

## CROATIAN NOBLE REFUGEES IN LATE 15<sup>th</sup> AND 16<sup>th</sup> CENTURY BANAT AND TRANSYLVANIA – PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

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In the late 15<sup>th</sup> century, the Ottoman pressure on the Kingdom of Croatia within the Hungarian Realm became unbearable and many nobles decided to leave their native land and resettle in another part of the realm, where their status would be recognised and service to the ruler continued. The nobility of southern Croatia sought refuge in various parts of Hungary, among which were Banat and Transylvania. Their arrival to the easternmost part of the state mostly happened before the division between the Habsburgs and the Zápolyas and their loyalty after 1526 was usually dictated by the majority within the community they settled into. In Banatian and Transylvanian sources the Croats are identified by their conspicuous surnames and the epithet *Croatus* (*Horváth*) and, sometimes, by their noble predicates which specified their original main estate. Many of them acquired possessions in their new places of residence, married into local noble families and performed various duties, mostly as commanders of the cavalry or castellans of important fortresses. Even though they adapted to the new environment, it seems that the Croats kept close to each other, which can be observed through their documents, connections and family ties. Putting aside the most famous example of George Martinuzzi, this overview will include the short case studies of Martinuzzi's compatriots – Mark Mišljenović of Kamičac, the Kučićs of Razvade, the Šušalićs of Lukarić, Nicholas Kolunić, the Benkovićs and Bojničićs of Plavno, and Cosma Petričević of Raduč.

**Keywords:** nobility, migrations, Croats, Banat, Transylvania, 15<sup>th</sup> century, 16<sup>th</sup> century.

### INTRODUCTION

The subject of migration of South Slavic noblemen to Banat and Transylvania<sup>1</sup> in the late medieval and early modern period, mainly as the result of Turkish pressure, is a promising topic which remains understudied in both South Slavic, Hungarian and Romanian historiographies, since it has never been systematically researched. While ex-Yugoslav authors mainly focused on the migrant families prior to their resettlement or on the first generation of nobles who came to Banat and Transylvania, Hungarian historians tried to make a more

<sup>1</sup> The use of these terms (Banat and Transylvania) for the late 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century may seem anachronistic, but due to frequent changes in the administrative and political map of southern and eastern part of the Hungarian Realm in that period, I will employ them throughout the text, having in mind primarily the borders from the age of the Principality of Transylvania and Turkish-occupied Banat.

synthetic approach, but it resulted in only a few studies or smaller monographs on certain influential families of South Slavic origin in the easternmost part of the Realm of St. Stephen. Romanian historiography became interested in the topic only recently, primarily dealing with the individuals who held important military or administrative offices on the territory of present-day Romania during the regimes of King Matthias Corvinus, Jagiellonian kings, Zápolya family, George Martinuzzi, Báthory family, Michael the Brave etc.

Taking into account the increased availability of the original documents and literature through a series of digital platforms on the internet, as well as the strengthening of cooperation between the historians and scholarly institutions of the region, future developments should include not only one- or two-author studies, but wider international and interdisciplinary projects that would shed more light on various aspects of the life of South Slavic noble individuals, families and communities in Transylvania and Banat – their family, marital and political networks, their cultural influences and written practices, their religion, their careers and their general position in the Transylvanian and Banatian society from the late 15<sup>th</sup> century up until the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The Turkish advance in the Balkans and South-East Europe was and still is a popular topic of the historiography of our region and beyond.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, the subject of war-induced migration of people (including both elites and wider population) is becoming increasingly interesting to the scholarly and non-scholarly audience due to present-day tendencies and current political developments which bear a certain degree of similarity to those of the past.<sup>3</sup> However, in depth analysis of the migrations between the parts of South-East Europe are yet to find their systematic researchers. We should bear in mind that, to some extent, this was a reversible process – while some noblemen and groups of people went to the Hungarian Kingdom, the others went to the Ottoman Empire. There were quite a few examples of several iterations of switching sides, although primarily in the early stages after the Ottoman conquest of South Slavic states. On this occasion, however, we will focus only on permanent resettlement of noblemen from Croatia proper to the easternmost part of the Hungarian Realm, namely Banat and Transylvania.

I intend to shed some light on the life and career of the representatives of lesser to middle-ranked nobility, primarily since the cases of magnates have – mostly – already been studied and there is no substantial data on lower strata of

<sup>2</sup> F. Adanır, S. Faroqhi (eds.), *The Ottomans and the Balkans: A Discussion of Historiography*, Leiden – Boston – Köln, 2002; H. W. Lowry, *The shaping of the Ottoman Balkans, 1350-1550: the conquest, settlement & infrastructural development of Northern Greece*, Istanbul, 2008; D. Nicolle, *Cross and Crescent in the Balkans: The Ottoman Conquest of Southeastern Europe (14th–15th Centuries)*, Barnsley, 2010; O.J. Schmitt (ed.), *The Ottoman Conquest of the Balkans: Interpretations and Research Debates*, Wien, 2016; S. Rudić, S. Aslantaş (eds.), *State and Society in the Balkans Before and After Establishment of Ottoman Rule*, Belgrade, 2017.

<sup>3</sup> D. Eltis (ed.), *Coerced and Free Migration: Global Perspectives*, Stanford, 2002; N. Fattori, *Migration and Community in the Early Modern Mediterranean. The Greeks of Ancona, 1510–1595*, Cham, 2019.

Croatian population (especially serfs) who may have followed their noble lords. Data suggests that the only reason for resettlement of the nobles was unsustainability of the southern border, along which their estates were located, under Ottoman advance in the last years of the 15<sup>th</sup> and first years of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. By the 1490s, the pressure on the Kingdom of Croatia within the Hungarian Realm became unbearable for the marcher nobility which endured Turkish raids for decades, especially since the fall of the Kingdom of Bosnia (1463). Without any significant subsidies from the central government and growing poor due to the lack of resources and depopulation of their possessions, many members of lesser and middle (known as *egregii*)<sup>4</sup> nobility decided to leave their native land, virtually as refugees, and resettle in another part of the Realm, where their status would be recognised and active service to the ruler or a magnate continued.<sup>5</sup>

The nobility of southern Croatia sought refuge in various regions, depending on the office they were given or network/faction they belonged to. It was common for different branches of the same family to resettle in entirely different parts of the Realm. The migration to Banat and Transylvania was just one direction in which the noble Croats went.<sup>6</sup> Their arrival to the easternmost part of the state mostly happened long before the division between the Habsburgs and the Zápolyas and their loyalty after 1526 was usually dictated by the majority within the community they settled into, but there were exceptions to this rule. The other key conclusion, although preliminary, is that, once in the far east of the Realm, most of the Croats made part of the same political network, keeping, at first, their original identification and identity, entering marital ties between themselves and mainly collaborating. In time, they adopted the customs of their new communities and fully blended in the society, some of them becoming Protestant and many of them corresponding in the Hungarian language, which was typical only for the elites of Transylvania.

#### HISTORIOGRAPHY, STATE OF RESEARCH AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES

Before setting out to explore the abundant new data which became available through digitisation, a researcher must review the achievements of previous historians and the methodological framework which was employed. The dominant questions are – which noble families and individuals were most thoroughly studied

<sup>4</sup> S. Miljan, *Plemićko društvo Zagrebačke županije za vladavine Žigmunda Luksemburškoga (1387.–1437.)*: doctoral dissertation, Zagreb, 2015, p. 23–25.

<sup>5</sup> I. Jurković, “Šesnaestostoljetna hrvatska raseljenička kriza i moderna sociološka terminologija”, *Društvena istraživanja* 14/4–5, 2005, p. 759–782.

<sup>6</sup> There were Croatian noble and non-noble communities in eastern, southern and northern Hungary, in Austrian lands etc. The most famous and the most studied Croatian community is the one in Burgenland (Croat. Gradišće, Hung. Órvidék) – M. Valentić, *Gradišćanski Hrvati od XVI stoljeća do danas*, Zagreb, 1970; B. Vranješ-Šoljan, *Gradišćanski Hrvati: između tradicije i suvremenosti*, Zagreb, 2005.

and by whom, what was the dominant approach in previous studies, what the old sources and those which have recently emerged offer to historians and, finally, how to improve the research in the future.

All South Slavic historiographies had a similar model of research. Namely, the studies were focused on the most notable individuals from the period of migration and on the first generations in the new environment. Having in mind the sheer number of Croatian noble families and individual migrants to Banat and Transylvania, either through their connections with duke John Corvinus, illegitimate son of King Matthias Corvinus, and his entourage in the 1490s and early 1500s, or by opting for Zápolya in the dynastic strife of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, it is quite surprising that there is practically no historian who studies this topic. The closest approach was made by Ivan Jurković who defended his PhD thesis *The Fate of the Croatian Noble Families in the Face of Ottoman Advance* in 2004, at Central European University in Budapest. Yet again, in his comprehensive articles on certain families, rich in source material, he did not focus on any of those that went to Transylvania or Banat.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, the Croatian noble migration remains the most understudied and the most promising topic for future research, in comparison with the noble migrants from Serbia or Bosnia. Croatian noble families were more numerous since they represented proper Hungarian nobility, originally belonging to the Hungarian Realm, unlike the Serbs (and presumably Bosnians, who were not confirmed in their titles by Hungarian kings), who had to earn their nobility by their service.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> I. Jurković, “Raseljena plemićka obitelj za osmanske ugroze: primjer Berislavića de Werhreka de Mala Mlaka (Dio prvi: Stjepan Berislavić Vrhrički i Malomlački)”, *Zbornik Odsjeka za povijesne znanosti Zavoda za povijesne i društvene znanosti Hrvatske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti* 20, 2002, p. 125–164; idem, “Raseljena plemićka obitelj za osmanske ugroze: primjer Berislavića de Werhreka de Mala Mlaka. (Dio drugi – Nasljednici Stjepana Berislavića tijekom 16. st.)”, *Zbornik Odsjeka za povijesne znanosti Zavoda za povijesne i društvene znanosti Hrvatske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti* 21, 2003, p. 119–181; idem, “Klasifikacija hrvatskih raseljenika za trajanja osmanske ugroze (od 1463. do 1593.)”, *Migracijske i etničke teme*, 19/2–3, 2003, p. 147–174; idem, “Socijalni status i prisilni raseljenici podrijetlom iz hrvatskih plemićkih obitelji u zemljama njihovih doseoba za trajanja osmanske ugroze”, *Zbornik Odsjeka za povijesne znanosti Zavoda za povijesne i društvene znanosti Hrvatske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti* 23, 2005, p. 63–85; idem, “Hrvatsko raseljeno plemstvo u korespondenciji Antuna Vrančića”, in V. Lakić (ed.), *Zbornik o Antunu Vrančiću*, Šibenik, 2005, p. 41–50; idem, “Osmanska ugroza, plemeniti raseljenici i hrvatski identitet”, *Povijesni prilozi* 31, 2006, p. 39–69; idem, “Ugrinovići od Roga – Raseljena obitelj plemenitog roda Šubića Bribirskih za trajanja osmanske ugroze”, *Zbornik Odsjeka za povijesne znanosti Zavoda za povijesne i društvene znanosti Hrvatske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti* 26, 2008, p. 71–85; idem, “Demográfiai válság az oszmánellenes háborúk idején: Magyar és horvát főurak és a horvát kizeleptülők / Demografska kriza u razdoblju protuosmanskih ratova: ugarski i hrvatski velikaši i hrvatski raseljenici”, in P. Fodor, D. Šokčević, J. Turkalj, D. Karbić (eds.), *A magyar-horvát együttélés fordulópontjai: intézmények, társadalom, gazdaság, kultúra / Prekretnice u suživotu Hrvata i Mađara: Ustanove, društvo, gospodarstvo i kultura*, Budapest / Budimpešta, 2015, p. 242–249, 294–301; idem, “Migracije. Raseljenička kriza za osmanske ugroze: ‘U baščini mojoj ne dadu mi priti’”, in M. Karbić (ed.), *Vrijeme sazrijevanja, vrijeme razaranja: Hrvatske zemlje u kasnome srednjem vijeku*, Zagreb, 2019, p. 99–113.

