

Thesis title: Foreign influences on Transylvania's political elite, 1559-1602

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Introduction

... [Sigismund Báthory] hired more and more vegetable and flower gardeners, cooks, confectioners, sausage-makers, Italian-style cheese masters... actors, clowns, comedians, court jesters, dancers, tailors, gladiators...¹

Historical background

The medieval period of the Kingdom of Hungary ended with the decisive triumph of Suleiman I (1494-1566) in 1526 at the Battle of Mohács. The Ottoman victory and the death of Louis II (1516-1526) led to the double election of Ferdinand I (1526-1564) and John I (1526-1540), and thus, to the political and administrative partition of the country into two parts - Royal Hungary under Habsburg rule, and Ottoman Hungary which was reigned by the Zápolya family.² In 1541, Suleiman captured Buda, the Hungarian capital, and limited the territory of John I's heir, John Sigismund (1540-1571) to the eastern part of the country, while the central part of Hungary fell under direct Ottoman administration. In 1570, the geographical region of Transylvania and its related areas became entirely separate from the former territory of the Hungarian crown, under Ottoman suzerainty.³ Thus, this semi-independent state was surrounded by the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, Moldavia, Wallachia, and two expansive powers, the Ottoman Empire and the Habsburg Monarchy. The authority of its leaders was subject to the approval of the sultans as well as constantly challenged by the rivalry of the neighbours.⁴ In addition, Transylvania's rulers had the task to govern various ethnic and religious groups.

¹ The Hungarian historian István Szamosközy on the entourage of Sigismund Báthory in Transylvania: '...egyre másra fogadta fel a zöldség- és virágkertészeket, szakácsokat, édességkészítőket, hurkatöltőket, olasz módra ügyeskedő sajtimestereket; ezekhez járultak a színészek, bohócok, komédiások, udvari bolondok, táncosok, szabók, bajvívók...' István Borzsák (tr.) and István Sinkovics (ed.), *Szamosközy István: Erdély története (1598–1599, 1603)* [*István Szamosközy: A history of Transylvania (1598-1599, 1603)*] (Budapest: Magyar Helikon, 1963), p. 41, own translation from Hungarian.

² The Habsburg Archduke became king of Royal Hungary and Bohemia in 1526, king of Croatia in 1527, and Holy Roman Emperor in 1556.

³ Teréz Oborni, 'Between Vienna and Constantinople: Notes on the Legal Status of the Principality of Transylvania' in: Gábor Kármán and Lovro Kunčević (eds), *The European Tributary States of the Ottoman Empire in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), pp. 67-89.

⁴ On the birth of Transylvania as a semi-independent state and the use of the title 'prince', see: Katalin Péter, 'Báthory István a fejedelmi hatalom megteremtője Erdélyben' ['Stephen Báthory the creator of

The timeframe of this thesis is the second half of the sixteenth century when Transylvania was a young state with an emergent government system. Importantly, a significant part of the political elite shared a common feature - they were either foreigners or local people who had studied abroad. There were a number of categories within this elite – Protestant refugees and other foreigners, students with foreign education, and members of the Society of Jesus. Firstly, several refugees arrived in East Central Europe from Italy, the Swiss cantons and the Holy Roman Empire, for political and religious reasons. They were considered ‘heretics’ and persecuted by the papacy and often by Protestant denominations as well, and many of them found refuge in the comparatively tolerant Transylvania during the reign of John Sigismund, between 1559 and 1571. The radical religious doctrines of Antitrinitarianism were introduced here by Italian physician Giorgio Biandrata (1515-1588) and his fellows in the 1560s. Antitrinitarianism was referred to as ‘Arianism’ in Catholic sources as the denial of Christ’s deity and the doctrine of the Holy Trinity derived from ancient Arian concepts.⁵ Several foreign Protestants, who arrived in Transylvania in the following years, carried out intellectual and theological activities. By the end of John Sigismund’s reign, the ruler himself and the majority of the elite had become followers of this Protestant denomination. Additionally, Transylvania was a hub for foreign courtiers – particularly Italians and Poles – whose influence became especially substantial in the last decade of the sixteenth century. At the court of Sigismund Báthory (1586-1602), the number and influence of Italians largely increased due to his personal enthusiasm for Italian culture.

Secondly, numerous Transylvanian students embarked on study tours abroad, since they had no opportunities to attend higher education institutions at home. Most of them chose Italian universities, especially Padua, but some Protestant students went to complete their studies at the University of Wittenberg.⁶ The knowledge, experience and qualifications gained abroad

princely power in Transylvania’] in: László Dám (ed.), *Tanulmányok Nyírbátor és a Báthori-család történetéhez* [Studies on the history of Nyírbátor and the Báthori family] (Nyírbátor: Báthory István Múzeum, 1986), pp. 17-23.

⁵ The institutionalised form of the Antitrinitarian community has been called the *Unitarian Church of Transylvania* since the seventeenth century. Although the term ‘Unitarian’ is used more frequently in literature, I prefer using ‘Antitrinitarian’ due to the timeframe of my thesis.

⁶ András Szabó, ‘Magyarok Wittenbergben, 1555-1592’ [‘Hungarians in Wittenberg, 1555-1592’] in: Imre Békési et al. (eds), *Régi és új peregrináció Magyarok külföldön, külföldiek Magyarországon* [Old

were highly appreciated, particularly under the rule of Stephen Báthory (1571-1586), who also became king of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 1576. Upon returning home, many of the peregrinating students built political careers in crucial diplomatic positions, for instance the humanist, politician and chancellor Farkas Kovacsóczy (1540-1594).⁷ Employing Padua students, who were familiar with the most recent intellectual innovations of the late Renaissance and humanism, was a frequent trend at courts and state administrations across Europe, remarkably in Northern Italy, the Holy Roman Empire, Poland-Lithuania and Transylvania.

Finally, the presence of the Society of Jesus was a common aspect of the politics of both Stephen Báthory and his successor, Sigismund Báthory. By supporting the Jesuits, these two Catholic rulers aimed at reviving the Catholic faith, church and education in the predominantly Protestant state. Jesuits launched a large-scale educational programme in Transylvania. Some prominent members of the society engaged in political affairs, notably Alfonso Carrillo (1553-1618) who played an important role in Sigismund's diplomacy during the Fifteen Years' War (1591-1606) which was fought between the Holy Roman Empire and the Ottoman Empire.⁸

Central research question

The thesis addresses the following question: What political role did the presence, activities and rivalries of foreigners and foreign-educated locals play at the Transylvanian court between 1559 and 1602? This thesis assesses the political engagement of Protestants refugees and other foreigners, foreign-educated students and Jesuits by analysing their coexistence, conflicts and cooperation in Transylvania in the second half of the sixteenth century. This research question enables a novel investigation into their political engagement in parallel with their various encounters. The joint analysis of these groups aims to shed new light on the extent to which the connections between them influenced their activities and opportunities.

and new peregrination. Hungarians abroad, foreigners in Hungary], vol. II (Nemzetközi Magyar Filológiai Társaság-Scriptum Kft. Budapest-Szeged 1993), pp. 626-638.

⁷ In this thesis, the term 'peregrines' is used to refer to people who studied abroad. Although calling them peregrines after their return to Transylvania is not completely accurate but I prefer using this term to keep it simple and consistent.

⁸ It is also referred to as the Long Turkish War or Thirteen Years' War, depending on the reckoning of the start of the conflict either from 1591 or 1593.

Literature review and academic relevance

Much scholarly interest has been dedicated to the question of religious tolerance, the phenomenon of peregrination, and the activities of Jesuits in Transylvania, both in recent and older literature. However, no studies have dealt with the joint analysis of the group of foreigners and foreign-influenced locals, and the political rivalries among them.

Mihály Balázs and István Monok highlighted that one of the most important Hungarian historiographic accounts, the history of the kingdom between 1490 and 1552, was written by an Italian Padua alumnus, Giovanni Michele Bruto (1517-1592).⁹ Such commissioned works made essential part of the rulers' international image, so the employment of an Italian in this position illustrates the role of foreigners as mediators vis-à-vis European courts. However, Gábor Klaniczay has argued that courts were the venues of several moral and cultural conflicts between people of various origins. This phenomenon was intensified during the Counter-Reformation when Catholic intellectuals criticised the expansion of Protestant ideas and the increasing influence of foreigners in the highest social circles.¹⁰ Péter Erdősi highlighted that the perception of Italian courtiers by contemporaries was often hostile – this pattern fits the common trope of putting the blame on foreigners for the unsuccessful political endeavours of a ruler.¹¹ Religious diasporas were found in various parts of early modern Europe. Jean-François Dubost has argued that foreigners who settled down in France were received more suspiciously than 'le viateur', travelers, students, and merchants who resided in the country temporarily. Among the settlers, those who entered the political sphere encountered the most

⁹ Mihály Balázs and István Monok, 'Történetírók Báthory Zsigmond udvarában (Szamosközy István és Baranyai Decsi János kiadatlan műveiről)' ['Historians at Sigismund Báthory's court (On the unpublished works of István Szamosközy István and János Baranyai Decsi)'] in: Ágnes R. Várkonyi (ed.), *Magyar reneszánsz udvari kultúra [Hungarian Renaissance court culture]* (Budapest: Gondolat, 1987), pp. 249-262.

¹⁰ Gábor Klaniczay, *A civilizáció peremén [On the edge of civilisation]* (Budapest: Magvető Könyvkiadó, 1990), pp. 82-83.

¹¹ Péter Erdősi, 'Az itáliai erényekben vétkesnek mondott fejedelem (Az olasz udvari emberek helyzete, tevékenysége és megítélése Erdélyben Báthory Zsigmond uralkodása idején)' ['The prince who was said to be guilty of Italian virtues (The situation, activity and judgement of Italians in the court)'], *Sic Itur Ad Astra*, 1996/1-3, pp. 12-48.

hostile form of xenophobia – notably the Italian courtiers whose political professions contributed to their social advancement in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.¹²

Andrea Pontecorvo Martonffy has stated that the humanist and Renaissance literacy of Jesuits in Transylvania was a key to being accepted in the local political elite. Martonffy challenged the stereotype of 'militant' Jesuits highly involved in political issues, arguing that their letters revealed equally important pastoral and organisational pursuits.¹³ Tamás Kruppa contested this conclusion and portrayed the Jesuits' efforts in Transylvania as significant attempts to become involved in secular decisions, foreign affairs, and internal governance.¹⁴ From an international perspective on the Jesuits' political involvement, Robert Bireley has argued that the consolidation and expansion of the moderate absolutist power of Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand II (1619-1637) over his territories were significantly supported by the Society of Jesus, and thus, the Catholic Church. Ferdinand was advised by his Jesuit confessors, particularly Wilhelm Lamormaini (1570-1648), in the course of his campaigns in the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648), and he zealously advocated the Jesuit ecclesiastical and educational activities.¹⁵ Thomas M. McCoog has pointed out that the English secular clergy introduced the Jesuits as agents of foreign powers in anti-Jesuit pamphlets, and accused them of serving Spanish diplomatic interests, intervening in the selection of the Catholic James Stuart (1603-

¹² Jean-François Dubost, 'L'étranger dans la France d'Ancien Régime : ambiguïtés d'une perception' ['The foreigner in France of the Ancien Régime: ambiguities of a perception'] in: Jean-Pierre Jessenne, *L'image de l'autre dans l'Europe du Nord-Ouest à travers l'histoire* [*The image of the other in North-West Europe through history*] (Lille: Publications de l'Institut de recherches historiques du Septentrion, 1996), pp. 33-42.

¹³ Andrea Pontecorvo Martonffy, *The Early Counter-Reformation in Hungary: Jesuits, Papal Nuncios, and the Hungarian Lands, 1550-1606* (University of Chicago: Ph.D. Dissertation, 1980), pp. 344-347.

¹⁴ Tamás Kruppa, *Tradíció és propaganda keresztútján: fejezetek Báthory Zsigmond udvarának kultúrájából* [*On the crossroad of tradition and propaganda: Chapters on the culture of Sigismund Báthory's court*] (Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, 2015), pp. 224-225.

¹⁵ Robert Bireley, *Ferdinand II, Counter-Reformation Emperor, 1578-1637* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 123-166.

1625) as king, and generating conflicts between Charles I (1625-1649) and the Parliament in the 1640s.¹⁶

Consequently, it has been pointed out that the presence, relations and activities of foreigners in Transylvania were highly politicised as they served either the personal interests of the rulers or the endeavours of external powers such as the papacy.¹⁷ The conclusions of current scholarship are useful starting points for this research, as they demonstrate how diverse and far-reaching foreign influences on Transylvania's elite were, and how many intersections in the political performances of its actors could be found. Some of the political connections between foreigners have been highlighted, but this thesis aims at improving our understanding of these encounters in Transylvania by analysing them in greater detail and with greater focus.

Main concepts and theories

Firstly, the thesis aims to investigate 'foreign influence' by considering the context of a long-term process in which the traveling of ideas, styles and customs created a cultural dialogue. The research concentrates primarily on the *cultural transfer* of these patterns towards Transylvania as a 'one-way street' rather than a dialogue because, most of the individuals with whom this thesis deals carried out the bulk of their political and intellectual activities in Transylvania. Therefore, to assess the extent to which these people were influenced by foreign trends and the ways in which they used this knowledge in their careers, this thesis offers a prosopographical analysis of the education, networks, intellectual accomplishments and political engagements of the three examined groups.

¹⁶ Thomas M. McCoog, 'The Society of Jesus in the Three Kingdoms' in: Thomas Worcester (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Jesuits* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 88-103, 91-92.

¹⁷ See: László Szilas, *Der Jesuit Alfonso Carrillo in Siebenbürgen 1591-1599* [*The Jesuit Alfonso Carrillo in Transylvania 1591-1599*] (Rome: Institutum Historicum S. I., 1966), pp. 128-132; Jászay Magda, *Párhuzamok és kereszteződések: A magyar-olasz kapcsolatok történetéből* [*Parallels and crossroads: On the history of Hungarian-Italian relations*] (Budapest: Gondolat, 1982), pp. 235-254 and 263-265; and Tamás Kruppa, 'Erdély és a Szentszék kapcsolatainak ismeretlen kérdésköréhez. Fabio Genga római tárgyalásai 1594-ben és 1596-ban' ['On the questions of the relations between Transylvania and the Holy See in 1594 and 1596'], *Hadtörténeti Közlemények*, vol. 117, no. 4 (2004), pp. 1166-1197.

The first concept to define is *cultural transfer*. Jan Ślaski has identified a so-called ‘golden triangle’ between Italy, Poland and Hungary/Transylvania in the context of Renaissance and humanist culture in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. According to Ślaski, cultural trends from Italy were spread by Italian travellers who circulated and mediated Italian artistic styles and patterns between Poland and Hungary/Transylvania, and via students’ encounters at Italian universities. Renaissance artists and craftsmen arrived with Italian queen consorts - Beatrice of Naples, wife of Matthias I Corvinus of Hungary (1458-1490), in 1476, and Bona Sforza from the Duchy of Milan, wife of Sigismund I of Poland-Lithuania (1506-1548), in 1518.¹⁸

In addition, Maria Todorova has studied the notion of backwardness in cultural terms as an aspect of nationalism in modern Eastern Europe. She chose ‘time’ as the object of her research and argued for the *relative synchronicity within the longue durée framework* – claiming that cultural phenomena develop comparatively at the same time in various regions. Thus, Todorova states that since the late medieval period, cultural phenomena were not adopted by ‘backward’ regions but rather progressed simultaneously within the framework of a dialogue among European countries.¹⁹ Todorova’s argument is useful for this research as it rejects the idea of ‘advanced’ and ‘backward’ regions in the geographic and historical area of Europe, and emphasises the treatment of culture as common, concurrent and interacting developments.

Secondly, the thesis analyses the foreign members and features of the *political elite* that led the government and administration of Transylvania between 1559 and 1602 and determined a number of crucial factors in its religious life, education system, and diplomacy. Zsolt Trócsányi’s work on Transylvania’s central government provides a list of officers with their functions in the chancellery, the princely council, and the magistrates of the treasury.²⁰

¹⁸ Jan Ślaski, ‘Il “triangolo aureo” italo-polacco-ungherese all’epoca dell’umanesimo e del rinascimento’ [‘The Italian-Polish-Hungarian „golden triangle” at the time of the humanism and the Renaissance’], *Rivista di Studi Ungheresi* (2001), pp. 39-44. See also: Jan Ślaski, ‘L’Umanesimo nella Polonia del XV secolo e l’Italia’ [‘Humanism in fifteenth-century Poland and Italy’] in: Tibor Klaniczay and József Jankovics (eds), *Matthias Corvinus and the Humanism in Central Europe* (Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, 1994), pp. 211-222.

¹⁹ Maria Todorova, ‘The Trap of Backwardness: Modernity, Temporality, and the Study of Eastern European Nationalism’, *Slavic Review*, vol. 64, no. 1 (2005), pp. 140-164.

²⁰ Zsolt Trócsányi, *Erdély központi kormányzata 1540-1690* [The central government of Transylvania 1540-1690] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1980).

However, Ildikó Horn has found Trócsányi's compilation insufficient, and has argued that, in the late sixteenth century, the political elite consisted of all the nobles whose wealth, ancestry, relations or education made them capable of practising power, and not only those in specific governmental positions.²¹ Ildikó Horn's broader concept of the political elite is used in this thesis because there were several advisors and envoys who did not hold offices in the country's administration, and yet, had significant influence over the ruler (Biandrata), or played a key role in Transylvanian diplomacy (Carrillo).

Nobility and *aristocracy* are two additional important terms to define.²² Zsigmond Jakó has investigated the nobility of Belső-Szolnok County of the 1580s – there were five aristocrats with more than seventy-five serfs, thirty-seven landed nobles with more than ten serfs, and fifty minor nobles with less than ten serfs.²³ By using a similar method to analyse Torda County's nobility, Veronka Dáné has pointed out that in the 1570s only one noble possessed more than seventy-five portas (one porta stands for one serf family), sixteen nobles had more than ten portas, and eighty-three nobles had ten or less portas.²⁴ Based on these case studies, it can be assumed that the majority of Transylvania's noble society belonged to the *minor nobility*, the *landed nobility* was a smaller and slightly wealthier group, while only a few families represented the *aristocracy* in each county. In the thesis, Transylvanians from all three strata of the nobility are investigated as actors of the political elite which demonstrates the permeability of the system in the examined period. The research considers their careers by taking into account their background as well as their studies to explore the significance of foreign education, relations, and experience.

²¹ Ildikó Horn, *A hatalom pillérei. A politikai elit az Erdélyi Fejedelemség megszilárdulásának korszakában (1556–1588)* [*The pillars of power. The political elite in the period of consolidation in the Principality of Transylvania (1556-1588)*] (Budapest, 2012), pp. 14-15.

²² Literature on the socio-economic status of Transylvania's nobility is incomplete due to the limited amount of available sixteenth-century documents.

²³ Zsigmond Jakó, 'Belső Szolnok és Doboka magyarsága az újkorban' ['Hungarians in Belső Szolnok and Doboka in the early modern period'] in: Attila Szabó T. (ed.), *Szolnok-Doboka megye magyarsága* [*Hungarians in Szolnok-Doboka County*] (Cluj: Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület, 1944), pp. 70-130, 88.

²⁴ Veronka Dáné, „Mennyi jobbágya és mennyi portiója” *Torda vármegye birtokos társadalma a 17. század első felében* [„How many serfs and how many portions” *The landed society of Torda County in the first half of the 17th century*] (Cluj: Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület, 2016), pp. 30-38.

Finally, the concept *cosmopolitan* is used in this thesis when discussing the political roles and encounters of foreigners and foreign-educated locals at Transylvania's court. Robert J. W. Evans has argued that Holy Roman Emperor Rudolph II (1576-1612) established a cosmopolitan court in Prague by patronising leading humanists from various parts of Europe.²⁵ Peter Burke has developed Evans's argument by highlighting that many sixteenth-century rulers granted specific 'positions' to the *litterati*.²⁶ Princely patronage drew several scientists and theologians also to Transylvania's capital, Gyulafehérvár (Alba Iulia), where they became part of Transylvania's intellectual and political life.²⁷

Survey of primary sources

Contemporary historical accounts; Jesuit letters and memoirs: These sources illustrate the social acceptance of foreigners in Transylvania and how contemporaries measured the significance of their activities. Both in the works of Hungarian authors from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries²⁸ and in the letters of the Jesuits present in Transylvania²⁹, there are several references

²⁵ Robert J. W. Evans, *Rudolf II and His World: A Study in Intellectual History, 1576-1612* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973), pp. 5-43.

²⁶ For example, the Danish astronomer, Tycho Brahe (1546-1601) was Rudolph II's 'imperial mathematician'. Peter Burke, 'The Courtier' in: Eugenio Garin (ed.), *Renaissance Characters* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), pp. 98-122, 115-116.

²⁷ Such intellectuals were the Italian physician Marcello Squarcialupi (1538-1592) and the Hungarian humanist Farkas Kovacsóczy.

²⁸ István Borzsák (tr.) and István Sinkovics (ed.), *Szamosközy István: Erdély története (1598–1599, 1603)* [*István Szamosközy: A history of Transylvania (1598-1599, 1603)*] (Budapest: Magyar Helikon, 1963); Péter Kulcsár (ed.), *Baranyai Decsi János magyar históriája (1592-1598)* [*The Hungarian story of János Baranyai Decsi (1592-1598)*] (Budapest, 1982); and Ferenc Forgách, *Emlékirat Magyarország állapotáról [Memoir about the condition of Hungary]*, in: Péter Kulcsár (ed.), *Humanista történetírók [Humanist historians]* (Budapest: Alföldi Nyomda, 1977), pp. 982-985.

