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The Art of Love in Late Medieval Bone Saddles

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by

Virág Somogyvári

(Hungary)

Thesis submitted to the Department of Medieval Studies,
Central European University, Budapest, in partial fulfillment of the requirements
of the Master of Arts degree in Medieval Studies.

Accepted in conformance with the standards of the CEU.

Chair, Examination Committee

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I, the undersigned, **Virág Somogyvári**, candidate for the MA degree in Medieval Studies, declare herewith that the present thesis is exclusively my own work, based on my research and only such external information as properly credited in notes and bibliography. I declare that no unidentified and illegitimate use was made of the work of others, and no part of the thesis infringes on any person's or institution's copyright. I also declare that no part of the thesis has been submitted in this form to any other institution of higher education for an academic degree.

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Abstract

The thesis deals with a little known, albeit particular and unique Central European object group from the fifteenth-century. A great number of wood saddles covered with bone panels survived from the first part of the fifteenth-century and are dispersed in museums all over the world. Despite their particularity, these special parade objects have not gained enough attention in scholarship which can be explained by the main issue related to them: the lack of written sources. Therefore we cannot assert when and where exactly they were made, or their original purpose.

The aim of the thesis is to examine a recent idea connected to the purpose of the saddles, namely that they were used during marriage processions. In order to find an answer to this question, in my thesis I examine the topic from different angles: their decoration and their possible cultural context. Accordingly, my thesis is divided into four main chapters. In the first chapter, I give an overview of the most important issues about the object group. In the second chapter, I reveal the dominating iconography, which is connected to love. The third chapter examines the inscriptions which usually have some love content and the initials which may refer to concrete couples. Finally, I place these special objects in their probable cultural context: in late medieval marriage rituals.

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Introduction

Fifteenth-century bone saddles form a particularly unique and special object group in medieval Central European history. There are thirty-three parade saddles dispersed in museums of all over the world from Budapest to New York. Despite their particularity and uniqueness they have a marginal position in scholarship. Several issues occur in connection with these special objects, for which there are no convincing answers because of the lack of written sources. These problems include their place and time of origin, their original purpose, and their use.

In the twentieth-century, a theory emerged that all of the saddles were made for the Dragon Order of the Holy Roman emperor, Sigismund.¹ However, recently a new idea has appeared regarding the original purpose and function of the saddles, namely that they were used during marriage ceremonies. Benedetta Chiesi suggests that these saddles were used in tournaments and parades as well as in marriage ceremonies, more precisely during the procession of *domumductio*, whereby the bride was led from the parental house to her new husband's house. This procession symbolized the change of the bride's status and it was also a possibility to represent the wealth of the family by showing the dowry.²

The main goal of the thesis is to examine this new marriage theory, and to find an answer to the question of whether the fifteenth-century bone saddles were made for wedding purposes. Understanding the function of the saddles may shed light on their original purpose and reveal a typical Central European tradition.

¹ Géza Nagy, "Hadtörténeti ereklyék a Magyar Nemzeti Múzeumban: Első közlemény," [Relics of military history in the Hungarian National Museum: First report], *Hadtörténeti Közlemények* 11 (1910): 232; Kornél Divald, *A Magyar iparművészet története* (Budapest: Szent István Társulat, 1929), 47-48; Stephen V. Grancsay, "A Medieval Sculptured Saddle," *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* 36 (1941): 76.

² Benedetta Chiesi, "Le pouvoir s'exerce à cheval," in *Voyager au Moyen Age* [Exhibition catalog], ed. Benedetta Chiesi et al. (Paris: Musée de Cluny - Réunion des musées nationaux, 2014), 101.

The thesis consists of four main parts. In the first part I give an overview about the previous scholarship and the most important issues connected to the bone saddles, that is their classification in contemporary saddle types, the connections between the bone saddles within the object group, their existence in written sources, the place and time of their origin, the question of their purpose, and their afterlife, as well as their relation to other bone objects of the period.

The next three main chapters cover three main arguments in favor of the idea that the saddles were made for weddings. Therefore, in the second chapter I examine the objects from an art historical perspective, which entails an iconographical description and an analysis of the scenes which have direct or hidden love content. I will also make an attempt to find the origins of some depictions in courtly literature. In the third chapter, the inscriptions incised into the saddles are reviewed: the long inscription fragments as well as their possible parallels in literature and the initials which perhaps refer to actual persons and couples. In the fourth chapter, I will place the saddles in their cultural context, in the environment of late medieval wedding rituals and ceremonies. Throughout the whole thesis, from time to time there will be a recurring point. I will compare the saddles with another media, the so-called marriage caskets and bridal boxes. These wedding-related objects may well be the material, iconographical, and also ceremonial antecedents and parallels to the saddles themselves.

Previous Scholarship

Despite their particularity, bone saddles have not received enough attention in historiography. Mostly articles, catalog entries have been written since the late nineteenth-century. These works usually come from the field of art history, and focus on one or two saddles, but a comprehensive dissertation comprising all of the saddles is still missing.

One part of scholarship is confined to annotated lists of the saddles.³ The most recent list of the saddles was made by Mária Verő, in the catalogue of the great exhibition of *Sigismund Rex et imperator* in 2006, in which she assembled a comprehensive and critically reviewed list of twenty-eight saddles.⁴ This is the most complete list of the saddles up to this point, however, I have augmented Verő's list with new items (see Catalogue).⁵ The online database of the Courtauld Institute of Art — although it is mainly dedicated to ivories — also includes twenty-one saddles. This database is particularly important because it provides the most up-to-date information about the pieces, especially the bibliography, and high-quality pictures.⁶

The first dissertation that not simply listed but also interpreted the saddles was written by the prominent character of the late nineteenth-century Vienna school of art history, Julius von Schlosser.⁷ In his work, Schlosser reviews the saddles he knew of and makes their detailed description including iconography, inscriptions and provenance. In his second work about the saddles he connects the saddles to the Embriachi-workshop of Venice, suggesting that all of them were made in the workshop but by different masters.⁸

Schlosser's pioneering work seemed to remain unnoticed, and bone saddles aroused interest again only towards the end of the twentieth-century. From this time onwards, there are articles, catalogue entries of one or two saddles with different kinds of interpretation. Éva Kovács in

³ Sir Guy Francis Laking, *A Record of European Armour and Arms through Seven Centuries*, pt. 3 (London: G. Bell and sons, 1920); István Genton, "Monumenti artistici ungheresi all'estero," *Acta Historiae Artium* 16 (1970): 5-36; Lionello Giorgio Boccia, *L'Armeria del Museo Civico Medievale di Bologna* (Busto Arsizio: Bramante, 1991)

⁴ Mária Verő, "Bemerkungen zu den Beinsätteln aus der Sigismundzeit," in *Sigismundus rex et imperator. Kunst und Kultur zur Zeit Sigismunds von Luxemburg, 1387–1437*, ed. Imre Takács (Budapest: Szépművészeti Múzeum, 2006), 270-78.

⁵ Bone saddle, Art Institute Chicago, George F. Harding Collection (Cat. 21); Saddle in unknown location (Cat. 29). According to an old photo I found in the documentation of the Art Object Department at the Musée du Louvre, it was sold in an auction in Perugia; a wooden copy of the Trivulzio Saddle (Cat. 30); and two wooden copies of the Possenti Saddle (Cat. 27 and Cat. 28). I thank Alice M. Choyke who drew my attention to these two latter.

⁶ Courtauld Institute of Art, *Gothic Ivories Project* [GIP].

⁷ Julius von Schlosser, "Elfenbeinsättel des ausgehenden Mittelalters," *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des Allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses* 15 (1894): 260-94.

⁸ Julius von Schlosser, "Die Werkstatt der Embriachi in Venedig," *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des Allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses* 20 (1899): 220-82.

her catalogue entry about the Jankovich Saddle argues for the French origin of the bone saddles based on sources from French courtly literature.⁹ However, courtly literature is hardly the acceptable as concrete evidence for the origin of the saddles.

Two of the most outstanding articles about the subject were written by János Eisler in 1977 and 1979.¹⁰ Eisler reexamines the tendencies that appeared in scholarship in connection with the saddles which — because of the lack of sources — were not relevant enough. Accordingly, he refuses the widespread theory about the connection of the saddles with Sigismund and the Dragon Order and, based on stylistic analysis, he also gives a possible date and location of the saddles in the Hungarian National Museum.¹¹

In 2014, in the exhibition catalogue of the *Voyager au Moyen Age* of the Musée de Cluny, Benedetta Chiesi suggested in connection with the two saddles of the Bargello Museum that this type of saddles were used during marriage processions.¹²

In 2016, I offered a new interpretation about the iconography of the three saddles in the Hungarian National Museum, introducing a Middle High German handbook, *Der Welsche Gäst* (The Italian guest) by Thomasin von Zirclaria (c1186-1259), as the possible textual and pictorial root of some iconographical scenes.¹³

⁹ According to Kovács, this very special technique—saddles covered with bone panels—originally came from Paris, and the surviving saddles are later variants of the French ones. She gives examples from epic poetry in which the authors writes about saddles beautifully decorated with ivory, fur, and precious stones. Kovács Éva, “Dísznyereg Sárkányrenddel” [Parade saddle with the emblem of Dragon Order], in *Művészet Zsigmond király korában 1387-1437* [Art in the time of King Sigismund] [Exhibition catalog], vol. 2 (Budapest: Budapesti Történeti Múzeum 1987), 83-85.

¹⁰ János Eisler, “Zu den Fragen der Beinsättel des Ungarischen Nationalmuseums I.,” *Folia Archaeologica* 28 (1977): 189-210; and “Zu den Fragen der Beinsättel des Ungarischen Nationalmuseums II”, *Folia Archaeologica* 30 (1979): 205-48.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Chiesi, “Le pouvoir s’exerce à cheval”, 101.

¹³ Virág Somogyvári, “Zsigmond-kori csontnyergetek a Magyar Nemzeti Múzeumban” [Fifteenth-century bone Saddles in the Hungarian National Museum, Budapest], M.A. diss., Eötvös Loránd University of Budapest, 2016.

Chapter 1 - The object group

Saddle types

Traditionally in scholarship two types of saddles of the Middle Ages are distinguished: the Eastern types (*Bocksättel*) and the Western types (*Krippensättel*) (Figure 3). Structurally, the Eastern types are lower with two rounded cantles and pommels (see Glossary). Bertrandon de la Brocquière reports from a tournament of the Buda Castle in 1432 that men ride low saddles on low horses which clearly shows who is the best knight among them.¹⁴ The saddles reported by Brocquière could be similar to the surviving tournament saddles from the court of Maximilian I, which also follow this low construction. These saddles were made of light birch wood in order to be as light as possible, around 2.6 kg (Figure 4).¹⁵ The saddle of the bronze statue of Saint George by Martin and George of Kolozsvár is described as an Eastern, even Hungarian type in saddle historiography (Figure 5).¹⁶

As opposed to this, the Western type has higher, chair-back-like cantles which encompass the body of the rider. This kind of structure is more suited for knights with heavy armour, the wide pommel plates protect the legs, and the cantles support the back of the rider.¹⁷ Nevertheless

¹⁴ “Et jousta le filz dudit grant conte' en basses selles sur petis chevaux à la guise du pays, qui est belle chose à voir et congoist on bien ceulx qui sesçavent bien tenir sur la selle.” Charles Schefer ed. *Le voyage d'outremer de Bertrandon de la Broquière: Premier conseiller de Philippe le Bon, duc de Bourgogne*, (Paris: Leroux, 1892), 238, accessed April 24, 2017, <https://archive.org/stream/levoyagedoutreme00labruoft#page/n9/mode/2up>

¹⁵ Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien “Turniersattel, vom Turnierhof Maximilians I (1459-1519)” accessed 28 April, 2017, www.khm.at/de/object/796301da74/

¹⁶ Ferenc Temesváry, *Fegyverkincsek a Magyar Nemzeti Múzeumban* [Weapon treasures in the Hungarian National Museum] (Budapest: Helikon, 1995), 8; Imre Gráfik, *A nyereg* [The saddle], A Néprajzi Múzeum tárgykatalógusai 6 (Budapest: Néprajzi Múzeum, 2002), 26; Gyula László, *Kolozsvári Márton es György Szent-György szobrának lószerszámja* [The saddlery of the Saint George statue by Martin and George of Kolozsvár] (Kolozsvár, 1943), 76; János Kalmár, *Régi magyar fegyverek* [Old Hungarian weapons]. (Budapest: Natura, 1971), 337.

¹⁷ Gráfik, *A nyereg*, 17-26; Temesváry, *Díszes nyergek, lószerszámok*, 8.

these cantles could also cause injuries on the back of the knight, since it could be hit by the opponent's lance against the high chair-back like cantle (Figure 9).¹⁸

A similar kind of distinction can be made related to the structure and shape of the bone saddles. Accordingly, twenty-one saddles show similarities to the Eastern saddles, while three saddles are more similar to the Western types. Mária Verő in her list clearly distinguishes these two types identifying the first group as *Bocksättel* and the second one as *Krippensättel*. However, some scholars describe the Eastern types of the bone saddles as transitional forms: which means that they are between the two main types.¹⁹ Since the pommels of the saddles of this first group in most of the cases are higher than the cantles, unlike in the case of the Saint George statue, it is worth considering this idea as well.

The so-called Hussar Saddle (Husarischer Sattel) of Maximilian I has two rounded — heart-shaped — cantles, and high pommel which make its character similar to the Eastern type bone saddles.²⁰ (Figure 6) The characteristic shape of the first group — the low rounded double cantles and the high pommel — can be found in later periods, among the so-called Cuman Saddles or Füred Saddles, which also have low rounded cantle and high pommel.²¹

For the sake of comprehensibility I keep the traditional classification of Eastern and Western types. In the following subchapter I present one example of both groups in order to give a clear picture of their construction and appearance.

¹⁸ Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien, "Turniersattel, vom Turnierhof Maximilians I (1459-1519)"

¹⁹ According to Ferenc Temesváry, Imre Gráfik and Tibor S. Kovács they are transitional types. Temesváry, *Díszes nyergek, lószerszámok*, 9; Gráfik, *A nyereg*, 27; and information by Tibor S. Kovács.

²⁰ Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien, "Husarischer Sattel," accessed April 28, 2017, www.khm.at/de/object/8f863291ef/

²¹ Gráfik, *A nyereg*, 26.

Eastern type: Jankovich Saddle

The Jankovich Saddle (Cat. 8), similarly to the other Eastern saddles, was made according to the following method: its base was made of beech-wood covered with birch bark on the bottom.²² The lower side of the base was covered with leather on which the bone panels were mounted with bone-rivets, or in some cases, they were glued onto the base.²³ The material of the panels was cattle or horse bones and antler. The panels are carved with figural decoration, the edges are plain. There are red, blue and green pigment traces on the panels, which imply that the whole surface was originally painted.²⁴ The slots that serve to attach the stirrup-leather are not punctulated, which indicates that this saddle could not have been used for practical purposes. At the same time, the staples made of iron on the pommel plate were used to fix the collar-harness. The whole surface is decorated with grand leaves which serve as the background for the figural decorations that include romantic couples, musicians, animals, a nude figure, wild men, a unicorn and Saint George. On the back of one of the cantles, the emblem of the Dragon Order is visible, on the left pommel there is a Latin inscription: “*da pacem domine.*”

Western type: Saddle in the Bargello Museum

The Western saddle of the Bargello Museum (Cat. 23) was made by a similar process as the Jankovich Saddle: the wood base was covered with parchment, bone panels and staghorn.²⁵ On the inner part of the saddle a strap was attached. The panels are decorated with figural decoration, the edges vary: some of them are plain but there are several roped borders as well. Traces of red, green (trees) and black (inscription) imply that the entire saddle was originally

²² Birchbark has hygroscopic character. Verő, “Bemerkungen zu den Beinsätteln aus der Sigismundzeit,” 271.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ GIP.

painted.²⁶ The figural decoration includes courting couples, animals, a hunter, and floral decorations as well. The Latin inscription is dispersed in different parts of the object: “*aspeto tempo*” is on a banderol of the right side, “*amor*” is on the other side; “*laus*” and “*deo*” are distributed on the lower part of the two pommel plates.

If we compare these two examples of the two types, the differences are easily recognizable. The diverse shapes of the objects, especially the pommels and cantles indicate that the decorations also have different places. For example, the heart-shaped plain cantles of the Jankovich Saddle provide more space than the slender and chair-back-like curving cantles of the Bargello Saddle. The same rules are valid for the field under the cantles of the Jankovich Saddle vs. the Bargello Saddle: the former is much wider which allows broader compositions, comprising as many as three and four figures than the narrow fields of the latter where there is room only for two figures. Moreover, the shapes of the pommels are also different, seen from the side the Jankovich Saddle’s pommel forms a volute, while seen from the front, the Bargello Saddle has a round pommel. The two types also differ in aspects other than construction and shape. While on most of the Eastern saddles (except the Jankovich Saddle) the inscriptions — if any — are written in German, the two Western saddles’ inscriptions (Bargello Saddle and Saddle of Ercole d’Este - Cat. 24) are Latin.

Connections

Apart from their classification of saddlery, another important question is whether the saddles compose a unique object group. Because of their similar structure, technique of creation and material, they form a particular group among other ivories or saddles. On the other hand, there are no two saddles alike—each of them differs to some extent.²⁷ From the point of view of the

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ N.B. The Possenti Saddle has many copies (see Catalogue: Copies and fakes), but since it is a nineteenth-century fake, and its copies are made of wood, their similarity is not relevant in this aspect.

carving, some of them are more plastic (Saddle of King Albert - Cat.1) while others are decorated by plainer carving (Batthyány-Strattman Saddle – Cat. 5). On most of the saddles the bone panels cover the whole surface of the base, while in some instances the base and the leather are visible (Braunschweig - Cat. 6; the three London saddles – Cat. 13, 14, 15, Bologna – Cat. 4; and Ladislaus Posthumus Saddle – Cat. 22).

The saddles also share similarities and dissimilarities in decoration and iconography. Most of them have figural decoration, but three saddles differ: one of the saddles preserved in Berlin (Cat. 2) as well as the saddles in Glasgow (Cat. 12) and Washington (Cat. 21) do not have figural decoration.²⁸ The iconography of the rest of the saddles shows a great amount of similarities, for example the representation of love couples, Saint George and the dragon, banderoles with inscriptions, and initials.

Bone saddles in written sources

As previously noted, there is no concrete evidence for bone saddles in written sources. However, there are some traces which refer to saddles covered with bone material. Saddles decorated with ivory appear in French epic works, as the *Athis et Prophelias* and *Erec et Enide*.²⁹ In these works, ivory is only one of the decorative elements on the saddles besides precious stones and expensive fur. Ivory also appears in other kinds of sources: an inventory from Lille in 1412 reports a saddle flanked with ivory, sold by Jehan Rapin, saddler of the

²⁸ The Washington Saddle (Cat. 21) is not carved at all, the Berlin (Cat. 2) and Glasgow (Cat. 12) Saddles' decorations are not figural.

²⁹ “D’ivoire furent li archon / Bordé de pierres environ. / Par liens furent d’or adouhé / Et a florètes oiselé.” (*Athis et Prophelias*, ms. 7191, f 114.) Victor Gay, *Glossaire archéologique du Moyen Age et de la Renaissance*, vol 1 (Paris: A. Picard, 1928), 53; Victor Gay, *Glossaire archéologique du Moyen Age et de la Renaissance*, vol. 2 (Paris: A. Picard, 1928), 12, 341; “la sele fu d’autre meniere, / couverte d’une porpre chiere ; / li arçon estoient / d’ivoire.” Chrétien de Troyes, *Erec et Enide*, ed. Pierre Kunstmann (Ottawa and Nancy: Université d’Ottawa, Laboratoire de Français Ancien, ATILF, 2009), 21a, accessed April 24, 2017, <http://catalog.bfmcorpus.org/ErecKu>

king.³⁰ In the regulations of saddle guilds, there are sporadic references to the use of ivory. The regulations of the Parisian saddler guild from the thirteenth-century, for example, states that the rivets used to fix the saddles were not allowed to be made of ivory or enamel.³¹ The saddle guild of Prague in 1451 regulated that bone decorations on saddles must be made of antler.³²

As we can see, these sources report only saddles which contain bone elements in their decoration or construction. However, there are no sources where bone saddles can be clearly identified.

Place and time of origin

Since there are no written sources about bone saddles before the sixteenth-century, the place and time of their origin is unknown.³³ Their most precise specification is that most of them were probably made in the first part of the fifteenth-century in Central Europe. In scholarship there have been attempts to identify the place and time with the help of stylistic comparison, the analysis of the dresses, arms and weapons depicted.

Concerning the place of origin, there are different opinions about the Eastern saddles. According to Schlosser, they could be made in the Embriachi workshop by different masters.³⁴ Other possible locations suggested are Rhineland and Tirol.³⁵ Buda, Prague and

³⁰ Léon de Laborde, *Les Ducs de Bourgogne: Études sur les lettres, les arts et l'industrie pendant le XVe siècle*, vol 1, (Paris: Plon frères, 1849), 92.

