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PÁZMÁNY'S PROCESS OF ENQUIRY AND HIS FAMILY ARCHIVES

PÉTER TUSOR



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PÁZMÁNY'S PROCESS OF ENQUIRY AND HIS FAMILY ARCHIVES

Our research is of biographical, prosopographical and genealogical nature. It combines traditional historical genres with micro-philological thoroughness from time to time, due to the character of the verbal, which serves as a basis for the paper. By being connected with the illustrious historical discourse of the Pázmány-research¹ it shows how and in what measure the *processus informativus*, i.e. the process of enquiry, this unique and important sequential type of source of the Vatican, can be exploited and gives an excess to the existing researches and Hungarian sources. Nonetheless, the perspectives that the Italian private archives can offer in order to make Hungarian history better known (and understood) are presented.²

¹ The main works: FRANKÓI (FRANKL) VILMOS, *Pázmány Péter és kora I–III*, Pest 1868–1872; FRANKÓI VILMOS, *Pázmány Péter 1570–1637* (Magyar Történeti Életrajzok), Budapest 1886; SÍK SÁNDOR, *Pázmány. Az ember és az író*, Budapest 1939; ÖRY MIKLÓS, *Pázmány Péter tanulmányi évei* (Pázmány Irodalmi Műhely. Tanulmányok 5), Piliscsaba 2006²; BITSKEY ISTVÁN, *Pázmány Péter* (Magyar História. Életrajzok), Budapest 1986.

² For the canonical process of enquiry and the Hungarian verbals in the 17th century see TUSOR PÉTER, *Magyar püspökök kánoni kivizsgálási jegyzőkönyvei (1605–1711). Historiográfia és projekterv*, Collectanea Vaticana Hungariae (CVH), vol. I/15, under press.

The possibility of the further scientific exploitation is primarily connected to the Pázmány-research, as well. The specified and modified data of certain careers and the family circumstances can be reflected in his literary work. It remains the task of the history of literature to re-read the works of Pázmány – following the method of MIKLÓS ŐRY – and to find bases along newer biographical results, or even to raise objections. The same is held to our observations concerning his literary work.

The analysis of the archives of the Pázmány–Tholdy family, revealed through research, their documents' richness in data and the nature of the historian's narrative, which relies upon those data and radically diverges from the text of the verbal-analysis proves that the process and the family archives practically "talk at cross purposes". The one does not cover the lack of the other. Moreover, they complement each other. The famous phrase of LÁSZLÓ FEJÉRPATAKY: "The history of Hungary cannot be written without the knowledge of the archives of Italy and mainly the Vatican", is current, however, not primarily due to the loss of data in Hungary, since that is irrecoverable. The phrase is relevant, because the archives of Italy (could) preserve such data for us that can be unreachable in Hungary even under ideal source conditions. The statement is true not only to the processes. It is valid from the registers of the papal tithe collectors through the various supplications and bull registers to the reports of the nuncios and personal letters (*missilis*), etc. Moreover, not only in case of the Vatican, the Italian state and ecclesiastical collections, but the numerous Italian private archives, as well. Pázmány's process of enquiry, the hidden treasure of the *Villa Aldobrandini* in

Frascati is a proof of the lavish perspectives veiled in the Italian family archives.³

A) THE PROCESS OF ENQUIRY

The verbal, preserved in *Villa Belvedere* among the documents of Pietro Aldobrandini, cardinal viceprotector, contains the material – the testimony of all in all four witnesses – of the canonical investigation, which was conducted in the nunciature of Prague between 30 September and 3 October, 1616 on the occasion of the filling of the archiepiscopal chair of Esztergom.⁴ On 30 September, Bálint Lépes, bishop of Nyitra, chancellor; on 1 October Mihály Ramocsaházy, canon of Pozsony, Lőrinc Ferenczffy, royal secretary, György Székely, the majordomo of Cardinal Klesl reported on Pázmány and the state of the archdiocese.⁵

³ About the Hungarian researches relating to the historical relations between the Papacy and Hungary: CVH vol. I/1exc; and MOLNÁR ANTAL, *Le ricerche ungheresi nell'Archivio Segreto Vaticano (1980–2010)*, Religiosa archivorum custodia. IV. Centenario della Fondazione dell'Archivio Segreto Vaticano (1612–2012). Città del Vaticano 2015, 685–698. FEJÉRPATAKY's sentence: *A pápai levéltárak, Századok* 18 (1884) 66–73, 73.

