

The *Eastern European History Review* is an international and interdisciplinary annually online and open access peer-reviewed journal about studies on Central and Eastern Europe in the Modern Age (XV–XIX). The Journal is also the expression of the Study Center CESPoM (Centro Studi sull'età dei Sobieski e della Polonia Moderna – Center Study on the Age of Sobieski and Modern Poland) of the University of Tuscia, born in 1997.

It publishes articles with significant approaches and original interpretations in all research fields concerning Central and Eastern Europe, with specific attention to the History Sciences.

This special issue of *Eastern European History Review* addresses the complex and intense history of Christian-Ottoman relations in Central and Eastern Europe during the Early Modern Period. Tracing the salient moments and facts with battles, border issues, diplomacy and intelligence, the volume – with the participation of authors from different parts of Europe and Türkiye – constitutes an international opportunity to analyze topics that continually offer new study themes.

Central and South-Eastern Europe between the Christian world and the Ottoman world: conflicts, encounters and compromises (XVI-XVIII centuries), edited by the Turkish historian Canan Parmaksızoğlu Aksoy, is the result of research and scientific collaboration between the CESPoM Study Center and Vilmos Fraknói Vatican Historical Research Group (ELKH-PPKE-PTE).

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Edited by Canan Parmaksızoğlu Aksoy



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**CENTRAL AND SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE
BETWEEN THE CHRISTIAN AND OTTOMAN WORLDS:
CONFLICTS, ENCOUNTERS AND COMPROMISES
(XVI-XVIII CENTURIES)**

Edited by
Canan Parmaksızoğlu Aksoy

Co-edited by
Katalin Nagy

Special Participation of
Vilmos Fraknói Vatican Historical Research Group (ELKH-PPKE-PTE)



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EASTERN EUROPEAN HISTORY REVIEW: LA RIVISTA

Il Comitato redazionale e scientifico è lieto di presentare al pubblico la rivista scientifica *Eastern European History Review*.

Con un carattere internazionale e interdisciplinare, una cadenza annuale e una fruibilità *open access* la rivista focalizza i propri interessi sulle dinamiche occorse nell'Europa Orientale durante tutta l'età moderna (XIV-XIX). *Eastern European History Review* è espressione del Centro Studi dell'Università della Tuscia CESPoM (Centro Studi sull'età dei Sobieski e della Polonia Moderna) nato nel 1997 per intuizione del Prof. Gaetano Platania, Direttore Emerito della Rivista.

L'iniziativa editoriale che presentiamo nasce dall'evidente mancanza in Italia di una rivista scientifica relativa alla storia dell'Europa centro-orientale in Età Moderna, nonostante la penisola abbia giocato un ruolo fondamentale per la Storia e la Cultura di una parte integrante del continente, a torto considerata come lontana e periferica.

Consapevoli di questo, il Comitato ha posto quale obiettivo primario della *Eastern European History Review* quello di offrire uno spazio di riflessione e di discussione su temi che appartengono alla storia dell'Europa centro-orientale, e insieme alle relazioni - politiche e culturali - che questa vasta area del Vecchio Continente ha avuto con l'occidente d'Europa, e l'Italia in particolare, incoraggiando il dialogo tra studiosi e esperti di settore, e tra differenti approcci della ricerca scientifica.

Il Comitato Redazionale e Scientifico

EASTERN EUROPEAN HISTORY REVIEW: THE JOURNAL

The Editorial and Scientific Board are proud delighted to present the *Eastern European History Review* under the aegis of Sette Città Editore.

The *Eastern European History Review* is an international and interdisciplinary annually online and open access peer-reviewed journal about studies on Central and Eastern Europe in the Modern Age (XIV-XIX). The Journal is also the expression of the Study Center CESPoM (Centro Studi sull'età dei Sobieski e della Polonia Moderna – Center Study on the Age of Sobieski and Modern Poland) of the University of Tuscia, born in 1997, from an idea of Prof. Gaetano Platania, today Director Emeritus of this journal.

It publishes articles with significant approaches and original interpretations in all research fields concerning Central and Eastern Europe, with specific attention to the History sciences.

The editorial initiative we present comes from the obvious lack of a journal, in Italy, concerning the history of Central and Eastern Europe during the Modern Age, this despite its fundamental role in the history and culture of that part of the continent, wrongly considered distant and peripheral.

Quite the contrary is true, in fact. Main objective of the journal is to create a space for reflection and discussion on topics pertaining to Central and Eastern Europe, but also relations with Continental Europe, encouraging dialogue between scholars and experts in the field, and between different approaches of scientific research.

The Editorial and Scientific Board

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INTRODUCTION

The advance of the Ottoman Empire in Europe in the Modern Age posed a threat to many European states. The conquest of Constantinople (later İstanbul) during the reign of Sultan Mehmed II (the Conqueror) in the XV century, followed by the Otranto expedition and siege, the Ottoman advance in Central Europe during the reign of Sultan Suleyman I in the XVI century, particularly the Siege of Vienna, as well as the successes of Chief Admiral Barbaros Hayreddin Pasha in the Mediterranean and many other similar events generated a sense of anxiety and fear in Europe for centuries. As a matter of fact, the phrase *Mamma li Turchi!*, used by Italians even today in response to negative events, dates back to this historical Turkish threat and the negative feeling it generated, which has its roots in the XV and XVI centuries.

It is rather challenging to cover such a broad subject as the relations between the Ottoman Empire and European states in the Modern Age, especially between the 16th and 18th centuries, in an introduction. However, in order to understand the dynamics between the Ottoman Empire and the Christian world, it would be useful to go back a little further and give a brief overview of how the parties viewed each other as an introduction to the subject. Starting from the Late Middle Ages until the middle of the Modern Age, the East and the West, in other words, the two worlds comprised mostly of Muslims and Christians, were in constant interaction with each other in a relationship that alternated between wars and trade. However, the fear became a dominant emotion in this intense and dynamic relationship from the XV century onwards. Although the world order changed due to geographical discoveries, the main region where the conflict of control and domination took place was the Mediterranean and Central-Eastern Europe. On the one hand, there was the Western Christian world, which had entered a new era with the Thirty Years' War and the Peace of Westphalia, and on the other was the Ottoman Empire, which had conquered Byzantium and its culture. From another perspective, it can be deduced that the conflict between these two sides evolved from a clash of "civilizations" to a clash of "powers" and gained a stronger political character at least since the XVI century¹. At this point, it is necessary to underline the differences between Western historiography and Ottoman historiography. For a long time, contrary to what Western historiography suggests, the Ottoman Empire did not carry out its conquests with the aim of forcibly converting the peoples of the conquered regions to Islam, however mainly aimed to expand the borders of the Empire². The distinguished Turkish historian Professor Halil İnalcık provided in his works important information on Ottoman conquest policy. For example, how the Ottomans conquered the Christian Balkans and managed to establish themselves there for so long remain a historical question even today. According to the old theory, Ottoman rule was manifested by force and persecution and lasted

1 Franco Cardini, *Il Turco a Vienna. Storia del grande assedio del 1683* (Roma-Bari: Laterza, 2011), 4.

2 Marko Jacov, *L'Europa tra conquiste ottomane e leghe sante* (Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana), 255.

as a regime of exploitation under the control of a military class of Sipahi³. However, according to the current historical analysis derived from research based on Ottoman archive documents, the Ottoman Empire was able to persuade the local Christian populations to peace and reconciliation thanks to the principles of *istimalet*⁴ and *aman* which meant looking out for the people, especially non-Muslim subjects, and treating them with clemency. The Ottoman Empire always offered the opponent three chances to surrender, and if the offer was accepted, a sworn “ahdname”⁵ guaranteed the opponent’s security of life and property. These guarantees were rigorously implemented, and many conquests were accomplished by this way. In fact, speaking about the Balkans again, it is known that Orthodox Greeks and Slavs often viewed the Ottoman regime as a protector of their Church. In addition, one of the main reasons for the long-lasting Ottoman rule in the conquered lands was the Ottoman tax-land system. Unlike the old feudal system, this system guaranteed the peasant’s land use through the *mîrî* land (State owned land that was transferred to those who use the right of disposition) regime⁶.