<sup>8</sup> A. Ivić, *Spomenici Srba u Ugarskoj, Hrvatskoj i Slavoniji tokom XVI i XVII stoleća*, Novi Sad, 1910; idem, *Istorija Srba u Ugarskoj: od pada Smedereva do seobe pod Čarnojevićem (1459–1690)*,

Hungarian historiography was far more interested in the topic in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, since it was compatible with the endeavour to publish most of the sources and, also, the genealogies and histories of noble families. Putting aside many short articles in specialised journals or brief notes in encyclopaedic volumes on the Hungarian nobility<sup>9</sup>, only two monographic accomplishments should be mentioned. The book of József Molnár on the Melić family of Bribir<sup>10</sup> and a group of publications by Emil Petrichevich Horváth on his own family.<sup>11</sup>

Romanian historiography was not particularly interested in South Slavic (especially Croatian) nobility in Banat and Transylvania as the primary subject of its research, maybe because, beside George Martinuzzi, none of the Croatian nobles had a key role in Transylvanian politics and maybe because those nobles were perceived as a part of the Hungarian elite and were eventually fully magyarised.<sup>12</sup> Some valuable data can, however, be traced on the margins of broader studies on Banat and Transylvania in the late medieval and early modern period. Only lately, some Romanian historians have begun to publish their studies focused on South Slavic notable individuals in present-day Romania.<sup>13</sup> Having in mind the fact that most of the new sources are to be found in Romanian and Hungarian archives (some of them in the Hungarian language, as well), the interest of researchers from these countries in this topic is more than valuable.

This brief overview of the state of research shows that it was rather limited, uneven and “capsuled” within national historiographies, both in methodological

Zagreb, 1914; V. Atanasovski, *Pad Hercegovine*, Beograd, 1979, p. 162–165. Also see the article “The Belmužević Family – The Fate of a Noble Family in South-East Europe during the Turbulent Period of the Ottoman Conquest (The 15th and the First Half of the 16th Century)” by Aleksandar Krstić and Adrian Magina, in this volume.

<sup>9</sup> Most of these articles were published in the Hungarian journal for heraldry and genealogy *Turul*. Also see: I. Nagy, *Magyarország családai: czimerekkel és nemzékrendi táblákkal*, vols. I–XIII, Pest, 1857–1868; B. Kempelen, *Magyar nemes családok*, vols. I–XI, Budapest, 1911–1932 *Arcanum DVD könyvtár IV. – Családtörténet, heraldika, honismeret*, Budapest, 2003 (DVD edition).

<sup>10</sup> J. Molnár, *A Subich-nemzetségből származó Bribiri Melith-család-vázlatos története*, Hajdúnánás, 1939.

<sup>11</sup> E. Petrichevich Horváth, *A Mogorovich nemzetségbeli Petrichevich család története és oklevéltára – A Petrichevich család általános története*, Budapest, 1934; idem, *A Petrichevich-család naplói*, Budapest, 1941; idem, *A Mogorovich nemzetségbeli Petrichevich család története és oklevéltára – A Petrichevich család történetének regesztái*, Pécs, 1942.

<sup>12</sup> About Martinuzzi and historiography on him see recent monographs: A. Papo, G. Nemeth Papo, *Frate Giorgio Martinuzzi: Cardinale, soldato e statista dalmata agli albori del Principato di Transilvania*, Roma, 2017; idem, *Nemăsurata ispită a puterii. Gheorghe Martinuzzi, adevărul rege al Transilvaniei în secolul al XVI-lea*, Oradea, 2019.

<sup>13</sup> A. Magina, “Un nobil sârb în Banatul secolului al XV-lea: Miloš Belmužević”, *Analele Banatului* s.n. 18, 2010, p. 135–142; idem, “Milica Belmužević: l’histoire d’une noble dame du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle”, *Initial. A Review of Medieval studies* 2, 2014, p. 145–162; idem, “Peter Petrović and Protestantism. Aspects concerning the Patronage of the Reformation during its Early Period”, *Initial. A Review of Medieval studies* 3, 2015, p. 139–159; idem, “Acta Jakšićiana. Documents regarding the Jakšić of Nădlac Family in Romanian Archives”, *Initial. A Review of Medieval studies* 6, 2018, p. 159–188; F. N. Ardelean, *Organizarea militară în Principatul Transilvaniei (1541-1691)*, Cluj-Napoca, 2019.

approach and the choice of subjects and their presentation. Therefore, we should pose the question of further steps and ideas. First of all, it is essential that historians overcome language barriers and self-centeredness, as well as the diffusion of research and overwhelmingly present ignorance of the results of neighbouring historiographies. Some of these tasks are easier to do than others, but they are all doable, and some problems can be overcome by cooperation through collective authorships and delegation of specific tasks on the basis of expertise.

The typology of sources which were already used by the historians does not significantly differ from the typology of newly available ones. Both groups are mainly charters, reports and other types of documentary material, with much less narrative sources (although some chronical notes and genealogies can be found). But the new material, combined with a new methodological i.e. more synthetic approach, will still allow us to broaden our findings narrowed down to most important topics such as biographies of great personalities, the issue of their possessions or military service, the issue of their leadership in their communities etc. Beyond these, “usual” topics, sources offer a lot of data on political networking, affinities, marital policies, connections with other Croatian (or Slavic) noble families and broader Slavic population, issues of literacy and cultural influences, gradual magyarisation of the Croatian elite, religious affiliation, variety of offices held by the Croatian nobles, clientelism etc.

Having everything above-mentioned in mind, it is quite in place to urge historians from South East Europe to broaden their cooperation and include the research of South Slavic (especially Croatian) noblemen in Banat and Transylvania in their future projects. It would most definitely be a gratifying investment and even an international research project could be carried out in relatively close future. The fact that both Hungarian and Romanian archives for the Middle Ages and (to some extent) for the early modern period are mostly digitised and, therefore, fully and easily available on web portals such as *Hungaricana* (based in Hungary) and *Arhivă Medievală* (based in Romania), will give an impetus and motivation for the research.<sup>14</sup> Although the portal *DIZBI HAZU* (Digital Collection of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, based in Croatia) does not offer the same range of material and features, it also facilitates the process of research.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, *Hungaricana* also offers a substantial material from Croatian archives (up until 1526)<sup>16</sup>, available in the form of reproductions from microfilms, which makes the research much easier than before, even for a single historian, who would, however, be overwhelmed by the quantity and diversity of data. Since I found myself in a similar situation, this contribution will give only the preliminary findings on the subject, as indicated in the title.

<sup>14</sup> *Hungaricana* (<https://hungaricana.hu>), *Arhivă Medievală* (<https://arhivamedievala.ro>).

<sup>15</sup> Digitalna zbirka Hrvatske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti (<https://dizbi.hazu.hr/a>).

<sup>16</sup> A valuable new resource for the period 1526–1570 can be found on the Hungarian web portal *Adatbázisok Online* (<https://adatbázisokonline.hu/gyujtemeny/reformacio>).

### PRELIMINARY FINDINGS ON THE PROCESS OF ARRIVAL OF CROATIAN NOBLES TO BANAT AND TRANSYLVANIA

In the preliminary research I conducted during the last years, with the help of the literature and Romanian colleagues, I was able to identify more than a dozen noble families of Croatian origin in Banat and Transylvania, usually bearing the epithet “Horváth” i.e. “Croat”. Most of them originally came from southern Croatia (first to be occupied by the Turks). At this point I will mention only the most important ones and those who are very well documented – the Šušalić family of Lukarić or Oprominje, Šubić-Melić of Bribir, Šubić-Ugrinić of Rog, Petričević of Raduč, Kolunić and Perušić of Pset, Kučić of Razvađe, Bojničić and Benković of Plavno, Mišljenović of Kamičac and Uzdolje, Utišenović and Bartaković of Kamičac, Martinušević of Bogočin, Korlatović of Korlat. After their resettlement, most of these families were based in Banat, and the counties of Bihar (Hung. Bihar), Satu Mare (Hung. Szatmár) and Alba (Hung. Fehér), but some had estates or held important offices outside of these regions and counties as well.<sup>17</sup> A few of these noble families, unlike Serbian and Bosnian ones, are still existent, although they are now fully magyarised.