⁴ Archivio Privato dell'Eccellentissima Casa Aldobrandini di Frascati (Villa Belvedere), Documenti Storici, n. 17/10.

⁵ On the witnesses see: BITSKEY ISTVÁN, *Lépes Bálint és az olasz seicento stílus*, Klaniczay- emlékkönyv. Tanulmányok Klaniczay Tibor emlékezetére (ed. by Jankovics József), Budapest 1994, 334–343; FAZEKAS ISTVÁN, *Főpap és hivatalnok. Lépes Bálint kálcsai érsek, győri adminisztrátor pályájához*, Primus inter omnes. Tanulmányok Bedy Vince születésének 150. évfordulójára (A Győri Egyházmegyei Levéltár Kiadványai. Források, feldolgozások 25; ed. by Arató György–Nemes Gábor–Vajk Ádám), Győr 2016, 81–108; CAROLUS RIMELY, *Capitulum insignis Ecclesiae Collegiatae Posoniensis ad S. Martinum ep. olim SS. Salvatorem*, Posonii 1880, 269; HOLL BÉLA, *Ferenczffy Lőrinc egy*

Contemporary evaluations and quotations are unfolded in the narratives that were written in direct speech (*oratio recta*) and given orally on Pázmány by making his contemporary judgement more intelligible. All the historiographical problems of the biography cannot be solved on the basis of the consistorial source. Yet, something can be. At the same time, the number of the arisen questions also grows. The formal professional discourse is put on a new level. The verbal of the canonical examination was not compiled for being a historical source. It was part of a well-regulated canonical procedure. Its information is more exploitable in terms of history than it was usable during the curial procedure. The process and its related documents: the summary prepared for the consistorial proposal, requests, congregational documents, papal brevia and bulls became the tool of science only centuries later. The changes made during the official procedure are not manipulative; however, they influenced historiography. In general, the data of the verbals, especially the ones concerning the age of people have considerable value as a source. For example, the two witnesses, Lépes and Ferenczffy's own statement of their date of birth verify the convincing conclusions of the literature. Their categorical underrating has no grounds. The introduction and analysis of the document found in Frascati call

magyar könyvtár a XVII. században, Budapest 1980, 7ss; FREDERIK FEDERMAYER, *Laurentius Ferenczffy, der Sekretär der Ungarischen Hofkanzlei und seine Familie*, Die weltliche und kirchliche Elite aus dem Königreich Böhmen und Königreich Ungarn am Wiener Kaiserhof im 16.–17. Jahrhundert (Publikationen der ungarischen Geschichtsforschung in Wien 8), Wien 2013, 125–146.

the attention to the importance of the reflexive and creative criticism.

According to the testimony of the witnesses, given under oath at the nunciature of Prague, Pázmány often showed up with Cardinal Forgách on public occasions, whom he “trusted with his every secret”. His tasks neither as an archiepiscopal confessor and advisor, nor as a missionary of the primatial court (which was his official position in the Society)⁶ necessarily indicate such public attendance. The contemporaries were also aware of his key role on the council of 1611, at the beginning of the program of Trent’s systematic adoption in Hungary. His “public lectures” (*publicae lectiones*) in churches, held mainly at the time of the diets, differ from the sermons in the testimonies. Instead of/beside the catechism and Bible studies, which were popular among the Jesuits, indeed, they can be regarded as the verbal formation and adaptation of the polemical essays, earlier called “spoken language-style” by SÁNDOR SÍK.⁷ According to the witnesses, the effect of his sermons is shown by the fact that there was no such church in the Kingdom, which he did not visit for this purpose. Pázmány’s personal pastoral work was important for the contemporaries. The lectures and the sermons were visited by masses. As it was told by the witnesses, they attended these occasions for the sake of their own moral improvement. Péter Pázmány excelled in personal preaching and persuasion in the public opinion’s eye. Ac-

⁶ LADISLAUS LUKÁCS, *Cathalogi personarum et officiorum provinciae Austriae S.I. I: 1551–1600. II: 1601–1640* (Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu 117. 125), Romae 1978–1982, II, 80. 91 100 112. 124. 137. 149. 161–162. 195–196.