³¹ Étienne Boileau and Georg Bernhard Depping, eds. *Réglemens sur les arts et métiers de Paris, rédigés au 13 siècle, et connus sous le nom du Livre des métiers d'Étienne Boileau. Publiés, pour la première fois en entier, d'après les manuscrits de la Bibliothèque du roi et des Archives du royaume, avec des notes et une introd.* (Paris: Impr. de Crapelet, 1837), 206.

³² I am grateful to Etele Kiss, who drew my attention to this source. Zikmund Winter, *Dějiny řemesel a obchodův Čechách v XIV.a v XV.století* (Praha: Nákladem České akademie Císaře Františka Josefa pro vědy, slovesnost a umění, 1906), 864, accessed April 24, 2017, <https://archive.org/details/djinyemeselaobc00wintgoog>

³³ The Batthyány-Strattman Saddle (Cat. 5) was family property from 1520 onwards. GIP.

³⁴ Schlosser, "Die Werkstatt der Embriachi in Venedig." 220-282.

³⁵ Nagy, "Hadörténeti ereklyék a Magyar Nemzeti Múzeumban," 227; Temesváry, *Fegyverkincsek a Magyar Nemzeti Múzeumban*, 23; Danielle Gaborit-Chopin, *Ivoires du Moyen Age* (Freiburg: Office du livre, 1978), 213.

Pressburg also appear as possible cities of origin.³⁶ The opinions about the Western saddles are little more consistent. The Saddle of Ercole d’Este (Cat. 24) and the Western Bargello Saddle (Cat. 23) are both described as Italian works, while the Ladislaus Posthumus Saddle as German (Cat. 22).³⁷ As for their time of construction, most of the saddles are dated to the first part of the fifteenth-century, except the Saddle of Ercole d’Este, which is presumably from the second part of the century.³⁸ In my previous study, I dated the three Budapest saddles to around 1430-40 based primarily on the armours depicted, and I found their closest parallels in South German, Austrian and Tirolian images.³⁹

Identifying the time and place of the construction of all the bone saddles would require a large comparative analysis, which is beyond the scope of the present thesis but requires further research in the future.

Question of Usage and Purpose

Another problematic issue regarding the parade saddles is that it is uncertain whether they were used for horse-riding or only for decoration. This problem is still one of the most burning questions about these special objects. There are arguments on both sides. For example, since their material is hard, sitting on them is not comfortable. If they were covered with saddle cloth, the decoration was not visible. Furthermore, on the Jankovich Saddle the slots for the attachment of the stirrup-leather are not punctulated, which indicates that it could not have been used for practical purposes. (Cat. 8) On the other hand, surface of the Batthyány Saddle (Cat. 7) and Rhédey Saddle (Cat. 9) is scuffed in places in direct contact with the human body during

³⁶ Kovács “Dísznyereg Sárkányrenddel,” 85; Genthon, “Monumenti artistici ungheresi all’estero”; Eisler, “Zu den Fragen der Beinsättel des Ungarischen Nationalmuseums II.”

³⁷ GIP; Bruno Thomas and Ortwin Gamber, *Katalog der Leibrüstkammer*, pt. 1, *Der Zeitraum von 500 bis 1530* (Vienna: Kunsthistorisches Museum, 1976), 70.

³⁸ GIP.

³⁹ Somogyvári, “Zsigmond-kori csontnyergek a Magyar Nemzeti Múzeumban,” 41-42.

riding. (Figure 7 and Figure 8) However, since similar traces of attrition are visible on other parts of the saddles as well, this cannot be seen as a certain evidence of usage.

Another argument in favour of the use of bone saddles is their representation in contemporary images on altarpieces and miniatures. There are representations similar to these bone saddles. For example, István Genthon suggests Bernat Martorell's Saint George altarpiece as an analogue.⁴⁰ In this painting the saint sits on a saddle with a flap of bone-like color, but the cantle and pommel are dark (Figure 9). However, since the saddle flap could not have been made of a hard material such as bone, it is unlikely that the saddle in this altarpiece is a bone saddle. Another, better example is Masaccio's altarpiece of the Adoration of the Magi (Figure 10).⁴¹ In this painting the shape of the saddle is more akin to the bone saddles, and the material of the cantle and the pommel looks like carved bone. However, other parts of the saddle are covered with saddle cloth, therefore it is not visible if they have the same bone-like character. Even if this saddle seems like a convincing parallel, one should not forget that bone saddles were originally colorful while the saddle depicted is monochrome.

As for their function, according to a widespread theory, these saddles were made as gifts for the members of the Emperor Sigismund's Dragon Order.⁴² The basis for this suggestion is the emblem of the Dragon Order on a single example, the Jankovich Saddle (Figure 11). Out of all the saddles examined, this is the only one which can be related to the emperor. Still, the theory that connects all the saddles to him became so widespread in the twentieth-century that in even recent descriptions about the saddles contain this attribution, for example, "it is one of the saddles ordered by Sigismund to the members of the Dragon Order."⁴³ Another, less concrete

⁴⁰ Genthon, "Monumenti artistici ungheresi all'estero," 7.

⁴¹ I thank Szabolcs László Kozák-Kígyóssy, who drew my attention to this picture.

⁴² Nagy, "Hadtörténeti ereklyék a Magyar Nemzeti Múzeumban: Első közlemény," 232; Divald, *A Magyar iparművészeti története*, 47-48; Grancsay, "A Medieval Sculptured Saddle," 76.

⁴³ For example on the datasheet of the Gothic Ivories Project for the Saddle of Tower of London (Cat. 15). GIP.

theory, suggested by Benedetta Chiesi is that the saddles were used in processions such as tournaments, weddings.⁴⁴ In my thesis, I follow this kind of conception revealing if some saddles could be used in wedding ceremonies.

Object biography

While the original purpose of the bone saddles is not clear, their afterlife is an interesting aspect. Most of the saddles were preserved in collections of aristocratic families before they were taken to their current places, the museums. The three Budapest saddles, for example, bear their former possessors' names, Jankovich (Cat. 8), Batthyány (Cat. 7), and Rhédey (Cat. 9) in their appellation. The Batthyány-Strattman Saddle, currently in Boston (Cat. 5), had an exciting career before it was purchased by the museum. It was in the collection of the Batthyány family probably from 1520 onwards, and was the property either of Balthasar or his son, Francis. In the eighteenth-century the family got the title of Princes Batthyány and Counts of Strattman from Empress Maria Teresa. In the nineteenth-century the saddle was loaned to the museum of Szombathely, then it was returned to the Batthyánys' Kör mend Castle. The saddle was sold by the wife of Ladislaus Batthyány-Strattman, Antoinette Windisch-Grätz at Sotheby's, London in 17 April 1969, and bought by Herbert Bier, on behalf of the Museum of Fine Arts of Boston.⁴⁵ Before becoming a museum item the saddle descended from generation to generation in one family.

The existence of copies and fakes also shows the preciousness of the saddles in later periods. According to our present knowledge, there are nine saddles which are considered to be copies or fakes, all from the nineteenth-century (Cat. 25-33). Among them the Possenti Saddle (Cat. 25) is particularly interesting, since it has three other copies made of wood. One of its copies,

⁴⁴ Grancsay, "A Medieval Sculptured Saddle," 73; Chiesi, "Le pouvoir s'exerce à cheval," 101.

⁴⁵ GIP.

now in the Musée l'Armée of Paris (Cat. 26), was once owned by Napoleon III himself. These factors indicate that owning a bone saddle was a sign of real prestige, so much so that even the French emperor had only a copy made several hundred years after the heyday of this type of object.

Bone saddles in the context of other bone objects

The bone saddles can be examined not only in the context of saddlery but also in that of other secular objects from the period which share similar features. Such objects are wedding caskets and chests whose similarity on the one hand lies in their material, ivory or bone; on the other hand, in the analogous iconography comprising elements and scenes of romantic love. Other secular ivory objects with similar decorations depicting love iconography include knife handles, combs, tablets and crossbows.

The similarity of crossbows and bone saddle lies in their armour-related character as well as in their material: they were made of wood and carved staghorn. While most of the surviving crossbows come from later periods, The Metropolitan Museum of Art owns three from the fifteenth-century, including the crossbow of Count Ulrich V of Württemberg (Figure 12). Some aspects of this object serve as a comparison to the bone saddles, such as the figural decoration and the banderoles with inscriptions.⁴⁶

Related secular objects raise the issue of the identity of the masters and workshops where bone saddles were made. They can be described either as bone objects or as saddles. This leads to the question whether bone saddles were made in the same workshop as the caskets, combs, and knife handles or in a saddle guild; or were the work of a collaboration of different workshops. Written sources of guild regulations do not contain references to any guilds working only with

⁴⁶ The Metropolitan Museum of Art, “Crossbow of Count Ulrich V of Württemberg (1413–1480),” accessed April 24, 2017, <http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/21940>.

ivory or bone. An earlier source, the thirteenth-century Parisian guild regulations entitled *Livre des Métiers*, provides information about various trades, including ivory carving in Paris.⁴⁷ The absence of references to an ivory guild in the book suggests that a specialized ivory-carving guild did not exist at that time. On the other hand, different guilds worked with various materials, including stone, wood, ivory, and bone.⁴⁸ Furthermore, the guild regulations imply that ivory workers also carved bone, horn and wood.⁴⁹ The artisans who worked with ivory and bone include sculptors, painters, knife handle makers, tablet makers, and so on.⁵⁰ The above mentioned source from fifteenth-century Prague also suggests that saddler guilds used bone, even ivories, in their work.⁵¹ These observations can lead us to the conclusion that bone objects were probably made by the collaborative work of different masters.

As we can see, several issues about the bone saddles remain unresolved and require further research. While some aspects may stay shrouded in mystery, an interdisciplinary approach enlisting art history, literary history, material culture, military history, and cultural history can lead to new answers about these special objects. Accordingly, the following chapters examines particular saddles from different approaches, such as iconography, literary history, and cultural history, in order to reveal their possible connections to wedding ceremonies.

⁴⁷ Boileau and Depping, *Réglemens sur les arts et métiers de Paris*, 206.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Elisabeth Sears, “Ivory and Ivory Workers in Medieval Paris,” in *Images in Ivory. Precious Objects of the Gothic Age*, ed. Peter Barnet (Detroit, MI: Detroit Institute of Arts; Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997), 25.

⁵⁰ Ibid. 23.

⁵¹ Boileau and Depping, *Réglemens sur les arts et métiers de Paris*, 206; Zikmund, *Dějiny řemesel a obchodu v Čechách v XIV. a v XV. století*, 864.

Chapter 2 - The iconography of love on the saddles

This chapter will concentrate on the iconographical elements carved into the saddles which have a direct or hidden love content. This kind of examination is particularly important, since earlier scholarship suggested that the scenes adorning the saddles were not elements constituting a unique iconographical program, but a collection of disparate motifs.⁵² As opposed to these earlier suggestions, I will demonstrate that the different iconographical elements taken together comprise a unified program of love iconography. Accordingly, in the first part of the chapter I will shed light on the parallel between the organization of the iconographical programs of marriage caskets and the saddles.

In subsequent parts of the chapter, I will present four different groups classified based on the positioning of the couples represented. Not only does this classification demonstrate the conscious composition of the saddles' iconographical program, but also shows the clear relationship between different saddles. This classification will be followed by a discussion of some motifs illustrating various themes appearing on individual saddles as well as scenes that have a less concrete and more explicit love content such as the unicorn, the wild man, the falcon, and the nudes. Finally, in the third part of the chapter, I will examine another type of scene, which — similarly to the representation of couples — also appears on many saddles: Saint George's fight with the dragon, accompanied in some instances by the princess. In addition, I will also reveal the possible roots of love-scenes in medieval courtly literature. This method is necessary, since — as Michael Camille points out — medieval depictions with love

⁵² See: Verő, "Bemerkungen zu den Beinsätteln aus der Sigismundzeit," 274; Schlosser, "Elfenbeinsättel des ausgehenden Mittelalters," 283-84.

content cannot be regarded independently but only as reflections of texts and concepts in medieval literature.⁵³

Marriage casket – a possible iconographical parallel

In the fourteenth-century, scenes of courtly literature were represented most frequently on wedding caskets. These boxes were decorated with famous scenes of well-known courtly epics like *Tristan and Iseult*, *Pyramus and Thisbe*, etc. Apart from these epics, the carvers also chose symbolic motifs from love lyrics: couples, unicorns, falcons and so on. Some of these boxes had firmly structured programs: the scenes represented on different sides of the boxes reflected different types of love expressed in various stories from courtly literature. This method, according to Paula Mae Carns, reflects the medieval literary practice called *compilatio*, which originally meant grouping together different texts in manuscripts to create an overarching statement.⁵⁴ Carns identifies the same organizing practice in the case of a fourteenth-century French medieval casket: she points out that the scenes, such as *Aristotle and Phyllis*, *Pyramus and Thisbe*, *Tristan and Iseult*, express various contrasting types of love, for instance, true love vs. false love, young vs. old lovers, and so on (Figure 13).⁵⁵

Following in Carns's footsteps, I also suggest that the iconographic program of the saddles was constructed using a similar method. A structured program is created even though the saddles have different, undulating and irregular shapes compared to the regular and easy to classify box shapes.

⁵³ Michael Camille, *The Medieval Art of Love: Objects and Subjects of Desire* (London: 1998), 7.

⁵⁴ Paula Mae Carns, "Compilatio in Ivory: The Composite Casket in the Metropolitan Museum," *Gesta* 44, no. 2 (2005): 69-88.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

Contrasting organization of love

Depicting contrasts is an immediately recognizable image organization technique on some of the saddles. On the Batthyány Saddle (Cat. 7), proper love and sinful love are contrasted. On one side of the saddle, under the cantle, the sinful couple play chequers, while on the other side, the good couple pray with their rosary. The devil flies down above the sinful couple while an angel appears above the good couple (Figure 14 and Figure 15).

A similar contrast appears on the Saddle of Ladislaus Posthumus (Cat. 22), although the contradiction is less remarkable. On the pommel plates, two couples appear on each side. Three of them are young couples playing music, dancing and drinking but one couple markedly differs in their dress and activity: they wear looser clothing, their heads are covered and they – similarly to the good couple of the Batthyány Saddle – each hold a rosary in their hands. This couple can also be interpreted as good and virtuous – not necessarily an older couple among the other couples (Figure 16).

On the Rhédey Saddle (Cat. 9), the contrasting structure is represented by dragon–lion depictions (Figure 17 and Figure 18). On the marriage caskets, these two animals are similarly opposed in the context of Iseult and Mark from the story of *Trystan and Iseult*. The lion represents the noble heart of Mark, while the dragon signifies Iseult’s infidelity.⁵⁶ On the Rhédey Saddle, these two animals appear under the feet of a man and woman on either side of the saddle. They can no longer be identified as the protagonists of the epic, but rather become more general figures of a noble-hearted man and a cheating woman. Similarly to marriage

⁵⁶ Richard H. Randall Jr, “Popular Romances Carved in Ivory,” in *Images in Ivory: Precious Objects of the Gothic Age*, ed. P. Barnet (Detroit, MI: Detroit Institute of Arts, 1997), 72.

caskets, these kinds of contrasting representations of sinful and good love were intended as a moral guide for the viewer and owner of the saddle.⁵⁷

Couples

Couples are popular decoration elements on secular objects from the fourteenth-century onwards. They usually appear on ivory products: combs, knife handles, and caskets. Lovers are the most frequent scenes of the saddles' iconographical program as well: they can be seen on eighteen saddles.

In this subchapter, I move from the general view towards the specific. Accordingly, in the first part of this subchapter, I will offer a wider, more general picture with the help of my classification. Then, in the second part, I will go into detail focusing on specific scenes among the love couples.

Organization

Couples appear in various forms on the saddles. Comparing the different saddles, the organization follows a variety of patterns. Accordingly, I set up four main groups of saddles. The first group contains the saddles where the couples are represented separately on the two sides of the saddle but in corresponding fields, normally the area on the pommel and, in some cases, under the cantle. The second group consists of the saddles where couples are depicted together, some of them in the same sections as the couples in Group 1, but others are placed in other sections. In the third group, I incorporated the saddles where both of the two above patterns appear. The fourth group is comprised of the three Western saddles: due to their different shape, they do not fit these previous patterns. The classification is summarized in

⁵⁷ Johann von Antoniewicz, "Ikonographisches Zu Chrestien De Troyes," in *Romanische Forschungen* 5 (1890): 241–68; Carns, "Compilatio in Ivory," 69.

tables providing the following information: the name of the saddle, the number of the couples depicted, the field where the images of couples are found, and the position of the members of the couple (Table I-V). The tables also indicate the inscriptions where appropriate, since most of the time these are connected to the couples. The inscriptions will be discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

There are some problems that make classification difficult. For example, in some instances it is hard to decide if the depicted man and woman form a couple or not. These doubtful cases are flagged by a question mark. Another difficulty is the image of Saint George: sometimes he is part of a couple together with the figure of the princess and depicted similarly to the courtly couples (see Nieuwerkerke Saddle, Cat. 14). Therefore, in certain cases Saint George and the princess are included among the couples. Apart from these classification problems, the four groups display the different image organization systems used in the decoration of the saddles.

Group 1: Separated couples

Generally, on the saddles in the first group, only one, or at most two couples can be seen (Figure 19). In all these cases, the two members of the couple are placed on either side of the saddle, on the pommel. On the Meyrick Saddle (Cat. 13), the members of the second couple are found under the cantles, and on the Tratzberg Saddle (Cat. 16) they appear on the narrow section under the volute. All Group 1 saddles feature inscriptions, and three out of the four have some kind of love content.

Table I: Group 1 - Separated couples

Name of the Saddle	Number of couples	Position			Inscription
		Field	Left side	Right side	
Bone saddle, Bologna, Museo Civico Medievale (Cat. 4)	1	on the pommel	woman with covered hair	man	✓
Meyrick Saddle, London, Wallace Collection (Cat. 13)	2	on the pommel	woman with covered hair	man	✓
		under the cantle	man	woman	
Tratzberg Saddle, New York, MET (Cat. 16)	2	on the pommel	woman	man	✓
		under the pommel	man	woman	
Thill Saddle New York, MET (Cat. 17)	1 (but the other parts of the saddle are not carved!)	on the pommel	woman with covered hair	man	✓

There are two saddles whose patterns are similar but do not represent romantic couples: only female figures appear on the pommel and under the cantle on the Braunschweig Saddle (Cat. 6). The other example is the Nieuwerkerke Saddle which features Saint George and the princess as a couple (Cat. 14).⁵⁸ Even though these two examples differ from the previous ones, the same pattern is recognizable.

⁵⁸ She does not wear a crown as in the other cases.

Table II

Name of the Saddle	Number of couples	Position			Inscription
		Field	Left side	Right side	
Bone saddle, Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum (Cat. 6)	2 (only women)	on the pommel	woman with covered hair	bareheaded or veiled woman	✓
		under the cantle	bareheaded or veiled woman	bareheaded or veiled woman	
Nieuwerkerke Saddle, London, Wallace Collection (Cat. 14)	1	on the pommel	Saint George	bareheaded woman	✗

Group 2: Couples together

The second group contains the saddles on which the couples are not separated but appear together on the pommel, under the cantle and, in some cases, on the cantles too (Figure 20).

Table III: Group 2 – Couples together

Name of the Saddle	Number of couples	Position			Inscription	
		Number of couples				
		Field	Left side	Right side		
Batthyány Saddle, Budapest, Hungarian National Museum (Cat. 7)	8 (?)	on the pommel below each other		2	✗	
		on the cantle		1		
		under the cantle	2	2		
		next to the cantle	1			
Trivulzio Saddle, New York, MET	6	on the pommel	1	1	✗	

(Cat. 18)		one the cantle	1	1	
		under the cantle	1	1	
Bone saddle, Stresa, Isola Bella, Museo Borromeo (Cat. 19)	3	on the pommel	1	1	✓
		under the cantle	1		
Bone saddle, Berlin, Deutsches Historisches Museum (Cat. 3)	2 (?)	on the pommel	1 (?)		✗
		under the cantle	1		
Saddle of King Albert, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Hofjagd und Rüstkammer (Cat. 1)	2	on the back of the cantle	1	1	✓

Group 3: Couples both separated and together

The third group contains the saddles where these two previous patterns both appear (Figure 21). In some of the cases, because of the greater number of the couples, their positioning seems less structured, more arbitrary. Nevertheless, on many of them the first and second patterns can be recognized, since the couples are positioned in their usual place, on the pommel, under the volute, or under the cantle.

Table IV: Group 3 - Couples both separated and together

Name of the Saddle	Number of couples	Field and Description						Inscription	
		Separated couples			Couples together				
		Position			Number of couples				
		Field	Left side	Right side	Field	Left side	Right side		
Rhédey Saddle, Budapest, Hungarian National Museum (Cat. 9)	11	on the pommel	man	woman	between the pommel and the cantle	2	2	✓	
		1			on the cantle	1	1 (Aristotle and Phyllis)		
					under the cantle	2	2		
Batthyány-Strattmann Saddle,	2	under the volute	woman	man	on the pommel		1	✓	

Boston, Museum of Fine Arts (Cat. 5)		1						
Bone saddle, Florence, Museo Nazionale, Bargello (Cat. 10)	4	under the volute 1	woman	man	under the pommel in the bottom	1		✓
		on the pommel 1	Saint George	princess	under the cantle	1		
Jankovich Saddle, Budapest, Hungarian National Museum (Cat. 8)	3	on the pommel 1	Saint George	princess	between the pommel and cantle	1		✓
					under the cantle		1 (sitting couple, holding each other's hand)	

Group 4: Western saddles

The three Western saddles are different from the others in shape and do not follow any of the above patterns. Therefore, it is necessary to discuss them separately. Among these saddles, the position of the couples is the same as in the case of the Saddle of Ladislaus Posthumus (Cat. 22) and Saddle of Ercole d'Este (Cat. 24): two couples are displayed on each pommel plate, whereas on the Western Bargello Saddle (Cat. 23), as a result of its slightly different shape, they appear in different fields.