The Ottomans have been called “Turks” by the Western world for centuries. In the Modern Age, fear for the “Turk” has manifested as activities and efforts of “marginalization”, “vilification” and therefore “disparagement”. Turks have been the main representative of the “other” for Europeans for centuries, from the very beginning of Muslim-Christian contact⁷. However, the Ottoman Empire was not only a source of fear for the Western world, but also a source of great curiosity and fascination. In the West, most literary scientific works were written against the Ottomans, who were described as “*infidel*”. Thus, for centuries, the Ottomans were not only unlikeable and feared by Europeans, but also appealing and attractive. In addition to being “foreigners” for historical and geographical reasons, their traditions became the focus of interest for researchers and scholars as they were

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- 3 The most distinguished group of the household cavalry troops in the Ottoman military system. Erhan Afyoncu, “Sipahi”, *DİA*, 37 (2009): 256-58.
 - 4 The dictionary meaning of “*istimâlet*” is «to predispose, to appeal, to win the heart». In Ottoman chronicles it meant: «to look after the people, especially non-Muslim subjects, and be lenient towards them». Treating the people of conquered places well, protecting them, ensuring the security of life and property against external enemies, granting freedom in religious matters, facilitating taxation are the main elements of Ottoman *istimâlet*. See: Mücteba İlgürel, “İstimalet”, *DİA*, 27 (2001): 362.
 - 5 A document issued by the order of the rulers to grant special rights to certain states, groups and individuals. See: Mübahat S. Kütükoğlu “Ahidname”, *DİA*, 1 (1988): 536-40.
 - 6 Halil İnalcık, *Doğu Batı, Makaleler II* (Ankara: Doğu Batı Yayınları, 2008), 248, 96-110. On Ottoman provincial administration and the fief system, see also Halil İnalcık, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Klasik Çağ (1300-1600)*, trans. Ruşen Sezer (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 1995), 108-23. The work was first published in English. See Halil İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire, Classical Age (1300-1600)* (London: Nicholson Publishing, 1973).
 - 7 Mustafa Soykut, *Papalık ve Venedik Belgelerinde Avrupa’nın Birliği ve Osmanlı Devleti (1453-1683)* (İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2007), 17, 24.

close or neighbors. In short, many works depicting the Ottomans and providing information about them appeared in the XVI and XVII centuries⁸. In many of these works, when Western historiography tried to explain the success of Ottoman progress, the concepts such as “religious fanaticism”, “oppression”, “persecution” were used, contrary to the information given above⁹.

Today it is still evident that such images persist in Western historiography. However a significant effort in consulting Ottoman and Turkish sources by historians would lead to a more objective perspective on the complex relationships between the Ottoman and Christian worlds.

The issue of Eastern European History Review titled *Central and South-Eastern Europe between the Christian and Ottoman Worlds: conflicts, encounters and compromises (XVI-XVIII centuries)*, contains 14 articles on the topic. This issue presents articles by researchers from different countries such as Italy, Hungary, Romania, Poland and Türkiye and was prepared in collaboration with *Vilmos Fraknói Vatican Historical Research Group* (ELKH-PPKE-PTE).

I extend my sincere appreciation to the director of EEHR, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Alessandro Boccolini for offering me the special editorship of this issue of the journal.

Dr. PhD. Canan Parmaksızoğlu Aksoy
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8 Giovanni Ricci, *Ossessione turca. In una retrovia cristiana dell'Europa moderna* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2002), 41; Soykut, *Papalık ve Venedik Belgelerinde*, 19-24.

9 İncalcık, *Doğu Batı, Makaleler II*, 248.

THE VILMOS FRANKÓI VATICAN HISTORICAL RESEARCH GROUP (ELKH-PPKE-PTE)

The *Vilmos Fraknói Vatican Historical Research Group* of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the Péter Pázmány Catholic University was established in the June of 2012 as the 'Impetus' Church History Research Group in the frame of the Church History Research Institute of the University founded by Rector Péter Erdő in 1999. It carries on independently the latter's publications (*Bibliotheca Historiae Ecclesiasticae Universitatis Catholicae de Petro Pázmány Nuncupatae*) and researches in Rome and in Vienna, with the involvement of academic and other funding sources. From 1st July 2017 onwards it performs its activity within the framework of the Supported Research Places Program of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences visualizing its goals and professional identity also in its name. The official name from 2022: ELKH-PPKE-PTE *Vilmos Fraknói Vatican Historical Research Group*.

Its examinations concentrate decisively on political, diplomatic, cultural and institutional history. Its priority task is the systematic publication and processing of sources that has been heavily neglected since the age of positivism. The Vatican collections serve as the primary place of research, completed by the relating material – primarily in thematic context – of the Hungarian and Vienna archives and manuscript collections. Its publications provide space to the results of revealing of sources and historiographic works according to their scholarly profile (*Collectanea Textuum et Studiorum*), and separately to the Hungarian researches in the Vatican due to its particular importance (*Collectanea Vaticana Hungariae*). The long-term aim of the research institute is to serve as the professional framework of the establishment and efficient operation of an independent Hungarian institute of history in Rome of purely scientific nature. Owing to its academic background it pays special attention to the education of the future historian generation, to the engagement of students in certain phases of its work.

The main international cooperative partners are: Università della Tuscia (CESPoM-Centro Studi sull'Età dei Sobieski e della Polonia Moderna), Universität Wien (Institut für Historische Theologie), Deutsches Historisches Institut in Rom, Università Pontificia Gregoriana (Facoltà di Storia e Beni Culturali della Chiesa), Archivio Apostolico Vaticano. The relevant common publications are published by Edizioni Setta Città and Duncker & Humblot

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NUNCIO GIROLAMO MARTINENGO'S REPORTS ON THE MILITARY EVENTS OF 1552

ABSTRACT

One of the most famous periods of the anti-Ottoman wars was the year 1552. This was the time when the Ottoman armies captured among others the castles of Temesvár, Szolnok and Drégely which were originally in the hands of King Ferdinand I Habsburg of Hungary. The famous siege of Eger and the battle of Palást also happened this year. We have a special opportunity for a fresh view of the turbulent events of the war, provided by the examination of the reports written by Girolamo Martinengo. He was the nuncio sent by Pope Julius III to the court of King Ferdinand I. In these reports, the nuncio told in detail about the events of the war in Hungary, not only reporting in a factual and informative manner but also interpreting and commenting. This gives us a special opportunity to examine how the court of Ferdinand I saw the events, from whom did the nuncio obtain his information and what was the Holy See interested in the affairs and developments in Hungary? In addition, the reports show us how the Hungarian theatre of war was integrated into the grand European politics of the time.