⁷ SÍK, *Pázmány*, 145ss.

cording to Lőrinc Ferenczffy, Pázmány's speeches – that he frequently (*"frequentissime"*) visited – were not only held "unspeakably laudably and with the spiritual benefit of the people" (*"indicibili laude et populorum utilitate spirituali"*), but as it was widely known, he "easily preceded anyone in his sermons".

Although, it is mentioned that his literary work elicited "amazement and admiration" (*"stuporem et admirationem"*), its mass effect was minor than his sermons and lectures'. Even the members of the Catholic elite rarely quote the title of his works, mainly the *Kalauz* is known. It seems that his polemical essays were mainly read by the clergy absorbed in the controversies and by Protestant ministers for the sake of refutation.

In the narration of the witnesses, the letters appear as a third medium beside the sermons, lectures and the printed writings. These letters were not only personal letters addressed to the Protestant preachers to convince them, but they were also such writings that were sent to certain Catholic persons, churchmen, laymen, or even communities and circularized in copies or in original after being read. These "pastoral letters" – for which there is no example yet, and are only known from the reference made by Mihály Ramocsaházy, the canon of Pozsony – should be distinguished from the personal letters written as a spiritual leader and other private letters. The existence of these pastoral letters fits well into the picture of the age defined by Iustus Lipsius, namely the letter is an *alter sermo* and can be reckoned among the *epistola serialis publica*.⁸

⁸ HARGITTAY EMIL (ed.), *Régi Magyar Levelestár I–II* (Magyar Hírmondó), Budapest 1981, 525–531; Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények (ItK) 100 (1996) 318–344; n. 1; KNAPP ÉVA, *Levélelméletek a magyarországi jezsuita oktatásban a 16–18. században*, ItK

The stratification of the effect of Pázmány, who was the symbolic character of the Hungarian Catholic confessionality in early modern period, shows striking similarity to Ottokár Prohászka, the Hungarian eponym of the Modern Catholicism. The often mentioned parallel between them becomes even more plastic.⁹ The mass effect of the preaches and lectures on conferences is determining also at Prohászka. The higher number of his readers can be attributed to the spread of literacy; through his articles in journals and daily papers a newer medium was at his disposal.

It appears from the statements that there was a political line behind Pázmány's church administrative and spiritual activities on the way to reach the primacy. The monarch, namely, "often employed his services" earlier. These services were mainly around the diets of 1608, 1609 and 1613. They focused on the organization of the *Status Catholicus*'s debates, its actions' coordination and the mediation between Forgách and Klesl, whose bad relationship was public knowledge, moreover on his participation in the negotiations of the second Treaty of Vienna.¹⁰

115 (2011) 554–580, 569. See also HARGITTAY EMIL, *Régi magyarországi missziális retorikai elemzése*, Levél, író, irodalom (Pázmány Irodalmi Műhely. Tanulmányok 1; ed. by Kiczenko Judit–Thimár Attila), Piliscsaba 2000, 22–31.

⁹ Recently on Prohászka: MÓZESSY GERGELY (ed.), *Prohászka-tanulmányok 2012–2015*, Székesfehérvár 2015; *Prohászka-tanulmányok 2015–2017*, Székesfehérvár 2017.

¹⁰ BENDA KÁLMÁN, *Pázmány Péter politikai pályakezdése*, A Magyar Tudományos Akadémia I. Osztályának Közleményei 31 (1979) 273–280; BITSKEY ISTVÁN, *Der ungarische Jesuit Péter Pázmány über die Religionsfreiheit der Calvinisten und der Lutheraner*, Calvin und Reformiertentum in Ungarn und Siebenbürgen. Helvetisches Bekenntnis, Ethnie und Politik vom 16. Jahrhundert bis 1918 (hg. v. Márta Fata–Anton Schindling), Münster 2012, 453–472.