Table V: Group 4 – Western saddles

Name of the Saddle	Number of couples	Position				Inscription
		Field	front	left	right	
Saddle of Ladislaus Posthumus Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Hofjagd- und Rüstkammer (Cat. 22)	4	pommel plates	4			×

Saddle of Ercole d'Este, Modena, Galleria Estense, (Cat. 24)	4	pommel plates	4			✓
Bone saddle, Florence, Museo Nazionale, Bargello (Cat. 23)	3	on the front of the pommel	1			✓
		between the pommel and cantle		1		
		under the cantle			1	

The above tables clearly demonstrate different kinds of patterns regarding the constructions of couples that could be applied on these saddles. These examples, on the one hand, reflect the idea of a regular construction, on the other hand, they also show the relationship between the saddles.

Motifs

This part of the chapter focuses in closer detail on the most outstanding scenes of couples appearing on the saddles, that is, Aristotle and Phyllis, the *dextrarum iunctio*, and the slave of the wife motif. The roots of the chosen scenes can all be found in contemporary or earlier literature.

Aristotle and Phyllis

Among the numerous couples depicted on the saddles, there is one which can be identified without any doubt on the Rhédey Saddle (Cat. 9; Figure 22). This is Aristotle's famous, albeit not very glorious, affair with Alexander's beautiful lover, Phyllis. The story survives in two versions: in a French one by the Norman poet, Henri d'Andeli, and in a German variant.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ Carns, "Compilatio in Ivory," 71.

According to the story, Alexander met the Indian princess during his campaign in India and became obsessed with her. Alexander's teacher, Aristotle, warned him that he should not neglect his duties for the sake of love so he stayed away from her. When Phyllis learned this, she decided to take her revenge on the old philosopher. She offered Aristotle sexual favors if she could ride on his back, which he agreed to. Alexander witnessed the humiliation of his old philosopher teacher, who was fooled by love just as much as he was.⁶⁰ The moral lesson of the story: even the wisest can become a fool because of love.

On the Rhédey Saddle, the riding scene is represented on the right cantle: Aristotle wears a philosopher's beard, Phyllis wears headgear (Figure 22). In her left hand, she holds a whip and a banderol with the inscription "*lach lieb lach*" (Laugh, my love, laugh). This inscription serves to highlight the mocking aspect of the scene, similarly to the figure of a monkey, which appears not only under this couple, but elsewhere on the saddle.

This story is regularly found on fourteenth-century ivory products, mainly on caskets, but it also appears on objects from German lands. The saddle's version is similar to the German variants, for example, on the ivory chalice of Münster, where Phyllis — as in the scene on the saddle — also holds a whip (Figure 23).

The presence of the story on the saddle can be explained by two factors: on the one hand, it is a riding scene, it fits the common function of this medium, the saddle. On the other hand, the scene in the context of the Rhédey Saddle shows that Aristotle and Phyllis is most likely an example of bad, more precisely, of foolish love. This saddle is illustrated with many other couples shown in a variety of different situations. These couples may be interpreted as examples of good love, but more likely as those of bad love. Accordingly, the "*lach lieb lach*"

⁶⁰ Ibid.

inscription, as well as the inclusion of monkeys, suggests that the Aristotle scene certainly belongs to the latter.

Dextrarum iunctio

The representation of the *dextrarum iunctio*, the joining of the right hands of the two parties, goes back to Roman Period art. From the earliest times, it signified close relationships including fidelity between man and wife, as well as between parents and their children. In Christian iconography, the *dextrarum iunctio* is considered the visual evidence of marriage.⁶¹ This visual display of matrimony can be seen on two saddles: the Jankovich Saddle (Cat. 8) and the Trivulzio Saddle (Cat. 18; Figure 24 and Figure 25).

On the Jankovich Saddle, the couple is sitting on a bench with a curtain hanging behind them and partially under them. An armed guard is standing behind the bench. The woman's head is covered, which may refer to her new marital status. As opposed to this scene, the couple of the Trivulzio Saddle is shown in a standing position, the woman puts her left arm on the man's shoulder. The woman's head is not covered with headgear as in the other case; she has braided hair. This couple is more isolated, there are no other attendants or background elements in the scene.

The representation of the *dextrarum iuncio* can be found among contemporary illustrations of a handbook, *Der Welsche Gäst* (The Italian Guest) written by Thomasin von Zirclaria around the turn of the twelfth-century (Figure 26).⁶² The intended audience of the handbook were noble boys and girls and it served as a moral guide for living a virtuous life, giving guidelines

⁶¹ Sabine Müller, “Dextrarum iunctio,” *The Encyclopedia of Ancient History* (2012), accessed March 3, 2017, DOI: 10.1002/9781444338386.wbeah22079

⁶² I wrote about the *Welsche Gäst*, as the possible literary source for the Jankovich, Batthyány, and Rhédey Saddles in my previous MA thesis. In this work I compared some scenes which are similar in the illustrations and the saddles. See Virág Somogyvári, “Zsigmond-kori csontnyergek a Magyar Nemzeti Múzeumban,” 32-39.

on how young noble ladies and young men should behave with each other.⁶³ There are twenty-four surviving manuscripts of the book from the thirteenth to the fifteenth-century. In these manuscripts, the texts are accompanied by illustrations, which probably also had didactic purposes.⁶⁴ Among these illustrations, the scene of the *dextrarum iunctio* illustrates the following text: “*und daz weder wîp noch man / niht enliege den andern an*” /223-224/ (and neither man nor woman should lie to each other).⁶⁵ The following inscriptions can be read on the banderols “*Se des minn treue.*” (Be true to me) “*Ich gelobe du / dir wol.*” (I promise I will be good to you). The handbook clearly encourages its young readers to be true to their spouses. The same idea is reflected on the other medium, the saddle. This direct or indirect relationship between the handbook and the two saddles also supports the argument that these two saddles were made for marriage ceremonies.

The slave of the wife

On the Rhédey Saddle, there is an interesting couple who can also be connected with the illustrations of the *Welsche Gäst* (Figure 27). The woman is shown in a half-kneeling position holding something in her right hand, while the man sits below her. In a strikingly similar illustration in the *Welsche Gäst*, the couple illustrates the example where the husband is the slave of his wife (Figure 28). In the text the author says that a husband cannot be free if he follows his wife’s every order and thus makes a fool of himself.⁶⁶ On the illustrations, the woman is shown sitting on a throne holding a whip in her hand and her spouse is kneeling

⁶³ Thomasin von Zirclaria, *Der Welsche Gast (The Italian Guest)*, ed. and trans. Marion Gibbs and Winder McConnell, TEAMS: Medieval German texts in bilingual editions, 4 (Kalamazoo: Western Michigan University - Medieval Institute publications, 2009), 7-8.

⁶⁴ Thomasin von Zirclaria, *Der Welsche Gast*, 6.

⁶⁵ Heinrich Rückert, *Der Wälsche Gast des Thomasin von Zirclaria* (Berlin, 1852), 7; Thomasin von Zirclaria, *Der Welsche Gast*, 58.

⁶⁶ “sol aver der vrî wesen,/ der ân ein wîp niht kan genesen / und der niht hât sô vil kraft, / ern müeze ir meisterschaft / dulden und gar ir gebot? / der machet úz im selben spot, / der alle wege ligen muoz / under eines wîbes vuoz./ wie wil mir dan gebieten der / der durch ein wîp hât sô sér / sînen muot nider läzen?” (4301-4311) in Rückert, *Der Wälsche Gast des Thomasin von Zirclaria*, 117.

before her, holding his wife's leg. The similarity of the two representations suggests that the manuscript illumination could serve as a pictorial and also textual source for the saddle's depiction.⁶⁷

This possible connection with the *Welsche Gäst* also supports the idea that some saddles were made for wedding purposes. As Thomasin's handbook served as a guide for young noble boys and girls, these saddle scenes could also be interpreted as moralistic guidelines for the young bride and groom.

Symbolical Love

It is not only through couples that love can be displayed: another possible level to its expression is symbolic. On the bone saddles, symbolic images include ordinary animals such as falcons, fantastic creatures such as unicorns, as well as wild men, and erotic figures like nudes.

Falcon

The falcon usually appears in hunting scenes in courtly love literature and on medieval depictions as well, normally on the hand of a falconer, as on the Jankovich Saddle (Cat. 8; Figure 29). However, this bird also carries a complex symbolic meaning appearing in the context of love scenes as well. The falcon as the symbol of love appears in Middle High German courtly lyric: for example in the poem of Der von Kürenberg and Oswald von Wolkenstein.⁶⁸ In their work, the falcon serves as an allegory of the beloved. In addition, the

⁶⁷ Somogyvári, "Zsigmond-kori csontnyergek a Magyar Nemzeti Múzeumban," 36.

⁶⁸Der von Kürenberg (c.1150-1170): "Ich zoch mir einen valken / mere danne ein jar. / do ich in gezamete / als ich in wolte han / und ich im sin gevidere / mit golde wol bewant, / er huop sich uf vil hohe / und floug in anderiu lant. / Sit sach ich den valken / schone fliegen: / er fuorte an sinem fuoze / sidine riemen, / und was im sin gevidere / alrot guldin. / got sende si zesamene / die gerne geliep wellen" Mittelhochdeutsche Originaltexte, accessed 30 April, 2017, <http://www.saelde-und-ere.at/Hauptseite/Arbeitsgruppen/Mhd/Falkenlied/Falke.html>; Oswald von Wolkenstein (c. 1377-1445) :"ei, minnikliches falcken terz / wie süß ist dir dein snäblin wolgevar!" Karl Kurt Klein ed., *Die Lieder Oswalds von Wolkenstein*, Altdeutsche textbibliothek 55, (Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 1975), 150.

falcon can be interpreted as a messenger between lovers although it can also represent independency, and the woman herself who has to be tamed by the man.⁶⁹ On the Batthyány Saddle (Cat. 7), a man reaches towards the back of a woman while a falcon sits behind him (Figure 30). Similarly, on the Rhédey Saddle (Cat. 9) a man gives a flower to his beloved while a falcon sits on his other arm (Figure 31). In one case, the falcon appears in a scene of infidelity: between opposite members of two couples – where one of the couples is the already described whipped man and his wife (Figure 32). The falcon held by the woman appears on the Tratzberg Saddle (Cat. 16) and the Rhédey Saddle (Cat. 9) as well (Figure 33 and Figure 34). On the former, the bird sits on the woman's hand. This motif, according to Camille, symbolizes that she keeps her lover under her power.⁷⁰ On the latter, the bird sits on twigs held by the woman. The scene of a young woman catching a bird with lime-twigs was a common allegory of the female hunt for a man.⁷¹

Unicorn

The unicorn appears on three saddles: the Saddle of King Albert (Cat. 1), the Berlin Saddle (Cat. 3) and the Jankovich Saddle (Cat. 8). The scene of the unicorn and the virgin is popular in fourteenth and fifteenth-century miniatures, tapestries and caskets.

The complex allegory of the unicorn is explained in bestiaries from the Early Middle Ages. In the *Physiologus*, the unicorn is the symbol of purity, and it is very quick so the hunters can catch it only if it lays its head in the lap of a virgin. In this work, this scene has Christological meaning: the unicorn signifies Christ, the virgin typifies Mary.⁷² In Richard Fournival's

⁶⁹ John Cummins, *The Hound and The Hawk. The Art of Medieval Hunting*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988), 227.

⁷⁰ Camille, *The Medieval Art of Love: Objects and Subjects of Desire*, 96.

⁷¹ Jürgen Wurst, "Pictures and Poems of Courtly Love and Bourgeois Marriage: Some Notes on the So-called 'Minnekästchen,'" *Love, Marriage, and Family Ties in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. Isabel Davis et al. Jones International Medieval Research, 11. (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003), 111.

⁷² Raimond van Marle, *Iconographie de L'art Profane Au Moyen-Age et à La Renaissance et La Décoration Des Demeures, vol II., Allégories et Symboles*, (La Haye: M. Nijhoff, 1932), 448.

bestiary, the killing of the unicorn has another level of significance: the poet equates the scene with his suffering from love. Accordingly, the hunter who chases the unicorn typifies Love itself and the dying animal signifies the poet's suffering.⁷³ The *Bestiaire d'Amour* also had a German translation, which demonstrates that the depiction of unicorn was widespread in German lands.⁷⁴ The representation of the unicorn and the virgin could have marriage symbolism as well, especially on marriage caskets. The maiden is portayed as a rich lady, the unicorn is sitting on her lap on a painted panel of an Italian *cassone*. A cord is knotted around the unicorn's neck and tied to a tree indicating his capture (Figure 35).⁷⁵

The unicorn is on the right side under the cantle, with the virgin on the Berlin Saddle, similarly to many other contemporary depictions (Figure 36). The mythic animal appears upside down, and looks like a goat - it has additional goat horns too. Similarly, an even more goat-like unicorn appears on the portrait medal of Cecilia Gonzaga by Pisanello (Figure 37). According to Margaret B. Freeman, this goat-unicorn variant has roots in the *Physiologus* where the unicorn is described as being small as a kid.⁷⁶ The virgin depicted on the Berlin Saddle with open arms has a crown on her head and holds a basket on her right arm.

On the Jankovich Saddle and Saddle of King Albert, the unicorn has a more horse-like character although it is portrayed in a similar posture (Figure 38 and Figure 39). However, they are depicted in isolation without the virgin. On the former, the unicorn appears above a wild man,

⁷³ Célestin Hippéau ed., *Richard Fournival: Le bestiaire d'amour et la Réponse de la dame*, (Paris: A. Aubry, 1860), 23-24.; Margaret B. Freeman, *The Unicorn Tapestries*, (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1976), 30.

⁷⁴ Wurst, "Pictures and Poems of Courtly Love and Bourgeois Marriage: Some Notes on the So-called 'Minnekästchen,'" 112.

⁷⁵ Freeman, *The Unicorn Tapestries*, 52.

⁷⁶ Freeman, *The Unicorn Tapestries*, 34; Michael J. Curley, *Physiologus* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1979), 51.

on the latter, the beast is shown wearing a veil on its horn and is displayed among other animals from the *Physiologus*, between an owl and a phoenix.⁷⁷

Wild man

This mythical creature appears on two saddles – the Saddle of King Albert (Cat. 1) and the Jankovich Saddle (Cat. 8). Two wild men stand on each side on the Saddle of King Albert in the field under the cantle. Both wild men hold a club and a tree in their hands. They appear along other figures, but in an isolated way (Figure 40 and Figure 41). There are also two wild men on the Jankovich Saddle: on the left side one wild man appears under the unicorn with an axe in his hand and on the other side the wild man is depicted fighting with a lion (Figure 42 and Figure 43).

The wild man is also a popular mythical character in medieval literature and art, especially in German lands although it frequently appears on Bohemian depictions as well. According to Timothy Husband, the wild man was a literary and artistic invention of the medieval imagination.⁷⁸ In the literary works of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the wild man is described as a bear-like black and hairy monster.⁷⁹ However, its symbolic meaning changed over time. In the fourteenth-century, it is a brutal negative creature who does not know God, kidnaps virgins and fights against noble knights. By the end of the fifteenth-century, this negative monster turns into a rather positive character. By this time, it can be seen in the circle of its family, fighting against lions and other wild animals to protect them. This new interpretation can be explained by new changing attitudes towards marriage, principally in the

⁷⁷ Schlosser, “Elfenbeinsättel des ausgehenden Mittelalters,” 262.

⁷⁸ Timothy Husband, *The Wild Man: Medieval Myth and Symbolism* (New York: Cloisters, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1980), 1.

⁷⁹ Renaud de Montaubon describes the wild man as “*noir et velu com ours enchainé*” and in the German epic, Wigalois, the author Wirnt von Gravensberg writes about the wild woman as “*Diu was in einer varwe gar swarz ruch al sein beer*”. Ibid.

environment of burghers. This new attitude included the interpretation of marriage as a strong familial union, and wild men became emblems of these new values.⁸⁰ This new interpretation can be seen in a *Minnekästchen* from Vienna (Figure 44).⁸¹ The lid carved on all four sides depicts different activities of wild men in their natural habitat, the forest. On the right end panel a wild man is fighting against a lion. The model for the composition also survived: a woodcut from the Master of Nuremberg's Passion.⁸² This example is similar to the scene on the Jankovich Saddle: the wild man is about to hit the lion with his club, holding a shield in his other hand. However, there are also differences: the wild man on the casket and woodcut wears a dress, and his wife and child are standing behind him, while on the saddle, the wild man is not dressed and the rest of the wild family is not depicted. The particular shield with the shape of a man's profile on both media are popular elements especially in Bohemian artworks, more precisely in the crucifixions of fifteenth-century altarpieces (Figure 45).⁸³

Not only was the face-like shield popular in medieval Bohemian art, but also wild men themselves: they are frequently appearing figures in the Bible of Wenceslas IV, on the margins. On the bottom of one page, a wild man fighting with a heraldic Bohemian lion is ready to beat down on it with his club (Figure 46).

⁸⁰Jürgen Wurst, "Reliquiare der Liebe: Das Münchner Minnekästchen und andere mittelalterliche Minnekästchen aus dem deutschsprachigen Raum" (Phd Diss., Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München, 2005), 238-239; Husband, *The Wild Man: Medieval Myth and Symbolism*, 114.

⁸¹Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Kunstkammer, Inv. 118, Ibid.

⁸²München, Universität, L. I. 262, 16. G. 44. Ibid. 115-116.

⁸³Master of Raigern: Rajhrad altarpiece c. 1420, National Gallery of Prague; Master of the altar of Hohenfurth: Crucifixion, ca 1350, Vyšší Brod monastery - Convent of Saint Agnes of Bohemia, Prague; Reininghaus Altarpiece, Southern Bohemia, c. 1430, Convent of Saint Agnes of Bohemia, Prague. etc. I am grateful for these examples to Béla Zsolt Szakács.

Nudes

Naked figures appear on the three Budapest Saddles (Cat. 7, 8, 9), on the Berlin Saddle (Cat. 3) and the Saddle of King Albert (Cat. 1).⁸⁴ The characteristics of the nudes fall into three categories: antiquated, gnome-like and bathing nudes.

On the Jankovich and Batthyány Saddles, the nudes are depicted in the antique way. The nude figure of the Jankovich Saddle is probably a woman, with a curly antique hairstyle (Figure 47). There are two nudes sitting above the slots on the Batthyány Saddle. The posture of one is similar to that of river-gods, especially to a drawing from the circle of Pisanello, as Eisler has pointed out (Figure 49 and Figure 50).⁸⁵ However, it is not obvious whether it is a man or woman that is depicted on this saddle: while the males have curly, shoulder-length hair, the females have long lanker hair – just like the depicted nude.

Another nude appears in a fragmented form in another field on the Batthyány Saddle (Figure 48). This gnome-like figure is probably that of a man – since he wears pants. The strange conformation of the nudes on the Berlin Saddle also suggest that they are gnomes – although the figures of this saddle are all individual and specific (see Cat. 3).

The four naked figures on the Rhédey Saddle are probably bathing nudes (Figure 51 - Figure 54). A female and male nude appear in the narrow field under the volute on each side. The women are completely naked covering themselves only with transparent veils, the men wear pants. The woman on the right side holds the stick from an object (Figure 53). Bathing nudes appear on the Albert Saddle as well. Two figures are standing on the left side, under the cantle facing each other holding objects similar to the nude on the Rhédey Saddle (Figure 55). Similar bathing maidens adorn the Bible of Wenceslas IV throughout the whole book. These naked

⁸⁴ Also on the Possenti Saddle (Cat. 25).

⁸⁵ Eisler, "Zu den Fragen der Beinsättel des Ungarischen Nationalmuseums I.", 203.

women – sometimes men – in most cases appear on the margins, accompanying courtiers – or the king himself (Figure 56 Figure 57).⁸⁶ Many of them hold similar objects as one of the nudes on the Rhédey Saddle, and the nudes of the Saddle of King Albert: these are probably leafy twigs which served as a tool to scratch backs.⁸⁷ According to Hana Hlaváčková, the bath-maidens of the Bible of Wenceslas can be identified with Venus, and are symbols of earthly love and fertility.⁸⁸ Hlaváčková also points out that the goddess could acquire the form of a bath-maiden in connection with a Roman feast, Venus Verticordia, held on 1 April every year, when women ritually bathed to ensure their fertility.⁸⁹ Moreover, she suggests that these particular representations of fertility in the Bible are explained by the possibility, that the manuscript was a marriage codex made around the king's second marriage with Euphemia-Žophie of Bavaria.⁹⁰ She also emphasizes the importance of these figures as the first examples of the Renaissance sensual body.⁹¹

Naked women and men also appear on some marriage caskets, inside the lid. These naked pairs had nuptial significance and they were concealed inside the casket because - unlike the other depictions on the outer side of the chests - their dedicated audience was exclusively the fresh pair (Figure 58).⁹²

These examples of nudes explained as fertility symbols suggest that bathing nudes appearing on the saddles can be interpreted in a similar way.