²⁹ Endre Veress (ed.), *Fontes Rerum Transylvanicarum: 1. Erdélyi jezsuiták levelezése és iratai a Báthoryak korából /Epistolae et Acta Jesuitarum Transylvaniae Temporibus Principum Báthory (1571–1613)* [*Fontes Rerum Transylvanicarum: 1. Correspondence and documents of Transylvanian Jesuits from the time of the Báthorys*], vol. II: 1575-1588 (Budapest: Stephaneum, 1913); and Endre Veress (ed.), *Carrillo Alfonz jezsuita-atyja levelezése és iratai (1591-1618)* [*The correspondence and documents of Jesuit priest Alfonso Carrillo (1591-1618)*] (Budapest: MTA, 1943).

to Italian ‘heretics’ in the region. The contrast in their approaches offers the opportunity to understand the relations and interests of these analysed groups. The historical accounts contain an inherent bias, depending on the political or religious affiliation of their authors. However, this bias provides insight into the political and religious rivalries of certain groups – Catholic bishop Ferenc Forgách’s negative perception of foreign Protestants at Sigismund Báthory’s court testifies to a tension along denominational oppositions. The tension between newcomers and families of the established elite can also be detected.

Diet resolutions and diplomatic letters: Transylvania had three *estates*, the so-called ‘Union of the three Nations’ - the Hungarian nobility, the Szekler military class, and the Saxon patricians. The estates assembled at *diets* with varying regularity each year where the estate representatives had a considerable say in governmental issues. Transylvania was organised along the principles of *elective monarchy*, each estate supported their own princely candidates and then elected the most popular applicant.³⁰ The diet resolutions and the diplomatic correspondence of Transylvania’s rulers are available in edited volumes.³¹ These sources offer the chance to examine the relationship between the central power and the three groups of the research. Documents written by or addressed to the rulers provide information on how they were engaged in the support of incoming foreigners, students abroad and the Jesuit mission.³² Their main limitation is that to look beyond the mere decisions and statements, their contextual analysis is essential.

Registers of students abroad: Two edited volumes of registers, documents and correspondence of Transylvanian students have been published that comprise information on the conditions of

³⁰ The influence of the ruler was dominant in the determination of the composition of the estate representatives and the topics discussed at the diets as well. See: Teréz Oborni, ‘State and governance in the Principality of Transylvania’, *Hungarian Studies*, vol. 27, no. 2 (2013), pp. 313-324; and Id., ‘Az Erdélyi Fejedelemség állama és politikai berendezkedése’ [‘The state and political regime of the Principality of Transylvania’], *Korunk*, vol. 24, no. 3 (2013), pp. 8-16.

³¹ Sándor Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek [Memorabilia of the Transylvanian Diet]*, vols 1: 1540-1556, 2: 1556-1576, 3: 1576-1596, 5: 1601-1607, 8: 1621-1629 (Budapest: MTA, 1875-1882).

³² Zsigmond Jakó (ed.), *János Zsigmond királyi könyve 1569-1570 [John Sigismund’s royal book 1569-1570]* (Cluj-Napoca: Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület, 2003).

peregrination.³³ Their investigation allows the identification of patterns in peregrination to draw conclusions about the students' pre-peregrination circumstances and post-peregrination opportunities. The main problem with these sources is the limited information that they provide such as lack of data on studied subjects or extracurricular pursuits of students. This deficiency can be improved by focusing on a few individual cases on which sufficient data is available. For instance, György Kornis wrote numerous letters to his father from his travels, in which he reported about his financial circumstances, travels, friendships, and political news as well.³⁴

Structure

The thesis is arranged thematically and addresses three sub-questions in three consecutive chapters:

What incentives attracted Protestant refugees and other foreigners to Transylvania, and what impact did their activities have on the court?

What patterns can be identified in the tradition of academic peregrination from Transylvania, and what professional opportunities did graduates have to use their 'imported' intellectual capital upon return?

What impact did Jesuit educational institutions have on the Transylvanian political elite, and to what extent were the members of the Society of Jesus involved in political affairs at the Transylvanian court?

³³ Endre Veress (ed.), *Matricula et Acta Hungarorum in Universitatibus Italiae Studentium: Padova: 1264-1864 / A paduai egyetem magyarországi tanulóinak anyakönyve és iratai (1264-1864)* [*The registers and documents of students from Hungary at the University of Padua (1264-1864)*] (Budapest: Stephaneum, 1915); and Gustav Toepke, *Die Matrikel der Universität Heidelberg* [*The Matriculation of the University of Heidelberg*], vol. 2: 1554-1662 (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1884), Accessed: 2 June 2020, <https://digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/matrikel1554/0146> /Henceforth: *Matricula et Acta Hungarorum...*/

³⁴ The pieces of their correspondence were published in: Veress's *Matricula et Acta Hungarorum...*, pp. 257-261.

Chapter 1: The Italian diaspora – Protestant refugees and courtiers in Transylvania

In the second half of the sixteenth century, East Central Europe became home to a considerable Italian diaspora – it mainly consisted of Protestants who settled down in Poland-Lithuania, Moravia or Transylvania after years of religious persecution and migration, because of the tolerant religious environment of these territories. These Protestants, mostly Antitrinitarians, rose to particular importance in Transylvania, and many of them became members of the political elite in the course of the 1570s and 1580s. A number of such expatriates were engaged in diplomatic and court affairs in this period. This chapter investigates the 'foreign profile' of Transylvanian political life with an emphasis on Italian individuals in princely service. The following question will be discussed: What incentives attracted Protestant refugees and other foreigners to Transylvania, and what impact did their activities have on the court?

Foreigners in the political and religious life of Transylvania

The young state of Transylvania was challenged by the semi-dependence on the Ottoman Empire and the rivalry with the House of Habsburg, and in the 1550s, the area was inhabited by several ethnic and religious groups – predominantly Calvinist Hungarians, Lutheran Saxons, Orthodox Christian Romanians, and still mainly Roman Catholic Szeklers. By the late 1560s, this composition was changed by the introduction and spread of Antitrinitarianism, a radical branch of the Protestant Reformation.³⁵

Diversity was characteristic not only within the society but at the court of Gyulafehérvár as well. The 'cosmopolitan' nature of the court originated in the diverse entourage of queen consort Isabella Jagiellon (1539-1559). She was the daughter of Sigismund I of Poland-Lithuania and his Milanese wife, Bona Sforza, and spent her youth in the Renaissance-style court of Krakow before marrying John I Zápolya of Hungary in 1539. After the Ottoman forces captured Buda in 1541 and assigned the eastern territories of the former kingdom to the widow Isabella and her son John Sigismund, she established her court in Gyulafehérvár in the early

³⁵ István Keul, *Early Modern Religious Communities in East-Central Europe: Ethnic Diversity, Denominational Plurality, and Corporative Politics in the Principality of Transylvania (1526–1691)* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), pp. 84-106.

1540s.³⁶ The estates opposed the high number of foreign functionaries at Isabella's court. Nonetheless, she managed to make the diet accept a decree in 1556 that allowed her to nominate officers according to her own will, and employ foreigners beside Transylvanians, especially Poles.³⁷ Isabella knew Italian, Polish, Latin and German as well. Several Polish female and male courtiers served in her court, many of whom remained in Transylvania and married locals. The tradition of employing intellectuals with humanist literacy and foreign experience was already present at Isabella Jagiellon's court. The studies of Antal Verancsics (1504-1573) at the University of Padua were supported by his uncle, the Roman Catholic bishop of Transylvania, János Statileo (d. 1542) before he became the royal secretary and envoy of John I Zápolya of Hungary. After the king's death, Verancsics was the one of Isabella's secretaries and confidants, and corresponded with several Polish and Italian humanists.³⁸ For some Hungarians of lower noble status, joining the groups of Poles at the court and learning their language was a means of career advancement. It was the strategy of Gáspár Bekes (1520-1579), page of Péter Petrovics (1485-1557), a Hungarian aristocrat and landowner, one of the main noble supporters of the Protestant Reformation in Hungary. Later Bekes served Isabella in her late years, learned Polish in her court, and became John Sigismund's counselor in the course of the 1560s.³⁹ In early 1550, at the diet assembly held at Kolozsvár, the estates issued a decree stating that the office of the chancellor had always been the highest position in Transylvania's government, and therefore, the chancellor had to understand Hungarian.⁴⁰ This decree can be seen as a protest

³⁶ László Makkai and András Mócsy (eds), *Erdély története, vol.1: A kezdetektől 1606-ig* [A history of Transylvania, vol. 1: From the beginnings until 1606] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1986), pp. 409-446.

³⁷ Sándor Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek* [Memorabilia of the Transylvanian Diet], vol. 2: 1556-1576 (Budapest: MTA, 1876), p. 8.

³⁸ Teréz Oborni, 'Izabella királyné erdélyi udvarának kezdetei (1541–1551)' ['The beginnings of Queen consort Isabella's Transylvanian court (1541-1551)'], *Történelmi Szemle*, 2009/1, pp. 21-42, 34-35.

³⁹ Lajos Szádeczky, *Kornýáti Békés Gáspár, 1520-1579* [Gáspár Békés of Kornýát, 1520-1579] (Budapest: Méhner, 1887), Part I, <http://mek.oszk.hu/05600/05691/html/>

⁴⁰ 'Officium Cancellarii cum apud Principes Hungariae summus semper Magistratus fuerit, primique illi in consilio extiterint, talisque et inter nos Cancellarius esse debeat, qui et linguam nostram intelligat, et Jura Regui libertatemque nostrani optime calleat, supplicamus Majestati Vestrae in hac re et dignitati suae et libertati nostrae consulere.' in: Sándor Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek* [Memorabilia of the Transylvanian Diet], vol. 1: 1540-1556 (Budapest, 1875), p. 304.

against the appointment of Jakub Paczynski, a Polish royal secretary and canon of Krakow as chancellor of Transylvania in the spring of 1549 as well as the promotion of other Italians and Poles in Isabella's time.⁴¹

John Sigismund continued his mother's habit of welcoming and employing foreigners at the court. The commander of his guards between 1564 and 1567 was the Tuscan Giovanandrea Gromo, a spy of the Venetian Republic and the Holy See. Gromo arrived in Transylvania upon John Sigismund's request for Venetian mercenary troops against Holy Roman Emperor and king of Royal Hungary Maximilian II (1564-1576) – who maintained his father's, Ferdinand I's claims for Transylvanian territories. Maximilian reigned over Royal Hungary as Maximilian I (1563-1576). Gromo informed the Holy See and the Venetian Republic regularly about John Sigismund's affairs.⁴² He reported that the ruler always paid attention to the advice of Venetians, and that he was planning to marry a Venetian patrician maid, and to make the Republic his successor as ruler of Transylvania in case of not fathering any children.⁴³ Moreover, Gromo praised John Sigismund's literacy – he noted that the ruler spoke Latin, Italian, German, Polish, Hungarian, Romanian, and some Turkish and Greek.⁴⁴

An additional impact of foreigners under John Sigismund was the introduction and development of Antitrinitarianism by a number of Italians.⁴⁵ The first notable Antitrinitarian

⁴¹ Oborni, 'Izabella királyné erdélyi udvarának kezdetei (1541–1551)', p. 33.

⁴² Magda Jászay, *A kereszténység védőbástyája olasz szemmel. Olasz kortárs írók a XV-XVIII. századról* [*The bastion of Christianity through Italian eyes. Italian contemporary writers about the 15th - 18th centuries*] (Budapest: Nemzeti Tankönyvkiadó, 1996), pp. 129-130.

⁴³ Gustav Turba (ed.), *Venetianische Depeschen vom Kaiserhofe (Dispacci di Germania)* [*Venetian Dispatches from the Imperial Court (Dispatches from Germany)*] (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1895), p. 297.

⁴⁴ 'Latintudása jó, olyannyira, hogy ki tudja fejezni és megértetni a témáját. Jól beszél olaszul, németül, lengyelül, magyarul, románul és valamennyit törökül és görögül.' Renáta Tima (tr.), 'Giovanandrea Gromo: Compendium di tutto il regno posseduto dal re Giovanni Transilvano et di tutte le cose notabili d'esso regno' in: Péter Takács (ed.), *Fejedelmek, forradalmak, vasutak. Tanulmányok Erdély történetéből* [*Princes, revolutions, railways. Studies on the history of Transylvania*] (Debrecen: Erdélytörténeti Alapítvány, 2000), pp. 34-68, 56. /Henceforth: 'Compendium'./

⁴⁵ On Antitrinitarians in East Central Europe, see: Domenico Caccamo, *Eretici italiani in Moravia, Polonia, Transilvania* [*Italian heretics in Moravia, Poland, Transylvania*] (Florence: Sansoni, 1970); Delio Cantimori, *Eretici italiani del Cinquecento. Ricerche storiche* [*Italian heretics of the sixteenth*

was Francesco Stancaro (1501-1574) from Mantua, who was in Transylvania in the middle of the 1550s. Stancaro was a professor of theology and Hebrew at the University of Padua, where he started to preach his ideas against the dogma of the Holy Trinity and against the use of any sources other than the Holy Scripture. Therefore, as a suspected Servetian, he was chased by the Venetian Inquisition.⁴⁶ In 1546, he escaped Italy and traveled in the Holy Roman Empire, the Swiss cantons and Poland-Lithuania before becoming the physician of Péter Petrovics in 1548. Petrovics was a pro-Zápolya politician, supported Isabella Jagiellon and John Sigismund, and fervently promoted the spread of Calvinism. Stancaro attempted to gain followers but his theological tenets were rejected by the Lutheran congregation at a 1555 Protestant synod.⁴⁷ In Poland-Lithuania, Stancaro and his fellow Italian religious refugees were also aided by the local Protestant nobility. Therefore, the support of the Protestant elite can be considered a prerequisite but not a guarantee for the success of foreign exiles.

Stancaro's activity did not result in widespread success but paved the way for another Italian physician, Giorgio Biandrata (1515-1588). Originally from Piedmont, Biandrata studied obstetrics and gynaecology at the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Montpellier which was a hotspot of radical heterodoxy at that time. Between 1540 and 1544, Biandrata served Bona Sforza in Poland-Lithuania; and then until 1551, he worked as the personal gynaecologist of her daughter, Isabella Jagiellon.⁴⁸ By then, Isabella had been widowed and spent most of her

century] (Florence: Sansoni, 1967); Mihály Balázs, *Early Transylvanian Antitrinitarianism (1566-1571): From Servet to Palaeologus* (Baden-Baden: Éditions Valentin Koekner, 1996); and Alessandra Quaranta, 'Exile Experiences 'Religionis causa' and the Transmission of Medical Knowledge between Italy and German-Speaking Territories in the Second Half of the Sixteenth Century' in: Cornel Zwierlein and Vincenzo Lavenia (eds), *Fruits of Migration: Heterodox Italian Migrants and Central European Culture 1550-1620* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), pp. 72-101.

⁴⁶ Joanna Kostyło, 'Commonwealth of all the faiths: Republican myth and the Italian diaspora in sixteenth-century Poland-Lithuania' in: Karin Friedrich and Barbara M. Pendzich (eds), *Citizenship and Identity in a Multinational Commonwealth: Poland-Lithuania in Context, 1550-1772* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), pp. 171-205.

⁴⁷ Jenő Zoványi, *Magyarországi Protestáns Egyháztörténeti Lexikon [Hungarian Protestant Church History Encyclopaedia]* (Budapest: Magyarországi Református Egyház Zsinati Irodájának Sajtóosztálya, 1977), p. 474.

⁴⁸ On the relations between physicians and Antitrinitarianism, see: Ralf Bröer, 'Blutkreislauf und Dreieinigkeit Medizinischer Antitrinitarismus von Michael Servet (1511–1553) bis Giorgio Biandrata

time in Gyulafehérvár with her son. Interestingly, in 1546 Antal Verancsics encouraged Biandrata to stay at the Transylvanian court instead of returning home since, according to Verancsics, there foreigners could achieve the most distinguished positions and great wealth with their diligence and virtues.⁴⁹ Nonetheless, Biandrata left for Mestre to practice medicine. During the 1550s, he moved continuously due to the persecution of Antitrinitarian views that he was proclaiming - first from Italy, and then from Geneva after his irreconcilable conflicts with John Calvin (1509-1564), and finally from Poland-Lithuania where the Polish Reformed Church was frequently reminded by Calvin of the problematic nature of Biandrata's views.⁵⁰ The Italian Antitrinitarian returned to Gyulafehérvár in 1563 upon the invitation of John Sigismund, who had received the throne of Transylvania from the estates after his mother's death in 1559. Biandrata was employed as the ruler's physician but soon became his chief confidant as well.

(1515–1588)’ [‘Blood Circulation and Trinity Medical Antitrinitarianism from Michael Servet (1511–1553) to Giorgio Biandrata (1515–1588)’], *Berichte zur Wissenschaftsgeschichte*, vol. 29, no. 1 (2006), pp. 21-37.

⁴⁹ ‘Isabella Regina est et Hungarorum natio, apud quam externis hominibus quum ad opes per industriam, tum ad omnium gentiliciarum dignitatum, officiorum que facultas per virtutem concedatur.’ Antal Verancsics to Giorgio Biandrata (from Krakow), 28 September 1546 in: László Szalay (ed.), *Monumenta Hungariae Historica 2. Scriptores 9: Verancsics Antal m. kir. helytartó, esztergomi érsek összes munkái* [*Hungarian Historical Memorabilia 2, Scriptures 9: The works of Antal Verancsics, Hungarian royal procurator and Archbishop of Esztergom*], vol. 6: 1538-1549, p. 214.

⁵⁰ Elek Jakab, ‘Néhány adat Blandrata György élete és jelleme ismeréséhez’ [‘Some data on Giorgio Biandrata's life and personality’], *Keresztény Magvető*, vol. 12, no. 1 (1877), pp. 1-32, pp. 3-7; and Antonio Rotondò, ‘Giorgio Biandrata’ in: *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* [*Biographical Dictionary of Italians*], vol. 10 (1968), Accessed: 20 May 2020, http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/giovanni-giorgio-biandrata_%28DizionarioBiografico%29/ John Calvin's letters to the Polish Reformed Church about Giorgio Biandrata and his peers: Jean-François Gilmont and Peter Rodolphe (eds), *Bibliotheca Calviniana : les oeuvres de Jean Calvin publiées au XVI^e siècle. III, Écrits théologiques, littéraires et juridiques : 1565- 1600* [*Bibliotheca Calviniana: John Calvin's works published in the 16th century, vol. 3: Theological, literary and legal writings: 1565-1600*] (Genève: Librairie Droz, 2000), pp. 121-125.

An important factor in the development of Antitrinitarianism in Transylvania was John Sigismund's personal interest in theology.⁵¹ From the second half of the 1560s, the ruler frequently attended public debates, held by Biandrata's fellow court preacher, the Hungarian Antitrinitarian theologian, Ferenc Dávid (1520-1579) and Péter Méliusz Juhász (1532-1572), the leader of the Calvinist Reformed Church in Transylvania. In reaction to the Antitrinitarians' argument that only God the Father could be adored, Méliusz referred to Biandrata and Dávid as the 'sons of Beelzebub'.⁵² John Sigismund made it clear that he wanted to receive foreign intellectuals to participate in the debates and that such meetings would always be allowed to be held in order to discuss theoretical questions.⁵³ Ferenc Forgách (1530-1577), humanist, historian, and Catholic bishop, referred to John Sigismund's upbringing by accusing his Polish courtiers of teaching him a 'frivolous, ignorant and intemperate' lifestyle. His remark expresses how the influence of foreign Protestants over John Sigismund was perceived by Transylvanian Catholics:

He was brought up by the people who had been divorced from the fear of God, so that they could bring him on the side of Arianism more easily. Therefore they never talked about the Gospel and the Sacraments.⁵⁴

⁵¹ On John Sigismund's theological interests, see: Mihály Balázs, 'Megjegyzések János Zsigmond valláspolitikájához' ['Notes on the religious politics of John Sigismund'], in: Béla Varjas (ed.), *Irodalom és ideológia a 16-17. században* [*Literature and ideology in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries*] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1987), pp. 67-93.

⁵² Péter Méliusz Juhász, *Az egész Szentírásból való igaz tudomány* [*True Science from the entire Holy Scripture*] (Debrecen: Komlós András, 1570), p.70, Accessed: 20 May 2020, http://real-r.mtak.hu/303/1/RMK_I_0077-M_0061-b.pdf

⁵³ Lajos Nagy and Domokos Simén (eds), *Unitárius írók a XVI. évszázadból, I: A nagyváradai disputatio* [*Unitarian writers of the sixteenth century, vol. 1: The disputation at Nagyvárad*] (Kolozsvár, 1870), pp. 168-169.

⁵⁴ 'Így aztán gyerekek, majd hitvány lengyel emberek társaságában nevelkedett fel... Ilyen tanítók mellett főleg a könnyelműséget, tudatlanságot és részegeskedést szívta magába... A minden istenfélelemtől elrugaskodott emberek nevelték így, hogy annál könnyebben megnyerhessék az arianizmusnak, ezért nem beszéltek soha az evangéliumról, soha a szentségekről.' Ferenc Forgách, *Emlékirat Magyarország állapotáról* [*Memoir about the condition of Hungary*], in: Péter Kulcsár (ed.), *Humanista történetírók* [*Humanist historians*] (Budapest: Alföldi Nyomda, 1977), pp. 982-985, own translation from Hungarian.

The Calvinist historian Sebestyén Borsos (1520-1584) wrote in his chronicle that each religious group was trying to convince the ruler of their own views until he chose Antitrinitarianism. Borsos added:

Many lords stood by the king [John Sigismund] such as the Kendis and others as well, then cities like Kolozsvár, Torda, Déés... and the half of the town [Vásárhely] took up the new heresy, that of Blandrata.⁵⁵

Captain Gromo also noted that Biandrata:

... was not liked at the court, but people were afraid of his power that he practised over His Highness.⁵⁶

Arguably, Biandrata was perceived by contemporaries as not only the most influential preacher at court but also as an advisor who stepped beyond his position and had a significant say in political and military matters. Thus, the political involvement of a foreign theologian became an overt issue at the court.

