

Fraknói, Vilmos. “Lónyay Albert zenggi kapitány velencei követségei [The Venetian Embassies of Albert Lónyay, Captain of Senj].” *Magyar Történelmi Tár XXII* (1877): 3-44.

Fraknói, Vilmos. “Magyarország és a cambrayi liga 1509-1511 [Hungary and the League of Cambay 1509-1511].” *Századok* 16 (1882): 177-201, 366-387, 705-727, 793-811.

Fraknói, Vilmos. “Mátyás király magyar diplomatái XIV. Ifjabb Vitéz János [The Hungarian Diplomats of King Matthias. John Vitéz the Younger].” *Századok* 33 (1899): 291-309.

Fügedi, Erik. „A Szentgyörgyi Vincze család [The Szentgyörgyi Vincze Family].” *A Veszprém megyei múzeumok közleményei* 11 (1972): 261-269.

Fügedi, Erik. *A 15. századi magyar arisztokrácia mobilitása [The Mobility of the Medieval Hungarian Aristocracy]*. Budapest 1970.

Fügedi, Erik. “A XV. századi magyar püspökök [The Hungarian Bishops in the 15th Century].” In *Kolduló barátok, polgárok, nemesek. Tanulmányok a magyar középkorról*. Budapest: Magvető 1981. 89-113.

Fügedi, Erik. *Az Elefánthyak. A középkori nemes és klánja [The Elefánthy Kindred. The Medieval Nobleman and his Clan]*. Budapest: Osiris 1999.

Given-Wilson, Chris. *The English Nobility in the Late Middle Ages*. London: Routledge 1996.

Grgin, Borislav. „Hrvatska historiografija o Požegi i Požeškoj županiji u razvijenom i kasnom srednjem vijeku [Croatian Historiography relating to Pozsega and the County of Pozsega in the High and Late Middle Ages].” *Scrinia Slavonica* 8 (2008): 113-132.

Grgin, Borislav. „The Ottoman influences on Croatia in the second half of the fifteenth century.” *Povijesni prilozi* 23 (2002): 87-103.

Griffiths, Ralph A. „The King’s Court during the Wars of the Roses. Continuities in an Age of Discontinuities”. In *Princes, Patronage and the Nobility: the Court at the Beginning of the Modern Age*. Edited by R. G. Asch and A. M. Birke. Oxford 1991.

Guenée, Bernard. *Between church and state: the lives of four French prelates in the late Middle Ages*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1991.

B. Halász, Éva. “Szlavón hercegi és báni ítélőmesterek a XIV. században [Ducal and Banal Prothonotaries of Slavonia in the 14th Century].” *Acta Universitatis Szegediensis. Acta Historica*. Tomus CXXX. Szeged 2009: 69-81.

Harriss, Gerald. *Shaping the Nation. England 1360-1461*. Oxford: Clarendon Press 2005.

Hegyí, Géza. „Bálványosvár és a nagypolitika (1456-1463). A Várdai és a losonci Dezsőfi család küzdelme a bálványosi uradalomért [The Castle of Bálványos and High Politics. The Struggle of the Várdai and Dezsőfi of Losonc Families for the Estate of Bálványos].” *Erdélyi Múzeum* 2005/3-4: 105-130.

Hermann, Zsuzsa. “Miképp került Divény vára a Balassák kezére? [How did the Castle of Divény Get into the Hands of the Balassa Family?].” *Levéltári Közlemények*, 63 (1992) 1-2: 61-70.

Holub, József. „A főispán és alispán viszonyának jogi természete [The Legal Nature of the Relationship between the *Főispán* and the *Alispán*].” In *Emlékkönyv Fejérpataky László életének hatvanadik évfordulója ünnepére*. 186-211. Budapest 1917.

Hóman, Bálint and Gyula Szekfü. *Magyar Történet (History of Hungary) vol. II*. Budapest 1936.

Horváth, Richárd. „A Felső Részek kapitánysága a Mátyás-korban [The Captainship of the Upper Parts in the Age of Matthias].” *Századok* 137 (2003): 929-954.