The witnesses distinctly convey the contemporary opinion of Pázmány. They do not fall silent of their relationships, either. They speak in superlatives about Pázmány's suitability as a prelate. György Székely states "without hurting anybody" that there is no one to be compared to Pázmány in Hungary. Ferenczffy simply speaks about close friendship ("*ipsi familiarissimus extiterim*"). They support the contemporary public conviction of Pázmány's place of birth. The contemporaries regarded the family estate in Panasz¹¹ as his birth place, however, Pázmány often mentioned the more renowned Várad in his writings. Panasz – which was destroyed in 1598 – can be considered to be his native village, while Várad his native town.

The uniform silence of the witnesses serves indirect but firm evidence that the contemporary accusations against Pázmány were only results of a close, inner intrigue of the order. They did not evoke a stir, at all. Although, with the exception of Ramocsaházy, the witnesses belonged to the court of the Habsburgs, they briefly alluded to the exit of the Society of Jesus, namely a papal breve removed him from the order. They do not mention the related problems, the diplomatic negotiations with the papal Secretariat of State and his relationship with the Somascan Order. The provostship of Turóc is mentioned as the next phase of the career.¹²

¹¹ Cf. KARÁCSONYI JÁNOS, *Panasz*, Biharvármegyei és Nagyvárad Régorészeti és Történelmi Egyet Évkönyve 1903–1904, 21–25.

¹² LUKÁCS LÁSZLÓ, *Jezsuita maradt-e Pázmány mint érsek?*, Pázmány Péter emlékezete. Halálának 350. évfordulójára (ed. by Lukács László–Szabó Ferenc), Róma 1987, 197–267; LUKÁCS LÁSZLÓ–SZABÓ FERENC, *Autour de la nomination de Péter Pázmány au siège primate d'Esztergom (1614–1616) – Pázmány est-il resté jésuite après sa nomination?*, Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu 54 (1985) 77–148. See also CVH vol. I/13 (cited below).

* * *

Beside the appointment as an archbishop, the most exciting problem of the Pázmány-biography was his change of denomination. The best ever expert of the early years of Pázmány, MIKLÓS ŐRY rightly states that “many people dealt with the question, however, nobody had solved it yet”.¹³ The sentence, which exempts Pázmány from the obstacle of being of Protestant origin and became the basis of all the previous combinations, was written in the papal breve of 10 November, 1616 edited by a curial process. It is the following, “As we learned from a credible report, you, who was born from heretical parents and was brought up in heresy, which you, however, rejected at thirteen.”¹⁴ From the Baroque science, through Positivism to the twenty-first century, historiography shows a list of miscellaneous ideas. The supposed place of his catholicisation is sometimes Kolozsvár, sometimes Várad, but mainly the latter. Due to the varied interpretation of the breve-data, its time wanders between the years 1582–1584 (Pázmány was born on 4 October, 1570). Historiography saw the mutual effect of certain people – Jesuits, György Szántó, György Törösy and Antonio Possevino, furthermore the Catholic step-mother, Bor-

¹³ ŐRY, *Pázmány... tanulmányi évei*, 16–17 and 21–22.

¹⁴ Cf. FRANKÓI, *Pázmány Péter és kora*, I, 6–7 (STEPHANUS KATONA, *Historia Critica* XXIX, 655); HANUY FERENC (ed.), *Pázmány Péter... összegyűjtött levelei I–II*, Budapest 1910–1911, I, 779–782. The original breve: Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem Könyvtára, Kézirattár (ELTE EKK), Literae et Epistulae Originales, n. 1303; the breve’s concept: Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Segreteria dei Brevi, Registra, vol. 542, fol. 204^{rv} and fol. 231^v.

bála Tholdy – behind the event. The guessing runs even to the possible catholicisation of Miklós Pázmány.

In many respect, the canonical examination of the career accomplishing the appointment as an archbishop rather complicates than helps the historical understanding. Thanks to the testimony of Ramocsaházy and Ferenczffy it is finally certain that the place of the catholicisation was the Jesuit college of Kolozsvár and not Várad. However, in the verbal, the date is not the age of 13 but 12. On the basis of the examination, Paul V also quotes this date on an audience at the end of an October. All of this extends the interval of the event from 1581 to 1584.