No thorough study of how these particular noble families arrived to the easternmost part of the Hungarian Realm has yet been made. Only a few cases of notable individuals were studied in more details, the most famous one being George Martinuzzi (Croat. Juraj Utišenović Martinušević).<sup>18</sup> Since many nobles came from the relative (and some even from the immediate) vicinity of Martinuzzi’s home castle of Kamičac, it was assumed that he was the primary agent of their arrival. The other candidate was John Zápolya (Croat. Ivan od Zapolja), who became the voivode of Transylvania in 1510, sixteen years before he became a pretender to the throne of Hungary. He was one of the principal leaders of the lesser nobility and gentry, a social stratum to which most of the aforementioned nobles belonged to.<sup>19</sup> Finally, he was himself a noble from Slavonia and of Slavic origin and most of the Slavs from Slavonia were, in fact, Croats. In 1527 Slavonian nobility opted for Zápolya and Croatian for Ferdinand of Habsburg.<sup>20</sup> But, the emigrants we are discussing here mostly came to the region of Zápolya’s influence years before the civil war began. With most of the source material yet to be researched, it is precisely the time of the arrival of the noble Croats to Banat, Transylvania and the eastern counties of Hungary which leads us to re-consider the

<sup>17</sup> I. Horn, “Magyar végvári tisztek erdélyi karrierlehetőségei a 16. század második felében”, in G. Veres, M. Berecz (eds.), *Hagyomány és megújulás - Életpályák és társadalmi mobilitás a végváriak körében*, Eger, 2008, p. 103.

<sup>18</sup> Papo, Nemeth Papo, *Frate Giorgio Martinuzzi...*, passim; T. Oborni, “Fráter György szervitorainak és familiárisainak jegyzéke a Castaldo-kódexben, 1552”, *Fons: forráskutatás és történeti segédanyagok* 25, 2018, p. 435–451.

<sup>19</sup> Horn, “Magyar végvári tisztek...”, p. 103.

<sup>20</sup> F. Šišić, *Hrvatski saborski spisi*, vol. I, Zagreb, 1912, p. 50–55, 71–77.

theories of Martinuzzi's and Zápolya's direct involvement in the launching of the first migration wave from southern Croatia to the far east of the Realm. Both of the above mentioned personalities started their careers in the first years and decades of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, gradually rising to power.<sup>21</sup> That means they were not established well enough to coordinate migration in the last years of the 15<sup>th</sup> and early years of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Most Croatian nobles were to become the members of their affinity networks (through the institution of *familiaritas*) sometime later, but they were not responsible for their transfer. In fact, they themselves, or their ancestors, made part of the same process of migration, but they rose to greater prominence than their fellow-nobles and compatriots who are the topic of this particular paper.<sup>22</sup>

Although the Hungarian nobility had ranks, since the time of Louis I the Great's reforms in the 1350s, all of the nobles were protected by the king in their status and some of their vested rights.<sup>23</sup> The law by itself was important, but what boosted lesser Croatian nobility's potential for migration was their role in defence of the southern borders of the Realm during the period of Ottoman conquest. From the viewpoint of the central authorities in Buda, the situation in southern Croatia was gradually deteriorating throughout the first half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century since the area was isolated by Bosnia and Venice and controlled by local magnates whose loyalty to the crown was frequently compromised by either their own interests or pure political reality, since the king and his representatives did not invest enough effort to support the region which was attacked by all the neighbours.<sup>24</sup>

The Ottoman threat proved to be much more important challenge than the others, but the actions of the government were hindered by a long lasting dynastic strife. When Matthias Corvinus was finally secure on his throne, Bosnia had already fallen to the Ottomans (1463). Yet again, it was Corvinus who re-organised the border defence system, making Croatia and parts of Bosnia he conquered from the Turks in late 1463 and 1464 an active frontier aimed at halting the Ottoman advance. In comparison with the earlier period this buffer zone was more functional and it held for several decades.<sup>25</sup> It was not impervious to Turkish *akinci*

<sup>21</sup> T. Neumann, "Dózsa legyőzője. Szapolyai János erdélyi vajdasága (1510–1526)", *Székegyföld* 18, 2014, p. 93–107; Papo, Nemeth Papo, *Frate Giorgio Martinuzzi...*, p. 21–52.

<sup>22</sup> It is considered that George Martinuzzi himself was brought to Hungary by John Corvinus because George's father Gregory served John and was killed fighting the Turks. Papo, Nemeth Papo, *Frate Giorgio Martinuzzi...*, p. 21–29.

<sup>23</sup> F. Somogyi, L.F. Somogyi, "Ludovici I. Regis, decretum unicum, anno 1351, editum 1986", in S.B. Vardy, G. Grosschmid, L.S. Domonkos (eds.), *Louis the Great, King of Hungary and Poland*, Boulder – New York, 1986, p. 453–483.

<sup>24</sup> V. Klaić, *Povijest Hrvata od najstarijih vremena do svršetka XIX stoljeća*, vol. III, Zagreb, 1985, passim; N. Isailović, "Bosnia and Croatia-Dalmatia in the Late Middle Ages. A Historical Perspective", in Dž. Dautović, E.O. Filipović, N. Isailović (eds.), *Medieval Bosnia and South-East European Relations: Political, Religious, and Cultural Life at the Adriatic Crossroads*, Leeds, 2019, p. 39–49.

<sup>25</sup> B. Grgin, *Počeci rasapa. Kralj Matijaš Korvin i srednjovjekovna Hrvatska*, Zagreb, 2002, p. 31–33, 115–125, 171–186; D. Salihović, "For a Different Catastrophe: A Fruitful Frontier on the Southern Edges of the Kingdom of Hungary after 1463. An Initial Inquiry", *Initial. A Review of Medieval Studies* 5, 2017, p. 73–107; idem, "The Process of Bordering at the Late Fifteenth-Century Hungarian-Ottoman



raids which were gradually exhausting the resources and men power of the Hungarian south, but the king and his governors – bans – regained control over the entire region. In such a system, the middle ranked (*egregii*) or lesser nobles from southern Croatia, controlling smaller estates and forts, became marcher lords in direct service of the king and ban, frequently being named as *homines regii* in legal processes and local inquiries.<sup>26</sup> They were the immediate neighbours of advancing Turks and the first line of defence in Matthias' time.<sup>27</sup>

The king's death in 1490 and the ensuing strife over the throne did contribute to the decomposition of the defence system, but it was deteriorating over time, burdened with the lack of resources and people which were the main target of Turkish raids.<sup>28</sup> The decades of warfare were exhausting the royal treasury as well and the system was gradually collapsing. One of the last attempts to rebuild it once again was the appointment of King Matthias' illegitimate son – John Corvinus to the position of duke of Slavonia and ban of Croatia-Dalmatia.<sup>29</sup> His path to this office was paved with nails. Even before his father's death he was targeted by the queen and some circles of nobility, and after 1490 he not only definitely renounced all his claims to the throne, but was also left without the promised title of the king of Bosnia and effective control over Slavonia, although he supported Jagiellonian King Vladislaus II. It was only after 1496 and his marriage to Beatrice, a daughter of the influential Croatian magnate Bernardin Frankapan, that he regained some fortunes and the life-long position of the duke of Slavonia and ban of Croatia-Dalmatia. Through these offices he became the effective commander of the southern frontier.<sup>30</sup> It was the time of the war of Christian states against the Ottomans and John's efforts to secure the border were indisputable and clearly visible.

Although he achieved some success, not only of local significance, John's appointment came too late to turn the tide of the war, which was the consequence of a longer process. Namely, between 1471 and 1473, the Ottomans were already in control of some regions west of the river Neretva.<sup>31</sup> The defeat of the Croatian

Frontier", *History in Flux* 1, 2019, p. 93–120; idem, "Exploiting the Frontier – A Case Study: the Common Endeavour of Matthias Corvinus and Nicholas of Ilok in Late Medieval Bosnia", in Dž. Dautović, E.O. Filipović, N. Isailović (eds.), *Medieval Bosnia and South-East European Relations: Political, Religious, and Cultural Life at the Adriatic Crossroads*, Leeds, 2019, p. 97–112.

<sup>26</sup> M. Rady, *Nobility, Land and Service in Medieval Hungary*, New York - London, 2000, p. 70–74, 81, 175.

<sup>27</sup> Grgin, *Počeci rasapa...*, p. 115–125, 171–186.

<sup>28</sup> F. Szakály, "The Hungarian-Croatian Border Defense System and Its Collapse" in J.M. Bak, B.K. Király (eds.), *From Hunyadi to Rákóczi. War and Society in Late Medieval and Early Modern Hungary*, New York, 1982, p. 141–158.

<sup>29</sup> M. Mesić, "Građa mojih razprava u 'Radu': listine i izprave", *Starine Jugoslavenske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti* 5, 1873, p. 109–288; L. Thallóczy, A. Hodinka, *A horvát véghelyek oklevéltára 1490–1527*, Budapest, 1903, passim; F. Šišić, "Rukovet spomenika o hercegu Ivanišu Korvinu i o borbama Hrvata s Turcima (1473–1496)", *Starine Jugoslavenske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti* 37, 1934, p. 189–344; *ibid.*, *Starine Jugoslavenske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti* 38, 1937, p. 1–180.

<sup>30</sup> V. Klaić, *Povijest Hrvata od najstarijih vremena do svršetka XIX stoljeća*, vol. IV, Zagreb, 1985, p. 191–264.

<sup>31</sup> Atanasovski, *Pad Hercegovine*, p. 64–96, 118–125.

army at the battlefield of Krbava in 1493 had a more significant aftermath than it is usually viewed. It was not only a disastrous defeat but also a prequel to the series of attacks which led to the extension of Turkish authority to the river Cetina and even some areas west of it by 1497.<sup>32</sup> Although some fortresses kept their garrisons loyal to the Jagiellonian king up until the 1520s or, in case of Klis, until 1537, by 1505 those forts became mere islands in the Ottoman sea. The situation became untenable for the marcher nobility – the population was abducted in Turkish raids or fled to the northwest, the economy crumbled under constant pressure and the resources (money, food, men power) for the defence were completely exhausted. The reports from the southern border after 1504 and John Corvinus' death show despair of the remaining defenders of the south. Receiving only small subsidies or tax benefits from the central authorities, the local nobles sought to deliver themselves from the hopeless situation.<sup>33</sup>

John Corvinus, whose primary battlefield during the war with the Ottomans was on the southern borders, who was the governor of Croatia, Dalmatia and Slavonia, and whose wife was from a Croatian magnate family, established a network of connections with people who were serving him in the war – as horsemen or castellans. The leaders of auxiliary *vlach* troops also represented a network, but it functioned separately from the one which comprised Croatian nobility.<sup>34</sup> Corvinus was the last hope for the defenders of the isolated, south-western frontier of the Hungarian Realm. When the peace treaty of 1503<sup>35</sup> proved to be of small significance for the actual situation in the field, the network of middle-ranked and lesser nobles which John created started to organise the withdrawal from the region affected by the Turks since the official border was now in the immediate vicinity of major fortresses of Knin, Sinj, Klis and Skradin. It was, however, not meant for Corvinus to implement this gradual migration since he died of fever in Krapina 1504. His legacy was formally continued by his young offspring – sons Christopher and Matthew (both died in 1505), and daughter Elisabeth (died in 1508) – but effectively by his wife Beatrice (died in 1510), who kept John's possessions after his death, undoubtedly with support of her influential father Bernardin Frankapan.<sup>36</sup>

The migration did not happen at once – it was a gradual process and not an easy one. The central government certainly did not wish to leave the border with no

<sup>32</sup> Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (Istanbul), Tapu tahrir defterleri 987.