⁵⁵ 'Ebben a király mellé állának sokan a nagyságos urakban is, ugymint a Kendiek és sokan többen is; azután a városok közül Kolosvár, Torda, Déés... majd fele a városnak [Vásárhely], ugyan a nagyja az új haeresist, a Blandratáét, bévette volna.' Sebestyén Borsos, 'Világnak lett dolgairól írott krónika' ['Written chronicle about the events of the world'] in: Imre Mikó (ed.), *Erdélyi Történelmi Adatok [Historical Data of Transylvania]*, vol. 1 (Kolozsvár: Ev. Ref. Főtanoda, 1855), pp. 9-37, 27-28, own translation from Hungarian, Accessed: 9 June 2020, <http://mek.oszk.hu/06800/06860/pdf/erdely1.pdf>

⁵⁶ '... az udvarban kevésbé szeretik, de félnek a hatalmától, amelyet Őfelsége felett gyakorol.' 'Compendium', p. 59.

Eventually, Antitrinitarianism was legalised and acknowledged as one of the four ‘received religions’ at a diet held in Torda in January 1568. The representatives of the estates passed the *Edict of Torda*, a decree initiated by Ferenc Dávid. The edict announced the free practice of Calvinism, Lutheranism, Roman Catholicism and Antitrinitarianism, depending on the choice of each congregation.⁵⁷ This decree did not acknowledge freedom of conscience as an individual right but rather freedom of worship as a collective right of communities. Additionally, it did not concern the Jewish community or other Christian denominations. However, it declared the toleration of theologically and structurally different Christian communities which was a unique level of religious pluralism in early modern Europe. John Sigismund voiced his commitment to religious peace and his affiliation with the Antitrinitarians at one of their theological disputations with the Calvinists at Várad in October 1569:

Neither from us nor from our followers have you ever had to suffer injury... We wish that in our country - as it is said in the decree of the Diet [the Edict of Torda] – freedom shall reign. We know furthermore that faith is a gift from God and that conscience cannot be constrained.⁵⁸

The statements of the disputation were recorded and published in a minute book. Importantly, it was supervised by John Sigismund before printing – it can be argued that religious tolerance became an important aspect of his propaganda. At the same event, John Sigismund declared his wish that

from other countries, the most important scholars would come, the brave Beza or Simlerus⁵⁹, so that the truth from God’s Word would be revealed.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ ‘The preachers shall preach the Gospel and proclaim it, each according to his own understanding, and if the congregation wants to follow, so be it, if not, no one shall be compelled, for a soul will not find peace in this way, rather every man shall follow the preacher whose teachings appeal to him. For this reason, no superintendent or any other person shall do harm to the preachers; none shall suffer at the hands of others for religious reasons...’ Cited in English in: Keul, *Early Modern Religious Communities in East-Central Europe*, p. 111.

⁵⁸ Ibidem, p. 115.

⁵⁹ John Sigismund’s reference to the French Calvinist reformer Theodore Beza (1519-1605) and the Swiss theologian Josias Simmler (1530-1576) testifies to his theological knowledge and curiosity.

⁶⁰ Nagy and Simén, *A nagyváradai disputatio*, pp. 168-169, own translation from Hungarian.

In his testament, John Sigismund donated a large amount of gold and jewels to Giorgio Biandrata – he was the only inheritor of princely goods among the theologians who were active in Transylvania at that time.⁶¹

John Sigismund died in March 1571, and the estates elected Stephen Báthory as the new ruler. Báthory was born into an aristocratic family, and his ancestors had possessed lands and political titles. He spent several years of his youth abroad, travelled in Italy, and mastered German and Latin as a page in the court of Ferdinand I in Vienna in the 1540s.⁶² He preserved his Catholic faith and did not convert to Protestantism. Later he became the captain of Várada and John Sigismund's envoy to Maximilian II. Stephen was described in Gromo's account along with his brother Christopher Báthory (1530-1581) as follows:

Both are good friends of the Italian people and speak our language very well, especially Christopher.⁶³

In 1576, Stephen became king of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania. In his brother's absence, Christopher served as voivode of Transylvania between 1576 and 1581. When Christopher died, his son, Sigismund was elected as Stephen's successor. Since Sigismund was still underage, a Regent Council of three members, Sándor Kendy (d. 1594), Farkas Kovacsóczy and László Sombori (d. 1590), was formed to govern in Transylvania between 1583 and 1585.⁶⁴ Sigismund became ruler of Transylvania in 1586.

The era of the Báthorys represented a change in the religious life of Transylvania. The Catholic rulers sought diplomatic opportunities to strengthen relations with the Holy See and to restore the prevalence of Catholicism.

⁶¹ Gusztáv Heckenast, 'János Zsigmond végrendelete (1567)' ['The Testament of János Zsigmond (1567)'], *Keresztény Magvető*, vol. 111, no. 4 (2005), pp. 317-334, 331.

⁶² George Gömöri, 'Where was István Báthory Educated? Or: The Genesis of a Legend' in: George Gömöri, *The Polish Swan Triumphant: Essays on Polish and Comparative Literature Kochanowski to Norwid* (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013), pp. 15-18.

⁶³ 'Mindketten nagy barátai az olasz nemzetnek és igen jól beszélék a mi nyelvünket, különösen Kristóf.' Gromo, 'Compendium', p. 58, own translation from Hungarian.

⁶⁴ 'Part I: The Regency' in: Lajos Szádeczky, *Kovacsóczy Farkas kancellár [Chancellor Farkas Kovacsóczy 1576-1594]* (Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1891), Accessed: 1 June 2020, <https://mek.oszk.hu/05600/05626/html/>

Protestant Italians under Stephen and Christopher Báthory

Transylvania continued to be a favourable place for Italian Antitrinitarians even after the death of John Sigismund. Although Stephen Báthory took definite steps to limit the opportunities of Protestants, and especially the Antitrinitarian 'prosperity', he was not interested in an overt conflict with the overwhelmingly Protestant estates.

Not only was Antitrinitarianism introduced here by Italians but some of them played a significant role in diplomacy as well. As Giorgio Biandrata did not hesitate to become loyal to the new ruler, he managed to preserve his position as court physician and counselor whose opinion was considered by Báthory in diplomatic questions.⁶⁵ His main commission took place during the 1576 Polish-Lithuanian royal election. In July 1574, Henri de Valois (1551-1589), who had been king of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania since May 1573, left Krakow to claim the French crown after the death of his brother, Charles IX of France (1560-1574).⁶⁶ During the almost two years of interregnum, a number of candidates strived for the throne – among others, Emperor Maximilian II, his son Archduke Ernest of Austria (1553-1395), King John III of Sweden (1568-1592), Tsar Ivan IV of Russia (1547-1584), and Stephen Báthory. In late 1575, Giorgio Biandrata was Báthory's delegate at the Sejm, the parliament of Poland-Lithuania, and was in charge of proclaiming his religious tolerance.⁶⁷ Báthory's other representative was Márton Berzeviczy (1538-1596), a Lutheran humanist whose presence was supposed to ease the tension that the memory of the Italian 'heretic' brought up among the (mostly) Catholic nobles. Biandrata and Berzeviczy received full authority from Báthory to act in his interests, and orated for the election of their ruler by arguing that he would pay the debts of the commonwealth, respect the Polish-Lithuanian rights and freedoms, and strengthen the borders, especially against the Tsardom of Russia.⁶⁸ In addition, Biandrata referred to some of

⁶⁵ Robert J. W. Evans, 'Calvinism in East Central Europe: Hungary and her Neighbours' in: Menna Prestwich, (ed.), *International Calvinism 1541-1715* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), pp. 167-197, 173.

⁶⁶ Daniel Stone, *The Polish-Lithuanian state, 1386–1795* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), pp. 120–121.

⁶⁷ Felicia Roșu, *Elective Monarchy in Transylvania and Poland-Lithuania, 1569-1587* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 83-84.

⁶⁸ Endre Veress, *Berzeviczy Márton (1538-1596) Márton Berzeviczy (1538-1596)* (Budapest: A Magyar Történelmi Társulat kiadása, 1911), pp. 90-94, Accessed: 14 June 2020, <https://archive.org/stream/berzeviczymrto00vere#page/n5/mode/2up>

Báthory's general characteristics that would make him a suitable king such as loyal, Catholic, educated, kind, generous, and experienced in military affairs.⁶⁹ Even though Maximilian II was elected by Poland-Lithuania's main senators, eventually, Stephen Báthory was elected in December 1575.⁷⁰ Beside the persuasive presence of Biandrata and Berzeviczy at the Sejm, an additional factor of success was his relatively low position in European politics as the ruler of Transylvania. In the perspective of the nobles who disfavoured the further extension of the Habsburg Monarchy's Central European power, Báthory's election ensured the conservation of the status quo.

Stephen Báthory employed other members of the radical heterodoxy upon Biandrata's recommendation. The Italian Antitrinitarian physician and astronomer Marcello Squarcialupi was employed at the court in Gyulafehérvár from 1579 until 1586. He was from Piombino, Tuscany and left Italy in 1565 for being suspected of heresy by the Roman Inquisition due to his Antitrinitarian views. Squarcialupi spent the following years travelling across Europe as well as doing theological and scientific research. In Transylvania, he provided the first description and study of the *aurora borealis* (northern lights) which did not explain the natural phenomenon in religious terms, but established a theory upon scholarly investigation and calculations.⁷¹ In 1584, Squarcialupi published a book that outlined the humanist ideals through the example of ancient Roman statesman and philosopher Cicero (106-43 BC), and dedicated it to Stephen Báthory's nephew, Sigismund.⁷²

⁶⁹ '... summa pietas fideique catholicae conscientia, educatio ingenua, insignis eruditio, mores candidi, modestia et humanitas incredibilis, sagax liberalitas, rerum humanarum longa experientia et disciplinae militaris ingenitas peritia, par in bellis geredis, in pace iustitiaque servanda...' Cited in: Sándor Gebei, *Az erdélyi fejedelmek és a lengyel királyválasztások [Transylvanian princes and the Polish royal elections]* (Budapest: MTA – PhD dissertation, 2004), p. 29 (n15).

⁷⁰ Ibidem, p. 33.

⁷¹ Miklós Kázmér and Gábor Timár, 'Az északi fény első tudományos leírása - Marcello Squarcialupi: De coelo ardore (1580)' ['The first scientific description of the northern nights - Marcello Squarcialupi: De coelo ardore (1581)'], *Erdélyi Múzeum*, vol. 79, no. 1 (2017), pp. 82-87. See Squarcialupi's observation of a 1577 comet in: Thomas Erastus, András Dudith, Marcello Squarcialupi and Simon Grynaeus, Simon, *De cometis dissertationes novae* (Heidelberg: Lenoardi Ostenij, 1580).

⁷² Tibor Klaniczay, *Pallas magyar ivadéakai [The Hungarian offsprings of Pallas]* (Budapest: Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó, 1985), p. 110. /Henceforth cited as: Klaniczay, *Pallas*/

Giovanni Michele Bruto was a Venetian humanist who studied at Padua, and was forced to flee to Lyon due to being suspected of heresy and persecuted by the Venetian Inquisition. In 1574, Báthory's humanist chancellor, Ferenc Forgách, invited Bruto to Transylvania where he became Forgách's secretary and court historian.⁷³ He wrote a history of Hungary by using the writings of Antonio Bonfini (1427/1434-1502), the Italian historian of Matthias I Corvinus.⁷⁴

In short, a number of Italian Protestants managed to remain or get into Transylvania's court even during the reign of the Catholic Stephen Báthory.⁷⁵ Their loyalty and scientific contributions secured their positions which they often extended to political activities as well.

The 'Italian' court of Gyulafehérvár under Sigismund Báthory

The Italian language was widely spoken among the educated Transylvanian nobles, particularly among the alumni of Italian universities.⁷⁶ In the autumn of 1584, Petru II Cercel (1545-1590), voivode of Wallachia, sent his Italian envoy, Franco Sivori, with a diplomatic mission to Gyulafehérvár. Sivori noted that he was hosted by Biandrata, Kovacsóczy, and other graduates of the University of Padua - who could all speak in Italian with him.⁷⁷ The employment of foreigners and foreign-educated locals can be seen as a fundamental part of Sigismund's preparation as a future prince – the process of building his entourage and establishing his relations and representation.

⁷³ Trócsányi, *Erdély központi kormányzata 1540-1690*, p. 187.

⁷⁴ See: Ferencz Toldy (ed.) *Brutus János Mihály magyar királyi történetíró Magyar Históriája 1490-1552* [*Hungarian History by Hungarian royal historian Giovanni Michele Bruto*] (Pest: Eggenberger Ferdinánd, 1863); and Katalin S. Varga (ed.) and Péter Kulcsár (tr.), *Antonio Bonfini: A magyar történelem évtizedei* [*Antonio Bonfini: Decades of Hungarian history*] (Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, 1995).

⁷⁵ See: Márta Papp, *Brutus J. Mihály és Báthory István magyar humanistái* [*The Hungarian humanists of J. Mihály Brutus and Stephen Báthory*] (Budapest, 1940).

⁷⁶ Ildikó Horn, 'Nyelvtanulás – nyelvtudás az Erdélyi Fejedelemségben' ['Language learning – language skills in the Principality of Transylvania'], *Történelmi Szemle*, 2009/1, pp. 45-58.

⁷⁷ The manuscript of Sivori's memorial is titled: *Memoriale delle cose occorse a me Franco Sivori del signor Benedetto dopo la mia partenza di Genova l'anno 1581 per andar in Vallachia* (1590). Péter Erdősi, 'Franco Sivori fortélyos barátságai. Olasz emlékirat egy erdélyi fogolyszabadításról' ['Franco Sivori's crafty friendships. An Italian memoir about the rescue of a prisoner in Transylvania] in: G. Etényi and Horn, *"Idővel paloták..." Magyar udvari kultúra a 16–17. században*, pp. 276-313.

Sigismund Báthory was fluent in Italian and Latin, and was particularly fond of Italian people, language and culture. At his court, he established an orchestra of Italian musicians, conducted by Giambattista Mosto – he composed madrigals in Gyulafehérvár which were printed in Venice in the 1595 volume *Madrigali a sei voci* and dedicated to Sigismund.⁷⁸ Another composer from Perugia, Girolamo Diruta dedicated his organ piece *Il Transilvano* to Sigismund in 1593. Sigismund employed an Italian painter, Nicolò Greco, as well as Italian architects such as Simone Genga from Urbino, Francesco di Tanchetta from Brescia and Ottavio Baldigara from Trieste.⁷⁹ Moreover, Sigismund had an Italian secretary, Giorgio Tomasi, who wrote a fictitious genealogy about the origins of the Báthory family, titled *La Batorea*. It was Sigismund's first published biography and depicted a heroic image of the ruler whose ancestors had always been fighting for the values of Catholicism.⁸⁰ Thus, the employment of Italians at his court served a dual purpose – entertainment and propaganda.

A number of similar patterns can be found in the remarks of contemporary historians on Sigismund, his personal characteristics and pursuits. The impact of Italian courtiers on the prince was generally criticised by local contemporary historians. The Calvinist Ambrus Somogyi (1564-1636) wrote in 1590:

... most people saw... that Sigismund was not born to rule and govern the state wisely, but for games, opulence, dance, hugging women, squandering his fatherly goods, useless expenditures; all kinds of useless Italians... They say that he spent so much money per year on musicians that, everyone believes, it would have been enough for the service pay of the guards for one year.⁸¹

⁷⁸ Emil Haraszti, 'Étienne Báthory et la musique in Transylvanie' ['Stephen Báthory and the music in Transylvania'] in: Joseph Filipowski (ed.), *Étienne Báthory, roi de Pologne, prince de Transylvanie* [Stephen Báthory, king of Poland, prince of Transylvania] (Krakow: Imprimerie de l'Université des Jagellons, 1935), pp. 82-104.

⁷⁹ Péter Erdősi, 'Az itáliai erényekben vétkesnek mondott fejedelem', pp. 29-32.

⁸⁰ Péter Erdősi, 'Giorgio Tomasi és műve' ['Giorgio Tomasi and his work'], *A Dunánál*, vol. 1, no. 4 (2002), pp. 47-63.

⁸¹ '... legtöbben meg voltak győződve... hogy Zsigmond nem uralkodásra és az állam bölcs kormányzására született, hanem játékra, fényűzésre, táncra, nők ölelésére, atyai javai eltékozlására, haszontalan költekezésre; mindenféle haszontalan olaszra... zenésre annyit költött évenként, hogy mindenki szerint elég lett volna a testőrség egyévi zsoldjára.' Ambrus Somogyi, 'Báthory Zsigmond első éve' ['The first years of Sigismund Báthory'] in: László Cs. Szabó and László Makkai (eds), *Erdély öröksége (Erdélyi emlékirók Erdélyről), vol. 2: Sárkányfogak. 1572-1602 [The heritage of Transylvania*

Somogyi highlighted that Sigismund's fascination for his own entertainment with his foreign courtiers provoked the indignation of the local political and military elite. The perception of this tension is revealed by later historical accounts as well. Viet Marchthaler (1564-1641), a Lutheran traveller from Ulm (Silesia, Holy Roman Empire), travelled to Transylvania in 1595 as a confidant of Sigismund's wife, the Catholic Habsburg princess Maria Christina of Austria (1574-1621).⁸² In his travel account, Marchthaler reported on the customs, religious and educational conditions of Royal Hungary and Transylvania. On Sigismund's personality, he noted:

In his youth, he distinguished himself on the battlefield, otherwise he is stubborn... quite educated, speaks Italian well... He likes to listen to music, organ and similar instruments... so the estates were very dissatisfied with him, and wanted to oppose him wherever they could.⁸³

Marchthaler's remark on the discontent of the estates in the context of music was in line with Somogyi's note. Interestingly, in 1595, this similar observation had a different political background - Sigismund Báthory's participation in the Fifteen Years' War (1591-1606). The mostly Protestant estates did not agree with his alliance with the papacy and the Holy Roman Empire. They blamed the courtiers, especially the foreign ones, for 'distracting' the prince from his responsibilities, the political realities, and the political pragmatism that Stephen Báthory had been consistently following. The humanist historian István Szamosközy (1570-1612) was particularly harsh when describing Sigismund. He was a Calvinist, and his religious affiliation can be regarded as another source of his negative opinion about Sigismund's lifestyle,

(*Transylvanian memoir writers about Transylvania*), vol. 2: *Dragon teeth. 1572-1602*] (Budapest: Akadémiai Könyvkiadó, 1993), pp. 62-78, 73, own translation from Hungarian.

⁸² 'megmérgezték tanaikkal az ifjú Báthory Zsigmondot' Cited in: Katalin Németh S., 'Utazások Magyarországon és Erdélyben' ['Travels in Hungary and Transylvania'], *Irodalomtörténeti közlemények*, vol. 106, no. 1-2 (2002), pp. 3-23, 20, own translation from Hungarian.

⁸³ 'Fiatal korában kitüntette magát a csatamezőn, amúgy önfejű... meglehetősen studiert, jól tud olaszul... Musicát, orgonát és más hasonlót szívesen hallgat, úgyhogy a rendek ezért módfelett elégedetlenek voltak, és ahol csak tudtak, szembe akartak vele fordulni.' Cited in Katalin Németh S., 'Erdélyi fejedelmi udvar Marchthaler útleírásában' ['Transylvanian princely court in the travel account of Marchthaler'] in: G. Etényi and Horn, *"Idővel paloták..." Magyar udvari kultúra a 16-17. században*, pp. 331-339, 335, own translation in Hungarian.

environment and pursuits. His main criticism was that Sigismund preferred his personal interests instead of the common good, and the behaviour of his Italian courtiers 'corrupted' his mind.⁸⁴ However, Szamosközy's expressively negative opinion of the Italians and their activities was formed after Sigismund's final abdication, and thus, made in the light of his unsuccessful military and political campaigns. Szamosközy did not live in Sigismund's court but justified the credibility of his statements by referring to people who had been present at the described events and reported on them to him.⁸⁵ Importantly, when Szamosközy wrote his account, the war had already ended with Sigismund's military failures, and this circumstance explains the historian's tone.

Among the numerous Italians who lived at Sigismund's court, a few of them became politically influential as well, particularly during the Fifteen Years' War. This political and military conflict took place in the territories of Transylvania, Wallachia and Moldavia between the Ottoman Empire and the Holy Roman Empire. The Habsburgs were supported by the papacy, the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the duchies of Mantua and Ferrara, and together they formed what at the time was presented as an anti-Ottoman Holy League. Sigismund joined the league led by Pope Clement VIII (1592-1605) and Rudolph II in January 1594.⁸⁶ Sigismund's Italian envoys, who were in contact with Rome, the Duchy of Mantua and the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, were effectively building a large-scale propaganda campaign around Sigismund, and their pamphlets influenced the theories of Italian political philosophers.

One example of these pamphlet writers was Girolamo Frachetta (1558-1620), an alumnus of Padua, political philosopher and Sigismund's diplomat. He wrote on the characteristics of the ideal prince and the methods of good governance. In 1594, he wrote a discourse in which he described the role of Transylvania in the Christian alliance. Frachetta emphasised Sigismund's military skills and religious virtues along with the geopolitical importance of

⁸⁴ Sándor Szilágyi (ed.), *Szamosközy István történeti maradványai* [*The historical remnants of István Szamosközy*], vol. 2 (Budapest: MTA, 1876), pp. 11-16.

⁸⁵ Borzsák and Sinkovics, *Szamosközy István: Erdély története (1598–1599, 1603)*, p. 65.

⁸⁶ Emperor Rudolph II reigned as King Rudolph I over Royal Hungary. Gábor Barta, 'Erdély a tizenöt éves háborúban' ['Transylvania in the Fifteen Years' War'] in: Béla Köpeczi et al. (eds), *Erdély rövid története* [*A short history of Transylvania*] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1993), pp. 259–265.