⁸⁶ Hana Hlaváčková, "Courtly Body in the Bible of Wenceslas IV", in *Künstlerischer Austausch - Artistic Exchange, Akten des XXVIII. Internationalen Kongresses für Kunstgeschichte*, vol 2, ed. Thomas W. Gaehtens (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1992), 371.

⁸⁷ Paula Nuttal, "Reconsidering the Nude: Northern Tradition and Venetian Innovation" in *The Meanings of Nudity in Medieval Art*, edited by Sherry C.M. Lindquist, (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), 303.

⁸⁸ Hlaváčková, "Courtly Body in the Bible of Wenceslas IV", 374.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Ibid. 377.

⁹² Brucia Witthoft, "Marriage Rituals and Marriage Chests in Quattrocento Florence." *Artibus Et Historiae* 3, no. 5 (1982): 52, Accessed May 2, 2017, doi:10.2307/1483143.

Saint George and the Dragon

Apart from the couples and elements of symbolic love, the other dominant element of the saddles' iconography is the battle between Saint George and the dragon. The scene represents the story of the Golden Legend, the moment when the saint defeats the dragon.⁹³ The scene appears on eleven saddles in two different ways. On four saddles (Saddle of King Albert – Cat.1; Berlin Saddle - Cat. 3; Jankovich Saddle – Cat. 8; and Bargello Saddle – Cat. 11) Saint George sits on horseback. The scene is complemented with the appearance of the princess and, in some instances, with the castle as well. Furthermore, on the Bargello Saddle the scene is accompanied by an inscription related to Saint George (see Table VI).⁹⁴

On seven saddles, George appears in a standing position more isolated from his surroundings, as a separate motif (Batthyány-Strattman Saddle- Cat. 5; Batthyány Saddle – Cat. 7; Rhédey Saddle – Cat. 9; Nieuwerkerke Saddle – Cat. 14; Trivulzio Saddle – Cat. 18; Isola Bella Saddle – Cat. 19; and Saddle of Ercole d'Este – Cat. 24). Accordingly, the appearance of the princess in these instances is less frequent. The castle does not appear at all, nor do inscriptions related to Saint George. On two saddles (Trivulzio Saddle and the Isola Bella Saddle) two figures appear killing dragons. On the latter, by the reason of his wings, the figure on the left side can be identified with Saint Michael.

In the third main case, the Saint does not appear visually, only through inscriptions or other indications (Meyrick Saddle – Cat. 13; Saddle of the Tower of London – Cat. 15; Thill Saddle – Cat. 17). While on the Meyrick Saddle and Thill Saddle only inscriptions refer to the Saint,

⁹³ See: *The Golden Legend or Lives of the Saints. Compiled by Jacobus de Voragine, Archbishop of Genoa, 1275. First Edition Published 1470. Englished by William Caxton, First Edition 1483*, ed. F.S. Ellis, (Temple Classics, 1900), accessed May 3, 2017, <http://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/goldenlegend/GL-vol3-george.asp>

⁹⁴ Saint George on horseback with the princess and castle also appears on the fake Possenti Saddle (Cat. 25).

on the Saddle of the Tower of London the appearance of dragons and the Saint George's Cross indicate his presence.

Table VI: Saint George

<i>Saint George on Horseback</i>					
Saddle	Field	Princess	Castle	Posture of Saint George	Saint George Inscription
Saddle of King Albert, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Hofjagd und Rüstkammer (Cat. 1)	Left side, under the volute	under George (?)	✓	spear-thrust with both hands	✗
Bone saddle, Berlin, Deutsches Historisches Museum (Cat. 3)	Left side, on the pommel	under George or other side	✗	spear-thrust with both hands	✗
Jankovich Saddle, Budapest, Hungarian National Museum (Cat. 8)	Left side, on the pommel	other side + lamb	✓	right hand: sword, left hand: lance	✗
Bone saddle, Florence, Museo Nazionale, Bargello (Cat. 10)	Left side, on the pommel	other side	✗	right hand: sword, left hand: lance	✓
<i>Standing Saint George</i>					
Saddle	Field	Princess	Castle	Other	Saint George Inscription
Batthyány-Strattman Saddle, Boston, Museum of Fine Arts (Cat. 5)	Left side, on the pommel	other side (?)	✗	spear-thrust with both hands	✗
Batthyány Saddle, Budapest, Hungarian National Museum (Cat. 7)	Left side, on the pommel	✗	✗	right hand: sword, left hand: lance	✗

Rhédey Saddle, Budapest, Hungarian National Museum (Cat. 9)	Left side, on the pommel	×	×	spear-thrust with both hands	×
Nieuwerkerke Saddle, London, Wallace Collection (Cat. 14)	Left side, on the pommel	possibly the other side	×	spear-thrust with both hands	×
Trivulzio Saddle, New York, MET (Cat. 18)	Left side, under the volute	x	x	spear-thrust with both hands	x
	Left side, under the cantle			right hand: sword, left hand: lance	
Bone saddle, Stresa, Isola Bella, Museo Borromeo (Cat. 19)	Right side, under the volute	x	x	spear-thrust with both hands	?
	Left side, under the volute (Saint Michael?)			spear-thrust with both hands	
Saddle of Ercole d'Este, Modena, Galleria Estense (Cat. 24)	on the back of the right cantle	x	x	right hand: sword, left hand: lance	×
<i>Other identification of Saint George</i>					
Saddle	Other			Saint George Inscription	
Meyrick Saddle, London, Wallace Collection (Cat. 13)	x			✓	
Bone saddle, London, Tower of London (Royal Armouries) (Cat. 15.)	Two dragons and the cross of Saint George			✓	
Thill Saddle New York, MET (Cat. 17)	x			✓	

As we can see in the table, Saint George and the dragon are usually displayed in the same field, that is the left pommel. Two categories can be distinguished regarding the way Saint George

kills the dragon. On the Saddle of King Albert (Cat. 1), Berlin Saddle (Cat. 3), Batthyány-Strattmann Saddle (Cat. 5), Rhédey Saddle (Cat. 9), Nieuwerkerke Saddle (Cat. 14), one figure on the Trivulzio Saddle (Cat. 18) and the two figures on the saddle of Isola Bella (Cat. 19) depict the saint killing the dragon with a spear thrust to the mouth of the beast by a long lance, holding it with both hands. On the remainder of the saddles (Batthyány Saddle – Cat. 7; Jankovich Saddle – Cat. 8; Bargello Saddle – Cat. 10; and on the other figure of the Trivulzio Saddle – Cat. 18), George holds a sword in his right hand while he sticks the lance into the dragon with his other hand.⁹⁵ Both types of representation appear in fifteenth-century Central European art, although there are more parallels for the first version (Figure 62). A shield decoration serves as a good example of the latter, even if it is from the second part of the fifteenth-century (Figure 63). The motif of the dragon tail wrapped around the leg of Saint George, appearing on the Rhédey Saddle, the Batthyány-Strattman Saddle, and the Nieuwerkerke Saddle is also a Central European particularity, which appears on the already mentioned sculpture and on the statue of Martin and George of Kolozsvár (however, in this statue the tail of the dragon is wrapped around the horse's leg).

As was already noted (see Chapter 2 - Couples), in some instances, Saint George and the princess follow the same pattern as the couples. This is especially true for the Nieuwerkerke Saddle, where Saint George is dressed more like a courtly figure than a soldier, and the princess depicted on the other side of the saddle does not wear a crown.

Four saddles contain inscriptions related to the Saint: the Bargello Saddle (Cat. 10), the Meyrick Saddle (Cat. 13), the Saddle of the Tower of London (Cat. 15), and the Thill Saddle (Cat. 17). On the Bargello Saddle, the inscription probably only serves as an identification (“*ritt(er) sa(n)d Jörig*” - Knight Saint George). On the Meyrick Saddle, the man swears an

⁹⁵ He holds a shield in his left hand on the Saddle of Ercole d'Este.

oath in the name of the Saint (“*dein ewichleich in sand ierigen nam*” - yours forever in the name of Saint George). On the Saddle of the Tower of London, as well as on the Thill Saddle, Saint George appears as a patron, to whom the man or woman prays for success (Tower: “*hilf got wol auf sand jorgen nam*” - with God’s help well then, in the name of St George; Thill: “*hilfbol aufsand (jo)rgen nam (h)ilfritter sandjorig*” - well then, in the name of Saint George, help knight Saint George) (See Table VII).

The cult of Saint George became extremely popular from the fourteenth-century onwards over whole Europe. He was the patron of most of the ordos, as the English Order of the Garter, the Burgundian noble society, the Austrian order of Friedrich III and the Saint George order of Charles I of Hungary and the Dragon Order of Sigismund. Charles IV, Holy Roman Emperor even had a relic from the dragon’s head in his castle of Karlstein.⁹⁶

Saint George is primarily a military patron: protector of knights and archers, but also of horses and saddle-makers.⁹⁷ Therefore it is not a surprise that he is a popular decorative element on fifteenth-century weaponry such as the already noted shield (Figure 63).

Saint George’s appearance on the saddles can be explained by his patron role for cavalry. We can assume that the visual as well as the textual appearance has the same purpose: they serve as materialized prayers to the saint. On the other hand, when the Saint is paired with the princess, especially when they are depicted as courtly figures (Nieuwerkerke Saddle), Saint George can also be placed in the context of love iconography.

⁹⁶ Endre Tóth, “Szent György [Saint George],” in *Szent György a lovasság védőszentje [Saint George, the patron of cavalry]* (Budapest: Magyar Honvédség Oktatási és Kulturális Anyagellátó Központ Nyomda, 1992), 32.

⁹⁷ Louis Réau, *Iconographie de l’art chrétien, vol. III: Iconographie des saints* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1958), 573.

Chapter 3 – Inscriptions and Initials

Inscriptions

The inscriptions adorning the saddles fall into two main categories: twelve saddles are decorated with Middle High German, while three saddles have Latin inscriptions. Their length and meaning differ. The shorter inscriptions include mottos and short phrases. The longer ones are love dialogues written in rhymes, on banderoles held by the male and female figures of the saddles. Apart from these, proverbs also appear as parts of the longer dialogues.

Mottos

The inscriptions of the following saddles can be interpreted as mottos: the repeated “*gedenkch und halt*” (recall and stop) on the Batthyány-Strattmann Saddle (Cat. 5), the inscription of the Western Bargello Saddle (Cat. 23; “*aspetto tempo / amor / laus / deo*” - I wait time / love / praise to / God), and the inscriptions of the Saddle of Ercole d’Este (Cat. 24; “*deus fortitudo mea / deus adiutor*” – God my strength / God my supporter). On the latter, “*deus adiutor*” accompanies the scene of Saint George on the right cantle. The “*deus fortitudo mea*” appears in its full length on the back of the left cantle, above the scene of Samson or Hercules fighting with the lion, and on each side of the saddle in abbreviated forms (“*deus fort, deus fortitu*”).⁹⁸ The “*deus fortitudo mea*” was Ercole I d’Este’s personal motto. It can be read on the reverse of his *groschen* running around the depiction of Saint George (Figure 64).⁹⁹ His personal motto, as well as the coat of arms of the Este family on the front side indicate that the Saddle belonged to Duke Ercole I d’Este (1471-1505), count of Ferrara.

⁹⁸ Samson. GIP; Hercules. Schlosser, “Elfenbeinsättel des ausgehenden Mittelalters,” 274.

⁹⁹ Schlosser, “Elfenbeinsättel des ausgehenden Mittelalters,” 273.

Proverbs

Two proverbs on each of two saddles feature as part of dialogues. The “*lach lib lach*” (laugh, my love, love) inscription adorns the Rhédey and the Tratzberg Saddles (Cat. 9 and Cat. 16). On the Rhédey Saddle it is above the already presented scene of Aristotle and Phyllis, strengthening its mocking aspect (Figure 22). On the Tratzberg Saddle, the inscription does not connect to any particular scene: it is part of the longer inscription on a banderol which runs through the whole surface of the saddle (see Table VII; Figure 65).

The “*lach lieb lach*” expression can be found in a contemporary literary source, the *Lobrischer manuscript*, which includes the work of Heinrich Münsinger: *Buch von den Falken, Habichten, Sperbern, Pferden und Hunden*.¹⁰⁰ The book is the German translation and variation of part of Albert the Great’s zoological work: *De animalibus libri* (chapters 22 and 23).¹⁰¹ In Münsinger’s translation, the third part of the book, which discusses horses, concludes with the following line: “*Got unß sin hayligen frid send. Laus Deo! Lach. Lieb. Lach.*” (God send his holy peace to us. Praise to God. Laugh, my love, laugh).¹⁰²

Another proverb of the Tratzberg inscription is “*in dem ars is vinster*” (it is black in the arse), which also appears on the Saddle of the Tower of London as “*im ars is vinster*” (Figure 66 and Figure 67). While on the Tratzberg Saddle it is part of the inscription and rhymes with the line “*frei dich mit gantzem willen*” (rejoice, with your whole will), on the other saddle the inscription is presented in an isolated position and divided into the back sides of the two cantles (see Table VII). This expression can also be found in contemporary German literature, more

¹⁰⁰ Kurt Lindner, ed., *Von Falken, Hunden und Pferden. Deutsche Albertus-Magnus-Übersetzungen aus der ersten Hälfte des 15. Jahrhunderts*, vol. 2 *Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte der Jagd 7–8*. (Berlin: W. De Gruyter, 1962) 83.

¹⁰¹ Irven M. Resnick, ed., *A Companion to Albert The Great: Theology, Philosophy, and The Sciences* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 730.

¹⁰² Lindner, *Von Falken, Hunden und Pferden. Deutsche Albertus-Magnus-Übersetzungen aus der ersten Hälfte des 15. Jahrhunderts*, 83.

specifically in a manuscript preserving the Dialogue of Solomon and Marcolf in the Biblioteca Batthyanaiana in Alba Iulia.¹⁰³ The original Latin dialogue of the Old Testament king and the medieval peasant was probably born around the eleventh-century, and its Latin and German vernacular versions became widespread and extremely popular in German lands from the fifteenth-century onwards. Accordingly, the extant manuscripts from that time were all copied in Southern Germany or Austria. The work is composed of five verbal contests, each using different rhetorical forms: genealogies, proverbs, riddles, arguable propositions and arguments on both sides of an issue. As part of the proverb contest, Solomon quotes a moral statement from the Old Testament Wisdom Books to which Marcolf in his response adopts Solomon's statement in vulgar language, mocking it. He degrades Solomon's wisdom applying his words to the functions of the lower body.¹⁰⁴ This is what happens in the relevant part, when Solomon says: "*Ain schöns weib ist ain zier jrm mann*" (A beautiful woman is an ornament for her husband). Marcolf's reply is: "*Auff dem Hals ist sy weis als ain tawben, jm ars vinster al sein scher*" (In the neck she is white as a dove, in the asshole black as a mole).¹⁰⁵ The existence of the inscription in contemporary German literature as a proverb suggests that it was a popular idiomatic phrase at the time. Nevertheless, this vulgar proverb seems strange on the saddles in the context of the rest of the inscriptions and the illustrations. For example, on the Saddle of the Tower of London the other parts of the inscription pray to God and Saint George for success, and on the Tratzberg Saddle the lovers wait for each other and the summertime. (see Table VII).

¹⁰³ Sabine Gries, *Salomon und Marcolf – Ein literarischer Komplex im Mittelalter und in der frühen Neuzeit. Studien zu Überlieferung und Interpretation* (Berlin, Boston: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 2013), 283.

¹⁰⁴ Nancy Mason Bradbury and Scott Bradbury, eds., introduction to *The Dialogue of Solomon and Marcolf: A Dual-Language Edition from Latin and Middle English Printed Editions*, TEAMS Middle English Texts Series (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 2012), accessed May 13, 2017 <http://d.lib.rochester.edu/teams/text/bradbury-solomon-and-marcolf-intro>

¹⁰⁵ Gries *Salomon und Marcolf – Ein literarischer Komplex im Mittelalter und in der frühen Neuzeit. Studien zu Überlieferung und Interpretation*, 289; Jan M. Ziolkowski, trans., *Solomon and Marcolf*, Harvard Studies in Medieval Latin, 1. (Cambridge, Mass.: Department of the Classics, Harvard University, 2008), 71.

The appearance of the same lines in completely different genres suggests that they were frequently used proverbs at the beginning of the fifteenth-century. The words “*lach lib lach*” can be read in a book about animals (*Summa zoologica*), while the “*jm ars vinster*” is part of a medieval dialogue of an Old Testament king and a peasant. These examples reflect that the proverbs fitted well completely different contexts. This ambiguous character of the above presented literary examples, as well as the inscriptions of the saddles, might seem peculiar to us, but the medieval audience was probably well-acquainted with them, as well as with their meaning.

Love inscriptions: dialogues in rhymes and short sentences

On the rest of the saddles, we can read short sentences as well as dialogues in rhymes between the men and women depicted on the saddles. Since most of these dialogues have love content, and their characters show similarities to Middle High German lyric, it is worth giving a brief overview about the literary background of the period, in order to place the inscriptions into their adequate context.

The German poems known as *Minnesangs* were based on the idea of love and service. Their earliest examples come from the twelfth-century, and they were probably adapted from Old French and Provençal lyrics.¹⁰⁶ *Minnesang* expresses love between man and woman but exclusively outside of marriage.¹⁰⁷ The Middle High German term *minne* relates to this definition: it does not signify love itself: *hôhe minne* means the love for highborn ladies.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ Marion E. Gibbs and Sidney M. Johnson, *Medieval German Literature: A Companion*, (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1997), 224-25.

¹⁰⁷ Albrecht Classen, “Courtly Love Lyric,” in *A Companion to Middle High German Literature to the 14th century*, ed. Francis G. Gentry (Leiden; Boston; Köln: Brill, 2002), 118.

¹⁰⁸ Will Hasty, “Minnesang — The Medieval German Love Lyrics,” in *German Literature of the High Middle Ages*, edited by Will Hasty (Boydell & Brewer, 2006), 144.

The flourishing period of *Minnesänger* between the twelfth and thirteenth-century is regarded in scholarship of literary history as “courtly love literature”. The term “courtly love” was born in the nineteenth-century, and its relevancy and accuracy was called into question by D. W. Robertson Jr, who pointed out that there was no such thing in the Middle Ages and the term was only the invention of nineteenth-century historiography.¹⁰⁹ According to Robertson, “courtly love” should be confined to a higher ranked lady and his admirer whom love makes sick. In spite of this, medieval love poetry is varied: there are poems about sexual desire, praise of ladies and crypto-religious works, etc.¹¹⁰

Accordingly, scholarship distinguishes different types in love lyric. The *Frauenklage* – woman’s lament - which was more typical in the early period of love lyrics -presents the *höhe minne* from the point of view of the woman.¹¹¹ The *Tagelied* – dawn song – is the only one, which indicates the physical union of the lovers: it shows them waking up together in the early morning when they are warned by a bird’s sing or a guard that it is time to separate.¹¹² The *Kreuzlied* – crusading song – is a development of love lyric, based on the conflict between the service of the lady and service of God: the man has to leave her because God calls him to a crusade. In the *Kreuzlied*-s the main motif is the knight’s dilemma between his obligation of going on a crusade or remaining with his lady.¹¹³ In Hartman von Aue’s work, for example, the man fights in the Holy Land while his lady prays at home.¹¹⁴

By the fourteenth and fifteenth-century, German love lyric went through some changes. In the beginning of the fifteenth-century, a new tendency emerged. The traditions of love lyric were

¹⁰⁹ D.W. Robertson, Jr. “The Concept of Courtly Love as an Impediment to the Understanding of Medieval Texts.” In *The Meaning of Courtly Love*, ed. F. X. Newman (Albany, NY: State University of New York, 1968), 1.

¹¹⁰ Ibid. 4.

¹¹¹ Gibbs and Johnson, *Medieval German Literature: A Companion*, 234.

¹¹² Classen, “Courtly Love Lyric,” 136-37.

¹¹³ Gibbs and Johnson, *Medieval German Literature: A Companion*, 235; Classen, “Courtly Love Lyric,” 136; Frank Tobin, Kim Vivian, and Richard H. Lawson, trans. *Arthurian Romances, Tales, and Lyric Poetry: The Complete Works of Hartmann Von Aue* (Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), 35.