The consistorial proposal to obtain the papal bulls was the right and duty of Franz von Dietrichstein, the cardinal protector of Hungary and the Habsburg hereditary provinces. In his absence, Pietro Aldobrandini, viceprotector deputized for him. However, Dietrichstein took part in the curial administration through his agent, Iacomo Olivieri. He had detailed and current information. Thanks to the reports of the agent, the verbal's route, role and details of the procedure of the papal confirmation can be recalled. On the basis of a long and thorough historical reconstruction we can come to the conclusion that the change of the datum, the exchange of the age of 12 to 13 was caused by the complexity and irregular promptness of the procedure. In all likelihood, it firstly occurred in the petition – of which text is unknown – filed to the Roman and universal Inquisition, in which the exemption from being a Protestant was asked. To draft the petition, Pázmány and the administrator, Niccolò Ridolfi, Dominican brother, who was commissioned

by the court of Prague, could not directly use the verbal already sent to Pietro Aldobrandini.¹⁵

To determine the more exact date of the change of denomination, none of the above mentioned data can be utilized. Despite it survived in a copy, according to the note of the noviciate of Krakow of 1588, the time of the catholicisation was at the age of 14. The event can be put to the term of 1583/1584. Only hypothetically, by supposing the effect of the Easter holidays and the spiritual exercises of Advent and Lent, the year of the conversion could be 1584, which was supported by MIKLÓS ŐRY.¹⁶

If we thoroughly study the literature on the early years and family relations in connection with Péter Pázmány's catholicisation, we can state that – partly due to the lack of information and denominational consciousness – in the works of the history of ideas of the Positivism in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, or of the interwar period, the scientific and fictional narrative do not separate, moreover, in many details the fictional narrative appears in the disguise of science.¹⁷ Furthermore, the most profound historical criticism, like that of P. ŐRY's was also at the mercy of such wrong information that

¹⁵ See the reports of Olivieri at: TUSOR PÉTER, *Pázmány, a jezsuita érsek. Kinevezésének története 1615–1616 (Mikropolitikai tanulmány)* (CVH I/13), Budapest–Rome 2016, Documents, n. 24. 28. 29.

¹⁶ On the entry of Pázmány in the register of Kraków: ŐRY MIKLÓS–SZABÓ FERENC, *Pázmány Péter (1570–1637)*, Pázmány Péter. Válogatás műveiből (ed. by Őry Miklós–Szabó Ferenc–Vass Péter), Budapest 1983, 11–107, 13 and 86.

¹⁷ Cf. GYÁNI GÁBOR, *Mimézis és reprezentáció. Tény és fikció kapcsolata, Tény és fikció – Tudomány és fikció a nemzetépítés büvkörében a 19. századi Magyarországon* (Magyar Történelmi Emlékek, Értekezések. Tanulmányok a nacionalizmus kultúrköréből; ed. by Lajtai Mátyás–Varga Bálint), Budapest 2015, 11–24.

was believed to be shell-proof for centuries like the “age of 13” written in the papal breve of November 1616, and to make matters worse there was the divergent data of “12” of the attested verbal of the canonical examination, which served as a basis for it. The latter could not become a success in historiography only due to its late discovery.

While in many cases there is a real risk, this time we think that we do not find ourselves in the dead end of historic agnosticism. The danger of the relative perceptibility does not threaten, either. The question is whether a single historical data, namely, the determination of the time of Pázmány's catholicisation is worth such attention. If we consider historiography science, then the answer is clearly yes. Moreover, not only the wrong data of the papal breve about the date of changing denomination can be proven, and not only the circumstances of the mistake's origin can be identified, which from a perspective of exactly 400 years is an exceptional event itself among the source conditions of the seventeenth century. But on the basis of the closer and more authentic note in a register we can also explore that the date of the *processus informativus*, which can be regarded as a primary source comparing to the breve and the attached inquisitional documents, is neither based on a historical fact!