KEYWORDS: Diplomacy; Kingdom of Hungary; anti-Ottoman wars; papacy; nuncio.

THE ANTI-OTTOMAN STRUGGLE AND HUNGARY

The year 1552 is one of the most significant and famous periods of the anti-Ottoman struggles of the 16th century in Hungary. The military events of this period determined the conditions of the era for a long time. Although historians internationally examine the Ottoman wars mainly in the context of the actions in the Mediterranean, the importance of the Hungarian theatre of war was well known throughout Europe in its own time, and countless reports and accounts were written about it, especially the sieges of Temesvár and Eger.

Among the diplomatic reports of the time, which were sent to Ferdinand I, King of Bohemia, Hungary, Archduke of Austria – brother of Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor – the accounts of Nuncio Girolamo Martinengo stand out. The discussion of these events will not be carried out by following a linear order. After presenting the news of the most notable military affairs, such as the sieges of Veszprém, Temesvár, Eger, and the Battle of Palást, I will highlight two important, not so well observed, although fascinating topics to the Hungarian and European public eye of the time: the question of King Ferdinand's military engagement and the campaign of Prince Maurice of Saxony in Hungary.

The fate of the Kingdom of Hungary was of particular importance to King Ferdinand I. After Buda was conquered by Sultan Suleiman in 1541 – and the eastern part of the country was given into the hands of King John Zápolya's widow and son, Isabella Jagiellon, and John Sigismund, as well as the Bishop of Várad, George Martinuzzi (György Fráter/Utyeszenics) – one of Ferdinand's main aims was to regain the lost eastern territories, later known as the Principality of Transylvania. A possibility opened for these purposes in 1551, notably when, under the leadership of George Martinuzzi, the Hungarian Holy Crown was obtained, the queen and John Sigismund were removed from Transylvania, and an army led by Giovanni Battista Castaldo was sent to the province. In the meantime, Ferdinand succeeded in having George Martinuzzi created a cardinal by Pope Julius III. However, distrust of Martinuzzi led to the king's soldiers assassinating the cardinal in December 1551, while the number of incoming news of an impending Ottoman invasion was growing.

Ferdinand endeavoured to be prepared for this, but the spring of 1552 brought one of the most critical periods for the Habsburgs. King Henry II of France invaded the Empire from the west, the German orders led by Maurice, Elector of Saxony revolted, while the Ottoman fleet attacked Italy and the land forces invaded the Kingdom of Hungary. The imperial main forces led by Kara Ahmed Pasha attacked from the south and captured important elements of the Hungarian border fort system, Temesvár and Lippa, while Ali Pasha of Buda occupied Veszprém and the smaller keeps around Buda, destroying the Christian armies sent against him at Palást. The two Ottoman troops united under Szolnok, and after the castle was taken, they moved against Eger. However, the castle, defended by Captain István Dobó, demonstrated heroic resistance and managed to repel the attackers. Meanwhile, Ferdinand invested all his efforts into organizing the defence, sending reinforcements to the Hungarian front and even contemplated his own personal military engagement. Not surprisingly, Nuncio Martinengo, who was at his court, kept Rome constantly informed of military events in Hungary in his reports.

MARTINENGO AND THE OTTOMAN ISSUE

The Ottoman question was a central feature of Martinengo's weekly reports¹. He was particularly concerned with Transylvanian politics, especially with the following matters: the actions of George Martinuzzi and Isabella, the fate of Castaldo's troops, and the ever-changing (domestic) politics. Nevertheless, due to conflicting pieces of information, Martinengo also struggled to comprehend Transylvanian politics. At times he concluded that the final demise was near, at others he felt that affairs and circumstances in the province were improving, and then in his following week's account he stated the exact opposite viewpoint on more than one occasion. What he clearly perceived, however, was that the forces

1 About Martinengo: Viktor Kanász, "The life and work of the Abbot and Nuncio Girolamo Martinengo in Hungary", *Specimina Nova Pars Prima Sectio Mediaevalis*, 10 (2019) 211-30; Id., *Magyarország és a Szentszék a 16. század közepén. Girolamo Martinengo nuncius és a Magyar Királyság (1550-1554)* (PhD diss., University of Pécs, 2022).

sent to hold the province were constantly struggling with insufficient supplies and kept on asking for reinforcements. According to the nuncio, the army commander, Castaldo, had serious doubts as to whether Transylvania could avoid falling under the Ottoman's control, since he was reluctant to believe that it was manageable to keep the province in royal hands².

The difficulties are truly illustrated by the failures of 1552. One of the first significant events of the year was the "Peril of Szeged". On the night of 20–21 February, a Christian army surprised the Ottoman-held settlement, the palisade of which was successfully occupied, but the castle remained to be obtained by the Turks³. The highly publicised news had already been the subject of discussions in Vienna by 28 February⁴. Nevertheless, it was not until 7 March that Martinengo, who was in Bratislava, reported the unexpected military successes to Rome. According to his accounts, the castle was besieged by the Hungarians and Germans under Bernardo de Aldana, but the Pasha of Buda was on his way to rescue the keep⁵. These remarks were indeed credible, as the castle was failed to be seized, and Hadim Ali, Pasha of Buda, defeated the Christian troops on 1 March⁶. Shortly after the news arrived in Vienna, on 10 March, the nuncio reported that Szeged had been recaptured by the Ottomans⁷.

The newsworthiness of the affair on a European scale is demonstrated by the fact that the incidents were known throughout Italy. In addition to Martinengo, the Venetian

- 2 Helmut Goetz, ed., *Nuntiatur des Girolamo Martinengo (1550-1554)* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1965), letter 116. Castaldo has already wished to resign several times, further see ÖStA HHStA UA AA Kt. 67. Konv B. 1552. fol. 58r. The international context of the war more recently: Fodor Pál, *The Unbearable Weight of Empire. The Ottomans in Central Europe. A Failed Attempt at Universal Monarchy (1390-1566)* (Budapest: RCH HAS, 2015), 103-129; Zoltán Korpás and János B. Szabó, "If they came as a legation, they are many, if they are soldiers, they are few". The military background of the 1551 attempt to unite Hungary", in *Isabella Jagiellon, Queen of Hungary (1539-1559)*, eds. Ágnes Máté and Teréz Oborni (Budapest: MTA BTK, 2020), 147-62.
- 3 Péter Kulcsár, ed., *Humanista történetírók* (Budapest: Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó, 1977), 596-600; Sándor László Tóth, "Két világ között: Tót Mihály és a "szegedi veszedelem" 1552-ben", in *Oszmán-magyar viszony a 16-18. században*, ed. Zsuzsanna J. Újváry (Budapest: Szent István Társulat, 2020), 96-7.
- 4 Imre Szántó, *A végvári rendszer kiépítése és fénykora Magyarországon. 1541–1593* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1985), 85; D. Csaba Veress, *A szegedi vár* (Budapest: Zrínyi Katonai Kiadó, 1986), 57-8.
- 5 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 53.
- 6 Szántó, *A végvári*, 88-93; Miklós Istvánffy, *Istvánffy Miklós magyarok dolgairól írt históriája. Tályai Pál XVII. századi fordításában*, I/2, ed. Péter Benits (Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, 2003), 174-79; Tóth, "Két világ között", 105-09; Zoltán Péter, Bagi "Mohácstól Zsitvatorokig (1526-1606)", in *Magyarország hadtörténete II.* ed. Kálmán Mészáros (Budapest: Zrínyi Kiadó, 2020), 32-3.
- 7 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 55. Castaldo only notified the emperor about the defeat on 4 March. Veress, *A szegedi vár*, 65.