Horváth, Richárd. „Középkori kastélyépítési engedélyek Somogy megyéből [Medieval Authorisations of Castle Building from the County of Somogy].” In *Castrum. A Castrum Bene Egyesület hírlevele 1*. Edited by István Feld, Gábor Szatlóczky and György Domokos. 13-22. Budapest 2005.

Horváth, Richárd. “Várak és uraik a késő középkori Magyarországon. Vázlat a kutatás néhány lehetőségéről” [Castles and their Lords in Late Medieval Hungary. On the Possible Directions of Future Research].” In *Honoris causa. Tanulmányok Engel Pál tiszteletére*. Edited by Tibor Neumann and György Rácz. 63-104. Budapest-Piliscsaba: MTA Történettudományi Intézete – Pázmány Péter Katolikus Egyetem Bölcsészettudományi Kara, 2009.

Iványi, Béla. “Adalékok nemzetközi érintkezéseink történetéhez a Jagelló-korban [On the History of Hungarian Foreign Relations in the Jagello Period].” *Magyar Történelmi Társulat* 1906: 344-349.

Karácsonyi, János. *A magyar nemzetségek a XIV. század közepéig [The Hungarian Noble Kindreds until the Middle of the 14th Century]*. Budapest: MTA 1900.

Karácsonyi, János. „Katonai Becsületbíróság 1515-1516 [Military Court of Honour 1515-1516].” *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 4 (1891): 482-488.

Karácsonyi, János. *Szt. Ferencz rendjének története Magyarországon 1711-ig [The History of the Franciscan Order in Hungary until 1711] I-II*. Budapest: MTA 1922-1924.

Karbić, Marija. „Heiratsstrategien des Kleinadels von Turopolje (Slawonien) im späten Mittelalter.” *East Central Europe* 29/1-2 (2002): 167-176.

Karbić, Marija. „Od hrvatskog sitnog plemića do ugarskog velikaša i hrvatskog bana: Damjan Horvat od Litve i njegova obitelj [From a Petty Croatian Nobleman into a Hungarian Baron and Ban of Croatia: Damján Horváth of Litva and his Kindred].” In *Croato-Hungarica. Uz 900 godina hrvatsko-mađarskih povijesnih veza. A horvát-magyar történelmi kapcsolatok 900 éve alkalmából*. Edited by Milka Jauk-Pinhak, Csaba Kiss Gy. and István Nyomárkay. 119-125. Zagreb 2002.

Karbić, Marija. „Posjedi plemićkog roda Borića bana do sredine XIV stoljeća [The Possessions of the Noble Kindred of Borić Ban].” *Scrinia Slavonica* 5 (2005): 48-61.

Klaić, Vjekoslav. “Plemići Svetački ili nobiles de Zempche (997-1719) [The Noble Family of Szencse].” *Rad JAZU*, knjiga 199 (1913): 1-66.

Klaić, Vjekoslav. *Povijest Hrvata [The History of Croatia]*. 4. Zagreb: MH 1974.

Koppány, Tibor. *A középkori Magyarország kastélyai [The Castella in Medieval Hungary]*. Budapest: Akadémiai 1999.

Köblös, József. *Az egyházi középréteg Mátyás és a Jagellók korában [The Ecclesiastical Middle Class in the Age of Matthias and the Jagellonians]*. Budapest: MTA Történettudományi Intézete 1994.

Kristó, Gyula. *A vármegyék kialakulása Magyarországon [The Formation of Counties in Hungary]*. Budapest: Magvető 1988.

Kubinyi, András. „A kaposújvári uradalom és a Somogy megyei familiárisok szerepe Újlaki Miklós birtokpolitikájában [The Role of the Estate of Kaposújvár and the Familiares in Somogy county in the Territorial Policies of Nicholas Újlaki].” *Somogy megye múltjából. Levéltári Évkönyv*. Edited by József Kanyar. 3-44. Kaposvár, 1973.