¹¹⁴ Classen, “Courtly Love Lyric,” 136.

transformed into marital love poems between spouses. One of the pioneers of this new tendency was Oswald von Wolkenstein, in whose work, the survivals of the motifs of the “courtly love lyric” can be recognized, for example, the *Tagelied* tradition, when the woman warns his lover to the presence of spies.¹¹⁵ At the same time, his love poems were dedicated primarily to his wife.¹¹⁶

The love dialogues of the saddles can be placed in the context of this transitional period of German love lyric: there are the older traditional motifs, as well as the new tendencies toward marriage. The tradition of the *Kreuzlied* can be identified, for example, on the Meyrick Saddle (Cat. 13) where the dialogue between the man and woman is the longest. There are two inscriptions on each side (see Table VII). A long inscription on a banderol starting on the cantle, running by the borders of the saddle, up to the volute, finishes in the hand of the woman on the left side, and in the hand of the man on the right side. The shorter inscription running around the field under the cantles on each side is held by a man on the left side and by a woman on the right. The long inscription held by a woman on the left side says: “*ich pin hie, ich ways nit wie / ich var von dann, ich ways nit wan / nu wol auf mit willen unvergessen*” (I am here, I don’t know how / I am leaving, I don’t know when / Now then, willingly unforgotten). The long inscription held by a man on the right side replies: “*ich var, ich har, ye lenger ich har me gresser nar / dein ewichleich in sand ierigen nam*” (I go, I wait (stay?), the longer I wait (stay?) the more I become mad./ Yours forever in the name of Saint George). The short inscription, held by a man on the left side says: “*ich frei mich all zeit dein*” (I always rejoice with you), the woman on the right side replies: “*we den kr[....iegs?] rat*” (Woe is me from the war’s

¹¹⁵ “*herzlieb, nim war, das uns nicht vach der meider rick!*” Albrecht Classen, “Love and marriage in late medieval verse: Oswald von Wolkenstein, Thomas Hoccleve and Michel Beheim.” *Studia Neophilologica*, 62:2 (1990): 165; English translation: “Heart-beloved, pay attention that we are not being caught by the traitors’ ropes!” Albrecht Classen, *The Poems of Oswald von Wolkenstein: An English Translation of the Complete Works (1376/77–1445)*, New Middle Ages (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008), 147.

¹¹⁶ Classen, “Love and marriage in late medieval verse: Oswald von Wolkenstein, Thomas Hoccleve and Michel Beheim,” 164–65.

council(?)). The hesitant character of the inscription suggests the moment of separation (“*ich var, ich har, ye lenger ich har me gresser nar*”- the longer I wait (stay?) the more I become mad) and therefore shows similarities to the *Tagelied* tradition.

The short inscription of the Braunschweig Saddle (Cat. 6) speaks about fidelity: (“*treu yst selt(en) in der weld*” - fidelity is rare in the world). Faithfulness, a popular motif at that time, exists also on different media: men and women promise fidelity to each other on caskets, tapestries, sealstones, clay moulds, and manuscript illuminations.¹¹⁷ There is a dialogue about fidelity on the already mentioned illustration of the *Welsche Gäst* where the couple promise faithfulness to each other (see Chapter 2; Figure 26). Couples promising fidelity also appear on the different sides of a *Minnekastchēn*, where the man states: “*uf drin tru bu ich al stund*” (on your faith I rely at every hour), to which the woman replies: “*din tru lob ich nu*” (to be faithful to you I vow now).¹¹⁸ According to Jürgen Wurst, around this time fidelity became important in man-woman relationships, not only as a moral virtue, but because it also confirmed the marital alliance which provided the economic survival of the family.¹¹⁹ The reliefs of the *Minnekästchen* reflect this idea, as they can be regarded as representations of contemporary relationship models (Figure 68).¹²⁰ In accordance with this, the inscription about fidelity on the Braunschweig Saddle can also be placed in this context. The new importance of the family and fidelity in marriages was already noted in Chapter 2 in connection with the changing symbol of the wild man, who also served as a form of expression of this transitional period.

¹¹⁷ Wurst, “Pictures and Poems of Courtly Love and Bourgeois Marriage: Some Notes on the So-called ‘Minnekästchen’,” 108.

¹¹⁸ Ibid. 107.

¹¹⁹ Ibid. 119-120.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

The above-discussed love-related inscriptions are only two examples of the saddles, but similar ideas are formulated in the inscriptions of the other saddles as well, as we can see in Table VII. They seem to reflect the transitional character of the contemporary love lyric, as well as the changing attitudes towards fidelity and marriage.

Table VII: Inscriptions¹²¹

German inscriptions				
Name of the Saddle	Inscription		Translation	
	Left side	Right Side	Left side	Right side
Saddle of King Albert, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Hofjagd und Rüstkammer (Cat. 1)	<i>wyl es got ych helf dir aus</i>	<i>not¹²²</i>	if God is willing, I will help you out of	misery ¹²³
Bone saddle, Bologna, Museo Civico Medievale (Cat. 4)	<i>vol auf heute morgen</i>	<i>ich frewe mich denn (?)¹²⁴</i>	to this morning	I am looking forward ¹²⁵
Batthyány-Strattman Saddle, Boston, Museum of Fine Arts (Cat. 5)	<i>gedenkch und halt</i>	<i>gedenkch und halt</i>	recall and stop ¹²⁶	recall and stop
	<i>gedenkch</i>	<i>und halt</i>	recall	and stop
Bone saddle, Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum (Cat. 6)	<i>treu yst selt(en) in der weld¹²⁷</i>		fidelity is rare in the world	

¹²¹ I am very grateful to Gerhard Jaritz for his enormous help reviewing the inscriptions, transcriptions and translations of the saddles. I am also grateful for the translations to Susi Bogen.

¹²² “wyl es got ych helf dir au(s) not, ave...” Verö, “4.72. Beinsattel (Sattel von König Albrecht),” 363.

¹²³ The right order is probably: “wyl es got ych helf dir aus not” – “If God is willing I will help you out of misery.”

¹²⁴ “ICH FREUUE MICH VOL AUF HEUTE MORGEN” GIP.

¹²⁵ The right order is probably “Ich frewe mich denn (?)vol auf heute morgen” – “I am looking forward to this morning.”

¹²⁶ Literally, “think and stop” or, colloquially, “look before you leap”. GIP.

¹²⁷ “trev yst selth in der weld” GIP.

Rhédey Saddle, Budapest, Hungarian National Museum (Cat. 9)	<i>ich hof</i>	<i>si b(it) (?)¹²⁸</i>	I hope	she asks for (?)
	<i>mit lieb</i>	<i>lach lieb lach</i>	with love	laugh my love laugh
		<i>hof mit</i>		with hope
Bone saddle, Florence, Museo Nazionale, Bargello (Cat. 10)	<i>ich han nicht lieberr¹²⁹ wen dich</i>	<i>allain mein ader las gar sein¹³⁰</i>	I do not love anyone more than you	only mine or just leave it (if not staying with me just go)
	<i>bit erd (?)¹³¹</i>	<i>ritt(er) sa(n)d Jörig¹³²</i>	ask the earth (?)	Knight Saint George
		<i>dich libt¹³³ got</i>		God loves you
Bone saddle, Florence, Museo Bardini (Cat. 11)	<i>ander</i> <i>für</i>	<i>Ich lib all hie und wais nit wi(e) (u)nd mues vo' ... ich...¹³⁴</i>	other for	I love all here and don't know how and must ... I...
Meyrick Saddle, London, Wallace Collection (Cat. 13)	<i>ich pin hie, ich ways nit wie¹³⁵</i> <i>ich var von dann, ich ways¹³⁶ nit wan¹³⁷</i>	<i>ich var, ich har, ye lenger ich har me gresser nar¹³⁸</i>	I am here, I don't know how I am leaving, I don't know when ¹³⁹	I go, I wait (stay?), the longer I wait (stay?) the more I become mad. ¹⁴⁰

¹²⁸ *G lib (?)* Verő, “4.68. Beinsattel (Rhédey-Sattel),” *Sigismundus rex et imperator. Kunst und Kultur zur Zeit Sigismunds von Luxemburg, 1387–1437*, ed. Imre Takács (Budapest: Szépművészeti Múzeum, 2006), 360.

¹²⁹ “lieben” GIP; “liebere” Verő, “4.70. Beinsattel,” *Sigismundus rex et imperator. Kunst und Kultur zur Zeit Sigismunds von Luxemburg, 1387–1437*, ed. Imre Takács (Budapest: Szépművészeti Múzeum, 2006), 362.

¹³⁰ “ALLAIN MEIN ODER LOCGAR SEIN” GIP.

¹³¹ “huerd” or “Sit erd (?)” GIP.

¹³² “Ritt sad iorig” GIP.

¹³³ “hab” GIP.

¹³⁴ “ICH LIB ALL HIR UND WAIS NIT WI[E] / [U]ND WUCS [?] VO HIN” and “ICH WAI [SS] NI” Mario Scalini, “Sella da pompa,” in *Le Temps revient - Il tempo si rinnova. Feste e spettacoli nella Firenze di Lorenzo il Magnifico*, [exhibition catalogue] ed. Paola Ventrone (Milano: Silvana, 1992), 173.

¹³⁵ “ich pin bie / ich wans nit wie” Sir James Mann, *Wallace Collection Catalogues. European Arms and Armour*, vol. 1. Armour (London: William Clowes and Sons, 1962), 226-227; GIP.

¹³⁶ “waws” William Maskell ed., *A Description Of The Ivories, Ancient And Medieval, in The South Kensington Museum*, (London: Chapman and Hall, 1872), 175.

¹³⁷ “ich var von v... / ich wans nit wan” Mann, *Wallace Collection Catalogues. European Arms and Armour*, 226-227; GIP.

¹³⁸ “Ich war, ich har, ne lenger ich har, Me gresser nar” Maskell, *A Description Of The Ivories, Ancient And Medieval, in The South Kensington Museum*, 175; “ich var ich bar / ye lenger ich bar / me greffen (gresser) nar” Mann, *Wallace Collection Catalogues. European Arms and Armour*, 226-227; GIP.

¹³⁹ “I go hence, I know not where” Mann, *Wallace Collection Catalogues. European Arms and Armour*, 226-227; GIP.

¹⁴⁰ “I go, I stop, the longer I stop, the more mad I become” Ibid.

	<i>nu wol auf mit willen unvergessen</i>	<i>dein ewichleich in sand ierigen nam¹⁴¹</i>	Now then, willingly unforgotten ¹⁴²	yours forever in the name of Saint George ¹⁴³
	<i>ich frei mich all zeit dein</i>	<i>we den kr[....iegs?]J¹⁴⁴ rat¹⁴⁵</i>	I always rejoice with you ¹⁴⁶	woe is me from the war's council(?) ¹⁴⁷
Bone saddle, London, Tower of London (Royal Armouries) (Cat. 15.)	<i>hilf got wol auf sand jorgen nam</i>	<i>ich hoff des pesten dir geling</i>	with God's help well then, in the name of St George (God grant in the name of Saint George)	I hope for the best that you succeed.
	<i>im ars</i>	<i>is vinster</i>	in the arse	it is black
Tratzberg Saddle, New York, MET (Cat. 16)	<i>wol mich wart</i>	<i>wol mich nu wart</i>	just wait for me	just wait for me
	<i>ich hof der liben somerzeit</i>	<i>in dem ars is vinster</i>	I am hoping for dear summertime	it is dark in the arse
	<i>lach lib lach</i>	<i>frei dich mit gantzem willen</i>	laugh, my love, laugh. ¹⁴⁸	rejoice, with your whole will

¹⁴¹ "Dein ewigleich land ierigen varn" Maskell, *A Description Of The Ivories, Ancient And Medieval, in The South Kensington Museum*, 175; Mann, *Wallace Collection Catalogues. European Arms and Armour*, 226-227; GIP.

¹⁴² "Well a day! Willingly thou art never forgotten" Ibid.

¹⁴³ "Thine forever, The world o'er your betrothed" Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ "Me den krg: ent" Maskell, *A Description Of The Ivories, Ancient And Medieval, in The South Kensington Museum*, 175; Mann, *Wallace Collection Catalogues. European Arms and Armour*, 226-227; GIP.

¹⁴⁵ It can be also read as "Nie den kr[....iegs?]"

¹⁴⁶ "I rejoice to be ever thine" Mann, *Wallace Collection Catalogues. European Arms and Armour*, 226-227; GIP.

¹⁴⁷ "But if the war should end?" Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ The order is probably the following: Right side: "wol mich nu wart / in dem ars is vinster / frei dich mit gantzem willen" Left side: "wol mich wart / ich hof der liben somerzeit / lach lib lach"

Thill Saddle New York, MET (Cat. 17)	<i>bol auf sand (jo)rgen nam (h)ilf ritter sand jorig¹⁴⁹</i>	<i>hilf</i>	well then, in the name of Saint George, help knight Saint George	help
Bone saddle, Stresa, Isola Bella, Museo Borromeo (Cat. 19)	<i>lib</i>		love	

Latin inscriptions

Name of the Saddle	<i>Inscription</i>		<i>Translation</i>	
	<i>Left side</i>	<i>Right Side</i>	<i>Left side</i>	<i>Right side</i>
Jankovich Saddle, Budapest, Hungarian National Museum (Cat. 7)	<i>da pacem domine</i>		give peace, Lord	
Bone saddle, Florence, Museo Nazionale, Bargello (Cat. 23)	<i>amor</i>	<i>aspeto¹⁵⁰ tempo</i>	love	I wait time
	<i>deo</i>	<i>laus</i>	to God	praise
Saddle of Ercole d'Este, Modena, Galleria Estense, (Cat. 24)	<i>deus fortii</i>	<i>deus fortituu</i>		
	<i>deus fortitudo mea</i>	<i>deus adiutor</i>	God my strength	God my supporter

¹⁴⁹ "HILF VOL AUF SAND [JO]RGEN NAM -ILF(?) RITTER SAND JORG" GIP.

¹⁵⁰ "aspero" GIP.

Initials

It had already been suggested in scholarship, namely by Schlosser as early as the nineteenth-century that the initials of some saddles refer to concrete couples.¹⁵¹ Therefore, initials adorning seven saddles are highly important since they might confirm the idea that these particular saddles were made for couples from the past, and they might also help to identify their original owner.

On the Saddle of King Albert (Cat. 1) an “e” appears on the front side, under the volute (Figure 69). In front of it, on the inner side of the left volute the German imperial coat of arms is depicted (see Table VIII).¹⁵² These two details led Schlosser to attribute the saddle to Wenceslas IV, suggesting that the “e” refers to his second wife, Euphemia-Žophie.¹⁵³ However, since the style of the dresses indicates that the saddle is from later years, later scholarship attributed the saddle to Habsburg Albert (Albert V Austrian duke, king Albert II) and his wife, Elisabeth of Luxemburg, daughter of Emperor Sigismund.¹⁵⁴ According to the catalogue of Thomas and Gamber, if this identification is right, the following coats of arms featured on the broken parts of the volutes: Hungarian-Dalmatian, Bohemian, and Austrian ducal coat of arms.¹⁵⁵

Scholarship has attributed not only the initial of the Saddle of King Albert, but also the “v”, “e”, and “b” initials of the Trivulzio Saddle (Cat.18) to Wenceslas and his wife (Figure 70 and Figure 71). Accordingly, the “v” and “e” initials refer to their marriage in 1389, and “b”

¹⁵¹ Schlosser, “Elfenbeinsättel des ausgehenden Mittelalters,” 263.

¹⁵² The other volute is broken off.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Thomas and Gamber, *Katalog der Leibrüstkammer. I. Teil. Der Zeitraum von 500 bis 1530*, 69; Verő, “4.72. Beinsattel (Sattel von König Albrecht),” in *Sigismundus rex et imperator. Kunst und Kultur zur Zeit Sigismunds von Luxemburg, 1387–1437*, ed. Imre Takács (Budapest: Szépművészeti Múzeum, 2006), 364.

¹⁵⁵ Thomas and Gamber, *Katalog der Leibrüstkammer. I. Teil. Der Zeitraum von 500 bis 1530*, 69.

refers to the Bavarian lands which were the part of the bride's dowry.¹⁵⁶ The attribution to a Holy Roman Emperor is supported by the imperial one-headed eagle on the back of the right cantle as well.¹⁵⁷ Similar double initials decorate the Bible of Wenceslas. Throughout the whole manuscript, a “w” and “e” embellish the margin, which Schlosser identified as also standing for Wenceslas and Euphemia-Žophie (Figure 72).¹⁵⁸ This identification was disputed by Hana Hlaváčková who suggests that the initials do not necessarily stand for the couple.¹⁵⁹ Moreover, even if they do, the initials of the saddles are slightly different, since a simple “v” is presented instead of the “w”, and the dresses indicate that the saddle was made at the beginning of the fifteenth-century, long after the wedding.

The initials of the Braunschweig Saddle (Cat. 6) also pose questions. There are several “m”-s or “w”-s on the surface, and a “v” on the left side in the hand of a woman, while on the two cantles the “m/w” intertwists with an “h/n/u” (Figure 73). Hermann Riegel read these combined letters as an “M” and “II”, and identified the owner as Magnus II, Duke of Brunswick-Lüneburg.¹⁶⁰ This assumption was questioned already by Schlosser, who pointed out that the other initial cannot refer to a “II”, and the duke died much before the saddle was probably made. However, he did not exclude the possibility that the initials refer to him.¹⁶¹

Similar intertwining initials decorate other artworks related to Jadwiga, Queen of Poland. There are two intertwining “m”-s on her crystal vessel (Staatliche Kunstsammlungen,

¹⁵⁶ Eric Ramírez-Weaver, “No 90. Saddle, possibly of Wenceslas IV”, in: *Prague: the Crown of Bohemia, 1347–1437*, [Exhibition catalog], ed. Barbara Drake Boehm and Jirí Fajt (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2005), 236; GIP.

¹⁵⁷ Verő, “4. 66. Beinsattel,” in *Sigismundus rex et imperator. Kunst und Kultur zur Zeit Sigismunds von Luxemburg, 1387–1437*, ed. Imre Takács (Budapest: Szépművészeti Múzeum, 2006), 358; GIP.

¹⁵⁸ Julius von Schlosser, Die Bilderhandschriften Königs Wenzel I, *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des Allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses*, 14 (1893): 214-51, 270-308, 291-95.

¹⁵⁹ Hana Hlaváčková, “Courtly Body in the Bible of Wenceslas IV,” in: *Künstlerischer Austausch. Akten des XXVIII. Internationalen Kongresses für Kunstgeschichte*, vol. 2 (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1993), 375.

¹⁶⁰ Herman Riegel, *Die Sammlung mittelalterlicher und verwandter Gegenstände* (Braunschweig: G. Westerman, 1879), 98-100.

¹⁶¹ Schlosser, “Elfenbeinsättel des ausgehenden Mittelalters,” 267.

Dresden), as well as on the Sankt Florian Psalter where the double initials appear three times (Figure 74).¹⁶² According to Aleksander Brückner, since these “m”-s adorn other objects related to Jadwiga, and an “m” also decorates the wall of a hall in the Wawel of Cracow, we can safely assume that it was her personal, devotional motto.¹⁶³ However, despite the similarities, the monograms of the Braunschweig Saddle cannot be attributed to her, since Jadwiga died in 1399, and the saddle is from the beginning of the fifteenth-century. According to Brückner, these mottos were fashionable in the fourteenth and fifteenth-century.¹⁶⁴

As we can see, even if there were suggestions in scholarship in connection with the initials that they refer to concrete couples, these theories are contradictory. The double initials might cover persons, even couples, but also mottos, the meanings of which were once clear for the persons who owned them but not for us anymore. Much as it would be favorable to think that they support the idea of marriage, they cannot serve as a strong argument for this idea. Nevertheless, they cannot be excluded either. The initials do not lead us closer to the question of the use of the saddles, therefore it is worth examining the subject from a completely different point of view: their possible role in the cultural context of marriage ceremonies.

¹⁶² Verő, “4.70. Beinsattel,” 362.

¹⁶³ Aleksander Brückner, review of "Psalterz floriański, tacińsko-polsko-niemiecki. Rękopis Biblioteki Narodowej w Warszawie," edited by Ryszard Ganszyniec, Witold Taszycki, Stefan Kubica, and Ludwika Bernackiego, Ossolineum, Lwów 1939, Pamiętnik Literacki : czasopismo kwartalne poświęcone historii i krytyce literatury polskiej 35/1/4 (1938): 291-295. For the different interpretations of the motto, see Ibid. and Krzysztof Ozóg, “The Intellectual Circles in Cracow at the Turn of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries and the Issue of the Creation of the Sankt Florian Psalter,” *Polish Librarires* 4 (2016), accessed May 13, 2017, <http://polishlibraries.pl/article.php?a=2&p=6%20>:

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

Table VIII: Initials

Name of the Saddle	Initials	Field	Other
Saddle of King Albert, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Hofjagd und Rüstkammer (Cat. 1)	<i>e</i>	between the two volutes	German royal coat of arms
Bone saddle, Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum (Cat. 6)	<i>M/W</i>	repeatedly on the whole surface	
	<i>v</i>	on the left side	
	<i>M/W + U/N/H</i>	on each cantle	
Batthyány-Strattman Saddle, Boston, Museum of Fine Arts (Cat. 5)	<i>GGG/SSS (?)</i> <i>KKK (?)</i>	under the cantle on each side	
Bone saddle, Florence, Museo Nazionale, Bargello (Cat. 10)	<i>b</i>	left side, under the cantle	
	<i>a</i>	right side, under the cantle	
Bone saddle, Glasgow, Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum (Cat. 12)	<i>m</i> <i>n</i>	repeated on each side of the pommel and volute	
Trivulzio Saddle, New York, MET (Cat. 18)	<i>b</i>	right cantle	one-headed imperial eagle
	<i>e</i>	left cantle	
	<i>v</i>	right side, under the cantle	
Saddle of Ladislaus Postumus Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Hofjagd- und Rüstkammer (Cat. 22)	<i>U/V with crown</i>	under the cantle on each side	

Chapter 4 - Wedding Rituals and Marriage Gifts in the Late Middle Ages

Wedding processions

Marriage procession was the most public part of the wedding in late medieval Italy.¹⁶⁵ During the *domumductio* (also called *ductio ad domum* or *traductio*) the wedding party marched in the public streets from the paternal house to the groom's house.¹⁶⁶ The main role of wedding processions was connected to their public aspect: they established the marriage in the community's eyes.¹⁶⁷ Processions also had legitimization purposes of the match and served as opportunities to display the family's political and economic power.¹⁶⁸

During the procession the bride walked through the streets from house to house. She was accompanied by women who were members of her family or her new husband's family. The bride's father did not take part in the procession, which is explained by Marcantonio Altieri, Renaissance author, as all weddings recall the rape of Sabine women.¹⁶⁹ The grandiosity of the procession depended on the families' wealth, especially that of the groom, since they covered the expenses of the wedding. The rich families' marriage processions were splendid parades, sometimes the members of the party were dressed in festive garments. The party was led by musicians even in the case of poorer families. The procession ended at the husband's house and continued with a banquet.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁵ Brucia Witthoft, "Marriage Rituals and Marriage Chests in Quattrocento Florence," 46.