<sup>33</sup> Gy. Pray, *Epistolae procerum regni Hungariae*, vol. I, Pozsony, 1806, p. 156–158; L. Thallóczy, S. Barabás, *A Frangepán család oklevéltára*, vol. II, Budapest, 1913, p. XLV–XLVI; N.C. Tóth, *Politikatörténeti források Bátori István első helytartóságához (1522–1523)*, Budapest, 2010, p. 44–45; Thallóczy, Hodinka, *A horvát véghegyek oklevéltára...*, p. 16–19.

<sup>34</sup> S. Gunjača, “Tiniensia archaeologica historica topographica II”, *Starohrvatska prosvjeta* III/7, 1960, p. 78–84; Klaić, *Povijest Hrvata...*, vol. IV, p. 225–257. Many details concerning this period are also brought by Sanudo's diaries.

<sup>35</sup> L. Thallóczy, S. Horváth, *Jajca (bánság, vár és város) története: 1450–1527*, Budapest, 1915, p. 167–170.

<sup>36</sup> Gy. Schönherr, *Hunyadi Corvin János 1473–1504*, Budapest, 1894; T. Neumann, “Mátyás herceg (Szerény adalék a Hunyadi családfához)”, *Turul* 88, 2015, p. 72–73.

defence, depopulated and without nobility to keep up the struggle against the advancing Ottomans. Yet, the signs of the deteriorating situation in the decade between the peace of 1503 and the fall of Sinj in 1513, could not be ignored and they were easily verified. The appointment of a local Croatian noble with courtly career – Mark Mišljenović of Kamičac to the office of ban of Croatia and Dalmatia (which he shared with a notable Hungarian noble Andrew Both of Bajna) was a part of the efforts of the court in Buda to elevate distinguished local fighters and give a new impetus for the gentry defending their estates.<sup>37</sup> These efforts were faltering due to intensified Turkish pressure that created the situation in which smaller forts were demolished, commoners captured or dispersed, all valuables pillaged, crops destroyed and any collection of tribute rendered impossible. This created an atmosphere in which the network made by Corvinus could receive their master's and king's grant to leave the area and assume another office elsewhere, retaining their title and noble status.<sup>38</sup> The first ones to leave were people on higher positions, better connected to Beatrice Frankapan, who became a wealthy landowner in Banat and Transylvania, with the centre in her castles of Hunedoara (Hung. Hunyad) and Lipova (Hung. Lippa). She received support not only of her father, but also of King Vladislaus II who eventually remarried her to his cousin George of Brandenburg-Ansbach in 1509, a year prior to Beatrice's death which was preceded by the deaths of her children with Corvinus.<sup>39</sup> Two facts in support of the theory that John Corvinus and Beatrice Frankapan were the first to coordinate Croatian migration to the eastern part of the Hungarian Realm are that most of the data for the period between the 1490s and 1510s are to be found in the family archive of Hunyadi i.e. Corvinus family, as well as that the Kučić family (very close to Beatrice) was supporting neither Zápolya or Martinuzzi, but, in fact, Ferdinand I of Habsburg since late 1526, although the majority of Croats of the region did not do so.

In 1510 George of Brandenburg-Ansbach was granted Beatrice's heritage of Hunedoara, Lipova and 252 villages by King Vladislaus II who named George her principal heir. Some of the Croats remained in his affinity until the moment he sold out most of his possessions in Hungary in order to acquire some Silesian ones, not only because his career was oriented to German lands, but also because of his continuous feuds with Zápolya.<sup>40</sup> The representatives of the first wave of Croatian noble refugees already established themselves in the new environment, receiving not only offices (usually military, due to their experience in cavalry and as castellans), but some estates too. They became intermediaries for the arrival of the

<sup>37</sup> V. Klaić, "Hrvatsko kraljevstvo u XV. stoljeću i prvoj četvrti XVI. stoljeća (1409–1526.)", *Vjesnik Hrvatskoga arheološkog društva* 8, 1905, p. 136, 138.

<sup>38</sup> Jurković, "Šesnaestostoljetna hrvatska raseljenička kriza...", p. 759–782; idem, "Socijalni status...", p. 63–85.

<sup>39</sup> P. Strčić, "Frankapan, Beatrica", in T. Macan (ed.), *Hrvatski biografski leksikon*, vol. IV, Zagreb, 1998, p. 399.

<sup>40</sup> W. Huber, "Georg (der Fromme)", in *Biographisch-Bibliographisches Kirchenlexikon*, Band 30, Nordhausen, 2009, p. 472–484.

second wave which mostly, but not exclusively, came prior to the battle of Mohács, possibly in the period before and immediately after the fall the main fortresses of Knin and Skradin (1522), Ostrovica (1523), and Obrovac as well as the counties of Krbava and Lika (1527).<sup>41</sup> It seems that only a small number of nobles from southern Croatia went to the east due to the civil war between the supporters of Ferdinand I and John Zápolya which started in 1527. We can, to some extent, deduce that from the fact that no representative on any major Croatian noble family that rose to some prominence in Banat and Transylvania was among the nobles choosing either Ferdinand I (mainly nobles from Croatia, in Cetin, on 1 January 1527) or Zápolya (mainly nobles from Slavonia, in Dubrava, on 6 January 1527).<sup>42</sup> Interestingly enough, Bernardin Frankapan and his sons were the only magnates originating from Croatia proper who supported Zápolya over the Habsburgs. However, we have no data that they had anything to do with the second wave of Croatian migrants to Banat or Transylvania, nor did Zápolya.<sup>43</sup>

When the new wave of migration began, it were those who were already in the new environment that helped their compatriots, in many cases their relatives too, to acquire land and service in the circles of Zápolya and, by then, already influential George Martinuzzi, the most famous offspring of two lesser noble families (Utišenović and Martinušević) from the district of Oprominje.<sup>44</sup> After he gained substantial power, following John Zápolya's death in 1540, Martinuzzi formed an impressive noble retinue. A list of his retainers at the time of his death comprises many persons bearing Slavic surnames and/or epithet Horváth.<sup>45</sup> After 1551, they were already members of the noble society of their counties and Transylvania as a whole<sup>46</sup> and their position was not (in some cases not substantially, in others not whatsoever) challenged or endangered by Martinuzzi's murder. Most of the Croats held offices for temporary pro-Habsburg governors, then for the new "strongmen" of John Sigismund Zápolya's Eastern Hungarian Kingdom and, ultimately, for the rulers of the Principality of Transylvania. In first

<sup>41</sup> M. Mesić, "Banovanje Petra Berislavića za kralja Ljudevita II.," *Rad Jugoslavenske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti* 3, 1868, p. 1–64; idem, "Hrvati nakon bana Berislavića do muhačke bitke," *Rad Jugoslavenske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti* 18, 1872, p. 77–163; *ibid.*, *Rad Jugoslavenske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti* 22, 1873, p. 55–204; V. Klaić, "Pad Obrovca, Udbine i Jajca. Prilog za hrvatsku povjestnicu godine 1527.–1528.," *Vjesnik Kr. hrvatsko-slavonsko-dalmatinskoga zemaljskog arkiva* 7, 1905, p. 53–69; Gunjača, "Tiniensia archaeologica...," p. 88–91; Klaić, *Povijest Hrvata...*, vol. IV, p. 293–430.

<sup>42</sup> Šišić, *Hrvatski saborski spisi*, vol. I, p. 50–55, 71–77.

<sup>43</sup> P. Strčić, "Frankapan, Bernardin Ozaljski," in T. Macan (ed.), *Hrvatski biografski leksikon*, vol. IV, Zagreb, 1998, p. 399–401; idem, "Bernardin Frankopan i njegovo doba. Prilog za sintezu povijesti o vrhuncu srednjovjekovnoga razvoja i početka borbe za opstanak Frankopana i hrvatskoga naroda," *Modruški zbornik* 3, 2009, p. 3–27.

<sup>44</sup> A. Sekulić, "Naš pavlin Juraj Utišinović, crkveni poglavar i državnik," in M. Mendušić, D. Marguš (eds.), *Miljevci u prošlosti (s pogledom u budućnost)*, Visovac – Drinovci, 2008, p. 165–169; Papo, Nemeth Papo, *Frate Giorgio Martinuzzi...*, p. 21–30; idem, *Nemšurata ispitā...*, p. 21–30.

<sup>45</sup> Oborni, "Fráter György..." , p. 443–451.

<sup>46</sup> At that time, Banat was conquered by the Turks.

generations, the newly settled Croats had comparative advantages – they were trained soldiers, skilful in marcher combat, experienced castellans. They also knew the Slavonic language in its South Slavic variant, which was, up until the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century, used even by higher Ottoman administration, but certainly by the Turkish marcher lords and *sanjakbeys*, who were, in large numbers, of South Slavic origin themselves (mainly from Bosnia and Croatia).<sup>47</sup> Finally, they formed one network, at least for a certain period of time, which was the source of loyal retainers of their leader (whether it was Beatrice Frankapan, George of Brandenburg-Ansbach, John Zápolya and his son, Queen Isabella, Martinuzzi, Castaldo, Báthory family, Nádasdy family, or local magnates).<sup>48</sup>

In Latin sources from Hungary, Banat and Transylvania the Croats were identified by their conspicuous Slavic surnames and the epithet *Croatus* (much more often in Hungarian version – *Horváth*) and, sometimes, by their noble predicates which specified their original main estate. Yet, most of them acquired new possessions, married into local noble families and performed various duties, mostly as wardens or prefects of important fortresses, county officials or *familiares* of kings, princes, bishops and magnates. Even though they adapted to the new environment rather easily, since their nobility was the first factor of their identity, it seems that the Croats kept close to each other, at least in the first couple of generations, which can be observed through their documents, connections and family ties.<sup>49</sup> Their bond was not only of ethnic and linguistic origin. Almost all of these nobles came from a small region near the Krka river in southern Croatia, which was already pointed out as the home region of Martinuzzi. The magyarisation which was already ongoing in the later decades of the 16<sup>th</sup> century was a normal process of blending in the customs of the majority of Transylvanian nobility of the same rank. It did not completely disrupt the network, but, eventually, new networks, based on the distribution of possessions and belonging to a faction, emerged as primary. The surnames, noble predicates (some of which slightly changed) and epithet *Horváth*, however, endured for centuries, even after the process of magyarisation was completed and all noble Croats from Transylvania assumed Hungarian identity.<sup>50</sup>

### SELECTED CASE STUDIES

Due to preliminary nature of this paper, in its last section, I will briefly go through several case studies which I deem exemplary in order to show the

<sup>47</sup> N. Isailović, A. Krstić, “Serbian Language and Cyrillic Script as a Means of Diplomatic Literacy in South Eastern Europe in 15th and 16th Centuries”, in S. Andea – A.C. Dincă (eds.), *Literacy Experiences concerning Medieval and Early Modern Transylvania*, Cluj-Napoca, 2015, p. 185–195.