Transylvania in the war.⁸⁷ He elaborated on a centuries-old topos that had often been used for Hungary. From the late Middle Ages, the increasing Ottoman expansion towards East Central Europe granted a new image to the Kingdom of Hungary, and subsequently, to Transylvania – the concept ‘bulwark of Christianity’ meant that the people and rulers of this region had the task to defend Christendom from the Ottoman threat.⁸⁸ This topos was often used by papal crusade preachings in the fifteenth century.⁸⁹ Frachetta was responsible for representing Sigismund to the pope, the Italian princes and the king of Spain. In 1596, he requested military and financial help on behalf of Sigismund from Philip II of Spain (1556-1598).⁹⁰

In 1559, the Dominican friar Tommaso Campanella (1568-1639), mostly known for writing *La città del sole*, wrote a piece titled *Dichiarazione di Castelvetero* about an imagined universal kingdom, in which he dedicated an important role to the rulers of Transylvania and

⁸⁷ ‘Ma che egli sia per vincere (quando sia ben soccorso) et lo promettono la sua pietà e il suo valore, il sito dove ha da guarreggiare, la qualità della gente di cui é per servirsi, et molte altre ragioni.’ Cited in: Tamás Kruppa, ‘Az oszmánellenes szent háború eszméje és Erdély Girolamo Frachetta alkalmi műveinek tükrében’ [‘Ideology of the anti-Ottoman holy war and Transylvania in the mirror of Girolamo Frachetta’s occasional work’] in: Gábor Ujváry (ed.), *Lymbus – Magyarságtudományi Forrásközlemények [Lymbus – Reports on Sources of Hungarian Studies]* (Budapest: Lymbus, 2004), pp. 19-49, 21.

⁸⁸ ‘antemurale Christianitatis’ Tamás Kruppa, ‘Hungary and the Hungarians in the Italian Public Opinion’ in: Gábor Almási et al. (eds), *A Divided Hungary in Europe. Exchanges, Networks and Representations, 1541-1699, vol. 3 – The Making and Uses of the Image of Hungary and Transylvania* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014), pp. 89-106, 90-91.

⁸⁹ See the essays in: Norman Housley (ed.), *Crusading in the Fifteenth Century. Message and Impact* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004).

⁹⁰ ‘Al Transilvano deve Vostra Maestà dar aiuto, si per esser congiunto in nodo di matrimonio dell'Archiduchessa Maria sua nipote, si per il zelo et per il valore, che in lui risplendono, si per esser collegato con Cesare, et si per haver tirato adosso di se tutte l'armi del Turco, et lasciato libero il campo all' Imperatore di far la guerra offensiva (...) Mosse egli l'armi contro il Tiranno de' Turchi dell'istessa età di ventitre anni, che Alessandro Rè de' Macedoni passò in Asia, ma non già come quello, per cupidigia di gloria, ò per ambitione di dominare; ma per semplice zelo di essaltar la fede di Christo’. Frachetta’s speech to Philip II was titled *Orationa prima... al Re Cattolico per essortare Sua Maestà ad aiutare il Principe di Transilvania nella guerra contra il Turco...*, 2 February 1596, cited in: Márton Szentpéteri, ‘Il Transilvano. The image of Zsigmond Báthory in Campanella’s political thought’, *Bruniana & Campanelliana*, vol. 9, no. 1 (2003), pp. 217-225, 223.

Poland-Lithuania as defeaters of the Ottomans. Campanella emphasised that the most effective way to realise this triumph would be a Christian coalition built upon dynastic marriages within the House of Habsburg.⁹¹ Therefore, the author referred to 'Il Transilvano', namely Sigismund Báthory, as a key figure in this concept. The prince married Archduchess Maria Christina of Austria, Rudolph II's cousin, as part of his plan of creating an alliance with the Habsburgs.

Sigismund's cosmopolitan court, where several Italians were employed in various occupations, gradually dissolved during the vicissitudes of the Fifteen Years' War, and the prince's multiple abdications and returns between 1594 and 1602. Most of the Italians left Transylvania by the beginning of the seventeenth century, mainly because their presence and activities had been personally related to Sigismund.

Conclusion

Nicholas Terpstra has stated that individual exiles were rather drawn to areas with sufficient political, cultural and ecclesiastical resources like printing houses and universities. Such places were Basel, Cologne and Strasbourg.⁹² In this respect, Transylvania was an exception – it did not possess any universities or an extended printing infrastructure, and yet, mainly individuals or small groups of religious refugees moved here. Transylvania was attractive because of the openness of its court towards foreigners, which derived from its rulers' interests and skills in foreign languages and cultures, and the personal experience they had gained abroad. Later, the prestigious positions held by foreigners, particularly Giorgio Biandrata and his network, promised further opportunities for immigrants.

Compared to the reception of foreigners in early modern France, the Transylvanian situation was more convenient. Protestant refugees found a safe environment here since religious tolerance was essential to maintaining religious peace and social stability. Although the religious preferences and attitudes of the rulers were different, overt persecutions was not in their interest. Nonetheless, foreigners' perception was not homogeneous. As Dubost stated, Italian courtiers in France triggered xenophobia as their social position rose thanks to their

⁹¹ Tommaso Campanella, 'Dichiarazione di Castelvetero' ['Declaration of Castelvetero'] (Caulonia, 1599) in: Luigi Firpo, *I processi di Tommaso Campanella* [*The proceedings of Tommaso Campanella*] (Salerno: Salerno Editrice, 1998), pp. 104-105.

⁹² Nicholas Terpstra, *Religious Refugees in the Early Modern World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), p. 165.

political activities. This hostility was more focused in Transylvania where a few individuals seized exceptional prominence through their confidential relations with the rulers. Giorgio Biandrata introduced Antitrinitarianism at the court, and with his fellow preacher Ferenc Dávid, contributed to its acceptance as a freely worshipped confession under John Sigismund.

In early modern Europe, the perception of foreign groups was two-sided. On one hand, they were welcomed as importers of foreign technical and language skills, like Jewish immigrants in the underpopulated lands of magnates in Poland-Lithuania.⁹³ On the other hand, unfortunate events often triggered locals' suspicion against foreigners and saw them as disloyal and malicious representatives of external interests. The case of Italians in Transylvania fits this second pattern. Foreigners were mostly Italian individuals, who did not form one unified group but various smaller groups according to their professions - they were engaged in music, gastronomy, art, architecture, and diplomacy. Their presence was concentrated in the princely court, and their activities were seen as limited to the personal service and entertainment of the ruler. The Italians were considered 'useless' and harmful, especially because Sigismund's disastrous reign was easy to criticise. Nonetheless, Sigismund Báthory's reputation as an 'italophile' facilitated his relations with Italian courts and promoted his image as a 'Catholic hero' in the Fifteen Years' War. This propaganda was supported by the Jesuits whose activities will be analysed in Chapter 3.

⁹³ Benjamin J. Kaplan, *Divided by faith: religious conflict and the practice of toleration* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of the Harvard University Press, 2007), pp. 314-315.

Chapter 2: Transylvanian students at universities abroad and their career pathways

Tibor Klaniczay labelled the political elite in the Báthory era as ‘a government of humanists and philosophers’, referring to the connection between their attendance of humanist universities and later political careers in Transylvania.⁹⁴ In the late sixteenth century, locals who had spent considerable time abroad formed the majority of the political elite. Their foreign experience consisted of military office, court service, or diplomatic missions, and most importantly, university education. This chapter addresses the question: What patterns can be identified in the tradition of academic peregrination from Transylvania, and what professional opportunities did graduates have to use their ‘imported’ intellectual capital upon return?

Peregrinatio academica – the tradition and networks of educational peregrination

In the era of the Great Church Fathers in the fourth and fifth centuries, the term *peregrinatio* indicated travel or exile, and the word *peregrini* was used for foreigners and travelers. In the Middle Ages, the term *peregrination* was used to refer to pilgrimage.⁹⁵ In early modern Europe, peregrinations were also understood as journeys for educational purposes. There was a parallel between the rise in the number of universities and the increase of the local role and significance of each institution.⁹⁶ Peregrination had other incentives than the mere lack of accessible universities. After the birth of the Reformation, the practices and destinations of academic peregrination were divided along religious and political lines. For example, the number of

⁹⁴ Klaniczay, *Pallas*, p. 109.

⁹⁵ Sarah Stewart-Kroeker, *Pilgrimage as Moral and Aesthetic Formation in Augustine's Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 11-12.

⁹⁶ Ronald Edward Ohl, *The University of Padua, 1405-1509: An international community of students and professors* (Ph.D. dissertation: University of Pennsylvania, 1980), pp. 173-198. On universities in early modern Europe and on academic peregrination, see also: Paul F. Grendler, *The universities of the Italian Renaissance* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002); Hilde de Ridder-Symoens and Walter Rüegg (eds), *A History of the University in Europe, vol. 2: Universities in Early Modern Europe (1500-1800)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); and Valentina Lepri, *Knowledge Transfer and the Early Modern University: Statecraft and Philosophy at the Akademia Zamojska (1595-1627)* (Leiden: Brill, 2019), pp. 59-78.

Catholic students from England increased, while that of Protestants decreased at French universities.⁹⁷

In the course of confessionalisation in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, emerging Protestant denominations were going through the process of institutionalisation and theological consolidation. The exceptional denominational diversity of Transylvania led to a slow development of the schooling system in the area - which, in addition to the decay of the Catholic Church and its institutions, resulted in an organisational and infrastructural crisis. Therefore, the majority of the Transylvanian youth completed also their secondary education outside Transylvania, for instance at the Reformed colleges of Debrecen and Sárospatak in the territory of Royal Hungary, or at Viennese institutions.⁹⁸

Calvinist historian Péter Bod (1712-1769) noted down in his 1766 work on Calvinist leaders that in the 1580s, the number of 'scientists' in Transylvania was increasing as the children of the nobles went to Padua, Bologna, Paris, London, Geneva, and Heidelberg for education.⁹⁹ In the sixteenth century, there were no universities either in Hungary or in Transylvania, and young people who aimed for higher education had to embark on study tours to other countries. Numerous Hungarian 'university projects' had failed in the preceding centuries - in Pécs in 1367, in Óbuda in 1395, in Pozsony in 1467 – due to the lack of sufficient royal and political support. In the newly formed Transylvanian state, the question of higher education was intertwined with the religious affiliations and aspirations of the rulers.¹⁰⁰ As Chapter 1 has shown, John Sigismund unsuccessfully attempted to establish a university for theological and Bible studies in Gyulafehérvár. In the second half of the sixteenth century, the

⁹⁷ Dominique Julia and Jacques Revel, 'Les étudiants et leurs études dans la France moderne' [Students and their studies in modern France] in: Dominique Julia and Jacques Revel (eds), *Les universités européennes du XVI^e au XVIII^e siècle. Histoire sociale des populations étudiantes, Tome II : France* [European universities from the 16th to the 18th century. Social history of student populations, vol. II: France] (Paris: Éditions de l'École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 1989), pp. 25-486, 57.

⁹⁸ Horn, *A hatalom pillérei*, pp. 315-316.

⁹⁹ Péter Bod, *Smirnai Szent Polikárpus* [Saint Polycarp of Smyrna] (Nagyenyed: 1766), p. 42.

¹⁰⁰ László Szögi (ed.), *Régi magyar egyetemek emlékezete 1367-1777. Válogatott dokumentumok a magyarországi felsőoktatás történetéhez* [The memory of old Hungarian universities 1367-1777. Selected documents on the history of higher education in Hungary] (Budapest: ELTE Könyvtár és Levéltár, 1995), pp. 6-11.

practice of academic peregrination increased due to humanist trends. To understand the career opportunities of peregrines, it is worth looking first at the cultural context of the phenomenon.

Italian universities served as the major training centres and meeting points of Polish and Hungarian humanists. The University of Padua was located in the territory of the Republic of Venice, which was interested in the import of foreign currency. For this economic reason, Protestant students were also admitted and fairly sheltered from religious persecutions, which ensured a certain level of scholarly autonomy and denominational diversity at Padua. In addition, due to the presence of humanists from all over Europe, studying there was a direct way to enter the *Respublica litteraria*, the European network of humanist intellectuals maintained by correspondence.¹⁰¹ This made Padua a highly attractive study destination for foreigners, especially Protestants.

The community of Hungarian peregrines was widespread in many countries throughout generations. In Royal Hungary in the 1550s and 1560s, Miklós Oláh (1493-1568), archbishop of Esztergom, chancellor, humanist and historian supported the studies of several young people from his entourage, who went to Italian universities and formed a new generation of humanists after returning home. One of his most promising protégés was Ferenc Forgách, a Catholic member of a mostly Calvinist aristocratic family. In 1553-1555, Oláh financed Forgách's studies in medicine and philosophy at Padua.¹⁰² His fellow students were Lőrinc and Ferenc Révay, the sons of Ferenc Révay (1489-1553), one of the main supporters of the Reformation in Royal Hungary. They were taught, among others, by the Antitrinitarian law professor Matteo Gribaldi Moffa (1505-1564) whose ideas influenced Biandrata and his peers.¹⁰³ Students who had belonged to the circle of the same professor usually stayed in touch personally and professionally after they completed their studies. Another protégé of Oláh, András Dudith (1533-1589), who later became a leading figure of Hungarian Renaissance literature and

¹⁰¹ János Győri L., 'Szabó András: Respublica Litteraria' ['András Szabó: Respublica Litteraria'], *Irodalomtörténet*, vol. 82, no. 2 (2001), pp. 297-301, 297.

¹⁰² Antal Pirnát, 'Egy humanista kör kialakulása. Forgách Ferenc és barátai' ['The development of a humanist circle. Ferenc Forgách and his friends'] in: Ács, Antal Pirnát: *Kiadatlan tanulmányok*, pp. 103-113.

¹⁰³ Antal Pirnát, 'Dudith András és Celio Secondo Curione' ['András Dudith and Celio Secondo Curione'] in: Pál Ács (ed.), *Antal Pirnát: Kiadatlan tanulmányok* [Antal Pirnát: *Unpublished studies*] (Budapest: Reciti, 2018), pp. 89-100.

Erasmian humanism, bishop of Pécs until 1568, and counselor of Maximilian II, became friends with the Polish Renaissance poet Jan Kochanowski (1530-1584) also at Padua in the 1550s.¹⁰⁴

Transylvanian and Hungarian peregrines usually aimed to stay abroad as long as possible and to visit multiple universities in order to gain new knowledge, to collect books and to discover several cities before returning home.

Transylvanian students at foreign universities

In the sixteenth century, academic peregrination created an extensive network across Europe which later influenced the students' professional perspectives.¹⁰⁵

Studying abroad had considerable costs that only the few wealthiest young aristocrats were able to pay for themselves. In Royal Hungary, the career of Ferenc Forgách quickly rose thanks to enjoying Miklós Oláh's financial and political support. Forgách became Maximilian II's royal secretary, counselor and envoy, bishop of Várad, and finally vice-chancellor of Royal Hungary in 1560. By the mid-1560s, a general disappointment had developed among the Hungarian nobility with Maximilian II's political decisions. In October 1565, Maximilian appointed Zaccaria Delfino (1527-1584), the former papal nuncio in Vienna, as the head of the bishopric of Győr. As it is revealed in his memoir, Forgách shared the indignation of the aristocrats:

As he [Maximilian II] had not granted any goods to any Hungarians since the death of his father, they [the nobles] considered it an even more serious grievance that for the first time... he granted the bishopric of Győr to a foreigner...¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ In his Renaissance literary works, Dudith followed the principles of Erasmus of Rotterdam (1466-1536). Erasmus was particularly popular among religious nonconformists – for example, irenicists who promoted theological consensus in order to erase disagreements. Gábor Almási, *The Uses of Humanism: Johannes Sambucus (1531-1584), Andreas Dudith (1533-1589), and the Republic of Letters in East Central Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), pp. 39-48.

¹⁰⁵ Sándor Tonk, *Erdélyiek egyetemjárása a középkorban* [*The university attendance of Transylvanians in the Middle Ages*] (Bucharest: Kriterion, 1979), p. 5.

¹⁰⁶ 'Mivel pedig atyja halála óta egyetlen magyarnak sem juttatott javadalmat, annál súlyosabb sérelemnek érezték, hogy legelső alkalommal... idegen személyre ruházta, idegennek adományozta a győri püspökséget...' Published as: Majer, Fidél (ed.), *Ghymes Forgách Ferenc Magyar története, 1540-1572* [*The Hungarian history of Ferenc Forgách of Ghymes, 1540-1572*] (Budapest: MTA

Forgách also had personal reasons to leave the service of Maximilian II – he expected to be the one to receive the bishopric of Győr instead of the Italian cardinal, and by 1568, he had realised that Maximilian II would not make any efforts to change the status quo and to conquer Ottoman Hungary.¹⁰⁷ Instead of making an overt break with the Habsburg dynasty, Forgách traveled to Italy in the summer of 1567, this time with two of his clients, Berzeviczy and Kovacsóczy. They enrolled together at the Law School of the University of Padua in May 1568.¹⁰⁸ Although Forgách stayed in Padua for only a short time, Berzeviczy and Kovacsóczy remained there for several years, during which they belonged to the humanist group of the Flemish physician and philosopher Nicasiaus Ellebodus (1535-1577) and the Dutch librarian Hugo Blotius (1533-1608).¹⁰⁹

Márton Berzeviczy came from a Lutheran landed noble family. His ‘salience’ was a result of his education, and more importantly, the relations gained during his studies. He was a clerk in the court of Tamás Nádasdy (1498-1562), palatine, landlord and supporter of Renaissance artists in Royal Hungary. Nádasdy introduced him to chancellor Oláh, Forgách, and Ferdinand I. Thus, Berzeviczy became a courtier in Vienna, and accompanied the king during his travels in the Holy Roman Empire in 1559 and 1562. During his service, Berzeviczy attended the University of Wittenberg in 1599.¹¹⁰ Between 1564 and 1566, Berzeviczy visited Geneva, Paris, and London as well. His name appears in the correspondence between Swiss theologians Theodore Beza (1519-1605) and Heinrich Bullinger (1504-1575). In a letter written

Történelmi Bizottsága, 1866). Cited in: Gábor Almási, *Reneszánsz és humanizmus [Renaissance and humanism]* (Budapest: L'Harmattan Kiadó, 2017), p. 82, own translation from Hungarian.

¹⁰⁷ Ödön Szabolcs Barlay, ‘Egy humanista politikus pályakezdése - Berzeviczy Márton’ [‘The beginnings of a humanist politician - Márton Berzeviczy’] in: Béla Varjas (ed.), *Irodalom és ideológia a 16-17. században [Literature and ideology in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries]* (Budapest, Akadémiai Kiadó, 1987), pp. 135-150, 144.

¹⁰⁸ Veress, *Matricula et Acta Hungarorum...*, p. 54.

¹⁰⁹ See their correspondence on political and military affairs in Transylvania and Royal Hungary, published in: Ferdinánd Mencsik, ‘A Paduában tanuló Blotz Hugó levelezése erdélyi és magyarországi barátaival (1571-1574)’ [‘The correspondence of Hugo Blotius studying in Padua with his friends from Transylvania and Royal Hungary (1571-1574)’], *Erdélyi Múzeum*, vol. 6, no. 6 (1910), pp. 22-50.

¹¹⁰ Barlay, ‘Egy humanista politikus pályakezdése - Berzeviczy Márton’, p. 136.

in July 1564, Bullinger praised and recommended Berzeviczy to Beza.¹¹¹ In Paris, Berzeviczy published an *Oratio* to commemorate the death of Ferdinand I in 1564, and dedicated it to Forgách as the patron who had financed his studies abroad and the printing of this work.¹¹² During his stay in Italy, Berzeviczy got acquainted with several Protestant humanists, and became part of an intellectual community that he made use of during his later career.¹¹³ Forgách invited Berzeviczy from Vienna to Gyulafehérvár in 1572. Berzeviczy started off with two important diplomatic missions to Pope Gregory XIII (1572-1585) – he gave an oration to the pope as Stephen Báthory wanted good relations with Rome, and requested a dispensation for Forgách that would have allowed him to get married. The dispensation was obtained as shown in a letter from Forgách to Dudith on 16 November 1573, in which the chancellor complained that:

I have got a dispensation from the pope but here... there is no person right for me.¹¹⁴

¹¹¹ 'S. D. Cum hic nobilis vir, D. Martinus Berzeviczeus Pannonius aulicus Augusti Romanorum Regis Maximiliani, a me petierit literas, quibus ipsum commendarem tuae humanitati, non potui ei hoc officii negare, cum ex collatione amica videretur vir esse bonus, et literarum bonarum amantissimus. Ergo si studia eius et institutum eius juvare poteris, non videris male collocaturus hoc beneficium.' Heinrich Bullinger to Theodore Beza, 1 July 1564 in: Alain Dufour et al. (eds), *Correspondance de Théodore de Bèze* [*Correspondence of Théodore de Bèze*], vol. 5: 1564 (Paris: Librairie Droz, 1968), p. 91.

¹¹² Márton Berzeviczy, *Oratio funebris de invictissimo Ferdinando I.* [*Funeral oration of the invincible Ferdinand I*] (Paris, 1565), Accessed: 6 June 2020, https://books.google.hu/books?id=rmZDAAAACAAJ&pg=PP5&lpg=PP5&dq=berzeviczy+m%C3%A1rton+oratio&source=bl&ots=o1ykKaI3X7&sig=ACfU3U2RyZ8X3SXxCdbAs_IPFv5pSiOLtw&hl=hu&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwi6zfGCj-7pAhUWAXAIHVj8BBwQ6AEwEnoECAkQAQ#v=onepage&q=berzeviczy%20m%C3%A1rton%20oratio&f=false

¹¹³ Berzeviczy became friends with the French humanist Marc-Antoine Muret (1526-1585), the French diplomat Paul de Foix (1528-1584), the Neapolitan humanist Gian Vincenzo Pinelli (1535-1601), and the Venetian printer Paolo Manuzio (1512-1574). Veress, *Berzeviczy Márton (1538-1596)*, pp. 62-64.