Kubinyi, András. “A kincstári személyzet a XV. század második felében [The Personnel of the Treasury in the Second Half of the 15th Century].” *Tanulmányok Budapest Múltjából* 12 (1957): 25-46.

Kubinyi, András. „A királyi tanács köznemesi ülnökei a Jagelló-korban [The Noble Assessors of the Royal Council in the Jagello Period].” In *Mályusz Elemér emlékkönyv*. Edited by Éva H. Balázs, Erik Fügedi and Ferenc Maksay. 257-268. Budapest 1984.

Kubinyi, András. „A királyi titkárok II. Lajos király uralkodása idejében [The Royal Secretaries during the Reign of King Louis II].” *Gesta. Miskolci történész folyóirat* VI (2006) 1: 3-22.

Kubinyi, András. „A középbirtokos nemesség Mohács előestéjén [The Nobility of Middling Wealth on the Eve of Mohács].” In *Magyarország társadalma a török kiűzésének előestéjén [The Society of Hungary on the Eve of the Expulsion of the Ottomans]*. Edited by Ferenc Szvircsek. 5-24. Salgótarján 1984.

Kubinyi, András. „A Mátyás-kori államszervezet [The Government of Hungary under King Matthias].” In *Hunyadi Mátyás. Emlékkönyv Mátyás király halálának 500. évfordulójára*. Edited by Gyula Rázsó and László V. Molnár. 53-147. Budapest: Zrínyi 1990.

Kubinyi, András. “A mohácsi csata és előzményei [The Battle of Mohács and its Antecedents].” *Századok* 115 (1981): 66-107.

Kubinyi, András. “A Szávaszentdemeter – Nagyolaszi győzelem 1523-ban. Adatok Mohács előzményeihez [The Victory of Szávaszentdemeter – Nagyolaszi. On the Precedents of Mohács].” In *Nándorfehérvártól Mohácsig. A Mátyás- és a Jagelló-kor hadtörténete*. Budapest: Argumentum 2007: 121-150.

Kubinyi, András. „Bárok a királyi tanácsban Mátyás és II. Ulászló idejében [Barons in the Royal Council in the Time of Kings Matthias and Wladislaw II]”. *Századok* 122 (1988): 147-212.

Kubinyi, András. „Ernuszt Zsigmond pécsi püspök rejtélyes halála és hagyatékának sorsa [The Mysterious Death of Sigismund Ernuszt, Bishop of Pécs, and the Fate of his Inheritance]”. *Századok* 135 (2001): 301-361.

Kubinyi, András. „Két sorsdöntő esztendő (1490-1491) [Two Decisive Years (1490-1491)].” *Történelmi Szemle* XXXIII (1991) 1-2: 1-54.

Kubinyi, András. *Matthias Rex*. Budapest: Balassi 2008.

Kubinyi, András. *Mátyás király [King Matthias of Hungary]*. Budapest: Vince 2001.

Kubinyi, András. „Szalkai László esztergomi érsek politikai szereplése [The Political Activity of László Szalkai, Archbishop of Esztergom].” In *Főpapok, egyházi intézmények és vallásosság a középkori Magyarországon*. Budapest 1999: 147-160.

Kubinyi, András. „Vitéz János és Janus Pannonius politikája Mátyás uralkodása idején [The Policies of John Vitéz and Janus Pannonius during the Reign of King Matthias].” In *Humanista műveltség Pannóniában*. Edited by István Bartók, László Jankovits and Gábor Kecskeméti. 7-26. Pécs 2000.

Lakatos, Bálint. “Kálnai Imre főesperesi és királyi titkári kinevezése (1523-1525). Adalékok a pápaság magyar személyi politikájához Mohács előtt [The Appointment of Emeric Kálnai as Archdeacon and Royal Secretary. On the Personal Politics of the Papacy in Hungary before 1526]”. *Századok* 144 (2010): 411-431.