<sup>48</sup> See the section of this article dedicated to selected case studies.

<sup>49</sup> Jurković, “Osmanska ugroza, plemeniti raseljenici...”, p. 39–69; Horn, “Magyar végvári tisztek...”, p. 103.

<sup>50</sup> See footnote 11.

possibilities that newly available data offer for future research. For these small “medallions” I selected the families and/or individuals who are well-documented in literature and databases easily accessible to all historians.

Mark (Croat. Marko) Mišljenović of Kamičac (the noble predicate derives from a fort on the Krka river, in the present-day Municipality of Promina) was one of the most important Croatian nobles whose career spanned several decades. He was from the same fort from which Martinuzzi’s father Gregory (Croat. Grgur) Utišenović was, but we have no data which would link these two families. His noble predicate was later expended by adding the nearby estate of Uzdolje to it. Mark came to King Matthias’ court in the 1470s as a young man. In the late 1480s he already distinguished himself in king’s service and gained possessions in Slavonia, in the county of Dubica, along with his brother John who was also a royal courtier.<sup>51</sup> In 1491 he received a portion of the estates of Francis Jakcs of Kusaly (today Coșeu in the county of Sălaj) for his services and was named King Vladislaus II’s *cubicularius*, receiving further possessions in the county of Trenčín (Hung. Trencsén).<sup>52</sup>

In 1496 Mark married Benigna, the daughter of Balázs Magyar and widow of Pál Kinizsi.<sup>53</sup> She gave up her rights and transferred them to her male family members, including her new husband.<sup>54</sup> Some of these possessions were in present-day Romania, in the county of Hunedoara (Hung. Hunyad). However, since many of them were formerly pledged, Mark soon transferred them to the king and Corvinus family.<sup>55</sup> Most of his remaining possessions were located around Herend near Veszprém in Hungary and near Székesfehérvár.<sup>56</sup> In the first years of the 16<sup>th</sup> century Mark was the castellan of Buda (certainly in 1505)<sup>57</sup> and after the death of John Corvinus in 1504 he was involved in defending southern Croatia from the Ottoman attacks. In 1506 he became one of Croatian bans and captains of Senj, along with Andrew Both of Bajna.<sup>58</sup> It was considered that he would, as a local Croat, enhance the defence, but he died soon afterwards (around 1508). His estate was claimed by his younger brothers Andrew and Matthew, and his widow

<sup>51</sup> Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár Országos Levéltára (=MNL OL) (Budapest), Diplomatikai levéltár (=DL) 26530, 30916, 67881; E. Laszowski, “Prilog historiji hrvatskih porodica Martinuševića, Utješenića, Mišljenovića i njihovih srodnika”, *Vjesnik Kr. državnog arhiva u Zagrebu*, 1937, p. 156.

<sup>52</sup> MNL OL, DL 30923, 46657, 82063.

<sup>53</sup> MNL OL, DL 63247, 63513, 63514; I. Borsa, *A Justh család levéltára 1274-1525*, Budapest, 1991, p. 100–101.

<sup>54</sup> MNL OL, DL 38914, 46332, 46657; Arhivele Naționale ale României (=ANR), Direcția Județeană (=DJ) Cluj, Fond familial Vécsey, Seria 1 – Documente medievale, Nr. 240.

<sup>55</sup> MNL OL, DL 30934.

<sup>56</sup> MNL OL, DL 39338, 46726, 66360, 66363, 66378, 66640, 69169, 102692.

<sup>57</sup> MNL OL, DL 39335.

<sup>58</sup> V. Klaić, “Kandidacija (commendatio) bana po hrvatskom saboru za vladanja kuće Habsburg (1527–1848.)”, *Vjesnik Kr. hrvatsko-slavonsko-dalmatinskoga zemaljskoga arkiva* 10, 1908, p. 168.

relinquished it to them.<sup>59</sup> His resettlement to the eastern part of the Hungarian Realm was among the first, but was not permanent.

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The Kučić family of Razvađa Vas (today Razvođe, Municipality of Promina) first appeared in sources in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Their main representative in the last quarter of the century was John (Croat. Ivan) Kučić who was granted the possibility to import *vlach* (i.e. nomad) population to his estates by Croatian ban Matthew Geréb of Vingard (Hung. Vingárd) in 1484, because he distinguished himself fighting against the Turks.<sup>60</sup> In the late 1490s he became a part of the network established by Croatian ban John Corvinus for the defence of the southern borders against the Ottomans. During Corvinus' administration, he probably became the castellan of Knin, one of two most important fortresses in southern Croatia and the seat of Croatian ban.<sup>61</sup> The other castellan may have been John's brother George (Croat. Juraj), mentioned in 1485.<sup>62</sup> Knin was under constant attack, but fell to the Ottomans only in 1522.

However, John Kučić seemed to have left his Croatian estates before the death of John Corvinus, moving north under the protection of Corvinus and his wife Beatrice Frankapan. He was first to be found as a castellan of the Vingard castle in 1503.<sup>63</sup> In 1505, along with his son Gaspar (Croat. Gašpar), he came in the possession of the estate Gusu (Hung. Kisludas)<sup>64</sup> and then, 1506–1508, of an iron mine near the castle of Hunedoara and of Vingard castle and market place with surrounding villages in the county of Alba.<sup>65</sup> After the Geréb of Vingard family became extinct, these possessions came into hands of John Corvinus, but after he died, his widow Beatrice Frankapan sold them to John Kučić for 11500 florins which she needed to redeem her numerous pledges (1508).<sup>66</sup> This transfer was sanctioned by King Vladislaus II, but was disputed by other nobles (Bethlen and Somkerekí) and neighbouring Saxon communities.<sup>67</sup> Prior to this transaction in 1508, John was Beatrice's castellan of Vingard, as well as of Lipova and Şoimoş

<sup>59</sup> MNL OL, DL 82532, 82570, 89214.

<sup>60</sup> E. Laszowski, "Prilog za povijest Vlaha u Dalmaciji", *Vjesnik Kr. hrvatsko-slavonsko-dalmatinskoga zemaljskog arkiva* 16, 1914, p. 318–319.

<sup>61</sup> Thallóczy, Hodinka, *A horvát véghegyek oklevéltára...*, p. 18.

<sup>62</sup> Thallóczy, Barabás, *A Frangepán család...*, vol. II, p. 163.

<sup>63</sup> ANR, DJ Cluj (custodie BCU Cluj), Colectia Generală, Seria 2 – BCU, Nr. 130.

<sup>64</sup> MNL OL, DL 26487.

<sup>65</sup> MNL OL, DL 32569; ANR, DJ Cluj, Fond familial Bethlen de Iktár, Seria 1 – Documente medievale, Nr. 66; I. Izsó, *Szemelvények a középkori montanisztika magyarországi történetének írott forrásából*, Rudabánya, 2006, p. 138.

<sup>66</sup> MNL OL, DL 37839.

<sup>67</sup> MNL OL, DL 26508, 26509, 74337; ANR, DJ Cluj, Fond familial Bethlen de Iktár, Seria 1 – Documente medievale, Nr. 230; S. Barabás, *A római szent birodalmi gróf széki Teleki család oklevéltára*, vol. II, Budapest, 1895, p. 313, doc. CXCVIII.

near Arad. His deputy was a man named Cosma, maybe another Croatian.<sup>68</sup> All these forts were put under Kučić's protection by Corvinus' widow. After Beatrice Frankapan remarried to count George of Brandenburg-Ansbach in 1509, she was able to regain Lipova and Şoimoş for herself.<sup>69</sup> Yet, she died in 1510 and her widower sold out many of their possessions, and the Kučić family was confirmed as the possessor of several estates in the counties of Alba, Târnava (Hung. Küküllő) and Hunedoara, as well as in Scaunul Mureşului (Hung. Marosszék).<sup>70</sup>

Having the Vingard castle as the core of their possessions their new noble predicate was "Horváth of Vingard". The litigations with local noble families from the Alba county continued even after the estates were confirmed to the Kučićs, which led even to armed conflicts of smaller scale in 1515.<sup>71</sup> In 1512, John Kučić bought two estates in the Arad county from another Croatian noble – John Benković of Plavno, for 400 florins.<sup>72</sup> John Kučić died before 1519 after which his son Gaspar was the only representative of the family.<sup>73</sup> The Vingard castle was in the hands of the same Gaspar Horváth of Vingard in 1526, but he was ousted in 1532 by Zápolya's troops headed by his palatine Michael Keserű (not to be confused with one of the Šušalićs of Cheşereu).<sup>74</sup> Why? His courtly career started in the Jagiellonian time and he used to be *magister dapiferorum* in 1526. After Louis II's death at Mohács he became a staunch supporter of King Ferdinand and from 1527 to 1540 he was addressed as king's *locumtenens* and *magister regalium cubiculariorum*, with fiscal authority in Transylvania.<sup>75</sup> In the same capacity, he also tried to take over the fortress of Făgăraş for the Habsburgs.<sup>76</sup> His name was mentioned with the title of "captain general" in the armistice concluded between Ferdinand's and Zápolya's supporters in 1529.<sup>77</sup> He was donating some of his

<sup>68</sup> ANR, DJ Sibiu, Magistratul oraşului şi scaunului Sibiu, Colecţia de documente medievale, Seria U III, Nr. 254.

<sup>69</sup> MNL OL, DL 37849.

<sup>70</sup> MNL OL, DL 26510.

<sup>71</sup> MNL OL, DL 26525.

<sup>72</sup> MNL OL, DL 59979, 60003, 60004.