¹¹⁴ '... pápától is dispensatióm vagyon; de nálunk... nincs én hozzám illendő ember.' Ferenc Forgách to András Dudith, on 16 November 1573, published in: Árpád Károlyi, 'Új adat Forgách Ferencz, a történetíró életéhez' ['New data on the life of historian Ferenc Forgách'], in: Sándor Szilágyi (ed.), *Századok* [*Centuries*] (Budapest: Magyar történelmi Társulat, 1880), pp. 755-757, 757, own translation from Hungarian.

Berzeviczy's mission was successful, since Gregory XII granted the Lutheran envoy a knightly title of the *Order of the Golden Militia*.¹¹⁵ This title was given to those who promoted the Catholic faith, so this way, the pope expressed his appreciation for Stephen Báthory's commitment to strengthen the Catholic Church in Transylvania. Moreover, Báthory appointed Berzeviczy as counselor at the chancellery in Gyulafehérvár in 1574. Berzeviczy also served as chancellor for Transylvanian affairs in Kraków between 1578 and 1586. In a 1583 diploma issued by Báthory, Berzeviczy was titled 'Magnificus', 'Liber Baro', 'Chancellor' and 'Captain of Stargard'.¹¹⁶ To strengthen Berzeviczy's position within the Polish-Lithuanian nobility where the Hungarian noble was an 'outsider', Báthory awarded him Polish noble titles.¹¹⁷

In the 1560s, Stephen Báthory urged John Sigismund to invite Forgách to Transylvania – the bishop finally arrived in Gyulafehérvár in the autumn of 1568. John Sigismund donated the town, the monastery and the castle of Kolozsmonostor with all of its income (approximately 6000 tallers per year) to Forgách in February 1569 and confirmed the grant in May 1570.¹¹⁸ After John Sigismund's death, Forgách served Stephen Báthory for four years as chancellor, and represented him at the coronation ceremony of Henri de Valois as king of Poland-Lithuania in February 1574.¹¹⁹ Forgách decided to leave Transylvania because of a health issue, but presumably, he wanted to settle in Italy, since he requested a significant amount of money from

¹¹⁵ Veress, *Berzeviczy Márton (1538-1596)*, pp. 73-74.

¹¹⁶ Egyed Berzeviczy, 'XVIII. Báthory István lengyel király diplomája 1583-ból, Berzeviczy Mártonra vonatkozó okmányok a Berzeviczy családi levéltárból Lomniczon 1550-1613' ['XVIII. Diploma of Stephen Báthory, king of Poland from 1583, Documents on Márton Berzeviczy from the archive of the Berzeviczy family in Lomnicz, 1550-1613'], *Történelmi Tár* (1899), pp. 34-77, 65-66, Accessed: 6 June 2020, http://real-j.mtak.hu/4107/1/MagyarTortenelmiTar_1899_47_3_22.pdf

¹¹⁷ Berzeviczy became baron and castellan of Osiek. See his letters sent from Osiek to his relatives between 1591 and 1594: Ibidem, pp. 65-70.

¹¹⁸ Records of 17 February 1569 and 22 May 1570 in: Jakó, *János Zsigmond királyi könyve 1569-1570*, p. 45. and 93.

¹¹⁹ As it has been pointed out, Forgách, Berzeviczy, Kovacsóczy and Dudith continued their correspondence with each other in the 1570s. See the letters of András Dudith concerning the pursuits of Forgách: Lecho Szczuki and Tiburtio Szepessy (eds), *Andreas Dudithius Epistulae, vol. II: 1568-1573* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó - Argumentum Kiadó, 1995), pp. 603-605, 609-610, 622-623.

Báthory.¹²⁰ Forgách's arrival in Padua was arranged by Kovacsóczy in July 1575.¹²¹ Even though a number of Hungarian nobles with humanist inclinations had stopped serving the Viennese court by the late 1560s, the members of this intellectual community did not break their relations even after the changes of their professional positions or political interests. They preserved their humanist interests during their political careers and maintained their correspondence. For instance, Dudith remained in contact with both Berzeviczy and Kovacsóczy even after he left the Catholic Church to get married and settled down in Poland-Lithuania. Interestingly, they preserved this relation even during the 1576 Polish-Lithuanian royal election, where Dudith served as Maximilian II's special envoy, while Berzeviczy represented Stephen Báthory along with Biandrata.¹²²

Farkas Kovacsóczy came from a minor noble background, and had even more modest financial resources than Berzeviczy when he became the secretary of Forgách. This 'homo novus' dedicated exceptionally great efforts to his education at Padua – between 1568 and 1575, he studied medicine and obtained a doctorate as well.¹²³ Meanwhile, he acted as the praeceptor (teacher) of Stephen Báthory's nephew, Stephen Báthory (1555-1605) during his studies at Padua.¹²⁴ Kovacsóczy also stepped onto a political pathway upon completing his studies in Italy. From 1576 to 1578, he worked as royal secretary at the chancellery for Transylvanian affairs in Krakow in cooperation with Berzeviczy. Between 1576 and 1578, Kovacsóczy served as the chancellor for Transylvanian affairs at Báthory's royal court in Kraków. In 1578, he became chancellor of Transylvania at the court of Gyulafehérvár. Kovacsóczy utilised his humanist erudition during his later prolific literary activities. In 1584, he summarised his political views in a treatise titled *De administratione Transylvaniae Dialogus*, according to which the ideal form of government would be a Venetian-style republic, led by a council of

¹²⁰ Forgách's exact incentives to leave the elite of Transylvania's political administration have not yet been explored in detail. See: Almási, *Reneszánsz és humanizmus*, pp. 106-107.

¹²¹ Veress, *Matricula et Acta...*, pp. 85-86.

¹²² Veress, *Matricula et Acta Hungarorum...*, pp. 42-43.

¹²³ Gábor Petneházi, 'Kovacsóczy Farkas kortörténeti feljegyzései (1563–1567)' ['The contemporary historical notes of Farkas Kovacsóczy (1563-1567)'], *Irodalomtörténeti közlemények*, vol. 118, no. 3 (2014), pp. 57-94, 60.

¹²⁴ Veress, *Matricula et Acta Hungarorum...*, pp. 82-83.

aristocrats and twelve chief counselors.¹²⁵ An interesting parallel can be drawn between Kovacsóczy's work and the political thought of the sixteenth-century Italian diaspora in Poland-Lithuania. The Italian Protestant reformers and their Polish noble patrons advocated the notion of creating a republic based on the Venetian form of government.¹²⁶ Arguably, foreign education contributed to the import of political ideas from abroad to Transylvania similarly to the influx of foreign thinkers to Poland-Lithuania in the same period.

The members of the Regent Council (Kovacsóczy, Kendy and Sombori) were supported by a group of nobles, which is referred to in scholarship as 'Kendy-Kovacsóczy party'.¹²⁷ Their political views were in line with the theory explained in Kovacsóczy's dialogue. They were striving to divert Sigismund Báthory from Catholicism and in the 1580s, they sought to regain influence in his court from the Jesuits.¹²⁸ Although the members of this political group did not have the same religious affiliation (for instance, Kovacsóczy was a Calvinist, while Kendy and Berzeviczy were Lutheran), they all promoted Protestantism and agreed on the 'harmful' impact of the Jesuits and the Roman Catholic Church on Sigismund and Transylvania. The publication of this book proves that close relations were maintained among Padua graduates and Italian intellectuals at the court of Gyulafehérvár – Kovacsóczy addressed his introduction to Pál Gyulai (1550-1592), another Padua alumnus with Antitrinitarian affiliation and teacher of Dudith's sons, while a recommendation of the book was written by the Antitrinitarian astronomer Squarcialupi. In the *Dialogus*, Kovacsóczy expressed that Transylvania's central power should be strengthened by creating a council where the issues of the multi-religious and

¹²⁵ Farkas Kovacsóczy, *De administratione Transylvaniae. Dialogus. Adiecta est ad Maximum et Victorem Poloniae Regem Gratulatio* (Kolozsvár: Typographica Gasparis Heltj, 1584), published as: Farkas Kovacsóczy, *Dialógus Erdély igazgatásáról [Dialogue about the administration of Transylvania]* in: György Bónis (tr.); Pál Ács et al. (eds), *Régi magyar irodalmi szöveggyűjtemény, vol. I: Humanizmus [Collection of old Hungarian texts, vol. I: Humanism]* (Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, 1998), pp. 650-687.

¹²⁶ Kostyło, *Commonwealth of all the faiths: Republican myth and the Italian diaspora in sixteenth-century Poland-Lithuania*, p. 198.

¹²⁷ This political group did not have an official name but I prefer using this term because of the leading role of Sándor Kendy and Farkas Kovacsóczy in their thinking and activities. The term is used in: Ildikó Horn, 'Az unitárius elit stratégiái (1575-1603)' ['The strategies of the Unitarian elite (1575-1603)'], *Keresztény Magvető*, 1999/1-2, pp. 28-34, 30.

¹²⁸ Kruppa, *Tradíció és propaganda keresztútján*, pp. 183-184.

multiethnic state could be discussed.¹²⁹ During his political career, Kovacsóczy sponsored the foreign studies of several Transylvanians. Importantly, Szamosközy studied at Heidelberg and Padua with his support. In 1593, Szamosközy published in Padua an archeological study on the remnants of the Roman province Dacia, and became the conservator of the archives in Gyulafehérvár, before his short career as court historian during the reign of István Bocskai (1605-1606).¹³⁰

A new and more large-scale educational peregrination took place in the 1590s, on the initiative of peregrines of former decades. The Transylvanian ruler and several aristocrats supported the study tours of talented but less wealthy young people. This system was one of the ways of building a ‘client network’ in which the funding lords acquired authority over the finances of the supported families.¹³¹ Establishing a ‘clientele’ and strong Antitrinitarian relations in addition to the traditional military service of Szeklers represented the career building strategy of Farkas Kornis, a Szekler landowner and officer. He bore the title *primor*, the highest rank among the Szeklers, and was influential among the Szeklers in Udvarhelyszék. He not only financed the studies of his own children but also supported other students as their patron.¹³² He sent his son, György Kornis, to the University of Heidelberg in 1587. György took part in Sigismund Báthory’s delegation to the 1587 Polish-Lithuanian royal election in Warsaw before enrolling at Heidelberg in the winter of 1589, where he remained until 1591.¹³³ The university records reveal that he studied together with several young Transylvanians such as István Szamosközy, Miklós Bogáthi and Sándor Sombori, the son of László Sombori, one of the members of the Regent Council.

¹²⁹ Béla Köpeczi, ‘A magyar politikai irodalom kezdeteihez. Kovacsóczy Farkas Dialógusáról’ [‘On the beginnings of the Hungarian political literature. On Farkas Kovacsóczy’s Dialogus’], *Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények*, vol. 74, no. 5-6 (1970), pp. 577-587, 578 and 584.

¹³⁰ István Szamosközy, *Analecta lapidum vetustorum et nonnullarum in Dacia antiquitatum* (Padua: Laurentium Pasquatum, 1593).

¹³¹ Miklós Vass, ‘Kornis György külföldi tanulása’ [‘György Kornis’s studies abroad’], *Keresztény Magvető*, vol. 47, no. 4 (1912), pp. 209-229, Accessed: 7 June 2020, https://epa.oszk.hu/02100/02190/00444/pdf/KM_1912_04_209.pdf

¹³² Judit Balogh, ‘A vargyasi Daniel család karrierjének kezdetei a 16–17. század fordulóján’ [‘The beginnings of the Daniel family from Vargyas at the turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries’], *Történelmi Szemle*, 2009/3, pp. 333-353, 344.

¹³³ Toepke, *Die Matrikel der Universität Heidelberg*, vol. 2: 1554-1662, p. 142.

In 1591, Farkas Kornis intended to send his son to France or England, but György opposed these ideas and opted for the University of Padua upon learning about the advantages of Italian language skills at Sigismund's court.¹³⁴ In 1593, György argued that the better one spoke Italian, the greater career they could expect in Transylvania.¹³⁵ György and Bogáthi enrolled at Padua on 21 October 1591.¹³⁶ The travel costs were covered by a loan from the treasury in Gyulafehérvár - in a letter written in August 1591, György mentioned that he had taken out three-hundred thalers, while Miklós Bogáthi had received one hundred gold pieces.¹³⁷ Thus, it can be argued that in addition to the previously highlighted benefits of studying at Padua (admission of Protestants, distinguished humanist scholars, and generous support from the ruler and some nobles of Transylvania), future career perspectives were also appealing. The members of the clientele were in personal contact with their sponsors, who were informed about the progress of the students' financial circumstances, studies, and extracurricular activities. György Kornis died suddenly in the course of 1593, but Miklós Bogáthi continued to send letters to his patron and the father of his friend, Farkas Kornis, throughout the following years.¹³⁸

From 1568, a group of young Antitrinitarians supported by John Sigismund, his chief counselor, Bekes, and his court preacher, Biandrata, started their studies at Padua – notably Pál Gyulai, who came from a non-noble family.¹³⁹ Upon completing his university studies in 1571, Gyulai served Bekes until 1577. During these years, Bekes and Stephen Báthory were in a feud

¹³⁴ Veress, *Matricula et Acta Hungarorum...*, p. 98.

¹³⁵ '... dixerant tantum esse usuin linguae Italicae insula Illmiprincipis Transsylvaniae, ut qui cam teneat, non modo laude n aliquam sed et gratiam creatur. Princeps ipse, domi, ruri, in urbe, in palatio, ad mensam, cum iis, qui vellent, solam linguam Italicain loquitur, E re nostra arbitrati sumus fore, si earn, quae honestatis, laudis, gratiae, aliquid adferret non negligeremus.' György Kornis to Farkas Kornis, 25 July 1593 in Padua in: Veress, *Matricula et Acta Hungarorum...*, pp. 257-261.

¹³⁶ Vilmos Fraknói, 'Adalékok a hazai és külföldi iskolázás történetéhez' ['Data on the history of schooling at home and abroad'] in: Kálmán Thaly and Sándor Szilágyi (eds), *Századok [Centuries]* (Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1875), pp. 667-677, 676.

¹³⁷ Vass, 'Kornis György...', p. 220 (n4).

¹³⁸ See a selection of letters from Miklós Bogáthi to Farkas Kornis in: Miklós Vass, 'Bogáthi Miklós külföldi tanulása' ['Miklós Bogáthi's studies abroad'], *Erdélyi Múzeum*, vol. 2, no. 5 (1907), pp. 321-327.

¹³⁹ Horn, *A hatalom pillérei*, p. 16.

for power over Transylvania. After Báthory defeated Bekes, Gyulai became the secretary of the former.¹⁴⁰ Kristóf Hagymási was the third most influential noble and landowner at the time of the Bekes-Báthory rivalry. The Greek theologian Jacobus Palaeologus (1520-1585), who resided in Transylvania between 1573 and 1575, dedicated his compilation of Antitrinitarian treatises to Hagymási in 1574.¹⁴¹ This shows that foreigners got involved in political matters not only when they moved to Transylvania for a considerable amount of time, like Biandrata and Squarcialupi did, but also if their stay was temporary as that of Palaeologus. The peregrine Gyulai and the refugee Palaeologus were engaged in politics on different sides, regardless of their common religious affiliation. It demonstrates that in the late sixteenth century, Antitrinitarians were not politically unified, and as in various parts of Europe, they can be considered individual members of the radical heterodoxy, rather than of a particular community.

The careers of returning students in Transylvania's political life

At sixteenth-century Italian courts, education and professional skills became as important aspects as ancestry and military experience in obtaining good administrative positions.¹⁴² A

¹⁴⁰ Pirnát, 'Egy humanista kör kialakulása. Forgách Ferenc és barátai', pp. 103-113.

¹⁴¹ Růžena Dostálová (ed.), *Jacobus Palaeologus: Catechesis Christiana dierum duodecim* (Warsaw: Polish Scientific Publishers – PWN, 1971).

¹⁴² On humanist culture and education in Italy, see: Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine (eds), *From Humanism to the Humanities: Education and the Liberal Arts in Fifteenth and Sixteenth-Century Europe* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986); Jonathan Davies, *Florence and its university during the early Renaissance* (Leiden: Brill, 1998); Paul F. Grendler, 'I tentativi dei gesuiti d'entrare nelle università italiane tra '500 e '600' ['The attempts of the Jesuits to enter Italian universities in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries'] in: Gian Paolo Brizzi and Roberto Greci (eds), *Gesuiti e università in Europa (secoli XVI-XVIII) [Jesuits and universities in Europe (16th-18th centuries)]* (Bologna: CLUEB, 2002), pp. 37-51; Gaines Post, 'The Papacy and the Students' in: William J. Courtenay (ed.), *The Papacy and the Rise of the Universities: Education and Society in the Middle Ages and Renaissance* (Leiden: Brill, 2017), pp. 208-236. On Renaissance courts: Walter Barberis, 'Uomini di corte nel '500' ['Courtiers in the sixteenth century'] in: Corrado Vivanti (ed.), *Storia d'Italia. Annali 4 [A history of Italy. Annals 4]* (Turin: Einaudi, 1981), pp. 857-894; Éva Vigh, 'Bevezetés. Udvar és udvari etika a XVI–XVII. századi Itáliában' ['Introduction. Court and court ethics in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in Italy'] in: Éva Vigh (ed.), *Az udvari élet művészete Itáliában [The art of court life in Italy]*

similar phenomenon took place in Transylvania, where the composition of the elite had gone through a fundamental change by the middle of the sixteenth century. A secular, humanist-educated intellectual stratum was emerging, which gradually replaced the role of the formerly prevailing clergy.¹⁴³

The chancellery was the chief governmental institution of the state. It dealt with financial, military and foreign affairs. It was headed by the chancellor, who was usually a member of the princely council that had an advisory role for the ruler.¹⁴⁴ As highlighted in the previous subchapter, a significant number of Transylvanian peregrines belonged to lower social strata, namely non-aristocratic groups who needed benefactors to pay for the costs of their travels and education. Since there was no university in Transylvania, any educated person was foreign-educated. However, foreign education implied several advantages in addition to the curriculum, and it is interesting to see to how it contributed to the progress of careers at the home court. In the examined period, every chancellor benefited from the erudition and relations acquired during their studies at humanist universities abroad. It is noteworthy that while these chancellors came from various social strata and had different religious affiliations, the completion of higher-level studies was a common pattern in their careers.

Office held:	Name:	Origins:	Religion:	Studies:
1556-1571	Mihály Csáky	landed nobility	Lutheran (converted from Roman Catholicism)	Krakow University
1571-1575	Ferenc Forgách	aristocracy	Roman Catholic	University of Padua

(Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, 2004), pp. 30–31; Alison Cole, *Italian Renaissance courts: art, pleasure and power* (London: Laurence King Publishing, 2016), pp. 200-230.

¹⁴³ Zsigmond Jakó, *Írás, könyv, értelmiség: Tanulmányok Erdély történelméhez* [Writing, book, intellectuals: Studies on the history of Transylvania] (Bucharest: Kriterion Könyvkiadó, 1976), pp. 10-24.

¹⁴⁴ Trócsányi, *Erdély központi kormányzata 1540-1690*, pp. 181-184.

1576-1578	Imre Sulyok	landed nobility	Roman Catholic	University of Vienna, University of Wittenberg
1578-1594	Farkas Kovacsóczy	minor nobility	Calvinist (converted from Roman Catholicism)	University of Padua
1594-1598	István Jósika	landed nobility	Roman Catholic (converted from Calvinism)	University of Padua
1597-1601	Demeter Naprágyi	landed nobility	Roman Catholic	University of Vienna

Mihály Csáky (1492-1572) studied at the University of Krakow with the aid of his relative, the Catholic bishop of Transylvania, János Gosztonyi (d. 1527) who had peregrinated himself to the universities of Vienna, Bologna and Paris. Csáky was a secretary of Queen consort Isabella in the 1540s and 1550s, and taught history to the young John Sigismund. In 1556, Csáky started to reform the institution of the chancellery to adjust it for the conditions of a semi-independent state, when Isabella and his son returned from their emigration in Poland-Lithuania.¹⁴⁵ Csáky set up the *cancellaria maior* for interior and foreign affairs, and the *cancellaria minor* that dealt with matters of jurisdiction. In the 1560s, Sándor Kendy started his

¹⁴⁵ Isabella and John Sigismund were forced to leave Transylvania when Ferdinand I seized power with the help of Isabella's former diplomat and counselor, György Fráter (1482-1551). They were invited to return to Transylvania by the estates in 1556. See: Ildikó Horn, *Hit és hatalom: Az erdélyi unitárius nemesség 16. századi története* [Faith and power: The history of the Transylvanian Unitarian nobility in the sixteenth century] (Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, 2009), pp. 161-170. o.

political career at the chancellery with Csáky's support.¹⁴⁶ Gromo depicted Mihály Csáky as the 'head of the Lutheran sect' and wrote that he was very friendly with Italians, especially with Biandrata.¹⁴⁷

Imre Sulyok (d. 1578) enrolled at the University of Vienna, but left soon to attend the University of Wittenberg in 1562-1563.¹⁴⁸ His attendance as a Catholic at Wittenberg, a Lutheran university, demonstrates that, in certain cases, a student's own religious affiliation was a secondary aspect in the practice of peregrination. In the 1560s, Transylvania was predominantly Protestant – education at a Protestant university could be seen as an advantage in career building. Sulyok started as clerk for Christopher Báthory, then became protonotary at the *cancellaria maior* in 1572, and between 1574 and 1576, he served as Stephen Báthory's diplomatic representative in Vienna and Poland-Lithuania.¹⁴⁹ Sulyok seized the position of chancellor in 1576, after Forgách moved from Gyulafehérvár for Padua. Along with László Sombori, Sulyok took part in Báthory's book purchases.¹⁵⁰ Additionally, Sulyok played a key role in the reorganisation of the archives of Gyulafehérvár, Várad, and Kolozsmonostor.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁶ Zsigmond Jakó, *Társadalom, egyház, művelődés: Tanulmányok Erdély történelméhez* [Society, Church, culture: Studies on the history of Transylvania] (Budapest: Magyar Egyháztörténeti Enciklopédia Munkaközösség, 1997), pp. 91-96.