Lővei, Pál. “Az ország nagyjainak és előkelőinek 1402. évi oklevelén függő pecsétek [The Seals Attached to the Charter of the Hungarian Barons and Nobles Issued in 1402].” In *Honoris causa. Tanulmányok Engel Pál tiszteletére*. Edited by Tibor Neumann and György Rácz. 149-182. Budapest-Piliscsaba: MTA Történettudományi Intézete – Pázmány Péter Katolikus Egyetem Bölcsészettudományi Kara, 2009.

Maček, Pavao and Jurković, Ivan. *Rodoslov plemića i baruna Kastelanovića od Svetog Duha (od 14. do 17. stoljeca)* [The Family of the Nobles and Barons Kasztellánfi of Szentlélek]. Slavonski Brod 2009.

Magyarország története 1526-1686 [The History of Hungary 1526-1686]. I-II. Edited by Zsigmond Pál Pach et al. Budapest: Akadémiai 1987.

Magyarország történeti kronológiája I. A kezdetektől 1526-ig [The Historical Chronology of Hungary I. From the Beginning to 1526]. Edited by László Solymosi. Budapest: Akadémiai 1981.

Mályusz, Elemér. „A magyar rendi állam Hunyadi korában [The Hungarian Corporate State in the Age of Hunyadi].” *Századok* 91 (1957): 46-123, 529-602.

Mályusz, Elemér. „A négy Tallóci fivér [The Four Tallóci Brothers].” *Történelmi Szemle* 23 (1980) 4: 531-576.

Mályusz, Elemér. *Egyházi társadalom a középkori Magyarországon [Ecclesiastical Society in Medieval Hungary]*. Budapest: Akadémiai 1971.

Mályusz, Elemér. „Zsigmond király központosítási törekvései Magyarországon [The Efforts of King Sigismund at Centralisation in Hungary].” In *Klió szolgálatában. Válogatott tanulmányok.* Edited by István Soós. 177-205. Budapest: MTA Történettudományi Intézete 2003.

Mályusz, Elemér. *Zsigmond király uralma Magyarországon 1387-1437 [The Reign of King Sigismund in Hungary 1387-1437]*. Budapest: Gondolat 1984.

Németh, Péter. *A középkori Szatmár megye települései a XV. század elejéig [The Settlements of Szatmár County until the Beginning of the 15th Century]*. Nyíregyháza 2008.

Neumann, Tibor. *A Korlátköviék. Egy előkelő család története és politikai szereplése a 15-16. században [The Korlátkövi. The History and Political Role of an Illustrious Noble Family in the 15th and 16th Centuries]*. Győr: Győri Egyházmegyei Levéltár 2007.

Neumann, Tibor. „Bátori István politikai szerepe II. Ulászló uralkodása alatt [The Political Role of Stephen Bátori during the Reign of Wladislaw II].” *Szabolcs-Szatmár-Beregi Szemle* XLII (2009) 1: 83-127.

Neumann, Tibor. “Békekötés Pozsonyban – országgyűlés Budán. A Jagelló-Habsburg kapcsolatok egy fejezete (1490-1492). Első közlemény [Peace Treaty at Pressburg – General Assembly at Buda. A Chapter in the History of Habsburg-Jagello Relationship. Part one].” *Századok* 144 (2010): 335-372.

Tibor Neumann, “Békekötés Pozsonyban – országgyűlés Budán. A Jagelló-Habsburg kapcsolatok egy fejezete (1490-1492) [Peace Treaty at Pressburg – General Assembly at Buda. A Chapter in the History of Habsburg-Jagello Relationship. Part two] *Századok* 145 (2011): 293-347.

Neumann, Tibor. „Telekpusztásodás a késő középkori Magyarországon [The Abandonment of Tenant Sessions in Late Medieval Hungary].” *Századok* 137 (2003): 849-884.