Nuncio⁸, and even Pope Julius III has expressed their opinions on the matter. According to Del Monte's letter to Martinengo, the Pope declared that he did not consider the occupation of Szeged to be a favourable move, since it would upset the Ottomans a great deal resulting in a possible attack, which the Holy Father did not want, due to the fact that hardly any help could be expected from others. The emperor was very preoccupied and the Pope himself required help as well⁹. On the same day, King Ferdinand's envoy to Rome, Don Diego Lasso, also articulated Rome's joy and concerns about the seizure of Szeged, as they were anxious that this might aggravate the Turks¹⁰. The consequent acts ultimately vindicated the Pope's stance.

Meanwhile, increasingly worrying news arrived from Istanbul. By the end of April, it has already been discussed at the Viennese court that the Sultan had threatened with war if John Sigismund was not permitted to return to Transylvania. A month later, rumours started to circulate about Suleiman's personal arrival¹¹.

The Ottoman troops eventually launched an offensive. One of the first major theatres of these was Veszprém. On 30 May, Martinengo reported that the Turks were at Veszprém, "a bishop's town in Hungary", which is near Styria, insufficiently supplied with Hungarian troops, and in a poor condition, certainly being taken without the hope of liberation¹². On 5 June, the nuncio had already heard about the capture of the castle on 1 June and the massacre of its guards, which caused great discontent among the Hungarians¹³. On 2 July, Cardinal Del Monte, the Secretary of State, replied to the Nuncio. In his letter he informed him that the loss of Veszprém devastated the Pope and the College of Cardinals¹⁴. Ferdinand I also informed the Holy See in a letter about the loss of Veszprém and the Ottoman attacks on Transylvania, seeking for aids from Rome. The Pope set up a commission of seven

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8 Franco Gaeta, ed., *Nunziature di Venezia. (2 gennaio 1552–14 luglio 1554)*, vol. 6 (Roma: Istituto Storico Italiano per l'età Moderna e Contemporanea, 1967), 76.

9 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 57. The European newsworthiness of the events: Thuani, Jac[ques] Aug[uste], *Historiarum sui temporis opera*, 1 (s.l. 1609), 190–92.

10 August von Druffel, ed., *Briefe und Akten zur Geschichte des sechzehnten Jahrhunderts. mit besonderer Rücksicht auf Bayerns Fürstenhaus. Beiträge zur Reichsgeschichte*, II: 1552. (München: M. Reiger'sche Universitäts-Buchhandlung, 1880), 266, 295.

11 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 68, 73; Druffel, *Briefe*, 449. Compare: this was a familiar theme in Rome and Venice as well, e.g., Druffel, *Briefe*, 152, 174–75; Gaeta, *Nunziature*, 91.

12 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 74. The castle was surrounded on 20 May, and news of the siege spread through the court on 28 May. Organising the liberation of the keep began during the siege, although it was not successful. E.g., MNL OL E 21-1552.06.01.

13 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 75; Istvánffy, *História*, 182–84; Kulcsár, *Humanista*, 608–09.

14 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 78. Compare: HHStA ÖStA Rom, *Correspondenz*, 13. 1550–1555. 207V, 211V

cardinals to deal with the matter¹⁵. In addition, the Venetian nuncio also reminisced about the siege of Veszprém in his account of 18 June, however, he shared with Del Monte the less authentic but all the more fascinating news he had heard from a Czech nobleman¹⁶.

After the occupation of Veszprém, the Pasha of Buda turned against the Hungarian holds surrounding his seat. Martinengo also disclosed these incidents in detail. He discussed the siege of Drégely, defended by György Szondi. He noted that it was a small but well-fortified and guarded stronghold of the Esztergom archbishopric¹⁷. Similarly, the invasion of Buják and the castle of Ság, once a Premonstratensian monastery, are also included in his records. The nuncio pointed out here that the loss of these two small keeps was also dangerous, due to their close proximity to the mines of Upper Hungary¹⁸.

He also commemorated the Battle of Palást, which resulted in a great defeat from the Christians' perspective. On 12 August, he noted that the Pasha of Buda had gathered men to fight a battle with the Christians, thus, on 9 August he attacked Erasmus von Teufel with 15 000 men. After the battle, only a few Germans and Italians survived, and although the Bishop of Vác was killed, many Hungarians managed to escape. According to the nuncio, there was no one to guard the frontier after the combat, and regardless of the fact that the Ottomans had suffered significant losses, they were still capable to cause further damages¹⁹. The gravity of the battle and the contemporary value of the news are demonstrated by the fact that the Venetian nuncio and the nuncio of Charles V both reported the events²⁰.

The southern affairs did not escape his attention either; he was also aware that the Turkish commanders who had sacked Slavonia had retreated after the capture of Csázma²¹. The nuncio also disclosed the siege of Szolnok. In his note on 8 September

15 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 78; Tusor Péter and Nemes Gábor, eds., *Consistorialia Documenta Pontificia de Regnis Sacrae Coronae Hungariae (1426–1605)* (Budapest-Roma: Gondolat Kiadó, 2011), 105; Tusor Péter, "A konstanzi bulla "alkalmazása". A magyar királyi főkegyúri jog a 15-16. században", in "*Causa unionis, causa fidei, causa reformationis in capite et membris*", eds. Attila Bárány and László Pószán (Debrecen: Printart-Press, 2014), 236.

16 Gaeta, *Nunziature*, 123.

17 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 80. Compare, Kulcsár, *Humanista*, 609-11. King Ferdinand informed Charles V of the seizure of the castle on the 15th. Korpás Zoltán, "I. Ferdinánd levelezése V. Károly melletti követével, Juan Alonso de Gámizzal. (1542-1556)", *Fons*, 16 (2009): 343.

18 Goetz, *Martinengo*, 83, 81. According to Castaldo, the castle (*Arcem Buyack*) was repaired by the Turks shortly after the siege. ÖStA HHStA UA AA Kt. 68. Konv A. 1552. 153v.

19 Goetz, *Martinengo*, 87. On the same day, Ferdinand I reported the battle to his envoy being at the side of Charles V. Korpás, *I. Ferdinánd*, 344.

20 Heinrich Lutz, ed., *Nuntiaturen des Pietro Camaiani und Achille de Grassi. Legation des Girolamo Dandino (1552-1553)* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1959), 96-97. Gaeta, *Nunziature*, 145, 165.

21 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 90. Compare, Korpás, *I. Ferdinánd*, 344; Szabolcs

1552, he declared that the castle was besieged, which was well equipped with artillery and troops, but would require two thousand men to defend it, however, only a thousand were available there²².