¹⁴⁷ 'Compendium', p. 48 and 57.

¹⁴⁸ Miklós Szabó and Sándor Tonk, *Erdélyiek egyetemjárása a korai újkorban 1521-1700* [The university attendance of Transylvanians in the early modern period 1521-1700] (Szeged: József Attila Tudományegyetem, 1992), p. 48.

¹⁴⁹ Zsolt Bogdándi, 'Az erdélyi ítélőmesterek társadalmi helyzetéről' ['On the social status of Transylvanian protonotaries'] in: Attila Bárány, Ádám Novák and Attila Györkös (eds), *Műveltség és társadalmi szerepek: arisztokraták Magyarországon és Európában* [Learning, Intellect and Social Roles: Aristocrats in Hungary and Europe] (Debrecen: University of Debrecen, Institute of History, Speculum Historiae Debreceniense, vol. 18, 2014), pp. 281-292.

¹⁵⁰ See Stephen Báthory's letters to Sulyok and Sombori: Endre Veress (ed.), *Báthory István erdélyi fejedelem és lengyel király levelezése* [The correspondence of Stephen Báthory, prince of Transylvania and king of Poland], vol. I: 1556-1575 (Cluj: Gróf Teleki Pál Tudományos Intézet, 1944), p. 296.

¹⁵¹ Klára Jakó, 'Lekcsei Sulyok Imre kancelláról' ['On the chancellor Imre Sulyok of Lekcse'] in: Sándor Pál-Antal et al. (eds), *Emlékkönyv Kiss András nyolcvanadik születésnapjára* [Album for András Kiss's 80th birthday] (Cluj: Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület, 2003), pp. 191-207, 196-197.

These activities prove that Sulyok's erudition acquired during foreign studies and travels was favourable for a political career in Transylvania.

Peregrines became dominant in political life during the reign of Stephen Báthory. All three of his chancellors can be regarded as 'outsiders' - Forgách came from Royal Hungary and the Habsburg court, while the families of Sulyok and Kovacsóczy were not part of the Transylvanian aristocracy and traditional political elite. Despite being a devoted Catholic monarch, Báthory did not make religious affiliation the chief criterion of advancement in his royal and princely courts. His Transylvanian chancellor, Kovacsóczy and his chancellor for Transylvanian affairs in Poland-Lithuania, Berzeviczy as well as the vice-chancellor in Krakow, Gyulai, were all Protestant.

The social diversity of Transylvania's political elite in the late sixteenth century provoked continuous conflicts between the 'traditional elite' and those who rose to high positions as a consequence of their erudition. At a diet assembly in June 1584 in Gyulafehérvár, Ferenc Geszthy (1545-1595), the Calvinist captain of the castle of Déva, attacked the 'philosopher counselors'. The less educated counselor declared that scholars were unable to govern, just like the ancient philosophers Plato and Cicero. Geszthy accused the members of the Regent Council of being too theoretical and less practical in political questions.¹⁵² In 1585, Kendy, Kovacsóczy and Sombori were replaced by one single governor, János Ghiczy.

István Jósika (d. 1598) rose to the highest political position from his landed nobility background thanks to his education, diplomatic experience and marriage. After his years in Padua and Rome, Jósika served as Sigismund Báthory's envoy at the imperial court in Prague and in the Duchy of Florence in order to unsuccessfully arrange the prince's marriage with a Medici princess. György Kornis, who was also member of the delegation, complained about Jósika's attitude:

István Jósika sent us a message that we would do him a favour if we acted as his henchmen, called him 'Illustrissimus dominus' everywhere, and thus respected him... as servants respect their gracious lords.¹⁵³

¹⁵² József Jankovics, Tamás Kruppa, Géza Pálffy (eds) and András Bodor (tr.), *Bethlen Farkas: Erdély története [Farkas Bethlen: A history of Transylvania]*, vol. III: 1571-1594 (Budapest: Enciklopédia Kiadó, 2000), p. 303.

¹⁵³ 'Izente vala Jósika István uram, hogy őneki kedves dolgot cselekednénk, ha vele elmennénk és az uton az inasok tisztit subealnok, mindenitt illustrissimus dominusnak hinuk, úgy megtisztelnik... mint

The Szekler Farkas Kornis's son, György Kornis, who was a student in Padua, concluded that courtiers who had been raised by the ruler were to face a downfall. This episode reveals that tension and conflicts occurred among peregrines. Kornis considered Jósika a 'newcomer' whose fortune depended on the goodwill of the ruler, whereas Jósika married Borbála Füzy, widow of Pál Gyulai, and converted to Catholicism – evidently to please Sigismund Báthory, before serving as chancellor between 1594 and 1598.¹⁵⁴

Finally, Demeter Naprágyi (1556-1619) completed his studies at the University of Vienna on the expenses of Miklós Telegdi (1535-1586), bishop of Pécs. Naprágyi became Catholic bishop of Transylvania in 1596, and served as chancellor between 1568 and 1600. Moreover, Sigismund sent him to Rudolph II to negotiate an agreement on the prince's return to the Transylvanian throne.¹⁵⁵ In his memoir, Naprágyi listed a number of suggestions for the reorganisation of Transylvanian religious life, with the goal of abolishing the religious toleration of Protestant denominations (except Lutherans) which had been acknowledged by the 1568 *Edict of Torda*.¹⁵⁶ In the winter of 1601, Naprágyi was sent into exile by a diet at Kolozsvár, for 'bothering those in the received religions, mainly the ones in Kolozsvár', which was a reference to the Antitrinitarian community.¹⁵⁷ Naprágyi's antipathy towards the estates, and the Protestants in general, can be explained by his service as Catholic bishop, and his strong dedication to Sigismund's pro-Habsburg diplomacy.

A specific group of peregrines were the students of the Antitrinitarian college in Kolozsvár who went to study at Padua with the support of John Sigismund and his chief

szolga kegyelmes urát szokta.' György Kornis to Farkas Kornis, on 13 March 1592 in: Veress, *Matricula et Acta Hungarorum...*, pp. 243-244, own translation from Hungarian.

¹⁵⁴ Erdősi, 'Az itáliai erényekben vétkesnek mondott erdélyi fejedelem', pp. 25-27.

¹⁵⁵ In the course of the Fifteen Years' War, Sigismund Báthory abdicated four times due to his conflict with the estates and unsteady military results – in July 1594, in March 1598, in March 1599, and finally in June 1602.

¹⁵⁶ 'Demetrii Napragy electi episcopi Transsilvaniensis de Transsilvanicis rebus ad sacratissimam caesaream regiamque maiestatem memoriale' in: Sándor Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 5: 1601-1607 (Budapest: MTA Történelmi Bizottsága, 1879), pp. 162-175.

¹⁵⁷ 'az recepta religiokon valókat főképen az kolosváriakat háborgatta' Szilágyi, Sándor (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek [Memorabilia of the Transylvanian Diet]*, vol. 4: 1597-1601 (Budapest: MTA, 1878), p. 587, own translation from Hungarian.

counselor Gáspár Bekes, and with the encouragement of Giorgio Biandrata.¹⁵⁸ As shown before, Padua possessed a reputation for free thought and tolerance of Protestants, including radicals such as the Antitrinitarians. György Enyedi's (1555-1597) Paduan studies in 1571 were funded by the Town Council of Kolozsvár. He became leader of the Antitrinitarian community in 1592. In a sermon in July 1594, Enyedi talked about the correlation between Catholic affiliation and political advancement during Sigismund Báthory's reign:

There are many of us who never saw any friars or masses... and other idolatries against God in our childhood. However... our sons learn every day... that afterwards [they have become Catholic] they receive a lot of benefits, offices and titles...¹⁵⁹

Conversions to Catholicism gradually increased under Sigismund, who aimed to form a new, younger and predominantly Catholic elite. Nonetheless, already under Stephen Báthory, some Antitrinitarian nobles let their children attend Jesuit colleges and convert to Catholicism, although they themselves did not change confession.¹⁶⁰ Due to the advantages outlined by Enyedi, more and more nobles converted to Catholicism in the early 1590s. A good example is Miklós Bogáthy, member of the formerly introduced Kornis clientele, who changed his denomination during his studies in Padua and Rome, which were financed by Kovacsóczy and Sigismund Báthory. Later, Bogáthy became a member of the princely council.

Conclusion

Academic peregrination was a European phenomenon so it is worth considering its social role in a broader perspective. Ad Tervoort has highlighted that the education of Dutch students at Italian universities contributed to a career mostly when it was completed with a degree, since

¹⁵⁸ Miklós Szabó, 'Az erdélyi unitáriusok külföldi egyetemjárása 1848-ig' ['Transylvanian Unitarians at foreign universities until 1848'], *Keresztény Magvető*, vol. 97, no. 2 (1991), pp. 85-104, 89.

¹⁵⁹ 'Sokan vagyunk, kik gyermekkorunkban soha sem barátot, sem misét nem láttunk vala... és egyéb efféle Isten ellen való bálványozást. De... naponként fiaink is tanulják... hogy sok hasznat és tisztességet, uraságot kaphassanak utána.' Cited in: János Káldos, 'Enyedi György prédikációja 1594 nyarán' ['György Enyedi's preaching in the summer of 1594'], *Keresztény Magvető*, vol. 114, no. 4 (2008), pp. 477-482, 481, own translation from Hungarian.

¹⁶⁰ 'Engedje Felséged, hogy mi már a mi módunk szerint éljünk, ám ha tetszik, fiainkat felajánljuk, s mi meg leszünk elégedve.' Cited in: Horn, 'Az unitárius elit stratégiái (1575-1603)', p. 29.

expertise was highly appreciated in the formation of administration in the United Provinces. Otherwise, career perspectives were determined by one's social roots.¹⁶¹

The Transylvanian case study does not entirely fit this pattern. It differs as the majority of students spent only a few years abroad, and only a handful of them actually graduated. Consequently, the most important ties between Transylvanians' education and careers were the new political ideas, diverse cultural experiences, and social relations acquired during the 'Grand Tour'. This chapter has analysed networks of people with access to important political and ecclesiastical positions, and thus, peregrination was an advantageous entry point for careers in government and administration. Forgách contributed to the establishment of a 'humanist-style' political elite, which was further developed by Kovacsóczy, who supported the foreign studies of several Transylvanians during his years as chancellor. These career pathways have shown that peregrines were considered well-trained enough to take up positions at the chancellery or in the princely council.

There are a few parallels between the role of expertise in Dutch and Transylvanian peregrination. This chapter has shown that Báthory's political apparatus was selected on the basis of expertise, loyalty and pragmatism. The elite that was influential during his reign mainly consisted of humanists who were personally related to a number of intellectual and political actors across Europe. From 1570 to 1583, this contributed to the effective operation of his government. Between 1583 and 1585, the members of the Regent Council were even accused of being 'ineffective' due to their humanist interests by less educated counselors. The government and administration of the Báthorys were dominated by intellectuals, many of whom produced significant literary and philosophical works.

The reputation of Sigismund Báthory's 'Italian' court motivated students to prefer Italian universities to those in other countries. This pattern also agrees with Tervoort's statement that despite the foundation of universities in Cologne (1388) and Louvain (1425), Dutch students' attendance at Italian universities was still increasing. The University of Padua was popular among Protestant Transylvanians, many of whom, however, decided to convert to Catholicism to improve their career prospects at Sigismund's court. This way, this chapter has demonstrated that education and religious conversion were the main cornerstones of the Transylvanian peregrines' political strategies.

¹⁶¹ Ad Tervoort, *The iter Italicum and the Northern Netherlands: Dutch students at Italian Universities and Their Role in the Netherlands Society (1426-1575)* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), pp. 19-23 and 372-380.

Chapter 3: The sixteenth-century mission of the Society of Jesus in Transylvania

By the 1570s, the practice of Catholicism in Transylvania had been restrained to the domains of a few Catholic nobles and some parts of territories occupied by Szeklers. When Stephen Báthory came to power in 1571, one of his main enterprises was to try to stop the decline of Catholicism. Due to the lack of a sufficient amount of priests and facilities, Báthory recognised the need to invite an institution that had been dedicating its efforts to Catholic revival for three decades - the Society of Jesus.

In 1540, Pope Paul III (1534-1549) approved the constitution of a new religious order, established by a Basque-Spanish noble, Íñigo López de Loyola (1491-1556).¹⁶² In his *Formula*, Ignatius determined that the members of the Society of Jesus aimed to propagate the Catholic faith through 'the education of children and unlettered persons'.¹⁶³

Stephen Báthory needed a well-trained clergy with papal support in order to launch his pro-Catholic enterprise. The uncertain perspectives of a Catholic mission in a predominantly Protestant state, and Báthory's rivalry with Maximilian II delayed the Transylvanian settlement.¹⁶⁴ Finally, the first Jesuits from the Polish-Lithuanian province arrived in the autumn of 1579 in Kolozsmonostor, a village close to Kolozsvár. This chapter discusses the question: What impact did Jesuit educational institutions have on the Transylvanian political elite, and to what extent were the members of the Society of Jesus involved in political affairs at the Transylvanian court?

The Jesuit influence on the Transylvanian political elite under the Báthorys

The *Missio Transylvanica*, executed by the Society of Jesus, was the Counter-Reformation project of the Catholic Church in the principality. The members of the order engaged in different activities - they preached, celebrated mass, visited the sick, introduced Catholic tenets, and

¹⁶² John W. O'Malley, *The first Jesuits* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), pp. 23-25.

¹⁶³ Cited in English in: Pasquale Puca, 'St. Ignatius of Loyola and the Development of the Society of Jesus', *L'Osservatore Romano. Weekly Edition in English* (2008), p. 12.

¹⁶⁴ Antal Molnár, *Lehetetlen küldetés? Jezsuiták Erdélyben és Felső-Magyarországon a 16-17. században* [Impossible mission? Jesuits in Transylvania and Upper-Hungary in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries] (Budapest: L'Harmattan Kiadó, 2009), pp. 24-26.

conferred the sacraments. However, their most influential institutions were the colleges, where a higher level of education took place.

Stephen Báthory explained to the estates that the Jesuits settled in Transylvania in order to teach the young people, so that they would become more suitable for conducting ecclesiastical and secular affairs. The estates did not hesitate to advise the Jesuits not to ‘go beyond teaching’.¹⁶⁵ The founding document for the Jesuit establishment in Transylvania was written by Márton Berzeviczy, and signed by Báthory in Vilnius on 12 May 1581. Berzeviczy was present in October that year when the fathers officially received the lands that had been granted them in the document.¹⁶⁶ They opened their first school in Kolozsvár, in the renovated building of the former Franciscan monastery. This institution was a type of academic secondary school that offered advanced level studies, and courses in theology and philosophy. It aimed to develop into a university, according to the founding letter.¹⁶⁷ It is important to emphasise that this college served the purpose of Catholic ‘resurrection’, to which its educational efforts were subordinated.

The aims of the Transylvanian mission and college were drafted by the Jesuit priest Antonio Possevino (1533-1622) in 1584. Possevino was a humanist, polemicist and papal diplomat, sent on a diplomatic mission by Gregory XIII to broker a peace in the last phase of the Livonian War (1558-1583). It was when he was involved in the negotiations between Stephen Báthory and Rudolph II about the possession of the territory of Szatmár that he travelled across Transylvania.¹⁶⁸ Possevino wrote accounts about the history, geography,

¹⁶⁵ Resolutions of the diet at Torda, 21-24 October 1579 in: Sándor Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek [Memorabilia of the Transylvanian Diet]*, vol. 3: 1576-1596 (Budapest: MTA, 1877), p. 143. /Henceforth cited as: Szilágyi, *EOE* 3./

¹⁶⁶ Endre Veress, ‘A kolozsvári Báthory-egyetem története lerombolásáig, 1603-ig’ [‘The history of the Báthory university in Kolozsvár until its demolition in 1603’], *Erdélyi Múzeum*, vol. 23 (1906), pp. 169-193, p. 180.

¹⁶⁷ On the specific organisation and curriculum of the Jesuit college in Kolozsvár, see: Antal Molnár, ‘Egyetem volt-e a „Kolozsvári Báthory-egyetem”?’ [‘Was the “Báthory university in Kolozsvár” a university?’] in: Molnár, *Lehetetlen küldetés?*, pp. 29-48. Molnár argued that the college lacked a papal confirmation as well as the legal and structural framework that would have made it a university of full status.

¹⁶⁸ John Donnelly, ‘Antonio Possevino, S. J., as papal mediator between Emperor Rudolf II and King Stephan Báthory’, *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu*, vol. 69 (2000), pp. 3-56, 12-25.

society and religious life of the area upon Báthory's request.¹⁶⁹ The goal was to inform the Holy See about the conditions in Transylvania and Royal Hungary 'to really be able to do some great service to God'.¹⁷⁰ Possevino reported on the exact measures that Báthory took to improve relations with the papacy and to support the Catholic religion in Transylvania – he asked for Jesuits from Rome and expressed his intention to establish Jesuit colleges in the country.¹⁷¹ The list of Báthory's deeds in support of Catholicism and the Italian language of the work both served propaganda purposes. Possevino believed that his account on Transylvania would be more accessible and useful for European rulers in Italian than in Latin.¹⁷² Possevino outlined the main steps for the Jesuits to take in order to enhance the efficiency of the mission – learning the Hungarian language to teach people as there were 'five hundred families subject to the college' in the countryside, establishing a printing house for Catholic writings, translating the Bible into Hungarian, and extending their mission to Moldavia and Wallachia via the 'thoroughly trained youth'. Possevino's final instruction highlighted the central role of Sigismund Báthory in the Jesuit mission and the idea that a devoted Catholic ruler was of key importance for the interests of the papacy.

As for so many blessed enterprises, we should take the greatest care of... the education of the young and innocent prince of Transylvania...¹⁷³

¹⁶⁹ Possevino's correspondence reveals that in international political and ecclesiastical circles, his account was much awaited. Both the Superior General of the Society of Jesus and Pope Gregory XIII read the manuscript and recommended it for publication. However, the manuscript remained in the Jesuit archives for more than 300 years and was published only in 1913.

¹⁷⁰ Antonio Possevino to Cardinal Tolomeo Galli (papal secretary of state between 1572 and 1585), 12 February 1584 in: Endre Veress (ed.), *Antonio Possevino: Transilvania (1584)* (Budapest: Stephaneum, 1913), pp. 204-206.

¹⁷¹ Ibidem, pp. 113-115.

¹⁷² 'Vero è ch'io fo questi libri in italiano, sì perché spero che ad alcuni principi potranno essere più utili, sì perché più facilmente gli farò poi (prima che ripassi per costà) in latino, se piacerà a Dio.', Possevino to Cardinal Alberto Bolognetti (papal nuncio in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth between 1581 and 1585), 20 October 1583 in: Ibidem, p. 203.

¹⁷³ '... sì come per tante benedette imprese principalissima cura... doverà haversi dell'educatione del principe di Transilvania, il quale in quella tenera età, et innocenza...' Ibidem, pp. 196-200, own translation from Italian.

He also suggested that influential ‘heretics’ from his environment should be removed and replaced by Catholics.¹⁷⁴ A few pages of the *Transilvania* were dedicated to the education of the noble youth, as Possevino considered their level of literacy insufficient. He suggested the foundation of a military academy to offer theoretical knowledge (history, politics, geography), military training, and Catholic religious education.¹⁷⁵ Possevino’s vision of a ‘Catholic military class’ was never realised. Nevertheless, his role in the progress of Jesuit education in Transylvania was of key importance.

The Jesuit college in Kolozsvár was a denominational institution - education served the purpose of spreading and strengthening Catholicism.¹⁷⁶ Nonetheless, attendance was not subject to religious affiliation - Protestants were admitted in the hope of their later conversion to Catholicism. The quality of teaching attracted a number of non-Catholics – sixteen out of eighty students were the sons and grandsons of Lutherans and Orthodox Christian priests.¹⁷⁷ In the first two years of the mission, according to the Jesuit reports, seven hundred people converted to Roman Catholicism.¹⁷⁸ In March 1583, members of the princely council sent a letter to Gregory XIII in which they expressed their appreciation for the Jesuit education and asked for further support ‘in the declining condition of this important fortress of Christianity, during the reign of the underage prince’.¹⁷⁹ The Jesuits disseminated their debates and documents, and performed drama plays for the noble audience.¹⁸⁰ In addition to written works,

¹⁷⁴ Ibidem, p. 177.

¹⁷⁵ Ibidem, pp. 184-185.

¹⁷⁶ The majority of students came from the Hungarian and the Polish nobility.

¹⁷⁷ Endre Veress (ed.), *Fontes Rerum Transylvanicarum: 2. Antonio Possevino della Compagnia di Giesu: Transilvania (1584)* [*Transylvanian Historical Sources, vol. 2: Antonio Possevino della Compagnia di Giesu*] (Budapest: Stephaneum, 1913), p. 89.

¹⁷⁸ Antal Meszlényi, *A magyar jezsuiták a XVI. században* [*Hungarian Jesuits in the sixteenth century*] (Budapest: Szent István-Társulat, 1931), p. 137.

¹⁷⁹ ‘Szentséged örök és halhatatlan nevet biztosít magának nemzetünknel, mely a kereszténység ezen fontos véghelyének hanyatló állapotában, kiskorú fejedelem uralkodása alatt, Szentséged további támogatását esdve kéri.’ Cited in: Vilmos Fraknói, *Egy jezsuita-diplomata hazánkban* [*A Jesuit diplomat in our country*] (Budapest: Stephaneum, 1902), p. 20, own translation from Hungarian.