Nógrády, Árpád. „A földesúri adó és az adózás elve a késő középkori Magyarországon [Seigniorial Tax and the Concept of Taxation in Late Medieval Hungary].” In *Gazdaság és gazdálkodás a*

középkori Magyarországon: gazdaságtörténet, anyagi kultúra, régészet. Edited by András Kubinyi, József Laszlovszky and Péter Szabó. 365-376. Budapest: Martin Opitz 2008.

Nógrády, Árpád. „A Szerdahelyiek és a rojcsai prediálisok [The Szerdahelyi Family and the Prediales of Rojcsa].” *Történelmi Szemle* XLIII (2001) 1-2: 73-82.

Nógrády, Árpád. „Mennyit ér a kegyelemlevél? [What is a Letter of Pardon Worth?].” In *Honoris causa. Tanulmányok Engel Pál tiszteletére*. Edited by Tibor Neumann and György Rácz. 235-249. Budapest-Piliscsaba: MTA Történettudományi Intézete – Pázmány Péter Katolikus Egyetem Bölcsészettudományi Kara, 2009.

Nyáry, Albert br. “Krisztallóci Tarkasis Józsa (sic) címere [The Coat-of-arms of Józsa Turk of Kristallóc].” *Turul* 2 (1884): 156-158.

Pálffy, Géza. *A tizenhatodik század története [The History of the 16th Century]*. Budapest: Pannonica 2000.

Pálffy, Géza. „Egy szlavóniai köznemesi família két ország szolgálatában: a Budrovci Budor család a XV-XVIII. Században [A Slavonian Noble Family in the Service of Two Countries. The Budor of Budorc Family in the 15th to 18th Centuries].” *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 115 (2002/4): 923-1007.

Pálosfalvi, Tamás. „A Rozgonyiak és a polgárháború (1440-1444) [The Rozgonyi Family and the Civil War].” *Századok* 137 (2003): 897-928.

Pálosfalvi, Tamás. „A Szencsei és Pekri családok a 15. században és a 16. század első harmadában [The Szencsei and Pekri Families in the 15th Century and the First Part of the 16th Century].” *Turul* 86 (2010): 65-78.

Pálosfalvi, Tamás. „Bajnai Both András és a szlavón bánóság. Szlavónia, Európa és a törökök, 1504-1513 [Andrew Both of Bajna and the Banate of Slavonia. Slavonia, Europe and the Turks 1504-1513]”. In *Honoris causa. Tanulmányok Engel Pál tiszteletére*. Edited by Tibor Neumann and György Rácz. 251-300. Budapest-Piliscsaba: MTA Történettudományi Intézete – Pázmány Péter Katolikus Egyetem Bölcsészettudományi Kara, 2009.

Pálosfalvi, Tamás. „Cilleiek és Tallóciak: küzdelem Szlavóniáért (1440-1448) [The Counts of Cilli and the Tallóci: Struggle for Slavonia (1440-1448)].” *Századok* 134 (2000): 45-98.

Pálosfalvi, Tamás. „Die Familie Tallóci im Mittelalter“. In *Lajos Thallóczy der Historiker und Politiker*. Edited by Dževad Juzbašić and Imre Röss. 183-190. Sarajevo – Budapest 2010.

Pálosfalvi, Tamás. „Grebeni Hermanfi László alnádor. Egy tekintélyes szlavón köznemesi politikus pályaképe. Első közlemény [Deputy Palatine Ladislav Hermanfi of Greben. The Career of an Influential Slavonian Noble Politician. Part One].” *Századok* 141 (2007): 843-877.

Pálosfalvi, Tamás. „Grebeni Hermanfi László alnádor. Egy tekintélyes szlavón köznemesi politikus pályaképe. Második közlemény [Deputy Palatine Ladislav Hermanfi of Greben. The Career of an Influential Slavonian Noble Politician. Part Two].” *Századok* 142 (2008) 267-313.

Pálosfalvi, Tamás. “Vitovec János. Egy zsoldoskarrier a 15. századi Magyarországon [John Vitovec. A Mercenary Career in 15th-Century Hungary].” *Századok* 135 (2001): 429-472.