¹⁶⁶ Chiesi calls it *domumductio*. Chiesi, "Le pouvoir s'exerce à cheval?", 101; Jane Fair Bestor uses the terms *ductio ad domum* or *traductio*. Jane Fair Bestor, "Marriage Transactions in Renaissance Italy and Mauss's Essay on the Gift." *Past & Present*, 164 (1999): 25, accessed May 2, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/651274>

¹⁶⁷ Witthoft, "Marriage Rituals and Marriage Chests in Quattrocento Florence," 46.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid. 47.

¹⁶⁹ Enrico Narducci, ed., *Marcantonio Altieri: Li Nuptiali*, (Rome, 1873), 73; Witthoft, "Marriage Rituals and Marriage Chests in Quattrocento Florence," 47.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid. 46-47.

According to Brucia Witthoft, wedding processions can be interpreted as triumphs in two senses: the groom's triumph who takes over the bride and her possessions, and the family's triumph – since it is an opportunity to display their wealth and power.¹⁷¹ At the same time, it is obviously not the woman's triumph. Her subordination appeared visually in the procession: she wore a crown – which symbolized her virginity and a collar which referred to the submission to her new husband.¹⁷² Furthermore, as Witthoft points out, some wedding processions were similar to triumphs. A wedding procession in Bologna was described as a *trionfalmente* in 1472, and Lorenzo de' Medici's wedding was also compared to a triumphal procession.¹⁷³

Gifts of love: Marriage Caskets and Minnekästchens

Two types of boxes can be connected to betrothal and marriage ceremonies: large marriage caskets (*forzieri, cassoni*) in which dowry- linen, and other bed furniture – were stored, and the smaller betrothal or bridal boxes – *forzerini, Minnekästchen* – which contained smaller possessions, as jewelry.¹⁷⁴

Marriage chests (*forzieri, cassoni*) had important role in Italian wedding ceremonies.¹⁷⁵ Their main purpose was to transport the dowry from the father's to the husband's house, where it became the part of the bed furniture.¹⁷⁶ By the end of the fourteenth-century, the casket became

¹⁷¹ Ibid. 48.

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Ludovico Frati, *La Vita Privata di Bologna dal Secolo XII al XVII* (Bologna, 1900), 52-53; Girolamo Mancini, "II bel S. Giovanni e le Festi Patronali di Firenze descritte nel 1475 da Piero Cennini", *Rivista d'Arte*, 6 (1909): 198.; Witthoft, "Marriage Rituals and Marriage Chests in Quattrocento Florence," 49.

¹⁷⁴ Wurst, "Pictures and Poems of Courtly Love and Bourgeois Marriage: Some Notes on the So-called 'Minnekästchen,'" 117.

¹⁷⁵ According to German written sources, German brides also brought presents and their dowries in the procession, although chests or boxes are not mentioned. Wurst, "Pictures and Poems of Courtly Love and Bourgeois Marriage: Some Notes on the So-called 'Minnekästchen,'" 119; August Jegel, "Altnürnberg Hochzeitsbrauch und Eherecht, besonders bis zum Ausgang des 16. Jahrhunderts", *Mitteilungen des Vereins für Geschichte der Stadt Nürnberg* 44 (1953): 252-55.

¹⁷⁶ Witthoft, "Marriage Rituals and Marriage Chests in Quattrocento Florence," 43.

an essential part of the marriage ceremony.¹⁷⁷ It was spectacularly carried by servants during the procession, then it was placed in the young couple's bedroom.

Miniature chests - *Minnekästchen* or *forzerini* - were more appropriate for keeping jewelry or other little objects. They could be made of tooled leather, bronze or ivory.¹⁷⁸ Ivory was more typical for French boxes, although traces of painting on a German *Minnekästchen* suggest that it also tried to imitate ivory.¹⁷⁹ According to Witthoft, miniature chests symbolized betrothal rather than wedding and they could serve as little courting boxes sent by the groom.¹⁸⁰

The decorations of the caskets were made for different audiences: their outer, easily readable decoration addressed more the people of the street who saw them during the procession, while the inner decoration was only for the couple. Therefore, we can assume that the decorations were made principally for ostentation.¹⁸¹

The outer side of caskets and boxes were decorated on one hand with scenes of romances creating narrative iconography, on the other hand with different motifs related to love: couples and symbolical characters: unicorns, wild men, etc. (see Chapter 2 Fig 11). While the former is not typical for the saddles (the only narrative detail is Aristotle and Phyllis on the Rhédey Saddle), the latter elements all appear on saddles. According to Robert L. Benson, the presence of the symbols of love and the figures of musicians on a miniature box suggest ceremonial celebration, thus it was not simply a betrothal gift, but a bridal box.¹⁸² Musicians adorn seven

¹⁷⁷ Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, "Les femmes dans les rituels de l'alliance et de la naissance à Florence," *Riti e rituali nelle società medievali*, ed. Jacques Chiffolleau, Lauro Martines, and Agostino Paravicini Bagliani (Spoleto: Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo, 1994), 8.

¹⁷⁸ Witthoft, "Marriage Rituals and Marriage Chests in Quattrocento Florence," 45.

¹⁷⁹ Carl F. Barnes, Jr, "The medieval house," in *The Secular Spirit: Life and Art at the End of the Middle Ages* [Exhibition catalog], ed. Timothy B. Husband et al., (New York: MET, 1975), 25; Wurst, "Pictures and Poems of Courtly Love and Bourgeois Marriage: Some Notes on the So-called 'Minnekästchen,'" 103.

¹⁸⁰ Witthoft, "Marriage Rituals and Marriage Chests in Quattrocento Florence," 43-45.

¹⁸¹ Klapisch-Zuber, "Les femmes dans les rituels de l'alliance et de la naissance à Florence," 6.

¹⁸² Robert L. Benson, "Ceremonies, secular and nonsecular," in *The Secular Spirit: Life and Art at the End of the Middle Ages* [Exhibition catalog], ed. Timothy B. Husband et al. (New York: MET, 1975), 255.

saddles as well: the Berlin Saddle (Cat. 3), the Batthyány-Strattman Saddle (Cat. 5), the Batthyány Saddle (Cat. 7), the Jankovich Saddle (Cat. 8), the Rhédey Saddle (Cat. 9), the Trivulzio Saddle (Cat. 18) and the Saddle of Ladislaus Posthumus (Cat. 22). As it has been noted, musicians led the wedding processions even in the weddings of the less wealthy families.¹⁸³ Musicians on the boxes and saddles strengthen the ceremonial aspect of the objects, and the idea that they were used in processions. Numerous boxes as well as saddles are decorated with inscriptions on banderols (see Chapter 3; Figure 68). Similarly to the saddles, some caskets and boxes are adorned with coats of arms while others are not: this indicates that they could be made for specific individuals as well as for the general market.¹⁸⁴

Some caskets have inner decoration as well: the nudes of Apollonio di Giovanni's casket inner side was intended only for the just married couple (see Chapter 2; Figure 58).

The question concerning the commission of the chests is debated among scholars.¹⁸⁵ According to Zuber the command could come from both sides.¹⁸⁶ As opposed to this, Witthoft claims that they were usually commissioned by the groom's family especially in Florence.¹⁸⁷ According to Wurst, gifts had particular roles in relationships between the sexes. The man, in return for his gifts, expected sexual favours. This is reflected in medieval love lyric as well.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸³ Witthoft, "Marriage Rituals and Marriage Chests in Quattrocento Florence," 47.

¹⁸⁴ Benson, "Ceremonies, secular and nonsecular," 254-55.

¹⁸⁵ Klapisch-Zuber, "Les femmes dans les rituels de l'alliance et de la naissance à Florence," 5.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid. 6.

¹⁸⁷ Witthoft, "Marriage Rituals and Marriage Chests in Quattrocento Florence," 43.

¹⁸⁸ See: Andreas Capellanus, *De Amore*, third book. Wurst, "Pictures and Poems of Courtly Love and Bourgeois Marriage: Some Notes on the So-called 'Minnekästchen,'" 115-16.

The role of horses during weddings

According to written and pictorial sources, not only caskets, but horses too played a significant role in weddings, especially in Italy. The Florentine law forbade girls who married within the city to ride horseback in the procession; only those brides were permitted to go on horseback whose groom lived outside the city.¹⁸⁹ Nevertheless, horses did take part in the course of the *domumductio*. According to Klapisch-Zuber a white *haquenée* was part of the processions from the fourteenth-century onwards. These smaller types of horses were ridden especially by women, but they were also used as carriers for travels.¹⁹⁰ This particular horse can be seen on a *cassone* panel (Figure 75). The painting displays the procession as part of the story of Ippolito Buondelmonti and Leonora Bardi.¹⁹¹ On the left part of the painting, in the beginning of the party the white horse is wearing precious saddlery, and is led by children, while in the background servants carry the marriage casket with the dowry.¹⁹² The saddle seems lavish, even gilded, and no one sits on it. This fits the idea that the precious saddlery of the wedding procession had only representative purposes.

Not small horses, but mules as important parts of wedding processions appear in a later, early sixteenth-century source. In 1519 Pope Leo X staged a triumphal wedding procession for the marriage of thirty orphans. They were dressed in gold and silver gowns decorated with pearls and jewels. Each orphan sat on a mule and fifteen mules carried marriage caskets. The mules were covered by precious saddle cloth bearing the arms of the Hospedale di Santo Spirito.¹⁹³

¹⁸⁹ Witthoft, "Marriage Rituals and Marriage Chests in Quattrocento Florence," 47.

¹⁹⁰ Larousse, "Haquenée," accessed May 13, 2017, http://www.larousse.fr/dictionnaires/francais/_haquen%C3%A9e/39045

¹⁹¹ The story is the fifteenth-century antecedent of the Romeo and Juliet: it is about two rival families whose children fall in love, but in contrast with Shakespeare's tragedy, this story has a happy ending with the wedding of the two young protagonists. Klapisch-Zuber, "Les femmes dans les rituels de l'alliance et de la naissance à Florence," 9.

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ Witthoft, "Marriage Rituals and Marriage Chests in Quattrocento Florence," 49.

Moreover, horses and saddles could be the part of the dowry in the case of royal marriages. A rather late source, the inventory of the trousseau of Queen Mary of Hungary, fiancée of King Louis II, and her future sister-in-law, Queen Anne reports that the queens took carriages, horses and saddles to their wedding.¹⁹⁴

As we can see in the written and pictorial sources, horses with precious saddles did take part, moreover they had an active role in marriage processions. The material of the saddles are not depicted or described as bone, but as noted earlier, caskets could be made of different materials from wood to ivory. Accordingly, it is very likely that it was the same for the saddles. The parade saddle of the casket painting seems a precious one, even if it is not made of bone. Therefore, it is possible to think that bone saddles were only one – a particular - category of parade saddles – they existed alongside with saddles made of different – but not less precious – material.

¹⁹⁴ I thank Patrik Pastrnak, who drew my attention to this article. Orsolya Réthelyi, “‘Maria Regina nuda venerat ad Hungariam’. The Queen’s treasures,” in *Mary of Hungary. The Queen and Her Court 1521-1531* [Exhibition catalogue], edited by Réthelyi Orsolya, F. Romhányi Beatrix, Spekner Enikő and Végh András (Budapest: Budapest History Museum, 2005), 123.

Conclusion

Fifteenth-century bone saddles are complex objects to be examined from different approaches, which in my work include iconography, literary history and cultural history in order to answer the question whether these special objects could be made for wedding purposes.

I assume that the decoration and function of fifteenth-century objects were linked. Marriage boxes were love gifts, therefore they contained love iconography. The dominating elements of the saddles' iconography are also connected to love, which makes it possible that they had similar purposes. Moreover, there are some elements which refer especially to marriage: the *dextrarum iunctio*, as the act of alliance, wild men as protectors of the family, and nudes as fertility symbols. The other dominating iconographical element - Saint George – can probably be explained by the original armorial character of the object type: the saddle.

Love-related inscriptions and their context in contemporary literary history also strengthen the marriage idea: the transitional period which prioritises marital fidelity and family alliance in contrast with the *höhe minne*. Although the initials have not led us to further conclusions as identifying them as couples, their existence may also be important. Love inscriptions, coats of arms adorn the parallel objects, marriage caskets as well as saddles.

The representative character of the saddles indicates, that similarly to the boxes, they could have been used during festive marriage processions, as another media of ostentation and representation of the wealth and power of the two families which made their alliance. Bone saddles were once painted, which could make their appearance even more lavish and ostentatious. Last but not least, marriage caskets and bridal boxes, as iconographical, ornamental and ceremonial parallels to the saddles also strengthen the marriage-theory.

In themselves these different approaches may not be sufficient to confirm this idea, but taken together different factors strengthen each other: love iconography, love inscription, and initials. On the Bargello Saddle (Cat. 10) all three factors appear: we can see couples, and a symbol of love: on the right side a hunter draws a bow which was a popular metaphor of the relation between sexes.¹⁹⁵ The inscription has love content (see Table VII), and there are two initials: an “*a*” on the right side and a “*b*” on the left side (see Table VIII). Among the other saddles two different factors appear in most cases (love iconography – love inscription, love iconography-initials or inscription-initials). Therefore, I suggest that the marriage-theory is worth considering in the cases of these saddles.

The main purpose of my thesis was to find an answer to the saddles’ possible connection to late medieval wedding rituals with the help of different approaches through different types of examination. However, there are many other issues connected to this special object group which – following a similar interdisciplinary method – may lead us to more answers about fifteenth-century bone saddles. Detailed stylistic and comparative analysis can reveal relationships between the saddles, identifying the workshops they were made in, the scientific analysis of the raw material can locate the place and precise time of origin, and narrative sources might also reveal more about the role of these special saddles in the environment of noble society.

My contribution can be regarded as a first step of a future elaborated scientific analysis of this special object group. In my work, I examined the art of love in late medieval bone saddles, but I also intended to enlighten the importance of this typical Central European object group in the

¹⁹⁵ Wurst, “Pictures and Poems of Courtly Love and Bourgeois Marriage: Some Notes on the So-called ‘Minnekästchen’,” 112.

context of Medieval Central European society and help to lead it back to its merited place in scientific discourse.

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Glossary

The following figures serve as visual explications of the most important terms.

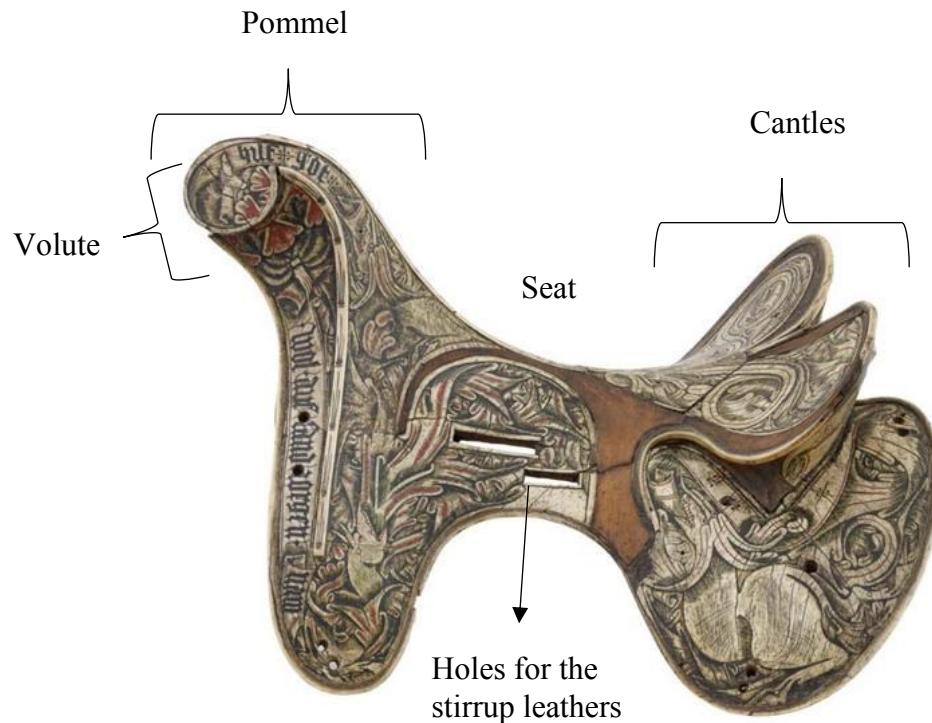


Figure 1 Bone saddle (Cat. 15), left side.



Figure 2 Saddle of Ladislaus Posthumus (Cat. 22), front side.

Figures

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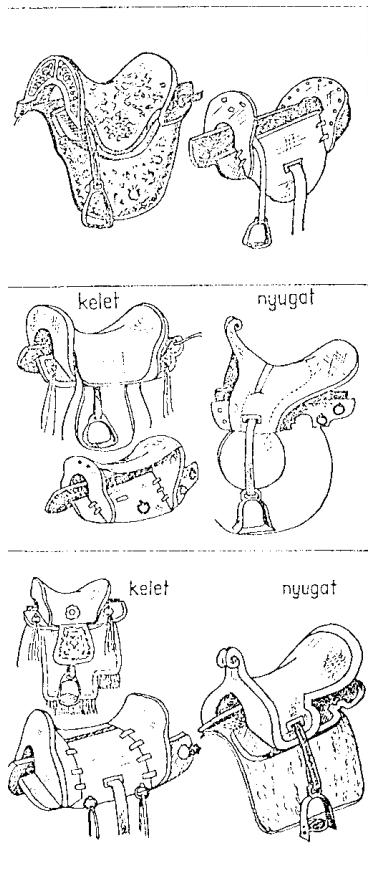


Figure 3 The development of the Eastern and Western saddles (left: Eastern saddle, right: Western saddle, after U. Kőhalmi).



Figure 4 Saddle from the tournament of Maximilian I (1459-1519).

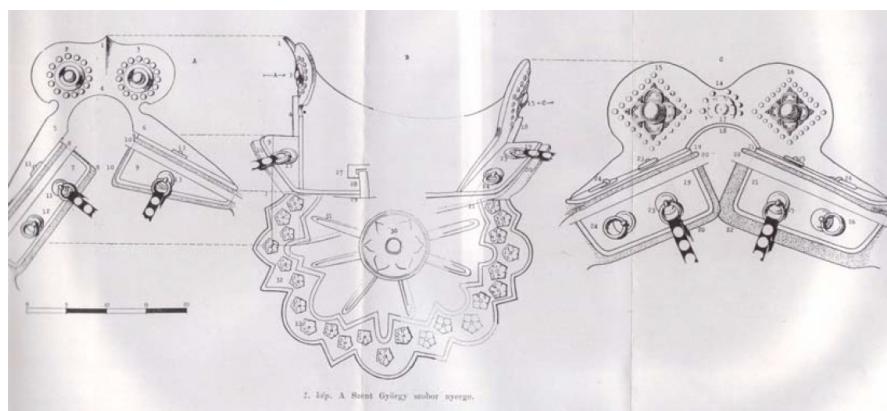


Figure 5 The saddle of the Saint George statue by the brothers of Kolozsvár, by Gyula László.



Figure 6 “Hussar saddle” of Maximilian I.



Figure 7 Traces of abrasion on the Batthyány Saddle.



Figure 8 Traces of abrasion on the Rhédey Saddle.



Figure 9 Bernat Martorell: *Saint George altarpiece*, Art Institute of Chicago, 1430-35 (detail).



Figure 10 Masaccio: *Adoration of the Magi*, Berlin Gemäldegalerie, 1426.



Figure 11 The emblem of the Dragon Order on the back side of the left cantle on the Jankovich Saddle.



Figure 12 Crossbow of Count Ulrich V of Württemberg, New York, MET, 1460.



Figure 13 Ivory casket, France, New York, MET, 14th century.



Figure 14 The “good couple” on the right side of the Battyhány Saddle.



Figure 15 The “sinful couple” on the left side of the Battyhány Saddle.



Figure 16 “Old couple” on the Saddle of Ladislaus Posthumus.



Figure 17 Lion on the right side of the Rhédey Saddle.



Figure 18 Dragon on the left side of the Rhédey Saddle.