The examination of this question by far exceeds the fundamental historical source analysis of the process. It seems that the date of the age of 12 is created by Pázmány from a perspective of two decades: as a teacher in Vágsellye, he considers the time of his catholicisation his meeting with the Jesuits, at the same time the last year of his legal infancy. He wanted to em-

phasize that he reached the responsible, legally competent age, the *legitima aetas* as a member of the true church. His pupil in Sellye and a witness, Ramocsaházy speaks about the catholicisation happened at the age of 12. On 29 September, 1616, Pázmány also mentions this date to Alessandro Vasoli, auditor of the nunciature, who deputized the nuncio, in his letter which requested the launch of the process. Observing the intentional modification is much more valuable information for us than the data of the register in Krakow – which is trustworthy in its date and far closer in time – would coincide with the process. Let it be indistinctly understood, in that case we would get a unanimous, verified notice, which would not be of great importance without being used in context. Its long historiography and the attempts to solve this problem in the last one and a half century made it significant solely for historiography and not for history. It is more interesting that Pázmány's deep subconscious became revealable; his anxiety about his "heretical past" and his salvation. By remotely carrying out a facelift in his career already around the 1600s and even at the moment of his appointment as an archbishop, he wanted to reduce the number of his "heretical years" by marking the end of his infancy. In this context, it is understandable why he felt it necessary to write his work of "On the Holy Bible and the Holy Mother Church" for his relatives and his birth-place, Bihar and why he used this title, which puts the only true church in the focus, for his writing!¹⁸

¹⁸ Pázmány Péter... összes munkái V, ed. by DEMKÓ GYÖRGY–RAPAICS RAJMUND ET AL., Budapest 1900, 349ss.

Beside the testimonies, the most valuable part of the bound and sealed verbal is Pázmány's letter of 29 September, 1616.¹⁹ Beside the special date of the catholicisation, it contains more data, about his parents. Not only do these notes decide and highlight historical questions, but they also multiply the problems. The statement of the newly appointed archbishop, namely that his parents had died as Protestants, once and for all refutes all opinions about Miklós Pázmány's probable catholicisation. The analysis of his following lines provokes even bigger drawback, "my mother died forty-four years ago and my father thirty-six years ago". According to the literature, Pázmány's mother, Margit Massay died around 1578, his father on the spring of 1584. Both data are considerably different. According to their son, Margit Massay was supposed to have deceased in 1572 and Miklós Pázmány in 1580. This would indicate that Péter Pázmány was an orphan from the age of 10.

By separating the examination of the two data, we can come to the conclusion that the statement on Margit Massay's demise is authentic. Namely the former research implied the date of 1578 (or sometimes 1580) from Pázmány's stepbrother's birth of around 1582, it has no further evidence. The early death of Margit Massay makes it understandable why her name does not occur in any source where she is listed as a live person, or why Pázmány did not have more blood brothers and sisters. Yet, it would have been possible until the earlier assumed 1578. It also means that Pázmány cannot have had any memories of his late mother. Since becoming conscious of life,

¹⁹ See the Pázmány-verbal, fol. 17rv.

he grew up as a half orphan, which aspect definitely should be paid attention while presenting his spiritual development.

His statement regarding his father's death is definitely wrong, the data of the 1584 autumn is right and will be further specify later. Nothing else explains the mistake but the *lapsus* of the rounded thirty-year-old statement through copying, namely, Pázmány's letter did not survive in original, but as a copy in the verbal.

* * *

The search for the verbal added new data and sources – moreover, the topic itself – to the micro-political writing of the history of the appointment as an archbishop (*Pázmány, the Jesuit Archbishop*). *A priori* to an old problem of historiography; to the period before the archiepiscopacy: the verbal serves an essential basis for his origin, catholicisation and his years in the Society. *A posteriori* to an also old question of historiography. To this matter VILMOS FRANKÓI's statement held true also after MIKLÓS ŐRY's comprehensive collection of material: "Unfortunately we do not possess detailed information, which could properly elucidate the relation of the archbishop to Pázmány and the latter's missionary work."²⁰ The process mitigates this lack. His data on his earlier years are retrospective; they were compiled around his archiepiscopal appointment. They require a deeper, longer and more detailed critical reflection, especially due to the sometimes chaotic "contingency" of the

²⁰ *Pázmány... és kora*, I, 81.

earlier researches. The results of the micro-philological approach – which during our research replaced the micro-historical method – show that certain historical data's objectifying is possible, moreover, perhaps worthwhile. Whether we were successful in extricating from the deadlock of the epistemological scepticism with reference to some data on Pázmány, and it was worth the time and trying for both the writer and the reader is the task of the latter.