- Pauler, Gyula. *A magyar nemzet története az Árpád-házi királyok alatt [The History of the Hungarian Nation under the Kings of the Árpád Dynasty] I-II*. Budapest 1899.
- Pavleš, Ranko. „Apatovec, Cerovo Brdo i neki susjedni posjedi u srednjem vijeku [Apatovec, Cerovo Brdo and some Neighbouring Possessions in the Middle Ages].” *Cris* 2004/6: 35-46.
- Pavleš, Ranko. *Koprivničko i đurđevačko vlastelinstvo. Povijest, topografija, organizacija [The Lordship of Kapronca and Szentgyörgy. History, Topography, Organisation]*. Koprivnica, 2001.
- Pavleš, Ranko. „Srednjovjekovna topografija Cirkvena, Žabne i njihove okolice [The Medieval Topography of Cirkvena, Žabna and their Surroundings].” *Cris* 2009/1: 17-29.
- Petrić, Hrvoje. „Ludbreg i ludbreska podravina u srednjem vijeku [Ludbreg and its Region along the Drava River in the Middle Ages].” *Podravski zbornik* 21 (1995): 29-37.
- Povijest Hrvata. Prva knjiga. Srednji vijek*. Edited by Franjo Šanjek and Franko Mirošević. Zagreb: Školska Knjiga 2003.
- Prestwich, Michael. *Plantagenet England 1225-1360*. Oxford: OUP 2005.
- Rácz, György. „Egy főnemesi család eredete és „pályakezdése”. A Battyányiak az Anjou- és Zsigmond korban [The Origins and the Early Career of an Aristocratic Family. The Batthyány in the age of the Angevins and Sigismund].” In *Honoris causa. Tanulmányok Engel Pál tiszteletére*. Edited by Tibor Neumann and György Rácz. 301-357. Budapest-Piliscsaba: MTA Történettudományi Intézete – Pázmány Péter Katolikus Egyetem Bölcsészettudományi Kara, 2009.
- Rady, Martyn. *Nobility, Land and Service in Medieval Hungary*. London: Palgrave 2000.
- F. Romhányi, Beatrix. *Kolostorok és társaskáptalanok a középkori Magyarországon [Monasteries and Collegiate Chapters in Medieval Hungary]*. Pytheas 2000.
- Schnerb, Bertrand. „Noblesse et pouvoir princier dans les pays bourguignons au temps de Jean sans Peur (1404-1419).” In *Noblesse et états princiers en Italie et en France au XVe siècle*. Edited by Marco Gentile and Pierre Savy. 11-28. École Française de Rome 2009.
- Schönherr, Gyula. *Hunyadi Corvin János*. Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat 1894.
- Simon, Zsolt. „A zágrábi pénzverde 1525. évi számadása [The Accounts of the Mint of Zagreb from 1525].” *Századok* 144 (2010): 433-464.
- Sonnevend, Gergely. “Ifjabb Vitéz János veszprémi püspök [Bishop John Vitéz the Younger].” In *Veszprém reneszánsza 2008*. Edited by László Kilián and Pál Rainer. 121-174. Veszprém, 2008.
- Soós, Ferenc. *Magyarország kincstartói 1340-1540 [The Treasurers of Hungary]*. Budapest: Argumentum 1999.
- Süttő, Szilárd. *Anjou-Magyarország alkonya. Magyarország politikai története Nagy Lajostól Zsigmondig, az 1384-1387. évi belviszályok okmánytárával [The Waning of Angevin Hungary. The Political History of Hungary from Louis the Great to Sigismund, with the Charters relating to the Internal Strife in 1384-1387] I-II*. Szeged: Belvedere Meridionale 2003.

Szabó, Dezső. *A magyar országgyűlések története II. Lajos korában [The History of the Hungarian Diets in the Time of Louis II]*. Budapest 1909.

Szekfű, Gyula. *Serviensek és familiarisok [Servientes and Familiares]*. Értekezések a történeti tudományok köréből 23/3. Budapest 1912.