WHAT WAS LOST AND WHAT IS LEFT – THE SIEGE OF TEMESVÁR AND EGER

The nuncio also provided a comprehensive account of the actions of the Ottoman army. The first significant point of it was the strategically important city of Temesvár, defended by István Losonczi. On 5 June, the nuncio wrote that rumour had it that Ahmed Pasha would construct a bridge on the Tisza to besiege Temesvár, Szolnok and Eger, as the Ottoman armies considered it unreasonable to march towards Austria²³. Twenty days later, it became a certainty for him that the Turks were moving against Temesvár²⁴. The siege of the keep was then disclosed several times. On 13 July, the nuncio still expressed his hopes for victory²⁵, but by 18 July he saw a much less significant chance of it²⁶. On 26 July and 2 August, he explained meticulously how gallantly Temesvár had been held so far by its exhausted defenders²⁷. The next day, however, breaking the chain of reports he had been writing every week or so, he informed the Holy See of the occupation of Temesvár, although he had almost no information about the details, including the circumstances of the captain's beheading²⁸. It was only a few days later when he could provide shed some new light on the latter event²⁹. However, Martinengo was not the only one interested in these affairs; the fate of Temesvár was being followed all over Europe, for example, the news of the two sieges of the fortress reached not just Charles V, but the nuncio as well³⁰.

Varga, *Europe's Leonidas: Miklós Zrínyi, Defender of Szigetvár (1508-1566)* (Budapest: RCH HAS, 2016), 181.

- 22 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 90. Compare, Gaeta, *Nunziature*, 158; Thuani, *Historiarum*, 195; Korpás, *I. Ferdinánd*, 345-46; Druffel, *Briefe*, 770; Herrmann, Johannes Wartenberg, Günther Winter and Christian, eds., *Politische Korrespondenz des Herzogs und Kurfürsten Moritz von Sachsen*, vol. 6. (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2006), 516.
- 23 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 75.
- 24 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 76. Two days later, on 27 July, Ferdinand I sent a note to his envoy from Passau, who was at his brother's side, that Temesvár was being successfully defended, although they needed a thousand more men, and Castaldo complained that he did not have enough capacity. He subsequently informed the emperor of the fate of Temesvár. Korpás, *I. Ferdinánd*, 342-44. Compare, Thuani, *Historiarum*, 213-17; Kulcsár, *Humanista*, 606.
- 25 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 81.
- 26 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 82.
- 27 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 83, 84.
- 28 «[...] after I was informed about the fall of Temesvár, although I don't know precisely what happened, I will write the news». Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 85.
- 29 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 86.
- 30 Druffel, *Briefe*, 705, 733. Georg Kupke, ed., *Nuntiaturen des Pietro Bertano*

The siege of Eger in 1552 is one of the most famous military affairs of early modern Hungary. Interestingly, the first mention of the city in Martinengo's accounts dates from a year earlier, in 1551³¹. It became the centre of attention in the following year, after the fall of Drégely. The nuncio's excellent geographical knowledge is supported by the fact that he considered the fall of Drégely and Buják a vital issue, as their garrisons protected the road to Transylvania and Eger³². By that time already, he highlighted that Eger was a famous city of great significance due to its location, but unfortunately, the Turks were marching against it. He also listed the characteristics of the town's fortifications: he was aware that the castle was not very secure, since it was well fortified and manned, but there was a hill from which the keep could be held under fire, making it weak and less resilient³³. On 16 September, he documented the beginning of the siege – starting on 11 September – and on 25 September he wrote that according to some reports «the enemy had abandoned the siege of Eger». This is one example of the many hoaxes circulating in the Viennese court³⁴. A week later, on 2 October, he received information on two major assaults which were repulsed by the Eger defenders, who, he says, were well prepared for the attack. As an example, he recounts that they burned everything within a radius of 8–10 km around the castle, leaving the besieging army without any food³⁵. On 9 October, the news of Captain Dobó's famous oath can also be found at Martinengo, according to which the defenders of Eger would rather die than surrender the castle. Besides these recollections, he also emphasized that the Turks were exhausted³⁶. By 16 October, he could provide Rome some good news indeed: the Turks were disappointed by the failed invasions and were being decimated by a plague reportedly killing hundreds of people a day. They are unable to stabilize the public sentiment among the besiegers neither with attempts to convince, nor with threats. The Ottoman soldiers expressed their desire to go home, but Ali, the

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und Pietro Camaiani 1550-1552 (Berlin, 1901), 101-02. Gaeta, *Nunziature*, 141-43, 148. Fake news about the siege, see Gaeta, *Nunziature*, 731., Herrmann, Wartenberg and Winter, *Korrespondenz*, 490.

- 31 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 33. Compare, Gustav Turba, ed., *Venetianische Depeschen vom Kaiserhofe (Dispacci di Germania)*, voll. I-II (Wien: Kaiserliche Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1892), 448.
- 32 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 81. Szántó, *A végvári*, 145. Ferdinand also interpreted the advancements as the Ottoman commanders aiming to cut off the road to Transylvania. Korpás, *I. Ferdinánd*, 343.
- 33 This can be identified with the Almagyar hill or Királyszéke. Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 83.
- 34 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 91-2. Numerous similar rumours were circulating in the later imperial city. Therefore, Ferdinand I believed to know that the Pasha of Buda had died during the siege of Eger. Korpás, *I. Ferdinánd*, 347-53; Gaeta, *Nunziature*, 149, 165.
- 35 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 93.
- 36 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 94.

Pasha of Buda, is forcing the siege. The Christian armies fortified Győr (which he called the gateway to Austria)³⁷, fearing that it would be the next stronghold to be attacked after Eger³⁸.

On 28 October, he had already been informed about the victory from ten days prior. In his account he noted, the walls of Eger Castle had been destroyed, some of the noblemen inside were killed and many wounded, but the siege had failed. The Ottomans tried in vain, but the defenders refused to accept any terms of surrender³⁹. Even on 5 November, he devoted his attention to the matter, mentioning that the Ottoman forces had retreated from Eger, leaving a lot of ammunition, food, and dead corpses behind – even though they previously considered the city to be the weakest among the other lost ones. According to Martinengo, «but the goodness of God, the virtue of the soldiers – half of whom were missing – and the diligence of the bishop, who took care [of the city] and kept more men there than usual, protected [Eger] for us»⁴⁰.

It was not only through Martinengo that Rome received information about the siege of the episcopal see, but also, among others, from the Venetian nuncio Ludovico Beccadelli, who repeatedly informed Cardinal Del Monte of the actions⁴¹. Thoroughly observing these sources it is apparent, that Nuncio Martinengo, with

37 Martinengo correctly assessed the key role of Győr in the defence of Austria and Vienna. Further see Géza Pálffy: *A császárváros védelmében. A győri főkapitányság története 1526-1598* (Győr: Győr-Moson-Sopron Megye Győri Levéltár, 1999).

38 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 96. Ferdinand I wrote to the court of Charles V a day later, mentioning among other things that the defenders of Eger were holding out and causing much damage to the besiegers. He also mentioned that he was confident that the Turks would abandon the siege when the bad weather arrived. Korpás, *I. Ferdinánd*, 346. On the demoralised state of the Ottoman army, the plight of Ali Pasha and the plague among the besiegers, see: MNL OL P 1314. No. 12962. and No. 17286., Szántó, *A végvári*, 231, 234; Herrmann, Wartenberg and Winter, *Korrespondenz*, 536. It is possible that Ottoman soldiers who contracted the plague in here also brought the disease back to Constantinople. Tamás Kruppa, “Pestisjárvány és háború a 16. századi Magyarországon”, in *Dögvészkalauz. Járványok és gyógyításuk története az ókortól napjainkig*, eds. Dóra Czeferner and Tamás Fedeles (Pécs: Kronosz Könyvkiadó, 2021), 102-103.