<sup>73</sup> ANR, DJ Cluj (custodie BCU Cluj), Colecţia Generală, Seria 2 – BCU, Nr. 130.

<sup>74</sup> ANR, DJ Sibiu, Episcopia Bisericii Evanghelice C.A. din Transilvania, Colecţia de documente episcopale, Nr. 70; ANR, DJ Cluj, Fond familial Székely de Adămuş, Seria 1 (Registrul 1), Fascicula nr. 1, Nr. 31; ANR, DJ Cluj, Fond familial Bethlen de Iktár, Seria 1 - Documente medievale, Nr. 165; I. Nagy, *Magyarország családai: czimerekkel és nemzékrendi táblákkal*, vol. VI, Pest, 1860, p. 229.

<sup>75</sup> ANR, DJ Sibiu, Episcopia Bisericii Evanghelice C.A. din Transilvania, Colecţia de documente episcopale, Nr. 101; ANR, DJ Sibiu, Capitulul evanghelic C.A. Bistriţa, Nr. 1; ANR, DJ Braşov, Fond Primăria oraşului Braşov, Colecţia de documente Stenner, Seria 2 – Latină, maghiară, germană, Volumul I, Nr. 95; ANR, DJ Sibiu, Magistratul oraşului şi scaunului Sibiu, Colecţia de documente medievale, Seria U V, Nr. 320; ANR, DJ Sibiu, Magistratul oraşului şi scaunului Sibiu, Colecţia de documente medievale, Seria U IV, Nr. 343.

<sup>76</sup> ANR, DJ Braşov, Fond Primăria oraşului Braşov, Colecţia de documente Schnell, Volumul 2, Nr. 077.

<sup>77</sup> ANR, DJ Sibiu, Episcopia Bisericii Evanghelice C.A. din Transilvania, Colecţia de documente episcopale, Nr. 124.



estates to his retainers – the Thoroczky family in 1534, until they received others of the same value by King Ferdinand. Some of them were supposed to be returned to him in 1536 when Anthony Thoroczky was to receive Iclod (Hung. Nagyiklód).<sup>78</sup> After 1536, I was not able to trace any further data on this family's actions in Transylvania, because Gaspar's activity was, by then, already transferred to other parts of Hungary. The only certain information is that afore-mentioned Anthony Thoroczky asked, in his testament dated in 1549, to be buried next to his master – Gaspar Horváth of Vingard (who died after 1540) in his foundation – the church in Torna.<sup>79</sup>

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The Šušalić (Šušeljčić) family from the village of Lukarić in Oprominje (today Lukar, once again in the municipality of Promina along the left bank of the river Krka) was based in the small fort of Hotiblić, which is even today known by the other name Šušelj, on the slopes of the Promina mountain. Their first known member was Michael (Croat. Mihovil), who was under investigation in 1507 because he left his fortress and took shelter in the town of Skradin, fleeing from the Turkish siege laid on Hotiblić. The officials cleared him of the charges, admitting that he fought bravely until he was forced to retreat.<sup>80</sup> Another Šušalić, Stephen (Croat. Stipan), possibly Michael's brother or son, was the castellan of Morović (in present-day Serbia) in the south-Hungarian county of Vukovo (Hung. Valkó) in 1512 and then Gyula in 1514–1516.<sup>81</sup> It seems that he was the founder of Békés and the Külső-Szolnok line of the family, continued by his descendants Francis (Croat. Franjo) and Peter (Croat. Petar).<sup>82</sup>

After years of scarce mentions, the family is to be found in the broader circle of bishop Martinuzzi's supporters and retainers, in the counties of Békés, Külső-Szolnok and Bihar.<sup>83</sup> In fact, in 1543, Martinuzzi gave a previously pledged and later redeemed portion of the estate Cheşereu (Hung. Érkeserű), belonging to the bishopric of Oradea (Hung. Nagyvárad), to his loyal *familiaris* Peter Horváth Šušalić of

<sup>78</sup> ANR, DJ Cluj, Fond familial Thoroczky, Seria I - Documente medievale, Nr. 1, 33, 36; Zs. Jakó, A. Valentiny, *A torockószent-györgyi Thoroczky család levéltára*, Kolozsvár, 1944, p. 27–28.

<sup>79</sup> ANR, DJ Cluj, Fond familial Thoroczky, Seria I – Documente medievale, Nr. 41.

<sup>80</sup> ANR, DJ Bihar (Oradea), Colecția de fonduri familiale, Seria 3 – Familia Fráter, Nr. 1, f. 1; MNL OL, Diplomatiikai fényképgyűjtemény (=DF) 279057.

<sup>81</sup> MNL OL, DL 37903; E. Veress, *Gyula város oklevéltára 1313-1800*, Budapest, 1938, p. 63-66, 85, 103.

<sup>82</sup> A. Csipes, *Békés megye élete a XVI. században*, Békéscsaba, 1976, p. 24–25; Gy. Kristó, *Békés megye a honfoglalástól a törökvilág végéig. Nyolcszáz esztendő a források tükrében*, Békéscsaba, 1981, p. 85–86; Gy. Benedek, "Oklevelek Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok megye volt hevesi részeinek történetéből 1501-1597", *Zounuk – A Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok Megyei Levéltár Évkönyve* 13, 1998, p. 425–427; idem, *Őcsöd nagyközség oklevelei és fontosabb iratai 1297–1738*, Szolnok, 2001, p. 51–52, 83, 86, 90–91, 94–95, doc. 18, 19, 34, 35, 37, 39; idem, *Türkeve város oklevelei és iratai 1261–1703*, Szolnok, 2004, p. 160, doc. 61.

<sup>83</sup> Oborni, "Fráter György...", p. 445.

Lukarić.<sup>84</sup> Three years later, the bishop helped Peter by issuing him the genealogy of the Sassy family which was litigating with Šušalić over the same estate.<sup>85</sup> Litigation concerning the Cheşereu estate and Barathpyspeky *praedium* went on for years, since it was a joint possession of several noble families. In 1549, Peter Šušalić opposed a settlement between two other co-possessors of the estate and once again received protection by Martinuzzi who personally sentenced that the Sassy family had to enable the restitution of their estates to the Šušalić family.<sup>86</sup> In early 1550s, after Martinuzzi's death, it seems that Peter Šušalić made arrangements with King Ferdinand of Habsburg and his commanders, since the king confirmed his possession of Cheşereu, conferred his royal rights to the estate and issued several decrees in order to implement his decision (1552–1554).<sup>87</sup> He was even protected by Giambattista Castaldo, the organiser of Martinuzzi's murder.

Even five years later, when the Zápolyas regained the upper hand, Queen Isabella, the mother of King John Sigismund, confirmed Ferdinand's donation to the sons of Peter Šušalić – Michael and George and his daughter Helen (Croat. Jelena).<sup>88</sup> Once again the name Michael appears within the family, suggesting that the Šušalićs from Bihor were, in fact, direct successors of Michael Šušalić from 1507. From at least 1556, the guardian of the underage descendants of Peter Šušalić was another Croatian noble from the region surrounding the river Krka – Nicholas (Croat. Nikola) Ugrinić Šubić of Rog, a member of a lateral branch of the famous Šubić lineage. In 1556, Peter Petrović, King John Sigismund's envoy, ensured Nicholas' control over the *praedium* Barathpyspeky and the estate of Buduslău (also in the Bihor county).<sup>89</sup> Two years later, Šubić was opposing any changes in the structure of the estates as a tutor of the young Šušalićs, along with Sofia Edenffy (their mother, wife of late Peter Šušalić) and Michael Zombory.<sup>90</sup>

The same year, 1558, Michael Šušalić was no longer under tutelage and he started representing himself.<sup>91</sup> In 1562, the trial between the Šušalić and the Sassy family was renewed and the agreement was finally reached only in 1570.<sup>92</sup> Sofia Edenffy, Michael's and George's mother, issued her testament in 1575 and at the same time a small chronicle of the family, written in Hungarian, was made by an

<sup>84</sup> ANR, DJ Bihor, Fond Capitlul Episcopiei romano-catolice de Oradea, Seria 1 – Instrumenta litteralia, Subseria 1.1-Acte, Fascicula 47, Nr. w; Zs. Jakó, *A kolozsmonostori konvent jegyzőkönyvei*, vol. II, Budapest, 1990, p. 640, doc. 4777.

<sup>85</sup> ANR, DJ Bihor, Colecția de fonduri familiale, Seria 3 - Familia Fráter, Nr. 12, f. 1.

<sup>86</sup> ANR, DJ Bihor, Colecția de fonduri familiale, Seria 3 - Familia Fráter, Nr. 1, f. 6; *ibid.*, Nr. 7 f. 3.

<sup>87</sup> ANR, DJ Bihor, Colecția de fonduri familiale, Seria 3 - Familia Fráter, Nr. 5, f. 1; *ibid.*, Nr. 7, f. 4; *ibid.*, Nr. 12, f. 2; *ibid.*, Nr. 19, f. 1.

<sup>88</sup> ANR, DJ Bihor, Colecția de fonduri familiale, Seria 3 - Familia Fráter, Nr. 1, f. 9.

<sup>89</sup> ANR, DJ Bihor, Colecția de fonduri familiale, Seria 3 – Familia Fráter, Nr. 1, f. 7, 9, 11.

<sup>90</sup> ANR, DJ Bihor, Colecția de fonduri familiale, Seria 3 – Familia Fráter, Nr. 4, f. 4–5.

<sup>91</sup> ANR, DJ Bihor, Colecția de fonduri familiale, Seria 3 – Familia Fráter, Nr. 4, f. 5.