C. Tóth, Norbert. „A Gordovai család vagyoni helyzete 1424-ben [The Landed Wealth of the Fánecs of Gordova Family in 1424].” In *Várak, templomok, ispotályok. Tanulmányok a magyar középkorról*. Edited by Tibor Neumann. 271-290. Argumentum 2004.

C. Tóth, Norbert. “Ki kicsoda az ecsedi Bátori családban? A Bátori család ecsedi ágának tagjai 1377-1541 [Who is who in the Bátori of Ecsed család? The Members of the Bátori Family from the Ecsedi Brancs 1377-1541].” *Szabolcs-Szatmár-Beregi Szemle* (2009/1): 5-32.

Norbert C. Tóth, *Szabolcs megye működése a Zsigmond-korban [The Functioning of the Authorities of Szabolcs County in the Age of Sigismund]*. Nyíregyháza 2008.

C. Tóth, Norbert, „Vingárti Geréb Péter országbíró ítéletlevele 1498-ból [A Judgement by Judge Royal Peter Geréb of Vingárt from 1498] *Levéltári Közlemények* 73 (2002) 1-2:131-175.

Tringli, István. „Az 1481. évi szlavóniai közgyűlés [The Slavonian Judicial Assembly in 1481]. In *Tanulmányok Borsa Iván tiszteletére*. Edited by Enikő Csukovits. 291-318. Budapest: Magyar Országos Levéltár 1998.

Tringli, István. *Az újkor hajnala. Magyarország története 1440-1541 [The Dawn of the Modern Age. A History of Hungary 1440-1541]*. Budapest: Vince 2003.

Tringli, István. “Pest megye a késő középkorban [The County of Pest in the Late Middle Ages].” In *Pest megye monográfiája I/2. A honfoglalástól 1686-ig*. Edited by Attila Zsoldos. 75-194. Budapest 2001.

Varga, Szabolcs. *Szlavónia berendezkedése a késő középkor és kora újkor hajnalán [The Government of Slavonia at the Dawn of the Modern Age]*. Unpublished PhD dissertation. Pécs: JPTE 2008.

Wertner, Mór. *A magyar nemzetségek a XIV. század közepéig I*. Temesvár 1891.

Wertner, Mór. „Az Árpádkori bánok. Meghatározások és helyreigazítások [The Bans in the Árpád Age. Definitions and Corrections].” *Századok* 43 (1909): 377-415, 472-494, 555-570, 656-668, 747-757.

Wertner, Mór. „Két Árpádkori országnagy családja” [The Families of Two Barons from the Árpád Age] *Magyar Történelmi Tár* 1899. 78-84.

Wickham, Chris. *Framing the Early Middle Ages. Europe and the Mediterranean, 400-800*. Oxford: OUP 2005.

Winter, Marija. „Ludbreški grad i njegovi gospodari [The Town of Ludbreg and its Lords].” *Podravski zbornik* 6 (1980): 357-369.

Zsoldos, Attila. *Az Árpádok és alattvalóik. Magyarország története 1301-ig [The Árpáds and their Subjects. A History of Hungary until 1301]*. Debrecen: Csokonai 1997.

Zsoldos, Attila. *Az Árpádok és asszonyaik. A királynéi intézmény az Árpádok korában [The Árpáds and their Women. The Institution of Queenship in the Age of the Árpáds]*. Budapest: MTA Történettudományi Intézete 2005.

Zsoldos, Attila. *Családi ügy. IV. Béla és István ifjabb király viszálya az 1260-as években [Family Affair. The Conflict of King Bela IV and Stephen the Young King in the 1260s]*. Budapest: MTA Történettudományi Intézete 2007.

Zsoldos, Attila. „Egész Szlavónia bánja [The Ban of Whole Slavonia].” In *Analecta medievalia I. Tanulmányok a középkorról*. Edited by Tibor Neumann. 269-281. Budapest-Piliscsaba: Pázmány Péter Katolikus Egyetem 2001.