Group 1: separated couples



Bone saddle, Bologna,
Museo Civico Medievale
(Cat. 4)

Meyrick Saddle, London,
Wallace Collection
(Cat. 13)

Tratzberg Saddle, New
York, MET
(Cat. 16)

Thill Saddle New York,
MET
(Cat. 17)

Figure 19 Table I.

Group 2: couples together



Saddle of King Albert, Vienna,
Kunsthistorisches Museum,
Hofjagd und Rüstkammer
(Cat. 1)

Trivulzio Saddle, New
York, MET
(Cat. 18)

Batthyány Saddle,
Budapest, Hungarian
National Museum
(Cat. 7)

Bone saddle, Stresa, Isola
Bella, Museo Borromeo
(Cat. 19)



Figure 20 Table III.

Group 3: couples both separated and together



Figure 21 Table IV.



Figure 22 Aristotle and Phyllis on the cantle of the Rhédey Saddle.



Figure 23 Ivory chalice, Münster, treasury of the Cathedral, 15th century.



Figure 24 Dextrarum iunctio on the Jankovich Saddle.



Figure 25 Dextrarum iunctio on the Trivulzio Saddle.



Figure 26 Detail from Thomasin von Zirkalaria: Der Welsche Gäst - Universitätsbibliothek Heidelberg, Cod. Pal. germ. 320, Swabia, 1460-70, fol. 9 v.



Figure 27 The slave of the wife on the Rhédey Saddle.



Figure 28 Detail from Thomasin von Zirkalaria: Der Welsche Gäst - Gotha, Forschungsbibliothek, Cod. Memb. I 120, East-Franconia (?) 1340, fol. 36 r.



Figure 29 Falconer on the Jankovich Saddle.



Figure 30 Couple with a falcon on the Batthyány Saddle.



Figure 31 Couple with a falcon on the Rhédey Saddle.



Figure 32 Two couples with a falcon on the Rhédey Saddle.



Figure 33 Couple with a falcon on the Rhédey Saddle.



Figure 34 Lady with a falcon on the Tratzberg Saddle.



Figure 35 Painting on a casket, Florence, 15th century.



Figure 36 Unicorn and Virgin on the Berlin Saddle.



Figure 37 Pisanello: portrait medial of Cecilia Gonzaga (reverse), New York, MET, 1447.



Figure 38 Unicorn on the Saddle of King Albert.



Figure 39 Unicorn on the Jankovich Saddle.



Figure 40 Wild man on the Saddle of King Albert.



Figure 41 Wild man on the Saddle of King Albert.



Figure 42 Wild man on the Jankovich Saddle.



Figure 43 Wild man and lion on the Jankovich Saddle.



Figure 44 Wild man and lion on a Minnekästchen, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, 15th century.

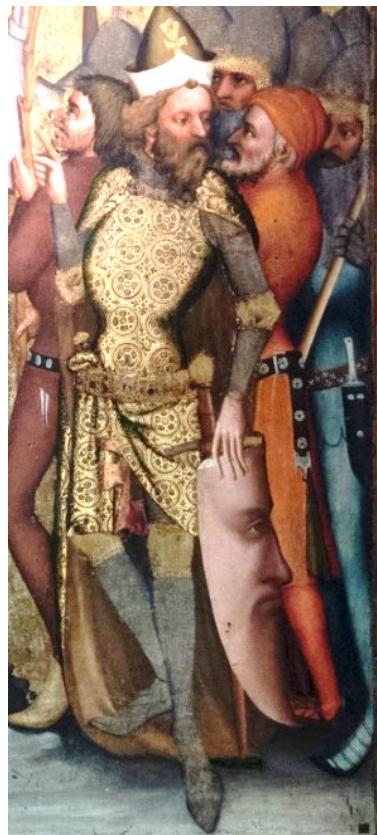


Figure 45 Master of Trebon Altarpiece workshop: Crucifixion (detail), Prague, National Gallery, c. 1390.



Figure 46 Wild man and Bohemian lion in the Bible of Wenceslas, fol. 91 r., c. 1400.



Figure 47 Nude from the Jankovich Saddle.



Figure 48 Nude from the Batthyány Saddle.



Figure 49 Nudes from the Batthyány Saddle.



Figure 50 Circle of Pisanello: River-god.

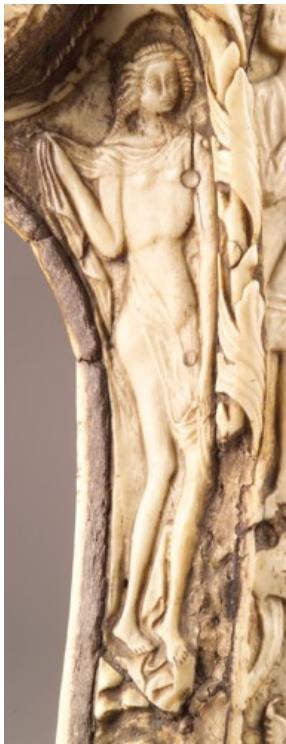


Figure 51 Nude from the Rhédey Saddle.



Figure 52.



Figure 53.



Figure 54.



Figure 55 Nudes from the Saddle of King Albert.



Figure 56 Nude from the Bible of Wenceslas, fol 25 r.

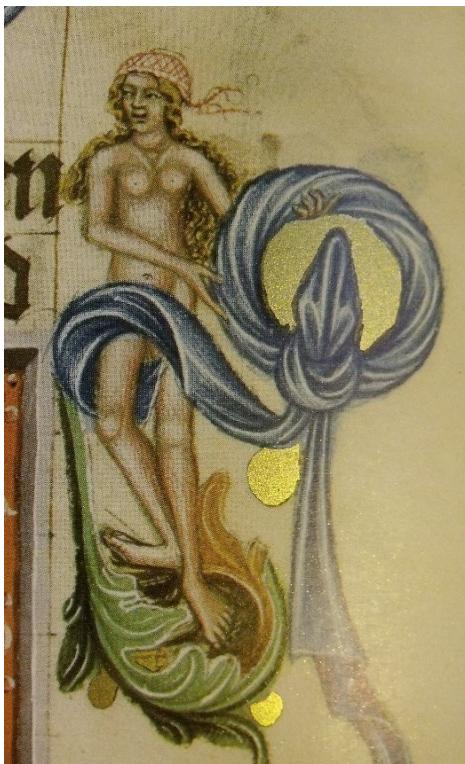


Figure 57 Nude from the Bible of Wenceslas, fol 86 v.



Figure 58 Nude from inside of a lid (unknown location), 15th century.

Saint George on horseback



Saddle of King Albert,
Vienna, Kunsthistorisches
Museum, Hofjagd und
Rüstkammer
(Cat. 1)



Jankovich Saddle, Budapest,
Hungarian National Museum
(Cat. 8)



Bone saddle, Florence, Museo
Nazionale, Bargello
(Cat. 10)

Figure 59 Table VI.

Standing Saint George II/1



Nieuwerkerke Saddle, London, Wallace
Collection
(Cat. 14)



Rhédey Saddle,
Budapest, Hungarian
National Museum
(Cat. 9)



Batthyány-Szatmári
Saddle, Budapest, Hungarian
National Museum
(Cat. 7)



Batthyány-Szatmári
Saddle, Boston, Museum of
Fine Arts
(Cat. 5)

Figure 60 Table VI.

Standing Saint George II/2



Saddle of Ercole d'Este,
Modena,
Galleria Estense,
(Cat. 24)



Bone saddle, Stresa, Isola
Bella, Museo Borromeo
(Cat. 19)



Trivulzio Saddle, New York,
MET
(Cat. 18)



Figure 61 Table VI.



Figure 62 Wood sculpture of
Saint George, South-East
Germany, München,
Bayerisches Nationalmuseum,
c. 1400.



Figure 63 Saint George on a Saxon shield, New York, MET, Dean
Memorial Collection, 1475.



Figure 64 Reverse of the groschen of Ercole I D'Este.



Figure 65 Detail of inscription on the Tratzberg
Saddle.



Figure 66 Detail of inscription on the Tratzberg Saddle.



Figure 67 Detail of inscription on the Saddle of Tower of London.



Figure 68 Minnekästchen, Galerie Böhler, München, Vorderseite, 15th century.



Figure 69 "e" and the German imperial coat of arms on the Saddle of King Albert.



Figure 70 "b" and "e" initials on the Trivulzio Saddle.



Figure 71 "v" initial on the Trivulzio Saddle.

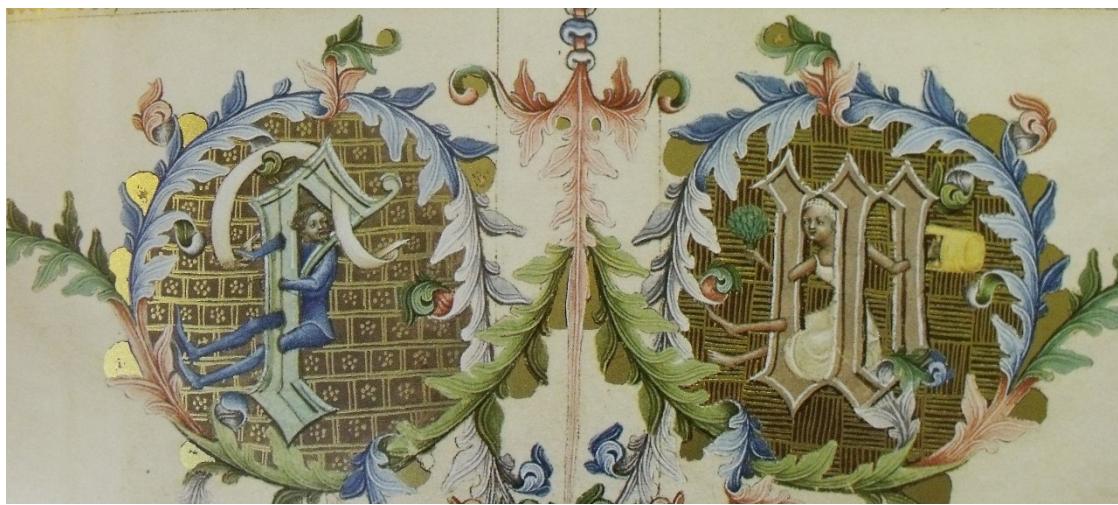


Figure 72 "e" and "w" initials in the Bible of Wenceslas, fol. 29 r.



Figure 73 Intertwisting initials on the Braunschweig Saddle.



Figure 74 Intertwisting initials in the Sankt Florian Psalter, fol 53 v.



Figure 75 Attributed to Fucecchio Master: Wedding procession on a cassone panel, Waltham, Mass., Rose Art Museum, c. 1470.

Appendix A - Catalogue

The order of the catalogue is based on the annotated list of Mária Verő which consist of twenty-eight saddles.¹⁹⁶ However I have completed this list with other existing pieces I discovered, therefore my catalogue includes thirty-three saddles overall.¹⁹⁷ In my catalogue I kept the original, alphabetical order of the saddles, although I made some minor changes, and put the new ones at the end of the sections. I also kept the traditional distinction of the two main types (Eastern and Western type), and indicated the pieces now considered as fakes.

Some of the saddles have specific traditional appellations which contain the name of the former possessor (e.g. Jankovich Saddle, Meyrick Saddle), or the place where they were formerly kept. For these saddles I kept these traditional names of the saddles. However, the rest of the saddles do not have any particular title. Furthermore, some saddles are preserved in the same museum (e.g. there are three saddles in London, four saddles in New York), which make it difficult to distinguish them clearly. Therefore, I have decided to name these saddles usually after one of their former possessors. Nevertheless, I do not intend to rename all the saddles, therefore, for the rest of the saddles I have kept the appellation connected to the current museum, as Bologna Saddle, or Isola Bella Saddle.

The technical data (material and height/width/depth/weight) and provenance are usually from the Gothic Ivories Project. In the cases of the saddles not included in the database, I indicate my source.

¹⁹⁶ Verő, “Bemerkungen zu den Beinsätteln aus der Sigismundzeit,” 277-78.

¹⁹⁷ Bone saddle, Art Institute Chicago, George F. Harding Collection (Cat. 21); Saddle in unknown location (Cat. 29); a wooden copy of the Trivulzio Saddle (Cat. 30); and two wooden copies of the Possenti Saddle (Cat. 27 and Cat. 28). I thank Alice M. Choyke who drew my attention to these two latter.

Bocksättel: Eastern type

1. Saddle of King Albert

Museum: Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Hofjagd und Rüstkammer, inv. A 73

Material: wood, bone, birchbark, the background was painted with blue, then repainted with green, there are traces of gilding¹⁹⁸

Height: 57 cm

Width: front: 27cm; end: 35 cm¹⁹⁹

Depth: ?

Inscription: *wyl es got ych helf dir aus / not*

Initials: -

Provenance: In 1731 it appears in the inventory of the little Schatzkammer of Vienna:
“hölzerner moskowitischer Sattel über und über mit beinernen Figuren
geziert”.²⁰⁰

In 1882 enters the Imperial Waffensammlung of Vienna.²⁰¹

Bibliography: Thomas and Gamber, *Katalog der Leibrüstkammer. I. Teil. Der Zeitraum von 500 bis 1530*, 69-70.; Verő, “4.72. Beinsattel (Sattel von König Albrecht),” in *Sigismundus rex et imperator. Kunst und Kultur zur Zeit Sigismunds von Luxemburg, 1387–1437*, ed. Imre Takács (Budapest: Szépművészeti Múzeum, 2006), 363-364; Verő, “Bemerkungen zu den Beinsätteln aus der Sigismundzeit,” 270-278.

¹⁹⁸ Verő, “4.72. Beinsattel (Sattel von König Albrecht),” 362.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ Thomas and Gamber, *Katalog der Leibrüstkammer. I. Teil. Der Zeitraum von 500 bis 1530*, 69.

²⁰¹ Verő, “4.72. Beinsattel (Sattel von König Albrecht),” 363.



Figure 76 Saddle of King Albert (Cat. 1), left side.



Figure 77 Saddle of King Albert (Cat. 1), right side.

2. Bone Saddle

Museum: Berlin, Deutsches Historisches Museum, inv. W 1011

Material: wood, bone, silk

Height: 29 cm

Width: 40 cm

Depth: 51.5 cm

Weight: 2800g

Inscription: -

Initials: -

Provenance: From the collection of Karl, Prussian prince (1801-1883) and of his son, prince Friedrich Karl of Prussia (1828-1885). Acquired by the museum in 1883.

Bibliography: See: Courtauld Institute of Art, *Gothic Ivories Project* [GIP], “Saddle,” accessed 2 May, 2017,
http://www.gothicivories.courtauld.ac.uk/images/ivory/b9036339_97040303.html



Figure 78 Bone saddle (Cat. 2), left side.



Figure 79 Bone saddle (Cat. 2), right side

3. Bone Saddle

Museum: Berlin, Deutsches Historisches Museum, inv. W 1010

Material: ivory (?), wood, leather

Height: 30 cm

Width: 45 cm

Depth: 38 cm

Inscription: -

Initials: -

Provenance: In the collection of prince Karl of Prussia (lived 1801-1883), then in his son, prince Friedrich Karl of Prussia (lived 1828-1885), at Monbijou Castle. Acquired by the Deutsches Historisches Museum in 1883, originally kept at the Zeughaus.

Bibliography: See: Courtauld Institute of Art, *Gothic Ivories Project* [GIP], “Saddle,” accessed 2 May, 2017,
http://www.gothicivories.courtauld.ac.uk/images/ivory/739e77ed_7299f3d8.html



Figure 80 Bone saddle (Cat. 3), left side.



Figure 81 Bone saddle (Cat. 3), right side.

4. Bone Saddle

Museum: Bologna, Museo Civico Medievale, inv. 402

Material: ivory (?), birch wood, leather

Height: ?

Width: 55 cm

Depth: ?

Inscription: *Ich frewe mich denn (?) / vol auf heute morgen*

Initials: -

Provenance: In the collection of Pelagio Pelagi (lived 1775-1860).

Acquired by the Commune di Bologna with the whole collection in 1860, which was divided between the Biblioteca Comunale dell'Archiginnasio, the Museo Civico Archeologico and the Museo Civico Medievale of Bologna.

Bibliography: See: Courtauld Institute of Art, *Gothic Ivories Project* [GIP], “Saddle,” accessed 2 May, 2017,
http://www.gothicivories.courtauld.ac.uk/images/ivory/80095F06_2049f0b3.html



Figure 82 Bone saddle (Cat. 4), left side.



Figure 83 Bone saddle (Cat. 4), right side.

5. Batthyány-Strattmann Saddle / Körmend Saddle

Museum: Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, inv. 69.944

Material: bone, wood (core), leather, hide, bark

Height: 36.2 cm

Width: 54.6 cm

Depth: 37.1 cm

Inscription: *gedenkch und halt* (three times)

Initials: GGG/SSS (?) + KKK (?) - under the cantle on each side

Provenance: In the collection of the Batthyány family probably from 1520, and was the property either of Balthasar or his son Francis. In the nineteenth-century the saddle was loaned to the museum of Szombathely, then it returned to Körmend Castle of the Batthyánys'. The saddle was sold by the wife of Ladislaus Batthyány-Strattman (1904-1966), Antoinette Windisch-Grätz (1902-1990) at the Sotheby's, London in 17 April 1969, and bought by Herbert Bier, from the side of the Museum of Fine Arts of Boston (Centennial Purchase Fund).

Bibliography: See: Courtauld Institute of Art, *Gothic Ivories Project* [GIP], "Saddle, (selle); also known as the 'Körmend Saddle' or 'Batthyany-Strattman Saddle'" accessed 2 May, 2017,
http://www.gothicivories.courtauld.ac.uk/images/ivory/994F41EC_726c0691.html



Figure 84 Batthyány-Strattmann Saddle (Cat. 5), left side.



Figure 85 Batthyány-Strattmann Saddle (Cat. 5), right side.

6. Bone Saddle

Museum: Braunschweig (Brunswick), Kunstmuseum des Landes Niedersachsen, Herzog Anton-Ulrich Museum, inv. MA 111

Material: bone panels, wood, leather, birch bark

Height: 33 cm

Width: 45.5 cm

Depth: 55.5 cm

Inscription: *treu yst selt(en) in der weld*

Initials: *M/W* - repeatedly on the whole surface

v - on the left side

M/W + U/N/H - on each cantle

Provenance: In the Kunstkammer of Bevern of Duke Ferdinand Albrecht I (lived 1636-1687), documented in 1683: (“Ein alter hölzerner Sattel mit Elfenbein überlegt, wroauf Zierathen und Figuren in gotischen Geschmak geschnitzet sind”)
Looted by Napoleon, restituted in 1814.

Bibliography: See: Courtauld Institute of Art, *Gothic Ivories Project* [GIP], “Saddle, (selle),” accessed 2 May, 2017,
http://www.gothicivories.courtauld.ac.uk/images/ivory/6CED8E65_130c6003.html



Figure 86 Bone saddle (Cat. 6), left side.



Figure 87 Bone saddle (Cat. 6), right side.

7. Batthyány Saddle

Museum: Budapest, Hungarian National Museum, inv. 55.3117

Material: wood, birch bark, leather, bone panels

Height: 35 cm

Width: 41 cm

Depth: 53 cm

Inscription: -

Initials: -

Provenance: In the property of the Batthyány family until 1848.²⁰² Bought by countess Lažansky from Count Kázmér Batthyány (1807-1854) for 40 forints, in the auction of the properties of the castle. She sold it to István Batthyány, then it was obtained by Antónia Batthyány (Countess Károlyné Zichy). Her son, János Zichy donated the saddle to the Hungarian National Museum in September 19, 1862.²⁰³

Bibliography: Eisler, "Zu den Fragen der Beinsättel des Ungarischen Nationalmuseums I.," 189-210; Eisler, "Zu den Fragen der Beinsättel des Ungarischen Nationalmuseums II," 205-48; Boccia, *L'Armeria del Museo Civico Medievale di Bologna*, 111; Verő, "Bemerkungen zu den Beinsätteln aus der Sigismundzeit," 270-78; Verő, "4.67. Beinsattel (Batthyány-Sattel)," *Sigismundus rex et imperator. Kunst und Kultur zur Zeit Sigismunds von Luxemburg, 1387–1437*, ed. Imre Takács (Budapest: Szépművészeti Múzeum, 2006), 359-60.

²⁰² Flóris Rómer, "Prunksättel im National-Museum zu Pest," *Mittheilungen der K.K. Central-Commission* 10 (1865): 6-7.

²⁰³ Nagy, "Hadtörténeti ereklyék a Magyar Nemzeti Múzeumban. Első közlemény," 232-33; "4.67. Beinsattel (Batthyány-Sattel)," 359.



Figure 88 Batthyány Saddle (Cat. 7), left side.



Figure 89 Batthyány Saddle (Cat. 7), right side.