<sup>92</sup> ANR, DJ Bihor, Colecția de fonduri familiale, Seria 3 – Familia Fráter, Nr. 1, f. 2, 15; *ibid.*, Nr. 3, f. 2.

unknown author from within the family.<sup>93</sup> The document, which is still to be thoroughly investigated, may trace the links between the Bihar county and Békés/Külső-Szolnok counties Šušalićs. It seems that the family renewed two other old feuds over some buildings in Cheşereu in 1578 but they were resolved peacefully.<sup>94</sup> In 1583 two noblemen from the Satu Mare county leased a part of an estate called Resighea to Michael Šušalić.<sup>95</sup> Six years later, Michael loaned 25 florins to the same noblemen.<sup>96</sup> He got married to Petronella Sulyok from an influential family of the Satu Mare and Bihar counties and was involved in legal process concerning the division of Ladislav Zólyomy's (Petronella's grandfather) possessions.<sup>97</sup> From 1585 to 1589, Michael acted as a vice-count and noble judge of the Bihar county, presiding over many processes and administering justice.<sup>98</sup>

Sigismund, the son of Nicholas Šušalić, as well as Melchior Šušalić were mentioned around Cluj and in the present-day Mureş county (namely in Târnaveni) in the 1580s and 1590s, but it is not certain in which way they were connected with the main line from the Bihar county.<sup>99</sup> They may have descended from John Lukarić (Šušalić) who was the castellan or vice-castellan of Vác in 1542, following the death of another Croat and Zápolya's supporter, Stephen Brodarić, the bishop of Vác, and was later mentioned with his brother Simon in the Târnavă and Alba counties.<sup>100</sup>

Michael, from the main line based in Bihar, died around 1590, when a debt was collected from his possessions.<sup>101</sup> According to Hungarian genealogies, he had a son Peter who, in his turn, had only two daughters – Helen and Sophia, ending the male line of this branch of the family. Peter was still the lord of Cheşereu and he was often mentioned along with Peter Melić of Bribir.<sup>102</sup> In 1628, the estates of

<sup>93</sup> ANR, DJ Bihar, Colecția de fonduri familiale, Seria 3 – Familia Fráter, Nr. 4, f. 7; ANR, DJ Bihar, Colecția de documente, Seria 2 (Inventar nr. 99), Nr. 24, f. 3–4.

<sup>94</sup> ANR, DJ Bihar, Colecția de fonduri familiale, Seria 3 – Familia Fráter, Nr. 15, f. 17; ANR, DJ Cluj, Fond familial Bethlen de Iktár, Seria 1 – Documente medievale, Nr. 273.

<sup>95</sup> ANR, DJ Bihar, Colecția de fonduri familiale, Seria 3 – Familia Fráter, Nr. 3, f. 4.

<sup>96</sup> ANR, DJ Bihar, Colecția de fonduri familiale, Seria 3 – Familia Fráter, Nr. 10, f. 4.

<sup>97</sup> ANR, DJ Cluj, Fond familial Vécsey, Seria 2 – Documente fasciculate, Nr. 9, f. 59, 62–64; I. Nagy, *Magyarország családai: czimerekkel és nemzékrendi táblákkal*, vol. X, Pest, 1863, p. 403, 406.

<sup>98</sup> ANR, DJ Cluj, Fond familial Kornis, Seria 1 – Documente medievale, Nr. 189; ANR, DJ Cluj, Fond familial Bánffy, Seria 3 – Evidențe vechi de arhivă și acte fasciculate, Subseria 2 – Acte fasciculate, Nr. 69, f. 69; ANR, DJ Bihar, Colecția de fonduri familiale, Seria 3 – Familia Fráter, Nr. 10, f. 3; ANR, DJ Bihar, Colecția de fonduri familiale, Seria 1 – Familia Ugray-Bölönyi, Nr. 7, f. 201–202.

<sup>99</sup> ANR, DJ Cluj, Fond familial Kornis, Seria 1 – Documente medievale, Nr. 180; ANR, DJ Cluj, Fond familial Gál de Hilib, Nr. 3; ANR, DJ Cluj, Fond familial Wass, Seria 2 – Documente fasciculate, Fascicula 65, Nr. 1, 8; ANR, DJ Cluj, Fond fideicomisionar Jósika, Seria 1 – Documente medievale, Nr. 354.

<sup>100</sup> Jakó, *A kolozsmonostori convent...*, vol. II, p. 670, 696–697, 716, 758, doc. 4894, 4989, 4990, 5069, 5227; Gy. Szarka, *A váci püspökség gazdálkodása a török hódítás korában, 1526–1686*, Vác, 2008, p. 66.

<sup>101</sup> ANR, DJ Bihar, Colecția de documente, Seria 2 (Inventar nr. 99), Nr. 13, f. 25.

<sup>102</sup> I. Nagy, *Magyarország családai: czimerekkel és nemzékrendi táblákkal*, vol. V, Pest, 1859, p. 160; K. Géresi, *A nagy-károlyi gróf Károlyi-család oklevéltára*, vol. IV, Budapest, 1887, p. 90–91; M. Détsky, "A pocsaji Rákóczi-udvarház", *Bihari Múzeum Évkönyve* 3, 1982, p. 97.

Šušalić went over to their cousins by the female line, the Fráter family, which was authorised by Gábor Bethlen.<sup>103</sup> The extant archive of the Šušalićs of Bihar is preserved within the archive of the Fráter family.

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Nicholas Kolunić, the captain of Senj (1496) and *magister agazonum* (master of the horses) of Jagiellonian kings (1502)<sup>104</sup>, a descendant of a family whose roots were from eastern Croatia (today a part of the Bosnian municipality of Bosanski Petrovac), had numerous possessions in the Hunedoara county and in the regions south of Karansebeş and Reşiţa (Vălişoara, Prilipeţ, Gârlişte etc.) but it is not certain whether he primarily lived there or at the court. After his death around 1503, his widow Ursula exchanged most of these estates with George of Marga and sold others.<sup>105</sup>

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Another Croat, Nicholas Benković of Plavno, was still on his possessions in southern Croatia, north of Knin, in the last years of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, defending his castle on the border with the Turks<sup>106</sup>, but became the captain of Hunedoara by 1506.<sup>107</sup> He previously came to Gyula with John Corvinus along with some other Croats (a branch of the Šušalić family, Peter Sadobrić of Skradin, Peter Grdešić of Ripač, Andrew Dudić, some of whom held the office of castellan of Gyula).<sup>108</sup> Another document from 1507 informs us that the captaincy of Hunedoara was given to him by Beatrice Frankapan, the widow of John Corvinus, who also gave Nicholas and his brother George estates near Gyula and in the Zărând (Hung. Zaránd) county in exchange for service to her and her progeny in the first generation. This decision was met by protests of some nobles who, supposedly, protected the rights of Beatrice's daughter Elisabeth (died in 1508). We do not have data on the decisions which were made in the ensuing legal process, but it

<sup>103</sup> I. Nagy, *Magyarország családai: czimerekkel és nemzékrendi táblákkal*, vol. II, Pest, 1858, p. 251–260; K. Benda, Gy. Kenéz, "Barbiano generális jelentése a Bocskai-szabadságharc első hónapjairól", *A Debreceni Déri Múzeum Évkönyve 1969-1970*, 1971, p. 163.

<sup>104</sup> M. Magdić, "Petnaest izprava, koje se čuvaju u arkivu senjskoga kaptola", *Vjesnik Kr. hrvatsko-slavonsko-dalmatinskog zemaljskog arkiva* 3, 1901, p. 54–55; V. Klaić, "Županija Pset (Pesenta) i pleme Kolunić (Prilog za historiju diaspore hrvatskih plemena)", *Vjesnik Hrvatskog arheološkog društva* 15, 1928, p. 11.

<sup>105</sup> ANR, DJ Cluj, Colecția personală Kemény József, Seria 2 – BCU, Nr. 140; F. Pesty, *A szörényi bánóság és Szörény vármegye története*, vol. III, Budapest, 1878, p. 149–151, 378–388.

<sup>106</sup> Thallóczy, Hodinka, *A horvát véghelyek oklevéltára...*, p. 16.

<sup>107</sup> ANR, DJ Sibiu, Magistratul oraşului și scaunului Sibiu, Colecția de documente medievale, Seria U V, Nr. 58; MNL OL, DL 30970; MNL OL, DF 245954.

<sup>108</sup> MNL OL, DF 232224; Kristó, *Békés megye...*, p. 85–86; L. Blazovich, *Városok az Alföldön a 14–16. században*, Szeged, 2002, p. 188.

seems that the Benkovićs kept the formerly granted estates.<sup>109</sup> The estates given to the Benković family were Kávás, Fajdas, Somos and Hégenháza, which were (at least Fajdas), after the ending of Nicholas' bloodline, passed to another Croatian from the same region – Francis Tivković of Petrovo polje who was also linked to the famous Melić (alternatively: Milić) family of Bribir.<sup>110</sup> Another Benković of Plavno, John, was in the circle of Martinuzzi's *familiares* and he sold his possessions in the Arad county to the Kučić family of Razvađe, as was already mentioned.<sup>111</sup>

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George Bojničić of Plavno and Knin was the vice-treasurer of John Zapolya's widow, Queen Isabella in the 1540s. There are many documents which testify that he collected money for the payment of tribute to the Ottoman sultan in 1543. He issued all of these documents in Gilău (Hung. Gyalu), near Cluj.<sup>112</sup> He is also found as a witness in a document issued by Martinuzzi in 1545, and was on the list of his *familiares* in 1552.<sup>113</sup> The other members of this family include Catherine (Croat. Katarina) Bojničić, the wife and since the 1550s widow of Michael Losonci-Bánffy, a member of an old Transylvanian noble family with estates in the Dăbâca (Hung. Doboka), Solnoc Interior (Hung. Belső-Szolnok) and Cluj (Hung. Kolozs) counties. Michael's and Catherine's estates were inherited by their daughter Euphrosina.<sup>114</sup> In 1569 the sources mention the same Catherine Bojničić in Târgu Mureș (Hung. Marosvásárhely), as the widow of Leonard Erdély.<sup>115</sup> Matthew, John and Gregory Bojničić, however, had most of their estates in the Zemplín (Hung. Zemplén) county in present-day Slovakia from the 1560s to 1580s.<sup>116</sup>

<sup>109</sup> MNL OL, DL 37806, 37812, 37826, 37827; Veress, *Gyula város...*, p. 44–46.

<sup>110</sup> I. Bojničić, "Kraljevske darovnice, odnoseće se na Hrvatsku. Iz kraljevskih registraturnih knjiga Libri regii", *Vjesnik Kr. hrvatsko-slavonsko-dalmatinskoga zemaljskog arkiva* 7, 1905, p. 263.

<sup>111</sup> MNL OL, DL 59979, 60003, 60004; Oborni, "Fráter György...", p. 440, 448.

<sup>112</sup> ANR, DJ Sibiu, Magistratul orașului și scaunului Sibiu, Colecția de documente medievale, Seria U IV, Nr. 419, 421, 829; ANR, DJ Brașov, Fond Primăria orașului Brașov, Colecția de documente Schnell, Volumul 3, Nr. 130.

<sup>113</sup> ANR, DJ Cluj, Fond familial Vécsey, Seria 2 – Documente fasciculate, Nr. 7, f. 28; Oborni, "Fráter György...", p. 443, 447.