39 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 97. On the very same day, Ferdinand I wrote to the court of Charles V with news of the end of the siege. Korpás, *I. Ferdinánd*, 353. Compare, Herrmann, Wartenberg and Winter, *Korrespondenz*, 536.

40 Goetz, *Martinengo*, 98. Miklós Oláh, the bishop of Eger truly spared no effort to help the defence of the castle, for example, he even monetised his gold pots to send material aid. Pongrácz Sörös, “Egy fejezet Oláh Miklós életéből”, *Katolikus Szemle*, 19/2 (1905): 130.

41 Gaeta, *Nunziature*, 158, 165, 170, 174, 177. Maurice of Saxony announced on the 28th that the Turks had retreated. The siege was also commemorated in the contemporary newspapers of the time. Druffel, *Briefe*, 796, 825; Herrmann–Wartenberg–Winter, *Korrespondenz*, 490, 516-17, 535. On the reception of the news in Rome: HHStA ÖStA Rom, *Correspondenz*, 13. 1550-1555. 249v.

his geographic and military knowledge, correctly assessed the importance of Eger. His reports also reflect when news arrived in Vienna and how military affairs were perceived in Ferdinand's immediate environment. Comparing the content of these reports with our current historical knowledge it can be concluded that the nuncio's information was mostly accurate, but in some cases, false reports were obtained. Martinengo, however, was not only informed in Viennese circles: we know, for example, that Castaldo also corresponded with him, initiating the exchange between the parties as early as 20 August 1552 regarding the need to fortify Eger. On 25 November 1552 he cited the battle of Eger as an admirable and exemplary case to the nuncio.⁴²

Overall, Martinengo wrote several times, in varying degrees of detail, usually based on authentic information, about the Ottoman advance towards Eger and the siege itself. Therefore, in reality, Rome and the papacy devoted significant attention to the events and the development of the theatre of war in Hungary, thus, the siege of Eger was not a matter of indifference for papal diplomacy as well.

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THE BROKEN PROMISE – THE KING AT THE HEAD OF THE HUNGARIAN ARMIES

The almost constant attacks by the Ottoman troops led to the emergence of the idea that King Ferdinand himself would go to war⁴³. The monarch seems to have put his faith in the concept. On 29 February 1552, at the Hungarian Diet, he declared that he would be personally present with the army, and that the noble orders should not delay, «for the enemy does not sleep, and now one hour worth a year»⁴⁴. It was also declared in the acts that in case of the Sultan attacked Hungary, the emperor, accompanied by his two sons, would confront the enemy with his entire military force⁴⁵.

Martinengo's report addressed the issue, specifically discussing the necessary actions if the king or one of his sons went to war against the Ottomans⁴⁶. As much as King Ferdinand desired to lead the campaign personally, the geopolitical situation intervened. The monarch, on the command of his brother, Charles V, was requested to go to Linz and then Passau to negotiate with the rebelling imperial orders. This forced the king to stay away from the borders during the most critical months, thus he was unable to send the necessary troops to the Hungarian theatre of operations⁴⁷.

42 Goetz, *Martinengo*, 325, 331-32.

43 E.g., Vilmos Fraknói, ed., *Magyar Országgyűlési emlékek. Magyar Királyság (1526-1606), Erdély (1540-1699)*, vol. 3: 1546-1556 (Budapest: MTA, 1876), 15.

44 Sándor Garády, "Türk Dániel naplója, 1548-1559", *Századok*, 5 (1871): 16.

45 Fraknói, *Országgyűlési*, 332, 336, 357-78. The Vatican Apostolic Archives also possesses old copies of the articles of the Diet. AAV, Misc. Arm. II, vol. 55, fol. 74-87r, on the king's marching to war: AAV, Misc. Arm. II, vol. 55, fol. 75r. On the same day, 29 March, King Ferdinand also wrote from Bratislava to Charles V, promising him a personal engagement on the behalf of him and Maximilian. Druffel, *Briefe*, 299.

46 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 60.

47 He also reported these events to Charles V in 1553, demonstrating that he was

On 13 July, the nuncio discussed that, despite the difficulties encountered, Ferdinand had promised to arm himself or his son, Maximilian, by 10 August, but as it was unlikely that the king would be able to send troops to Hungary, he wished to mobilise the army of Maurice of Saxony to fulfil this purpose. According to Martinengo, the monarch explained his absence to the Hungarians demanding his return by stating that he must remain in Passau, where he was suffering and labouring for the survival of the land and the country⁴⁸. The situation had not improved significantly by the beginning of August. On 7 August, Martinengo noted that Ferdinand was unable to come to Hungary, causing distress among its people, and that Archduke Maximilian believed that change cannot be expected in these circumstances⁴⁹.

Nevertheless, the news of a possible military engagement reached the Ottoman leaders, and when the Pasha of Buda discovered that Ferdinand was about to get involved in the military procedures, he declared his welcoming sentiments and expressed his hopes that this time, he, the Pasha, would have the chance to show the world that the real master of the country was not Ferdinand indeed, but his master, the sultan. Based on the records of the nuncio, at that time the king was still adamant about joining the forces, but there was no sign of actual participation taking place⁵⁰. Perhaps this is the reason why the French envoy to Venice was reluctant to believe that the king truly intended about going to war⁵¹.

This was still the case at the beginning of September: according to Martinengo, the king's march was further delayed, and the Hungarians were convinced that without his aid, the country would be lost. Ferdinand claimed that he personally wished to go and was not fleeing from battle⁵². The delay generated reproaches to which Ferdinand replied that he was doing all he could, but at the end, he personally had never been involved in leading a military operation in Hungary⁵³. Nevertheless, the idea arose whether Archduke Maximilian should attend to the forces, consequently he arrived in Hungary, in the Csallóköz⁵⁴. However, a possible

putting his brother's affairs before his own interests. Korpás, *I. Ferdinánd*, 355-63. Compare, Thuani, *Historiarum*, 213, Kulcsár, *Humanista*, 645-46.

48 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 81. On numerous occasions, the absence of the king was used by the nobles to justify their avoidance to go to war.

49 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 86. Although the king was in Passau, he also attended to Hungarian affairs from there, e.g., MNL OL P 419. A-41-No. 8.

50 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 89.

51 Druffel, *Briefe*, 750.

52 Therefore, according to the Nuncio, the only and most appropriate remedy to the problems that have arisen is for King John's son to return to Transylvania. Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 90.

53 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 91. According to Ferenc Forgách, a famous contemporary historian, «Ferdinand did not go to war personally – as was his habit to state – but continued to delay, as before. By chance or by grace, by the court men of wealth, and by his recurring financial problems simultaneously prevented him to act so». Kulcsár, *Humanista*, 611-12.

54 Gaeta, *Nunziature*, 159; Szántó, *A végvári*, 179.

campaign was prevented by the Archduke's serious illness, which became so severe that his life was feared⁵⁵.