8. Jankovich Saddle

Museum: Budapest, Hungarian National Museum, inv. 55.3119

Material: beech-wood, birch bark, leather, bone panels (horse or cattle), antler

Height: 36.5 cm

Width: 44.5 cm

Depth: 55 cm

Inscription: -

Initials: -

Provenance: In the collection of Miklós Jankovich as early as 1817 (the saddle appears in a report of György Fejér).²⁰⁴ Purchased by the Hungarian National Museum in 1836.²⁰⁵

Bibliography: Eisler, "Zu den Fragen der Beinsättel des Ungarischen Nationalmuseums I.," 189-210; Eisler, "Zu den Fragen der Beinsättel des Ungarischen Nationalmuseums II," 205-48; Boccia, *L'Armeria del Museo Civico Medievale di Bologna*, 111; Verő, "Bemerkungen zu den Beinsätteln aus der Sigismundzeit," 270-78; Verő, "4.65. Beinsattel (Jankovich-Sattel)," *Sigismundus rex et imperator. Kunst und Kultur zur Zeit Sigismunds von Luxemburg, 1387–1437*, ed. Imre Takács (Budapest: Szépművészeti Múzeum, 2006), 356-57.

²⁰⁴ György Fejér, "T. Vadassi Jankowics Miklós Gyűjteményeiről, és Régiségei között található két ismeretlen Emlékekről, eddig meg nem magyarázott Írásokról [About the collection, and the two unknown records in the antiquities of Miklós T. Vadassi Jankowics]," *Tudományos Gyűjtemény* 1 (1817: 11): 34.

²⁰⁵ Verő, "4.65. Beinsattel (Jankovich-Sattel)," 356.



Figure 90 Jankovich Saddle (Cat. 8), left side.



Figure 91 Jankovich Saddle (Cat. 8), right side.

9. Rhédey Saddle

Museum: Budapest, Hungarian National Museum, inv. 55.3118

Material: wood, birch bark, leather, bone panels

Height: 35 cm

Width: 39 cm

Depth: 53 cm

Inscription: *ich hof / mit lieb / si b(it)? / lach lieb lach / hof mit*

Initials: -

Provenance: Donated to the Hungarian National Museum by Count Lajos Rhédey (1760-1831) in 1810.

Bibliography: Eisler, "Zu den Fragen der Beinsättel des Ungarischen Nationalmuseums I," 189-210; Eisler, "Zu den Fragen der Beinsättel des Ungarischen Nationalmuseums II," 205-48; Boccia, *L'Armeria del Museo Civico Medievale di Bologna*, 111; Verő, "Bemerkungen zu den Beinsätteln aus der Sigismundzeit," 270-78; Verő, "4.68. Beinsattel (Rhédey-Sattel)," 360-61.



Figure 92 Rhédey Saddle (Cat. 9), left side.



Figure 93 Rhédey Saddle (Cat. 9), right side.

10. Bone Saddle

Museum: Florence, Museo Nazionale, Bargello, inv. 2831 Av. 15

Material: Bone and stag's horn, wood, leather, parchment

Height: 48 cm

Width: 34.5 cm

Depth: 39.5cm

Inscription: *ich han nicht lieberr wen dich / bit erd (?) / allain mein ader las gar sein / ritt(er) sa(n)d Jörig / dich libt got*

Initials: *a* – right side

b – left side

Provenance: From the Medici Collection, purchased by the Museum in 1896.

Bibliography: See: Courtauld Institute of Art, *Gothic Ivories Project* [GIP], “Saddle, (selle),” accessed 2 May, 2017,
http://www.gothicivories.courtauld.ac.uk/images/ivory/5cc38dc3_b0441ea7.html



Figure 94 Bone saddle (Cat. 10), left side.



Figure 95 Bone saddle (Cat. 10), right side.

11. Bone saddle

Museum: Florence, Museo Bardini, inv. 315²⁰⁶

Material: staghorn, wood (birch)

Height: 40 cm

Width: 45 cm

Depth: 52 cm

Inscription: *Ich lib all hie und wais nit wi(e) (u)nd mues vo' ... ich... / ander / für*

Initials: -

Provenance: Kuppelmayr collection: sale, Waffen-Sammlung Kuppelmayr.

Bibliography: See: Courtauld Institute of Art, *Gothic Ivories Project* [GIP], “Saddle, (selle),” accessed 2 May, 2017,
http://www.gothicivories.courtauld.ac.uk/images/ivory/8e3ffa4b_4f62e6e5.html

²⁰⁶ Unknown location. GIP.



Figure 96 Bone saddle (Cat. 11), left side.



Figure 97 Bone saddle (Cat. 11), right side.

12. Bone saddle

Museum: Glasgow, Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, inv. E 1939.65.bx

Material: bone, wood (birch)

Height: 34.3 cm

Width: 61 cm

Depth: 35.6cm

Inscription: -

Initials: *m, n* - repeatedly on each side

Provenance: In the collection of the Montgomerie family, earls of Eglinton and Winton, bought in the Eglinton Castle sale, 25 July 1922, by W. H. Fenton, a dealer acting for the collection of Robert Lyons Scott (1871-1939), of Greenock: bequeathed in 1939 to the people of Glasgow.

Bibliography: See: Courtauld Institute of Art, *Gothic Ivories Project* [GIP], “Saddle, (selle),” accessed 2 May, 2017,
http://www.gothicivories.courtauld.ac.uk/images/ivory/256B836E_23475714.html



Figure 98 Bone saddle (Cat. 12), left side.



Figure 99 Bone saddle (Cat. 12), right side.

13. Meyrick Saddle

Museum: London, Wallace Collection, inv. A 408

Material: Staghorn, wood, leather, wax, birch bark

Height: -

Width: 100 cm

Depth: -

Wight: 3000 g

Inscription: Left side, woman: *ich pin hie, ich ways nit wie / ich var von dann, ich ways nit wan / nu wol auf mit willen unvergessen*
Right side, man: *ich var, ich har, ye lenger ich har me gresser nar / dein ewichleich in sand ierigen nam*
Left side, man: *ich frei mich all zeit dein*
Right side, woman: *we den .kr[....iegs?] rat*

Initials: -

Provenance: In the collection of Sir Samuel Rush Meyrick (1783 - 1848), Goodrich Court, Herefordshire, in the Frédéric Spitzer collection of Paris. Bought by Sir Richard Wallace in 1871.

Bibliography: See: Courtauld Institute of Art, *Gothic Ivories Project* [GIP], “Saddle, (selle),” accessed 2 May, 2017,
http://www.gothicivories.courtauld.ac.uk/images/ivory/6609D6CF_96b7c444.html



Figure 100 Meyrick Saddle (Cat. 13), left side.



Figure 101 Meyrick Saddle (Cat. 13), right side.

14. Nieuwerkerke Saddle

Museum: London, Wallace Collection, inv. A 407

Material: Staghorn, wood, wax, leather, birch bark

Height: ?

Width: ?

Depth: ?

Weight: 3190g

Inscription: -

Initials: -

Provenance: In the collection of the Count Alfred-Émilien de Nieuwerkerke (1811 -1892).

Acquired from him by Sir Richard Wallace in August 1871.

Bibliography: See: Courtauld Institute of Art, *Gothic Ivories Project* [GIP], “Saddle, (selle),” accessed 2 May, 2017,
http://www.gothicivories.courtauld.ac.uk/images/ivory/1C67E0A4_54043f7b.html



Figure 102 Nieuwerkerke Saddle (Cat. 14), left side.



Figure 103 Nieuwerkerke Saddle (Cat. 14), right side.

15. Bone saddle

Museum: London Tower of London (Royal Armouries) inv. VI.95

Material: Bone (cow or horse), staghorn (border), leather, birch bark

Height: 37.5 cm

Width: 53 cm

Depth: 37 cm (front); 48.5 cm (rear)

Weight: 3175 g

Inscription: *hilf got wol auf sand jorgen nam / ich hoff des pesten dir geling / im ars / is
vinster*

Initials: -

Provenance: From the collection of the Tower of London.

Bibliography: See: Courtauld Institute of Art, *Gothic Ivories Project* [GIP], “Saddle, (selle),” accessed 2 May, 2017,
http://www.gothicivories.courtauld.ac.uk/images/ivory/4F3DB733_cb45869b.html



Figure 104 Bone saddle (Cat. 15), left side.



Figure 105 Bone saddle (Cat. 15), right side.

16. Tratzberg Saddle

Museum: New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. 04.3.249

Material: Staghorn, wood, birch bark, leather

Height: 44.4 cm

Width: 47.6 cm

Depth: 45.7 cm

Inscription: *wol mich nu wart/ in dem ars is vinster / frei dich mit gantzem willen / wol
mich wart / ich hof der liben somerzeit / lach lieb lach*

Initials: -

Provenance: In the collection of Count Frank III Enzenberg (1802 - 1879) in the Tratzberg castle, Tirol. In 1852 bought by Egger, art dealer of Vienna. Acquired in 1904 by the Museum thanks to the Rogers Fund.

Bibliography: See: Courtauld Institute of Art, *Gothic Ivories Project* [GIP], “Saddle, (selle); so-called 'Tratzberg Saddle'," accessed 2 May, 2017, http://www.gothicivories.courtauld.ac.uk/images/ivory/AE73874F_2c7f132b.html; The Metropolitan Museum of Art “Parade Saddle,” accessed May 5, 2017, <http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/21990>



Figure 106 Tratzberg Saddle (Cat. 16), left side.



Figure 107 Tratzberg Saddle (Cat. 16), right side.

17. Thill Saddle

Museum: New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. 36.149.11

Material: Birch wood, staghorn, bone, pig skin, birch bark

Height: 31.1 cm

Width: 40.6 cm

Depth: 50.8 cm

Inscription: *hilf / bol auf sand (jo)rgen nam (h)ilf ritter sand jorig*

Initials: -

Provenance: In the collection of Franz Thill, Vienna, then in the collection of Samuel J. Whawell (1857 - 1926), London, and in the collection of Frank Gair Macomber. Acquired at his sale in December 1936 by Christian A. Zabriskie who donated it to the Museum in 1936.

Bibliography: See: Courtauld Institute of Art, *Gothic Ivories Project* [GIP], “Saddle, (selle),” accessed 2 May, 2017,
http://www.gothicivories.courtauld.ac.uk/images/ivory/e84a0cc2_f12d9581.html; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, “Saddle,” accessed May 5, 2017,
<http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/29624>



Figure 108 Thill Saddle (Cat. 17), left side.



Figure 109 Thill Saddle (Cat. 17), right side.

18. Trivulzio Saddle

Museum: New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. 40.66 (Dick Fund)

Material: Staghorn over birch, birch bark, rawhide

Height: 33.8 cm

Width: 52.1 cm

Depth: 34.6 cm

Inscription: -

Initials: *b* - right cantle

e - left cantle

v - right side, under the cantle

Provenance: In the collection of Prince Gian Giacomo Trivulzio, Milan (1872 - 1928), collection of Julius Böhler Kunsthändlung, Munich (in 1928), collection of the Duveen Brothers, Paris, London, and New York (in 1928), collection of Clarence H. Mackay (1872 - 1938), in Roslyn, New York from 1928 until 1938. Estate of Clarence H. Mackay between 1938-1940. Bought through Jacques Seligmann, New York, thanks to the Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, acquired by the museum in 1940.

Bibliography: See: Courtauld Institute of Art, *Gothic Ivories Project* [GIP], “Saddle, (selle); so-called Trivulzio saddle,” accessed 2 May, 2017,
http://www.gothicivories.courtauld.ac.uk/images/ivory/9554ADDE_7bcef3cf.html; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, “Saddle,” accessed May 5, 2017,
<http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/467691>



Figure 110 Trivulzio Saddle (Cat. 18), left side.



Figure 111 Trivulzio Saddle (Cat. 18), right side.

19. Bone saddle

Museum: Stresa, Isola Bella, Museo Borromeo

Material: ?

Height: ?

Width: ?

Depth: ?

Inscription: ... *lib...*

Initials: -

Provenance: According to the tradition, it was donated by the Embriachi workshop.²⁰⁷

Bibliography: Verő, "Bemerkungen zu den Beinsätteln aus der Sigismundzeit," 270-78.

²⁰⁷ Verő, "Bemerkungen zu den Beinsätteln aus der Sigismundzeit," 278.



Figure 112 Bone saddle (Cat. 19), left side.



Figure 113 Bone saddle (Cat. 19), right side.

20. Zschille Saddle

Museum: unknown location

Material: ?

Height: ?

Width: ?

Depth: ?

Inscription: -

Initials: -

Provenance:

Bibliography: Laking, *A record of European Armour and Arms through seven centuries*, 174; Verő, "Bemerkungen zu den Beinsätteln aus der Sigismundzeit," 278.

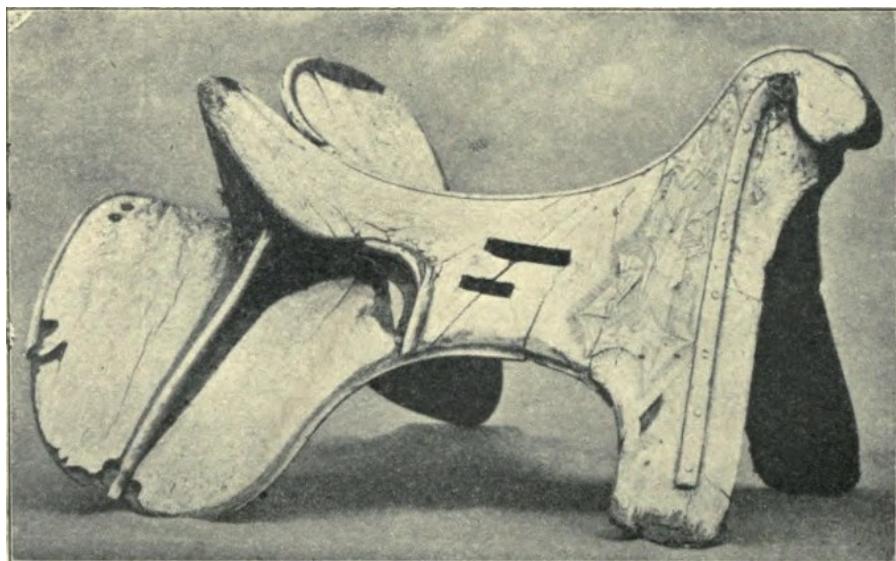


Figure 114 Zschille Saddle (Cat. 20), right side.

21. Bone saddle

Museum: Art Institute Chicago, George F. Harding Collection, 1982.2209

Material: wood, covered with pigskin and staghorn²⁰⁸

Height: ?

Width: ?

Depth: ?

Inscription: -

Initials: -

Provenance: George F. Harding Collection

Bibliography: *Art Institute Chicago*, „Parade Saddle” accessed May 5, 2017,
http://www.artic.edu/aic/collections/artwork/106328?search_id=54



Figure 115 Bone saddle (Cat. 21), left side.

²⁰⁸ Art Institute Chicago, „Parade Saddle” accessed May 5, 2017,
http://www.artic.edu/aic/collections/artwork/106328?search_id=54

Krippensättel: Western type

22. Saddle of Ladislaus Posthumus

Museum: Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Hofjagd- und Rüstkammer, Inv. A 64

Material: ?

Height: ?

Width: ?

Depth: ?

Inscription: -

Initials: U/V - with crown on each side

Provenance: From the collection of Ambras.²⁰⁹

Bibliography: Thomas and Gamber, *Katalog der Leibrüstkammer. I. Teil. Der Zeitraum von 500 bis 1530*, 70-71; Verő, "Bemerkungen zu den Beinsätteln aus der Sigismundzeit," 278.

²⁰⁹ Verő, "Bemerkungen zu den Beinsätteln aus der Sigismundzeit," 278.



Figure 116 Saddle of Ladislaus Posthumus (Cat. 22), front side.



Figure 117 Saddle of Ladislaus Posthumus (Cat. 22), left side.



Figure 118 Saddle of Ladislaus Posthumus (Cat. 22), right side.

23. Bone saddle

Museum: Florence, Museo Nazionale, Bargello, inv. 2832 Av. 3

Material: Staghorn, bone, wood, parchment

Height: 38.5 cm

Width: 36.5 cm

Depth: 47 cm

Inscription: *aspetto tempo / amor / laus / deo*

Initials: -

Provenance: From the Medici Collection, purchased by the Museum in 1865.

Bibliography: See: Courtauld Institute of Art, *Gothic Ivories Project* [GIP], “Saddle with reliefs (selle; appliqués),” accessed 2 May, 2017,
http://www.gothicivories.courtauld.ac.uk/images/ivory/06a0263c_1c0398a5.html



Figure 119 Bone saddle (Cat. 23), front side.



Figure 120 Bone saddle (Cat. 23), left side.



Figure 121 Bone Saddle (Cat. 23), right side.

24. Saddle of Ercole d'Este

Museum: Modena, Galleria Estense, inv. 2461

Material: Bone, wood, leather

Height: 44 cm

Width: 45 cm

Depth: 58 cm

Inscription: *deus fortis / deus fortitudinis / deus fortitudo mea / deus adiutor*

Initials: -

Provenance: From the collection of the Duke Ercole I d'Este, Count of Ferrara (1471 - 1505)

Bibliography: See: Courtauld Institute of Art, *Gothic Ivories Project* [GIP], “Saddle (selle); known as the Saddle of Ercole d'Este,” accessed 2 May, 2017,
http://www.gothicivories.courtauld.ac.uk/images/ivory/f11a4553_dfb68dcd.html



Figure 122 Saddle of Ercole d'Este (Cat. 24), front side.



Figure 123 Saddle of Ercole d'Este (Cat. 24), back side.



Figure 124 Saddle of Ercole d'Este (Cat. 24), left side.



Figure 125 Saddle of Ercole d'Este (Cat. 24), right side.

Copies and fakes

25. Possenti Saddle (19th century fake?)

Museum: New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. 04.3.250

Bibliography: Gothic Ivories Project “Saddle (selle); known as the 'Possenti Saddle'” accessed May 14, 2017,

http://www.gothicivories.courtauld.ac.uk/images/ivory/16934086_d30e72dc.html

26. Wooden saddle of Napoleon III, (copy of the Possenti saddle - 19th century fake)

Museum: Paris, Musée l’Armée, inv. G. 546

Bibliography: Verö, “Bemerkungen zu den Beinsätteln aus der Sigismundzeit,” 278.

27. Wooden Saddle (copy of the Possenti Saddle - 19th century fake)

Museum: Wallace collection, inv. A 415

Bibliography: *The Wallace Collection*, “Saddle” accessed May 14, 2017,
<http://wallacelive.wallacecollection.org/eMuseumPlus?service=ExternalInterface&module=collection&objectId=60908&viewType=detailView>

28. Wooden Saddle (copy of the Possenti Saddle - 19th century fake)

Museum: Sporting collection

Bibliography: *Sporting Collection* “A Saddle In German Or Flemish 15th Century style” accessed May 14, 2017,
<http://www.sportingcollection.com/saddles/saddle036/saddle036.html>

29. Bone Saddle

Museum: Unknown location, according to an archive photo, it was probably sold in an auction of Perugia²¹⁰

²¹⁰ I saw the photo in the documentation of the Object Art Department of the Louvre.

Bibliography: -

30. Wooden saddle (Copy of the Trivulzio Saddle - 19th century fake)

Museum: Riggisberg, Abegg-Stiftung, inv. 5.56.79

Bibliography: Courtauld Institute of Art, *Gothic Ivories Project* [GIP], “Saddle,” accessed May 2, 2017,

http://www.gothicivories.courtauld.ac.uk/images/ivory/B7F11733_884974a9.html

31. Ivory saddle fragment, Battles of the Amazons

Museum: Paris, Louvre, OA 3360

Bibliography: Courtauld Institute of Art, *Gothic Ivories Project* [GIP], “Pommel (fragment of a saddle),” accessed May 2, 2017,

http://www.gothicivories.courtauld.ac.uk/images/ivory/DAB4BCE7_3e5f32bf.html

32. Ivory saddle fragment, Knights

Museum: Paris, Louvre, OA 3361

Bibliography: Courtauld Institute of Art, *Gothic Ivories Project* [GIP], “Saddle (fragment)(troussequin),” accessed May 2, 2017,

http://www.gothicivories.courtauld.ac.uk/images/ivory/BC19D109_95e162a8.html

33. Ivory saddle fragment, Knight

Museum: New York, The Metropolitan Museum, inv. 17.190.227

Bibliography: Courtauld Institute of Art, *Gothic Ivories Project* [GIP], “Saddle (fragment),” accessed May 2, 2017,

http://www.gothicivories.courtauld.ac.uk/images/ivory/B2A94A31_8af5e271.html

Appendix B – Source of Figures

1. Courtauld Institute of Art, Gothic Ivories Project, accessed May 4, 2017, www.gothicivories.courtauld.ac.uk
2. Wikimedia Commons, accessed April 24, 2017, https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/af/HJRK_A_64_Prunksattel_Ladislaus_posthumus.jpg
3. Imre Gráfik, *A nyereg* [The Saddle], A Néprajzi Múzeum tárgykatalógusai 6 (Budapest: Néprajzi Múzeum, 2002), 18.
4. Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien, “Turniersattel, vom Turnierhof Maximilians I. (1459–1519),” accessed April 28, 2017, www.khm.at/de/object/796301da74/
5. Gyula László, *Kolozsvári Márton es György Szent-György szobrának lószerszámja, lószerszámja* [The saddlery of the Saint George statue by Martin and George of Kolozsvár] (Kolozsvár, 1943), 76.
6. Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien “Husarischer Sattel,” accessed April 28, 2017, www.khm.at/de/object/8f863291ef/
7. Photo by Virág Somogyvári, 2016.
8. Photo by Virág Somogyvári, 2016.
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