<sup>114</sup> ANR, DJ Cluj, Fond familial Bánffy ANR, Seria 2 – Instrumente contemporane de evidență și documente după instrumente contemporane de evidență, Subseria 2 – Documente ordonate după registrul 2, Fascicula II, Nr. 17; ANR, DJ Cluj, Fond familial Bánffy ANR, Seria 2 – Instrumente contemporane de evidență și documente după instrumente contemporane de evidență, Subseria 1b - Documente ordonate după Registrul 1b, Fascicula nr. 66, Nr. 29.

<sup>115</sup> ANR, DJ Cluj, Fond familial Suky, Seria 1 – Documente medievale, Nr. 286.

<sup>116</sup> ANR, DJ Cluj, Fond familial Sennyey, Seria 3 – Comitatul Zemplén, Acte fasciculate, Fascicula nr. 2a, Nr. 8; ANR, DJ Cluj, Fond familial Sennyey, Seria 3 – Comitatul Zemplén, Acte fasciculate, Fascicula nr. 7a, Nr. 1, 2, 11.

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The last case study for this occasion would be the one of the Petričević family of Raduč. The Petričevićs were members of a wider clan called Mogorović from the Croatian county of Lika. The village of Raduč is situated in the present-day municipality of Lovinac, south of Gospić. One branch, headed by Nicholas, son of John, came to Transylvania before 1543, possibly through connections with the Zápolyas and Martinuzzi, and settled in Bunești (Hung. Széplak). However, the most important member and the true establisher of family's fortunes was Cosma Horváth Petričević, whose career was at its height in the last quarter of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. He belonged to the Báthory circle and it seems that his family left Catholicism.<sup>117</sup> He had estates near the Székely Land – around Komlod, Milaș, Sânmărtinu de Câmpie, Șopteriu etc.<sup>118</sup>

Stephen Báthory named Cosma “provisor” of the Alba county by 1575.<sup>119</sup> By 1578 he also became the prefect of Făgăraș with several additional duties, including the role of the intermediary between the Székelys, Saxon communities and Transylvanian ruler, and of the collector of tithe.<sup>120</sup> It is interesting to note that a certain Michael Horváth (Croat) was the castellan of Făgăraș back in 1509 and 1510, yet his exact origin currently remains unknown.<sup>121</sup> Cosma's colleague was Michael Rác (i.e. the Serb), the royal judge of several Székely seats and prefect of Várhegy (Rom. Chinari), with whom he also traded.<sup>122</sup> The vice-provisor of Făgăraș was Nicholas, *literatus* of Besenyő, who received donations from Cosma in the Turda (Hung. Torda) county (1583). The donation of the estate Csanád led to a lawsuit of other proprietors, which lasted for years.<sup>123</sup>

There are many extant documents by which Cosma was appointed to administer borderline issues with Wallachia, control the roads and prohibit clandestine travelling or settle grievances of the citizens of Brașov and religious communities in Mediaș concerning tithes and taxes.<sup>124</sup> He also acted as a judge in

<sup>117</sup> I. Horn, *A hatalom pillérei: A politikai elit az Erdélyi Fejedelemség megszilárdulásának korszakában (1556–1588)*: doctoral dissertation, Budapest, 2012, p. 121–122, 179, 228, 264–265, 295, 358; eadem, “Magyar végvári tisztek...”, p. 103–104, 110.

<sup>118</sup> ANR, DJ Cluj, Fond familial Jósika de Vlaha, Seria Documente medievale, Nr. 20; ANR, DJ Cluj, Fond fideicomisionar Jósika, Seria 3 – Acte familii, Nr. 791, f. 1; ANR, DJ Cluj, Fond familial Haller, Seria 2, Nr. 60, f. 4.

<sup>119</sup> ANR, DJ Cluj, Fond familial Jósika de Vlaha, Seria Documente medievale, Nr. 22.

<sup>120</sup> ANR, DJ Brașov, Fond Primăria orașului Brașov, Colecția de documente Schnell, Volumul 2, Nr. 191.

<sup>121</sup> ANR, DJ Sibiu, Magistratul orașului și scaunului Sibiu, Colecția de documente medievale, Seria U V, Nr. 125, 1903.

<sup>122</sup> ANR, DJ Brașov, Fond Primăria orașului Brașov, Colecția Documente privilegiale, Nr. 557; ANR, DJ Cluj, Colecția Documente cu peceti atârinate, Seria 1 ANR, Fond Banffy, Nr. 1, 25.

<sup>123</sup> ANR, DJ Cluj, Fond familial Haller, Seria 2, Nr. 5, f. 1, 8, 11; *ibid.*, Nr. 69, f. 28–31.

<sup>124</sup> ANR, DJ Brașov, Fond Primăria orașului Brașov, Colecția Documente privilegiale, Nr. 1, 557, 565, 571, 572, 597; ANR, DJ Brașov, Fond Primăria orașului Brașov, Colecția de documente Fronius, Volumul I, Nr. 336; ANR, DJ Sibiu, Episcopia Bisericii Evanghelice C.A. din Transilvania, Colecția de documente episcopale, Nr. 239; ANR, DJ Sibiu, Colecția de documente ale parohiilor evanghelice

local litigations over property issues.<sup>125</sup> Cosma was keeping correspondence with Anna (Croat. Ana) Melić of Bribir, a Croatian noblewoman married first to Bernard Bánffy and then to Francis Mikola of Someşeni, exchanging advices about the household, which suggest that they had a close relationship.<sup>126</sup> Petričević died between 1592 and 1600. His sons Francis and Stephen and daughters Clara and Judith continued the family line which prospered in the decades and centuries that followed.<sup>127</sup> A member of the family – Emil Petričević Horváth wrote a series of monographs about his kindred in the 1930s and 1940s which are now somewhat outdated.<sup>128</sup>

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At this time, I prefer not to focus on the Melić of Bribir family, a branch of the Šubić kindred, since there is vast data on its activity, as well as some secondary works by József Molnár and Pál Lukcsics.<sup>129</sup> Their estates were concentrated in the north-east, in the counties of Szabolcs, Ugocsa and Satu Mare, and later also in Zemplín and elsewhere. It is known that they were closely connected with other Croatian nobles such as the Šušalić family, Francis Tivković of Petrovo polje<sup>130</sup> etc.

There were, of course, other Croats who came to the easternmost parts of the Hungarian Kingdom through their service to John Corvinus and his widow, Zápolyas or Martinuzzi, but we do not have enough space to address all of their cases.

C.A. Săteşti Preluarea 1, Seria 1 – Acte Parohia Bistriţa, Nr. 8; ANR, DJ Sibiu, Fond Capitlul evanghelic C.A. Sibiu, Seria 1 – Acte cu instrumente contemporane de evidenţă, Nr. 2, 177, 261; ANR, DJ Sibiu, Fond Parohia evanghelică C.A. Mediaş, Seria 1 – Registre, Registru de documente privind jurisdicţia ecleziastică a saşilor transilvăneni, Nr. 2, f. 99–100.

<sup>125</sup> ANR, DJ Cluj, Colecţia Documente cu peceti atârinate, Seria 1 ANR, Colecţia Generală, Nr. 1, 128.

<sup>126</sup> ANR, DJ Cluj, Fond fideicomisionar Jósika, Seria 1 – Documente medievale, Nr. 152. The Melić and Petričević family were connected through marriage since the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>127</sup> ANR, DJ Cluj, Fond familial Béli, Seria 1 – Documente medievale, Nr. 199; ANR, DJ Cluj, Fond familial Bánffy ANR, Seria 2 – Instrumente contemporane de evidenţă şi documente după instrumente contemporane de evidenţă, Subseria 1a – Documente ordonate după registrul 1a, Nr. 17, p. 18–22; Horn, *A hatalom pillérei...*, p. 360.

<sup>128</sup> See footnote 11.

<sup>129</sup> J. Molnár, *A Subich-nemzetségből...*, passim; I. Nagy, *Magyarország családai: czimerekkel és nemzékrendi táblákkal*, vol. VII, Pest, 1860, p. 411–412; P. Lukcsics, “A Bribéri Melith-család genealogiája”, *Turul* 3–4, 1934, p. 97–98; N. Kallay, “Zlatne bule Andrije II. i Bele IV. Šubićima Bribirskim”, *Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest* 44/1, 2012, p. 209–222; I. Fazekas, “Katholische Adelige jenseits der Theiß. Ein Beitrag zur ungarischen Adelsgeschichte zwischen 1550 und 1640”, in K. Keller, P. Maťa, M. Scheutz (eds.), *Adel und Religion in der Frühneuzeitlichen Habsburgermonarchie*, Wien, 2017, p. 48–49.

<sup>130</sup> A. Jakovljević, N. Isailović, *Petrovo polje u vrelima osmanskog razdoblja (1528.–1604.)*, Šibenik, 2019, p. 135–136.

### CONCLUDING REMARKS

The preliminary findings I presented clearly demonstrate that an extensive further research, which should most definitely include a team of historians from ex-Yugoslavia, Romania and Hungary or even from a wider region of South East Europe, would be a worthwhile effort.

The case studies show that I had to consult either old encyclopaedic literature or directly historical sources (charters, letters, notes etc.) which points to the lack of significant studies of migration of Croatian nobility to eastern Hungary, Banat and Transylvania during the period of the Ottoman threat and subsequent conquest. My modest knowledge of Romanian and Hungarian historiography and, moreover, less than basic knowledge of Romanian and Hungarian languages might have prevented me from tracing all the available literature. Yet again, intensive collaboration and exchange of information with my colleagues from both Romania and Hungary strengthen my opinion that the statement I made earlier is not essentially wrong. Even before much needed synthetic approach, a team of historians should start working on detailed case studies of notable Croatian families and individuals whose activity can be followed in a longer period and through a variety of source material.

The examples I selected are representative because they are demonstrating the possibilities of research. Both similarities and differences in careers, life paths and fate of the nobility can be observed from the given short case studies. In a more general sense, I believe that it is now established that the migrations were the result of the gradual collapse of the southern Hungarian border (which is why I call the migrants “noble refugees”) and that they were happening in phases. The first phase, linked with the actions of John Corvinus and his wife/widow Beatrice Frankapan, deserves a thorough study because it laid the foundation of the Croatian noble community in Banat and Transylvania. The second task of historians should be to analyse interconnections between Croatian nobility in the new environment (keyword: identity), ultimate establishment of affinity networks with key political players of the region (keyword: service) and marital ties with the members of local – non-Croatian, and mainly Hungarian – nobility (keyword: adaption).

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