¹⁸⁰ See the historical work of the Lutheran historian David Hermann (1625-1682): *Annales Rerum Ecclesiasticarum in Transsilvania*. Károly Veszely (ed.), *Erdélyi Egyháztörténelmi Adatok* [*Church*

public theological disputations were initiated and organised by the Jesuits with Calvinist, Lutheran and Antitrinitarian pastors, which aimed to ‘defeat’ Protestant views. Similarly, drama plays were meant to convince the audience of the ‘validity’ of Catholic dogmas. Jesuits were confident in such polemics since they had received a thorough humanist preparation as part of their training - especially István Szántó (Arator) (1540-1602), the main organiser of the *Missio Transylvanica* in the 1570s, who was zealously informing his superiors in Rome about Transylvanian internal political affairs.¹⁸¹ In 1584, the personnel contained eleven consecrated Hungarian and Italian priests as well as twenty-seven novices, teachers and household staff, mostly from Poland-Lithuania and the Holy Roman Empire.¹⁸² By the spring of 1581, the Jesuit mission already possessed a monastery in Gyulafehérvár in addition to their college in Kolozsvár. The rector of the Jesuit college in Kolozsvár was the Polish Jesuit Jakub Wujek (1541-1597), who also taught Sigismund Báthory as a child.¹⁸³

The Jesuit success in education triggered the displeasure of the estates – they accepted to elect the nine-year-old Sigismund as ‘prince’ after the death of his father in 1581 only on the

Historical Data of Transylvania], vol. 1 (Kolozsvár: Római Kath. Lyceum, 1860), p. 192, Accessed: 5 June 2020, <http://mek.niif.hu/03800/03807/03807.pdf>

¹⁸¹ István Szántó (Arator) was a Jesuit teacher from Royal Hungary, who studied in Vienna and Rome before teaching philosophy at Graz. In 1575, he initiated the establishment of the *Collegium Hungaricum*, an independent institute for the training of Hungarian-speaking Catholic priests, who had previously attended the *Collegium Germanicum*, a college for German-speaking novices. On Szántó’s activity in Transylvania, see: Dénes Szittyay, ‘Szántó (Arator) István SJ élete és munkássága’ [‘The life and activity of István Szántó (Arator) SJ’], *Essays in Church History in Hungary*, vol. 6, no. 3-4 (1994), pp. 5-33; Csaba Szilágyi, ‘Szántó (Arator) István erdélyi és partiumi működése (1580–1588)’ [‘István Szántó (Arator)’s activity in Transylvania and Partium (1580-1588)’], *Történelmi Szemle*, 2002/3-4, pp. 255-292; and Csaba Szilágyi, ‘Szántó (Arator) István mint a Missio Transylvanica szervezője’ [‘István Szántó (Arator) as the organiser of the Missio Transylvanica’ in: Csaba Szilágyi (ed.), *A magyar jezsuiták küldetése a kezdetektől napjainkig* [The mission of Hungarian Jesuits from the beginning to the present day] (Piliscsaba: Pázmány Péter Katolikus Egyetem Bölcsészettudományi Kar, 2006), pp. 131-141.

¹⁸² Andrea Pontecorvo Martonffy, *The Early Counter-Reformation in Hungary: Jesuits, Papal Nuncios, and the Hungarian Lands, 1550-1606* (University of Chicago: Ph.D. Dissertation, 1980), p. 230 and 247.

¹⁸³ Veress, ‘A kolozsvári Báthory-egyetem története lerombolásáig’, 1603-ig, p. 175.

condition of limiting the Jesuits' activities to Gyulafehérvár and Kolozsvár.¹⁸⁴ Thus, it can be argued that various actors of the political elite regarded education as an instrument of power and were 'competing' for influence over Transylvania's youth and Sigismund in particular. Another example of this rivalry is a letter written by the Jesuit teacher Szántó to Claudio Aquaviva (1543-1615), the Superior General of the Society of Jesus.¹⁸⁵ Szántó expressed his joy that Erzsébet Bocskai (1550-1581), Sigismund's Calvinist mother, had died three months before her Catholic husband, Christopher Báthory. She had made efforts to countervail the Jesuit impact on her son and had had daily conflicts with János Leleszi (1548-1595), Sigismund's preceptor.¹⁸⁶ After Christopher died in May 1581, Stephen Báthory entrusted Leleszi with all decisions related to Sigismund's education.¹⁸⁷ Szántó notified Aquaviva about his concern that Leleszi was too involved in secular affairs, had a strained relationship with the nobles at the court, and acted as if he was governing the place.¹⁸⁸

A letter written in February 1584 to Aquaviva by Ferrante Capecci, rector of the Jesuit college in Kolozsvár, gave an account of Sigismund's peers who received a Jesuit education at the court in Gyulafehérvár with him:

He is with nine others of the same age or slightly older than him, all noble, with heretical fathers, nevertheless they are raised Catholic, like the prince: and these are the hope of Transylvania. Because when the prince is grown, if he does not have the nobility with him, he will be able to achieve little: about this, we have not only speculation, but experience... Accepting more [young nobles] is in the power of father Leleszi; in fact so far he has not admitted more because of having been prevented by some external things and because he did not have more of our brothers [at his disposal] to keep them [the boys] in check: for now we have an agreement that he will receive as many [boys] as he can.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁴ Resolution of the diet at Torda, 1-17 May 1581 in: *EOE* 3, p. 39.

¹⁸⁵ Aquaviva had been the fifth Superior General since 1581.

¹⁸⁶ István Szántó (Arator) to Claudio Aquaviva, 1 September 1581 in: Ladislaus Lukács (ed.), *Monumenta Antiquae Hungariae, vol. II: 1580-1586* (Rome: Institutum Historicum S. I., 1976), p. 191. /Henceforth cited as: Lukács, *MAH II*./

¹⁸⁷ Stephen Báthory to János Leleszi, 10 June 1581 in: *Ibidem*, pp. 142-143.

¹⁸⁸ István Szántó (Arator) to Claudio Aquaviva, 22 August 1581 in: Lukács, *MAH II*, p. 163.

¹⁸⁹ 'Ha seco da nove dell'istessa età o poco maggiori di se, tutti nobili, quai, se ben sono de' padri heretici, nondimeno s'allevano cattolicamente, sì come il principe: e questi sono la speranza di Transilvania; perché, se ben il principe sia grande, se non ha seco la nobiltà, potrà poco: di ciò havemo

It was important for the Jesuit leadership to create a group around Sigismund who were provided with the same Catholic schooling in order to strengthen the commitment of the future ruler. Capeci's report was in accordance with Possevino's guidelines - keeping Sigismund and his close environment loyal to the Church was seen as the key to the success of the *Missio Transylvanica*. Furthermore, this extract reveals that the Jesuits' main challenges were the insufficient number of fathers present in Transylvania and the disturbance caused by 'external things' - which might be safe to identify with their conflicts with the Protestant elite.

Jesuit-Protestant relations and the expulsion of the Jesuits from Transylvania

The year 1588 was a turning point in the history of the *Missio Transylvanica*, when the Jesuit enterprise, which had achieved significant results since 1579, was interrupted. The analysis of this affair serves to illustrate an inherent tension among the main participants in Transylvania's political life.

As pointed out above, the relationship between the Protestant elite and the Jesuits was not entirely hostile. In January 1582, János Leleszi informed General Aquaviva about the 'charity and goodwill towards the society from the heretic physicians, Giorgio Biandrata and Marcello Squarcialupi'.¹⁹⁰ Leleszi expressed his hope that this amicable attitude would improve their relations with the government as well. This optimism, along with their success in education and Stephen Báthory's constant support, helped the Jesuits endure the tragic ramifications of the plague epidemic of 1585-1586. More than half of the personnel deceased at that time, but Báthory took charge of their replacement by arranging with Aquaviva the arrival of more than a dozen of new members from Italy.¹⁹¹

However, the Jesuits faced continuous challenges on another front. Their success in education triggered the disapproval of the 'Kendy-Kovacsóczy party', the group of Calvinist and Lutheran counselors in the government. In a letter from 1589, Kovacsóczy wrote that the

non solo speculatione, ma esperienza... Il riceverne più è in potere del P. Lelesio; insin' adesso non n'ha ricevuto più per esser stato impedito d'alcune cose esteriori et non haver havuto più fratelli de' nostri, che gli tenessero a freno: hora siamo convenuti, che ne riceva quanti potrà.' Ferrante Capeci to Claudio Acquaviva, 27 February 1584 in: Veress, *Epistolae et Acta Jesuitarum Transylvaniae...*, pp. 56-65, 60-61, own translation from Italian.

¹⁹⁰ János Leleszi to Claudio Aquaviva, 10 January 1582 in: Lukács, *MAH II*, pp. 235-236.

¹⁹¹ Stephen Báthory to Claudio Aquaviva, 29 August 1586 in: *Ibidem*, pp. 972-973.

primary issue with the Jesuits, in the eyes of his political group, was that they were serving the interests of the papacy and not those of Transylvania.¹⁹² Kovacsóczy's criticism about the society was a common pattern in the political literature of the later sixteenth century. Patriotic absolutist writers emphasised the Jesuits' 'disruptive' impact on monarchies and depicted them as advocates of papal authority over secular rulers.¹⁹³ It might be safe to state that the Jesuits' relationship with the Calvinists was more hostile and politically loaded than with the Antitrinitarians. This can be demonstrated in one of Ferrante Capeci's letters to Aquaviva from early 1584. The rector stated that the Antitrinitarians' faith was 'odious', but the Calvinists were more 'perfidious' people.¹⁹⁴ Importantly, Antitrinitarianism was associated with Italians in Transylvania (some of the Italians in Transylvania were Antitrinitarians indeed), and the Jesuits living in Transylvania considered them a potential target group for the Catholic mission.¹⁹⁵ The Italian Jesuit Luigi Odescalchi (1547-1585) wrote that solutions should be suggested for those who 'wanted to return to Italy and feared some persecution'.¹⁹⁶

Stephen Báthory died in December 1586. In his testament, he entrusted the Jesuit college in Kolozsvár to the care of his nephew and successor as the ruler of Transylvania, Sigismund Báthory. He emphasised that it had been preserved by his and Christopher Báthory's efforts, and that it would be Sigismund's task to legally protect the Jesuit mission.¹⁹⁷ However, the young age and weak power of Stephen's successor prevented him to be assertive enough against the increasing tension between the Jesuits and the Protestant elite. In the course of the 1580s, the situation of the *Missio Transylvanica* and the Jesuit fathers swiftly deteriorated. The

¹⁹² Klaniczay, *Pallas*, p. 112.

¹⁹³ Cesare Cuttica, 'Anti-Jesuit patriotic absolutism: Robert Filmer and French ideas (c. 1580–1630)', *Renaissance Studies*, vol. 25, no. 4 (2011), pp. 559-579, 560; and Carlos Zeron, 'Political Theories and Jesuit Politics' in: Ines G. Županov (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of the Jesuits* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 193-214.

¹⁹⁴ Ferrante Capeci to Claudio Aquaviva, 27 February 1584 in: Lukács, *MAH II*, pp. 671-681.

¹⁹⁵ Martonffy, *The Early Counter-Reformation in Hungary*, pp. 274-279.

¹⁹⁶ Luigi Odescalchi to Bishop Giovanni Andrea Caligari (papal nuncio in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth), 23 April 1580 in: Lukács, *MAH II*, pp. 58-59.

¹⁹⁷ 'Ad Te, Nepos carissime, Sigismunde Batori, redeo, Tibi imprimis collegium Claudiopolitanum et Albense lego et committo quae collegia Pater tuus et ego fundavimus, propiis ex facultatibus nostris, sine cuiusdam iniuria, quae quidem ita tuearis ac defendas, quatenus animae tuae, Patriaeque cui praees, salus Tibi cara est.' Cited in: Veszely, *Erdélyi Egyháztörténelmi Adatok*, vol. 1, p. 212.

hostility of the Protestants manifested in the form of accusations of idolatry, and the Jesuits were even blamed for the plague epidemic. Most importantly, the Jesuits were accused of stepping beyond their rights by pursuing other activities than education.¹⁹⁸ The fathers rejected these allegations and defended their activities in an *Apology* dedicated to Sigismund by referring to the advantages of their activities – educating the prince as a child, helping needy young people, building churches and schools, catering for teachers. In addition, they mentioned that the society was improving the literacy of Transylvanians and the reputation of the country abroad. Moreover, the Jesuits accused the estates of derogating the rights of the Catholic Church in Transylvania, where religious toleration had been proclaimed only in favour of the Calvinist, Lutheran and Antitrinitarian denominations.¹⁹⁹ The Jesuits insisted on the legitimacy of their presence and work, and called the estates to account for ensuring the free practice of Lutheranism, Calvinism and Antitrinitarianism, but not allowing the ‘most ancient religion’ to operate.

A diet was called to Medgyes between 8 and 23 December 1588. The estates declared that they would only accept the authority of the sixteen-year old Sigismund as ruler if he expelled the Society of Jesus from Transylvania. The decree stated that:

... we have demonstrated amply that this order [the Jesuits] tends to cause the ruin of our country and endanger our posterity...²⁰⁰

Sigismund attempted to defend the Jesuits with the benefits that their mission provided for Transylvania:

You have to take into account that the Jesuits have educated us since our childhood... they have been striving to improve our rhetorical and judgmental skills, and did everything diligently in order to sharpen our discernment and to serve the benefit of the homeland.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁸ Meszlényi, *A magyar jezsuiták a XVI. században*, pp. 187-189.

¹⁹⁹ Veress, *Epistolae et Acta Jesuitarum Transylvaniae...*, pp. 242-246.

²⁰⁰ ‘... hogy ez a szerzet hazánknak romlására, és posteritásunknak veszedelmére tendálna, bőségesen megmutattuk.’ Szilágyi, *EOE* 3, pp. 236-248, p. 238, own translation from Hungarian.

²⁰¹ ‘... figyelembe kellene vennem, hogy a jezsuiták kis korunktól fogva neveltek... szónoki és ítélőtehetségünk kiművelésén fáradoztak s mindenre mi belátásunk élesztésére és a haza javára szolgáltattak, szorgalmasan szoktattak.’ Cited in: Veszely, *Erdélyi Egyháztörténelmi Adatok, vol. 1*, p. 216.

Despite this reasoning and the protests of the Jesuits, the resolution was pressed on Sigismund until he accepted it, and the fathers were forced to leave Transylvania within two weeks. Moreover, the Calvinist and Lutheran members of the political elite gained some of those considerable properties that the Jesuits had owned until that moment.

To conclude, the aspirations of the Society of Jesus to establish an extensive education system in Transylvania conflicted with the interests of the Protestant nobility, since both 'parties' were striving to seize influence over Sigismund and the future generation of the political elite.

The political presence of the Society of Jesus in the 1590s

The involvement of the Society of Jesus in political affairs can be best analysed in the context of the Fifteen Years' War (1591-1606), because this conflict overlapped the second phase of the *Missio Transylvanica* and the Jesuit activities were largely interwoven with Sigismund Báthory's diplomacy and military affairs.

After the Jesuit expulsion, Sigismund started his efforts to reconcile with the Holy See already in the spring of 1589. In April, he sent an envoy, István Bodoni, to Sixtus V (1585-1590) to express his apology and attempt to annul his excommunication for the expulsion of the Jesuits.²⁰² In 1591, Sigismund managed to 'bargain' with the estates and withdraw the 1588 decree - one Jesuit was allowed to enter the court as Sigismund's personal confessor. As a consequence, Clement VIII sent several legates to Gyulafehérvár in the following years. After such a trip in 1592, Attilio Amalteo (1545-1633) reported that the political state of Transylvania was too malicious for the relaunch of the mission.²⁰³ Two former members of the *Missio* were recalled to Transylvania - Bálint Ladó (1564-1615), who had gone to Moldova, as Sigismund's confessor, and Alfonso Carrillo, who became his confessor and chief envoy in the 1590s. Carrillo was a Spanish Jesuit who had studied theology in Rome and taught Catholic dogmatics at the University of Paris. Carrillo's first engagement with Transylvanian secular issues was a series of efforts he made to restore Sigismund's relations with his cousins, Boldizsár Báthory (1560-1594) and András Báthory (1563-1599).²⁰⁴ András was a Roman Catholic cardinal who had studied at Jesuits colleges and had been the permanent representative of his uncle, Stephen

²⁰² Szilágyi, *EOE* 3, p. 264.

²⁰³ Veress, *Erdélyországi pápai követek jelentései VIII. Kelemen idejéből (1592-1600)*, p. 23.

²⁰⁴ Wolfgang Kabos to Stephen Kabos, 28 October 1592 in: Lukács, *MAH* III, pp. 840-841.

Báthory, at the Holy See. Nevertheless, András did not support the Jesuit activities and planned to reorganise the Transylvanian bishopric by training local priests. He envisaged Catholic revival on the basis of a re-established church that would have been subordinated to secular power.²⁰⁵

In 1591, a new conflict began with Ottoman campaigns against Habsburg possessions. In 1593, Sultan Murad III (1574-1595) violated the 1568 peace treaty of Drinápoly (Edirne), which had suspended Habsburg-Ottoman military clashes.²⁰⁶ Murad III declared war on the Holy Roman Empire and called on Sigismund Báthory to join him. However, Sigismund wanted to join the anti-Ottoman alliance instead because of the excessive demands that the sultan made. Transylvania's political elite became divided into 'pro-war' and 'anti-war' parties. The former supported Sigismund and comprised his courtiers, the Jesuits and some former officers of Stephen Báthory such as Sigismund's uncle, the captain of Várad, István Bocskai (1557-1606). Clement VIII put Carrillo in charge of convincing Sigismund to break his vassal relationship with Murad III, and to improve his relations with the Holy See and Rudolph II. Then there was the 'Kendy-Kovacsóczy' party, consisting of Calvinist and Lutheran counselors with foreign education, generally supported by the estates. They intended to keep Transylvania neutral and were afraid of an Ottoman reprisal in case of taking part in the Christian alliance.²⁰⁷ The Jesuits served the papacy's endeavours to direct the development of the war, and the foreign courtiers were contingent on Sigismund's decisions. The 'Kendy-Kovacsóczy' party and the estates had agreed with Stephen Báthory's pragmatism in foreign affairs, namely that he had not pursued pro-Habsburg relations. They were trying to create a counterweight against the central power, as envisaged in Kovacsóczy's political philosophical work. Therefore, from their perspective, Sigismund's approach to the Holy League risked the growth of Catholic and Habsburg influence in Transylvania. Arguably, the religious differences in this confrontation were secondary to political interests.

²⁰⁵ Kruppa, *Tradíció és propaganda keresztútján*, p. 233.

²⁰⁶ The treaty prohibited further territorial expansions on both sides and stabilised the status quo. It was concluded by Sultan Selim II (1566-1574) and Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian II.

²⁰⁷ József Lele, 'Erdély a tizenöt éves háborúban és a Porta' ['Transylvania in the Fifteen Years' War and the Sublime Porte'], *Aetas*, vol. 6, no. 3 (1991), pp. 103-136, 103-104.

Sigismund sent Carrillo to Rome in early 1594 in order to make known his wish to join the Christian coalition.²⁰⁸ However, the prince faced an increased opposition at home during the summer of 1594, since the anti-war counselors were now supported by two of his cousins, Boldizsár and András Báthory. János Baranyai Decsi (1560-1601) wrote that at a diet held in July 1594, some aristocrats opposed the Christian alliance and started to lean in favour of the Ottomans.²⁰⁹ The resistance made Sigismund recede. In July, he abdicated in favour of his cousin Boldizsár, but in August, he returned and convened another diet in Kolozsvár. There, his forces captured the anti-war opponents on the charge of treason - Boldizsár Báthory, Sándory Kendy, chancellor Farkas Kovacsóczy and some others were executed, and several counselors remained imprisoned.²¹⁰ In this context, Szamosközy's bias against Sigismund can be understood, since the historian had been one of Kovacsóczy's protégés.

When András Báthory was informed about the death of his brother, he immediately blamed the Jesuit order and personally Carrillo for influencing the prince and causing the events. Interestingly, András considered the Italian musicians and courtiers equally responsible for Sigismund's 'depravity'.²¹¹ It can be argued that, in his interpretation, 'foreigners' belonged to the same category in terms of their morals, regardless of their professions. András sent a number of letters to the papacy, in which he expressed his allegations. The cardinal's opinions stirred up the latent antipathy of the estates towards the Jesuits. Carrillo defended himself in letters to General Aquaviva, and complained about the tense internal political circumstances that hindered his and his fellows' educational and pastoral activities in the *Missio Transylvanica*.²¹²

Sigismund Báthory relied on his Jesuit and Italian confidants in his 'war diplomacy'. To highlight the relation of these two groups, it is worth comparing Fabio Genga with Alfonso Carrillo. Genga was the most prominent member of Sigismund's Italian courtiers, and his family played an important role in Gyulafehérvár. Simone Genga from Urbino had been in the

²⁰⁸ Ladislaus Lukács (ed.), *Monumenta Antiquae Hungariae, vol. IV: 1593-1600* (Rome: Institutum Historicum S.I., 1987), p. 21.

²⁰⁹ Péter Kulcsár (tr.), *Baranyai Decsi János magyar históriája (1592-1598)* [*Hungarian history by János Baranyai Decsi (1592-1598)*] (Budapest: Európa Kiadó, 1982), p. 168.

²¹⁰ Szilágyi, *EOE* 3, pp. 331-335.

²¹¹ Veress, *Carrillo Alfonz jezsuita-atyja levelezése és iratai*, p. XXXVIII.