The Hungarian nobility did not forget what had happened, and at the beginning of the following year King Ferdinand declared that he would have gone to war against the Turks personally if the siege of Eger had not already ended and if winter had not been in such close proximity⁵⁶. At the Diet of Sopron in 1553, Ferdinand explained to the orders how he interpreted the events of the previous year. He emphasized that a serious decision was made, namely, to launch a personal campaign against the Ottomans the previous year, and that everything was prepared for this endeavour, but upon his return to Vienna after the Diet, he was confronted with the unexpected news that a domestic unrest had broken out again in German territories. Therefore, not only out of respect for the emperor – but also because he expected substantial financial assistance against the Turks from the imperial court – he devoted all his might in trying to restore peace between Charles V and the rebellious princes, which efforts have proven to be fruitful. In addition, he did not fail to fortify the Hungarian outposts and to maintain an army in Hungary, Transylvania, and Slavonia. In the end, the campaign was cancelled, but the king was determined to keep his promise, which is why he summoned the orders. However, during the previous year, several castles fell, and the royal army suffered a severe strike due to the fact, that the orders were reluctant to take up arms despite being repeatedly called upon to do so. Therefore, Ferdinand «blamed the grievous events of the past year on the negligence and carelessness of the Hungarians», which stirred a great uproar⁵⁷. Regardless, the orders asked the king again – without any success – for him or his son to lead the armies in Hungary⁵⁸.

There was although one prince who eventually took an active part in the Hungarian military actions in 1552 with his army of thousands. He was none other than Maurice, Electoral Prince of Saxony, who had been fighting against Emperor Charles just a few months earlier.

FROM ENEMY TO ALLY – MAURICE OF SAXONY

We could whiteness how greatly Ferdinand needed an army to counter Ottoman attacks. In these desperate times, Prince Maurice was given a key role. On 12 March 1552, Martinengo reported that he had received information from Archduke Maximilian of Maurice's offer, namely that he would come to Hungary with three thousand cavalry men to fight the Turks, completely at his own expense⁵⁹. In order to fulfil the undertaking, Maurice had requested the release of his father-in-law,

55 Korpás, *I. Ferdinánd*, 347-52, 355-63.

56 Fraknoi, *Országgyűlési*, 405.

57 Fraknoi, *Országgyűlési*, 415, 417-18; Garády, *Türk*, 22.

58 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 118, Fraknoi, *Országgyűlési*, 420. On 17 April 1553, Canisius wrote in a letter that «it is uncertain whether our king is preparing to reconquer Hungary» Gábor Jablonkay SJ, «Jézus Társaságának első érintkezései Magyarországgal», *Katolikus Szemle*, 23/8 (1909): 828.

59 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 56., Druffel, *Briefe*, 222, 268, 457.

Philip of Hesse⁶⁰.

King Ferdinand and Prince Maurice first met in Linz on 19 April⁶¹. Although the negotiations were held in secret, the Nuncio remained in Linz and tried to obtain as much information as he could. In the meantime, he also had to face the fact that the news of the truce between his commissioner, the Pope, and the King of France – being concluded on 29 April – did not particularly delight Ferdinand⁶². Perhaps this factor contributed to the exclusion of Martinengo by the king from the negotiations in Passau. In his account of 3 May, the nuncio documented the incident, stating that on that same day, the monarch had informed him through a secret adviser that he could not stay long in Innsbruck. In response, Martinengo requested an audience, but the king handed over the commission of the investigation into Martinuzzi's murder and ordered him back to Vienna to take care of matter. The Nuncio, inevitably did not wished to be away from the Emperor and only whiteness the latest advancements from distance, therefore he insisted on staying to which the king reply was that «it is not good for you to come among people who look askance at you, who hate you»⁶³. It is dubious by all means whether the king was only thinking of the Protestant negotiating party in this case, or whether the reconciliation between Pope Julius III and Henry II also played a role.

Nevertheless, Rome continued to rely on the news received from the Nuncio on the negotiations⁶⁴. Thus, among other issues, he expressed his hopes to the king that Maurice would assist on the Hungarian field of battle⁶⁵. Ultimately, on 7 August, he broadcasted the binding of peace and the news of Maurice's confidence in his army of 13,000 infantry and 1,500 cavalry⁶⁶. The king was in dire need of this army in the Kingdom of Hungary, and therefore in his letter of 12 August, he asked Charles V to order Maurice to join as soon as possible⁶⁷. Maurice also urged the departure of the army, since his men began to disassemble when they learned that they had to come to Hungary⁶⁸.

60 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 58.

61 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 64. Compare, Kupke, *Nuntiaturen*, 368-70.

62 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 69, 71, 72.

63 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 71. letter. About the audience: ÖStA HHStA UA AA 72. Konv.B. fol. 111r.

64 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 72. At this time, and in the period that followed, the imperial diets became an increasingly difficult terrain. With the word of Alexander Koller, a "minefield" for the representatives of the Holy See. Alexander Koller, "La dieta di Augusta del 1582 come spazio di esperienza diplomatica. L'esempio dei rappresentanti della curia romana", in *Diplomatische Wissenskulturen der Frühen Neuzeit. Erfahrungsräume und Orte der Wissensproduktion*. ed. Guido Braun (Berlin-Boston: De Gruyter, 2018), 116.

65 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 80.

66 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 86; Lutz, *Nuntiaturen*, 77-8, 81; Turba, *Depeschen*, 542; Kulcsár, *Humanista*, 646; Thuani, *Historiarum*, 196-97, 217-18.

67 Szántó, *A végvári*, 106; Korpás, *I. Ferdinánd*, 344.

68 Druffel, *Briefe*, 732.

The prince did indeed leave for Hungary, but his joy was not without its ups and downs. In addition to the mistrust that remained between the parties, on 21 August the nuncio wrote from Vienna that the soldiers of Maurice did not want to fight on the Hungarian front⁶⁹. In addition, a problem, which would cause issues later started to emerge, namely the small number of infantry and cavalry⁷⁰. Furthermore, on 8 September Martinengo disclosed that the prince had arrived with three thousand five hundred infantry and one thousand five hundred horsemen, who are selected soldiers, but insolent to those known to be religious⁷¹. Besides the above-mentioned matters, on 16 September the Nuncio had already expressed his worries that there was little confidence that Maurice would keep his oath of allegiance⁷².