²¹² Alfonso Carrillo to Claudio Aquaviva, 27 December 1594 in: Lukács, *MAH IV*, p. 108.

service of Cosimo I of Medici (1569-1574) in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany before he started to work for the Báthory family as the architect of the princely castle in Gyulafehérvár. Two of his sons, Gianfrancesco and Flaminio, were papal courtiers in Rome, while the third one, Fabio, became the chief chamberlain and one of Sigismund's leading envoys.²¹³ Fabio mediated between the prince and the Holy See, reported about the developments of the war, and requested financial support from Rome.²¹⁴

The issue of the executions and the rumours about the Jesuits' involvement in political affairs had to be explained to the Holy See - Fabio Genga was commissioned by Sigismund with this task. The speech Fabio gave in Rome created a dissonance with Carrillo's letters about his innocence. Fabio reported that the difficulties of the Jesuit mission derived from the society's connection with political affairs and the executions. However, Fabio interpreted the executions as evidence of Sigismund's wisdom and strength as a military and political leader since he would not have to be afraid of the disloyalty of his subjects anymore.²¹⁵ Thus, it can be assumed that although both Carrillo and Fabio were serving Sigismund's interests and remained in continuous contact with each other, their diplomatic communications were not always synchronised.

The failure in establishing a permanent and efficient mission in Transylvania was rooted in the absence of a significant group of Catholic aristocrats supporting the Jesuit endeavour. For instance, only a couple of Catholic nobles protested against the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1588, namely Ferenc Géczi, Kristóf Keresztúri and Ferenc Wesselényi.²¹⁶ This situation changed as a consequence of Fabio Genga's diplomatic service for Sigismund. The prince sent him to Rome to ask for financial resources for military expenditures, and to assure Clement

²¹³ Tamás Kruppa, 'Hungary and the Hungarians in Italian public opinion during and after the Long Turkish War' in: Gábor Almási et al. (eds), *A Divided Hungary in Europe. Exchanges, Networks and Representations, 1541-1699, vol. 3 – The Making and Uses of the Image of Hungary and Transylvania* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014), pp. 89-105, 95-96.

²¹⁴ Kruppa, 'Erdély és a Szentszék kapcsolatainak ismeretlen kérdésköréhez...', pp. 1166-1197.

²¹⁵ 'Discorso del Signore Fabio Genga fatto a papa Clémente VIII. sopra le cose di Transilvania, l'anno 1595' published in: Giacomo Bascapé, *Le relazioni fra l'Italia e la Transilvania nel secolo XVI* [*Relations between Italy and Transylvania in the sixteenth century*] (Roma: Anonima Romana, 1931), p. 174.

²¹⁶ Meszlényi, *A magyar jezsuiták a XVI. században*, p. 178.

VIII that he was committed to the anti-Ottoman endeavours.²¹⁷ The principal result of this mission was the opening of a nunciature in Transylvania that served as a permanent yet short-lived representation of the Holy See – Clement VIII sent Alfonso Visconti (1552-1608) to Gyulafehérvár with an instruction that promised financial support for the continuation of the war.²¹⁸

The official treaty between Rudolph II and Sigismund was finalised by Carrillo and István Bocskai at the imperial court of Prague on 28 January 1595. The document demonstrates Sigismund's reason to choose the anti-Ottoman alliance with the Habsburgs:

Let the authority of Transylvania, including all the parts and lands of Hungary that have belonged to the principality so far stay unaffectedly and independently in the possession of the same prince, lord Sigismund Báthory of Somlyó... And if the prince would die without a male heir... Transylvania and its attached elements as a legitimate and inseparable part should become without any disputations the possession of no one else but His Majesty... [Rudolph II]²¹⁹

Arguably, Sigismund's reason to join the Holy League was the acknowledgement of Transylvania's independence, and of his heirs' right of inheritance by Rudolph II - with the

²¹⁷ István Hiller, 'A Vatikán és Magyarország (1526-1699)' ['The Vatican and Hungary (1526-1699)'] in: István Zombori (ed.), *Magyarország és a Szentszék kapcsolatának ezer éve [A thousand years of the relationship of Hungary and the Holy See]* (Budapest: Magyar Egyháztörténeti Enciklopédia Munkaközösség, 1996), pp. 135-169, 154.

²¹⁸ Papal instructions to Alfonsi Visconti, 14 December 1594 in: Klaus Jaitner (ed.), *Die Hauptinstruktionen Clemens' VIII. für die Nuntien und Legaten an den europäischen Fürstenhöfen (1592-1605) [The main instructions of Clemens VIII for the nuncios and legates at the European royal courts (1592-1605)]*, vol. 1 (Tübingen: Max Niemayer Verlag, 1984), p. 332.

²¹⁹ 'Erdély joghatósága, beleértve Magyarország mindazon részeit és vidékeit, melyek eddig a fejedelem birtokában voltak, érintetlenül és függetlenül maradjon ugyanennek a fejedelemnek, somlyói Báthory Zsigmond úrnak... Ha pedig a fejedelem fiúörökös nélkül halna meg... Erdély és a hozzá csatolt részek jogos és elválaszthatatlan tagként minden vita nélkül kerüljenek senki másnak, csakis őfelségének...' Cited in: Kruppa, Tamás (ed.) and Kasza, Péter (tr.), *Bethlen Farkas: Erdély története [Farkas Bethlen: A history of Transylvania]*, vol. V: 1598-1600 (Budapest: Enciklopédia Kiadó, 2006), pp. 107-108, own translation from Hungarian.

condition that Transylvania was integral part of the 'Hungarian crown', and thus, to become ruled by the king of Hungary if Sigismund would not have a son.²²⁰

Carrillo remained Sigismund's most important envoy in his war diplomacy – he represented the ruler throughout the decline of his power, his three abdications of the throne, and his failed marriage. The Fifteen Years' War ended in 1606 with no significant territorial changes. Eventually, Carrillo left Transylvania in 1599, after a series of warnings from General Aquaviva to focus on the *Missio Transylvanica* instead of his too eager involvement in political affairs.²²¹ Carrillo did not succeed in realising all the papal pursuits in Transylvania, but he undertook the major part of Sigismund's international diplomatic representation and negotiations for almost a decade.

To sum up, there was a strong Jesuit presence in Sigismund Báthory's internal political as well as foreign affairs, but the protagonist was always one Jesuit priest, Alfonso Carrillo. Even though he represented the Society of Jesus and the Catholic Church, his contribution to princely diplomacy was highly personal, not encouraged by his superiors or fellows. Nonetheless, as Sigismund's confidant, Carrillo had a considerable impact on the participation of Transylvania in the Fifteen Years' War and on its relations with European anti-Ottoman powers.

Conclusion

Harro Höpfl has argued that association with politics was inevitable for the Society of Jesus in its struggle against 'heretics'. As retribution imposed by the Church was considered insufficient among Jesuit thinkers, like Geronimo Torres in his 1676 *Confessio Augustiniana*, they

²²⁰ This type of agreement between the rulers of Transylvania and Royal Hungary was not without precedent. In the 1570 Treaty of Speyer, John Sigismund resigned from his title *rex electus Hungariae* and became *princeps Transylvaniae*. In return for this, Maximilian II acknowledged John Sigismund's limited sovereignty over the territories that he ruled. It was stated that Transylvania and its attached regions belonged to the 'Hungarian crown', and thus, the supremacy of the king of Hungary was declared. It is essential to note that the alliance between Sigismund Báthory and Rudolph II was ratified before Sigismund's disastrous marriage with Maria Christina of Austria, which was dissolved in 1599 by Clement VIII due to the prince's impotence. See: Teréz Oborni, 'Kettős függésben: Erdély államisága a 16. században' ['Dual Subjection: Transylvanian Statehood in the Sixteenth Century'], *Korunk*, vol. 3, no. 18 (2007), pp. 33-40.

²²¹ Martonffy, *The Early Counter-Reformation in Hungary*, p. 339.

emphasised the need for cooperation with secular rulers.²²² This idea appears to be even more relevant in Transylvania where Catholicism was declining, and Antitrinitarianism, the 'heretical' enemy of the papacy, was a highly significant confession, especially within the political elite. Furthermore, Höpfl has claimed that the Jesuits made enemies among those who had previously performed their educational and pastoral functions. This was partially true in Transylvania – in 1583, some princely counselors thanked Gregory XIII for the Jesuit colleges, and as highlighted in the thesis, several Protestant nobles sent their sons to study in these institutions because of the humanist curriculum. This attitude changed because the estates feared that the popularity of Jesuit teaching would lead to the growth of conversions. However, the Jesuit education of noble children did not manage to diminish the strength of the Protestant political elite and the traditionally mostly Protestant estates. The expulsion of Jesuits on the basis of their political involvement was not unusual in early modern Europe. The fathers were expelled from France for their suspected entanglement in the assassinations of Henri III and Henri IV (1589-1610).²²³ Even though several members of the *Missio* were actually Hungarian-speaking Transylvanians, their endeavours and activities could be easily depicted also as services carried out in the interests of foreign powers.

What distinguished the *Missio Transylvanica* from a global perspective was its environment – the constant competition with the Protestant elite to gain influence over the future ruler and his entourage, and the lack of a strong Catholic nobility. Susan Broomhall has highlighted that Jesuits became important actors at the French Valois court due to their alliance with the ultra-Catholic faction. In return for the financial aid that Catholic families provided for the society's projects and institutions, the Jesuits supported the aspirations of the ultra-Catholic nobility in the French Wars of Religion (1562-1598).²²⁴ In Transylvania, the lack of a broad Catholic social basis facilitated anti-Jesuit efforts which culminated in the society's 1588 expulsion.

²²² Harro Höpfl, *Jesuit Political Thought: The Society of Jesus and the State, c. 1540-1630* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 64-83.

²²³ Sabina Pavone, 'Anti-Jesuitism in a Global Perspective' in: Ines G. Županov (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of the Jesuits* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 833-854, 836.

²²⁴ Susan Broomhall, 'Devoted Politics: Jesuits and Elite Catholic Women at the Later Sixteenth-century Valois court', *Journal of Jesuit Studies*, vol. 2, no. 4 (2015), pp. 586-605.

Robert Bireley has argued that the Jesuits' political influence strengthened in the Holy Roman Empire due to their confidential positions as court confessors and teachers of heirs, and to the absence of other Catholic orders in the empire. This agrees completely with the way Jesuits ascended to power in Transylvania. Additionally, Bireley has stated that Superior General Muzio Vitelleschi (1615-1645) encouraged political involvement in service of papal interests against Protestants and the Ottoman Empire but not the official holding of political positions.²²⁵ In parallel, István Szántó (Arator) complained that János Leleszi was too enmeshed in Transylvanian secular affairs, and General Aquaviva reproved Carrillo for undertaking explicitly political commissions as Sigismund Báthory's envoy to Rudolph II.

This chapter has pointed out that the *Missio Transylvanica* followed the general trend of Jesuit involvement in politics in service of papal interests, but had two specific characteristics – the mission was 'defeated' by the local political elite, and one Jesuit became a diplomatic envoy in war affairs. Here, Jesuit activities were related to the rulers' personal ambitions to a greater extent than elsewhere.

²²⁵ Robert Bireley, *The Jesuits and the Thirty Years War: Kings, Courts, and Confessors* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 267-275.

Conclusion

This thesis aimed to investigate the complex composition of the Transylvanian elite that was subject to the changing religious preferences and political endeavours of three consecutive rulers, between 1559 and 1602. The interests, incentives, opportunities, and activities of three foreign-related groups have been analysed in the context of Transylvania's internal political life and diplomacy.

A central research question has been proposed in this thesis: What political role did the presence, activities and rivalries of foreigners and foreign-educated locals play at the Transylvanian court between 1559 and 1602? The political engagement of the examined foreign and foreign-educated groups was significant in Transylvania for two main reasons. First, Transylvanian rulers favoured them both personally and professionally. Second, since the examined individuals did not have origins in the local elite, their political involvement was related to political as well as non-political motivations - religious persecution, intellectual and artistic pursuits, education, Catholic mission. Arguably, the interests of Transylvanian rulers made them open towards foreign impacts and enabled 'outsiders' as well as 'people from below' to enter the political life in the listed alternative ways. In addition, the existing local elite was itself relatively flexible, which facilitated the career advancement of newcomers. This thesis argues that Transylvania was exceptional because of the close personal connection between its rulers and the protagonists of its diverse political elite.

As stated in the Introduction, this thesis is novel in bringing together three groups that have been investigated only separately. Their joint analysis has shown that they were related to a greater extent than described in the existing literature. What was unique in Transylvania's political elite was its young age, variable composition, and the conjunction of three foreign-related groups in positions and functions that had been traditionally associated with the aristocracy. Jean-François Dubost has emphasised that politically engaged foreigners were exposed to xenophobia in the early modern French society. This statement is a good starting point for the conclusion of this joint analysis, because in Transylvania, the situation was slightly different. Sigismund Báthory's court musicians, actors and artists were blamed as a group for 'corrupting' the prince without particular political activities. The exceptions were Giorgio Biandrata and Alfonso Carrillo, but they were targeted on the basis of their religious commitments. The Antitrinitarian Giorgio Biandrata and the Jesuit Alfonso Carrillo were criticised not only for their political engagements and subsequent social advancement, but

mainly for the significant impact they had on the rulers. Their close personal relations with John Sigismund and the Báthorys had far-reaching implications in the diplomacy and religious life of the country. Moreover, Biandrata built up a network around himself that drew Antitrinitarian intellectuals to Transylvania, such as Marcello Squarcialupi, and supported Transylvanians to embark upon study tours abroad. This way, Biandrata remained a proactive figure of the European radical heterodoxy even during his permanent settlement in Transylvania, and participated in the funding of academic peregrination as well. Interestingly, the analysed pieces of the Jesuit correspondence and the contemporary accounts of Protestant historians have revealed that the fathers' relationship with the Antitrinitarians (mainly the Italian ones) was much more amicable than with the Calvinist and Lutheran members of the political elite. The larger significance of this is that it is in line with the observed hostile Calvinist-Antitrinitarian relations in the Swiss cantons, and that as Antitrinitarianism uniquely became a 'received religion' in Transylvania, the competition between Protestant communities increased.

The thesis has challenged the historiographic theory that the most attractive feature of early modern universities was the humanist curriculum taught at these institutions. The humanist universities of Heidelberg, Wittenberg, Krakow, and Padua attracted students from the aristocracy, the landed nobility, the minor nobility, and non-noble background as well. As a relatively low percentage of them completed their degrees, and yet many of them rose to prominent government positions later on, it can be assumed that foreign studies were appreciated not principally for academic knowledge but rather for the acquired language skills, relations, and cultural experience.

In the global context, the thesis argues that the *Missio Transylvanica* was a representative example of early modern Jesuit activities, with some distinctive features. The general reputation of Jesuits as supporters of the Holy See and the House of Habsburg and advocates of the political regimes of their host countries can be evinced in Transylvania. The *Missio Transylvanica* had a close connection to both the domestic politics and the foreign affairs of the principality, and it operated against two main 'enemies' – Protestants and the Ottoman Empire. In these aspects, Transylvania followed the European trend. Moreover, Sigismund Báthory's propaganda strategy was in line with the role of Jesuits in France, where they

published orations about the Catholic zeal of Henri IV.²²⁶ The prince relied on the international relations of his Italian courtiers and Jesuits when building up his propaganda that aimed to support his position in the diplomatic negotiations during the Fifteen Years' War.

However, the members of the *Missio Transylvanica* faced a unique environment, in which foreign courtiers, Antitrinitarians, and Protestant counselors all played a part. The mission was launched and supported by Catholic rulers, but constantly challenged by the predominantly Protestant society and political elite of the country. By the joint analysis, the thesis has demonstrated that the main challenges of the Jesuit mission derived from its clashes with the two other examined groups. As outlined by Antonio Possevino, the mission needed the incessant support of the ruler in order to survive in the 'hostile' Protestant environment. The fathers were constantly concerned about the influence of the Protestant political elite, which consisted a number of ex-students of foreign universities as well as Italian exiles. Even though the Jesuits were invited by Stephen Báthory and continuously supported by Stephen and Sigismund Báthory, and educated several students from various social groups, they did not manage to combat the widespread anti-Jesuit endeavours. Uniquely, the Jesuit project represented the only tie between the papacy and Transylvania under the Báthorys, and Alfonso Carrillo acted as chief envoy in Sigismund Báthory's diplomatic negotiations in the course of his anti-Ottoman campaigns. The aspect that fits the wider picture is that the Jesuit political influence was confined to one key individual – there was no unified Jesuit attitude towards political steps in favour of the Counter-Reformation. This way, the thesis has enhanced our understanding of the global phenomenon of the Jesuit 'black legend' by analysing the political opportunities and connections of the *Missio Transylvanica*.

To conclude, the thesis has shed new light on the complexity and connectedness of the sixteenth-century Transylvanian elite and pointed out that the composition of the examined groups was less segmented, and their political activities were more related than stated in previous literature.

In future studies, a comparative research on the political activities of former peregrines and Jesuits at the imperial court in Vienna and the princely court in Gyulafehérvár would improve our knowledge on 'imported' intellectual capital.

²²⁶ Thomas Worcester, 'Jesuit dependence on the French monarchy' in: Thomas Worcester (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Jesuits* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 104-119, 110.

Lastly, due to the vicissitudes of the Fifteen Years' War, the 'foreign' character of the elite dissipated as most of the Italians left the court of the capital, the number of incoming religious refugees decreased, many of the old cosmopolitan guard deceased, and the Jesuits did not manage to take root in Transylvania despite all their efforts under the Báthorys. During the reign of Gábor Bethlen (1580-1629), a diet at Kolozsvár in May 1622 decided to establish a new Calvinist college in Gyulafehérvár.²²⁷ The resolution of the estates highlighted that:

... we see that the scholarly people, who had served in various chief affairs of our country, deceased in the many disturbances of the past times... We really praise and approve the gracious measure of Your Highness in which, in order to restore this deficiency of ours, you have arranged the building of a general academy...²²⁸

The nature of the political elite involved in 'chief affairs' had fundamentally changed by the early seventeenth century and it had to be rebuilt with new means and new institutions of education.

²²⁷ Gábor Bethlen had served Sigismund Báthory as page in the 1590s, and was elected as prince in October 1613. He supported academic peregrination to new directions - the universities of England and the Dutch Republic.

²²⁸ '... látjuk az tudós embereknek, kik hazánknak sok fő dolgaiban hasznosan szolgáltak, ez elmúlt időkben forgott sok disturbiumokban mely igen elfogyatkoztanak közülünk... Felségednek arról való kegyelmes dispositióját igen dicsérjük és jóvaljuk, holott Felséged ebbeli fogyatkozásainkat restaurálni akarván, egy közönséges académiának építéséről gondoskodott...' Sándor Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek [Memorabilia of the Transylvanian Diet]*, vol. 8: 1621-1629 (Budapest, 1875), pp. 96-97, own translation from Hungarian.

Illustrations



John Sigismund²²⁹

²²⁹ Wikimedia Commons, 2013, Accessed: 30 June 2020,
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Arolsen_Klebeband_01_063_2.jpg



Stephen Báthory²³⁰

²³⁰ Wikimedia Commons, 2012, Accessed: 30 June 2020,
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bathori_chalkographia.jpg



Sigismund Báthory²³¹

²³¹ Wikimedia Commons, 2015, Accessed: 30 June 2020,
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Zsgmondb%C3%A1thory.jpg>



Giorgio Biandrata²³²

²³² Wikimedia Commons, 2012, Accessed: 30 June 2020,
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Giorgio_Biandrata.jpg



Ferenc Forgách²³³

²³³ Wikimedia Commons, 2010, Accessed: 30 June 2020,
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Forg%C3%A1ch_Ferenc-v%C3%A1radi_p%C3%BCsp%C3%B6k.jpg

MARTINI. BERZEVICEI

O R A T I O

PRO. VAIVODA. TRANSILVANIAE

P R I N C I P E

HABITA PRID. ID. DECEMB. MDLXXII.



VLTA obitare, Beatissime Pater, videntur, quo minus ea, quæ mihi ad Sanctitatem tuam Legato Illustrissimus Vaiuoda Transilvaniae Princeps meus commisit, tanta aut eloquentia, aut prudentia, aut animi alacritate renuntiem, quantam sanctissimæ tuæ personæ auctoritas requirit. Atque inter alia moueor maiorem in modum Pontificia tua maiestate, purpuratorum item Principum augustissimorum ipso consessu, quo tua latera cingi video; & ad cuius conspectum omnes Legati ex diuersis christiani orbis plagis in Urbem ad Sanctitatem tuam gratulatum certatim confluentes, merito expauescunt. Persisterem equidem in eo timore, nisi me recrearet uis voluptatis, quæ Princeps meus mitissime effertur ob tuum nouum Pontificatum, quem immortalis Dei beneficio, & singulari hominum approbatione adeptus es. Tanta est letitia cum fratre suo Christophoro Bathorio persusus, tantique facit noui Pontificatus Sanctitatis tuæ felix auspiciū, ut se Christiani Principis nomine indignum putaret, nisi eius rei etiam hoc loco per legatum testimonium daret: quod quidem omnium pene opinionem sine ulla dubitatione superabit. Quis enim unquam ab illa regione ab isto sanctissimo domicilio remotissima, toto eo tempore, quo in Prouinciā est redacta, ad summos Pontifices sine gratulatum, suæ pietatis causa, quam omnes Principes summis Pontificibus debent, missus est? tota certe regio regnante defuncto Principe multis hæresibus inquinata fuit; in qua nisi duo columnæ, idest, duo Bathorij fratres Christophorus, & Stephanus extitissent, Catholica religio iniquitate aduersariorum obruta iacuilset. Eius quippe conseruandæ studio multas insidias & machinationes structas, denique ipsius prope vitæ discrimina hi duo proceres potius subire, quam vel latum vnguem ab eis discedere maluerunt: immo vero decreta Pontificum studioissime colentes, Ro-

Márton Berzeviczy's *Oratio*²³⁴

²³⁴ Veress, *Berzeviczy Márton (1538-1596)*, p. 75.



Pope Clement VIII²³⁵

²³⁵ Wikimedia Commons, 2011, Accessed: 30 June 2020,
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Papst_Clemens_VIII_Italian_17th_century.jpg

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