The Saxon prince strengthened and fortified Győr (Raab), a key city for the defence of Vienna, in order to ward off a possible Ottoman attack⁷³. Furthermore, based on Martinengo's narrative, he was not only preparing a passive defence, but also planned to attack the archbishop's seat, Esztergom, in order to relieve Eger⁷⁴. In the end, the great attack on Esztergom was cancelled, but Maurice nevertheless sent a troop of mainly Hussars towards Esztergom, who earned a brilliant victory, drowning part of the enemy in the Danube and capturing more than a hundred Turks⁷⁵. The departure of the liberating army was also aborted. This may have been due to the fact that the assembled forces were considered too small for a notable

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- 69 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 88; Druffel, *Briefe*, 714; Turba, *Depeschen*, 545.
- 70 Lutz, *Nuntiaturen*, 97, 95; Turba, *Depeschen*, 546-48.
- 71 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 90. In a letter written to Castaldo on 14 August, King Ferdinand estimated that Maurice's army had 10-12,000 infantry and 3-4,000 cavalry. Szántó, *A végvári*, 235. Others estimated this sum to be somewhere between 11-16,000. E.g., István Sugár, *Az egri vár és viadala*. (Budapest: Zrínyi Katonai Kiadó, 1971), 102; Bagi, *Mohácstól*, 36. Korpás, *I. Ferdinánd*, 345-46, 355-63. On 13 August, the Venetian nuncio had knowledge of 4,000 cavalry and 10,000 infantries. Gaeta, *Nunziature*, 142-43, 148, 157. By 1 October, he knew about 10 000 infantry and 3 000 cavalry: Gaeta, *Nunziature*, 159. Compare. Herrmann, Wartenberg and Winter, *Korrespondenz*, 516-517.
- 72 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 96.
- 73 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 91. Compare, Korpás, *I. Ferdinánd*, 353. At this time, the opinion that the Turks would march on Győr and then attack Vienna from there was well known. Herrmann, Wartenberg and Winter, *Korrespondenz*, 471, 490-91.
- 74 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 97. Gaeta, *Nunziature*, 165, 170. The background to the news may have been that the king had repeatedly urged Maurice, and Castaldo had also strongly urged the prince to launch a liberating campaign on Eger, or if not, at least to move on to Esztergom. Sugár, *Az egri*, 103, Szántó, *A végvári*, 235-37. E.g., ÖStA HHStA UA AA Kt. 67. Konv B. 1552, fol. 15r-18r, 49r-50v, 102r. On 18 October, however, Maurice complained that he had not received permission from Ferdinand to attack, consequently there was nothing else to do but defend the border, and that he would have a chance to attack in the spring, when his health improved. Herrmann, Wartenberg and Winter, *Korrespondenz*, 516-17.
- 75 Druffel, *Briefe*, 796, Herrmann, Wartenberg and Winter, *Korrespondenz*, 536.

campaign⁷⁶. Thus, although the keep of Győr was still fortified, there was no significant altercation between his army and the Ottoman troops⁷⁷.

During the span of autumn, the prince received increasingly worrying news from his estates, also an epidemic broke out in his army, which urged the prince to leave, and after defending Eger, he set off for home between 28 October and 1 November⁷⁸. In his notes of 29 December, the nuncio also noted that, as far as he knew, the prince had stayed in Wrocław, since he had caught the French disease, syphilis – which was raging at the time – and tried to heal from it⁷⁹.

The failure of the offensive campaign led to a very negative assessment of Maurice's activities in Hungary by his Hungarian contemporaries and later historiography. However, it was not without results, on the contrary. It expressed a strong message, which Ferdinand – and the Ottoman leadership – clearly perceived. The king believed that the military march of his former enemy on his side demonstrated to the Ottomans they are not to trust the French, who believed that the imperial orders were against the emperor, also urging them to be more cautious⁸⁰.

CONCLUSION

Closely investigating the most substantial affairs of Martinengo's nunciature, the war –rooted in the Habsburg–Valois antagonism, and the alliance of the Protestant imperial orders, which set much of the Empire on fire as well as to northern Italy – has a prominent part. As these advancements had a major influence on the decisions of Pope Julius III and Ferdinand I, Martinengo alertly followed the news he received and obtained, for e.g., about the siege of Parma, the campaign of Maurice of Saxony, and the negotiations in Linz and Passau. In fact, we can assume that one of the focal points of his reports was this great power rivalry, which not only seized the nuncio's attention but also occupied Ferdinand I's military capacities. This is important to emphasize, since this fundamental geostrategic fact tends to be forgotten in Hungarian literature in the context of the castle wars of the 1550s, and Ferdinand I's personal military engagement and the lack of imperial assistance. Regardless of much attention Martinengo devoted to the matters of the West, the other subject of his interest was clearly the course of the Ottoman wars. The political and, above all, military events in Hungary between 1551–1552 constitutes a vital part of his reports. From the very beginning of his Nunciature, he tracked the fate of

76 Compare, Korpás, *I. Ferdinánd*, 347–32.

77 Goetz, *Martinengo*, 98.

78 Druffel, *Briefe*, 793–94, 796, 805; Herrmann, Wartenberg and Winter, *Korrespondenz*, 1158; Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 97. Korpás, *I. Ferdinánd*, 353.

79 Goetz, *Martinengo*, letter 104. Archduke Maximilian was also aware of Maurice's illness. Druffel, *Briefe*, 809, Johannes Herrmann, "Zu Krankheiten und Tod des Herzogs und Kurfürsten Moritz von Sachsen", *Neues Archiv für sächsische Geschichte*, 81 (2010): 69–71. Up until today, it is still unclear exactly what disease the Prince was suffering from, perhaps he was infected with the plague.

80 Korpás, *I. Ferdinánd*, 263; Barnabás Guitman, Zoltán Korpás, Ferenc Tóth, et al., "A magyarországi török várháborúk nemzetközi háttere, 1547–1556", *Világtörténet*, 9/2 (2019): 286.

the eastern part of the country closely. He also disclosed the unification procedures and regularly issued reports on Castaldo's army in Transylvania. Similarly to his contemporaries, Martinengo, despite his best efforts, had difficulties to comprehend the affairs of Transylvania. The main reason behind was Castaldo's contradictory and often exaggerated reports.

Sensibly, the anti-Ottoman struggles appear most often and most prominently in his reports in 1552, in one of the most momentous years of the castle wars. This is the period when he provided a detailed account of the progress of the Ottoman armies, week by week, including the unsuccessful attempt to recapture Szeged, the fall of Veszprém, the Ottoman seizure of Lippa, Szolnok, Drégely, Buják and Ság, and the Battle of Palást. He described most meticulously the fall of Temesvár, the famous siege of Eger and the heroic stand of the castle defenders.

He separately dedicated efforts to discuss the questions often raised by the Hungarian orders: when and why did Ferdinand I not personally join the war efforts against the Ottomans? In the context of this issue, a lot of evidence can be found on how Ferdinand agreed with Maurice of Saxony to march his army into Hungary, which, if it could not be a substitute for the original plans, signalled an important message to the Ottoman commanders.

At the same time, Martinengo wrote surprisingly little about the affairs of the Hungarian Church compared to the events of the war and was less receptive to the pressing problems of the disintegrating medieval church structures. This clearly demonstrates that during the reign of Ferdinand, both the papacy and the royal court were concerned with the fate of Hungary, and that the events in the kingdom were interpreted at a pan-European level. Consequently, it is a definitive refutation of the historical topos that the papacy and the Habsburg court considered the Kingdom of Hungary merely as a buffer zone. It should be pointed out, however, that outside of the episcopal sees and the cardinalate, ecclesiastical and religious matters were not in the centre of attention, and the nuncios, including Martinengo, taken Hungary primarily as a theatre of war, embedded in the framework of the pan-European anti-Ottoman struggle. This is the main reason why the nuncio paid that much attention to the war in Hungary.

ABBREVIATIONS

- AAV: Archivio Apostolico Vaticano
 Misc. Arm.: Miscellanea Armadi
 ELTE EKK: Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem Könyvtára
 MNL: Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár
 OL: Országos Levéltár
 ÖStA: Österreichisches Staatsarchiv
 HHStA: Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv
 UA: Ungarische Akten
 AA: Allgemeine Akten

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