We go on working and try to reveal this and that. We attempt to show how the Hungarian sources can be used as a counterpoint to the foreign Hungaricums and the documents belonging to the researches in the Vatican. We will see that they are not suitable for the personal attitudes, like the changing of denomination, the question of study, or the pastoral activities. However, concerning the family relations and milieu's outlining it is simply thrilling; a line of practically untouched sources is readily available. We can have a closer look from where Pázmány came to Hungarian history and to where he arrived.

B) THE ARCHIVES OF THE FAMILY

Similarly to the verbal of the canonical examination, the documents of the Pázmány–Tholdy archives were not prepared for being historical sources, either. Apart from some valuable personal letters (*missilis*) addressed to Miklós Pázmány and Borbála Tholdy, they are mainly legal documents. Their survival is owing to the provision of the new archbishop,

who had the archives of the family brought out from the territory of the Principality in 1617.²¹ In accordance with the conventions, expectations and chances of the age it was the firm intention of the primate to raise the Pázmánys to the Hungarian and European aristocracy.²² He primarily needed the documents to certify the origin of the family leading back to the fourteenth century, their lineage, descent and dignified kinship. We can find his half-brother, György Pázmány in the court of the primacy also from 1617. The plans for his son, Miklós Pázmány, who was raised to the Hungarian and imperial aristocracy, and for the cardinal's paternal uncle, Farkas Pázmány's descendants of the female line, Péter Solymosi and János Namény were upset. After the dying out of Miklós Pázmány's line, the latter ones and their descendants were to take the name of Pázmány along with the inherited estate. Yet, it did not happen. The nephew of the cardinal had already squandered the goods bequeathed to him in the 1650s. Out of the Hungarian ec-

²¹ Pázmány's letter to Boldizsár Kemény, Tyrnavia, 5th August 1617. Archivelor Nationale Romania, Directia Judeteana Cluj, Fond Familiar. Kemény, K VIII/450.

²² Cf. WOLFGANG REINHARD, *Nepotismus. Der Funktionswandel einer papstgeschichtlichen Konstanten*, Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte 86 (1975) 145–185; CHRISTOPH WEBER, *Familienkanonikate und Patronatsbistümer. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte von Adel und Klerus im neuzeitlichen Italien* (Historische Forschungen 38), Berlin 1988, particularly 148–266, 169–204; MARIO ROSA, *Per grazia del papa. Pensioni e commende nell'Italia del Seicento*, Roma, la città del papa. Vita civile e religiosa dal giubileo di Bonifacio VIII al giubileo di papa Wojtyła (Storia d'Italia. Annali 16; a cura di Luigi Fiorani–Adriano Prosperi), Torino 2000, 293–326; WOLFGANG REINHARD, *Papal Power and Family Strategy in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, Princes, Patronage and the Nobility (ed. by R.G. Asch–A.M. Birke), Oxford 1991, 329–356; A.D. WRIGHT, *The Early Modern Papacy: From the Council of Trent to the French Revolution*, Abingdon–New York 2013, 232–253.

clesiarches of the seventeenth century, finally György Széchenyi succeeded in establishing a collateral dynasty.²³

A considerable amount of the documents, which are dispersedly and incompletely found in the *Classis T* division of the secular archives of the primate of Esztergom,²⁴ have reference to the father, Miklós Pázmány. Until now, he has only been a name and title, a character invested mostly with fictive acts on the pages of historiography.²⁵ We can get closer to him, his refinement, aims and relations through letters of judgements and testimonies (*litterae testimoniales*), etc. containing evidences and through some personal letters (*missilis*). We can become acquainted with his functioning as a *vicecomes*, his manorial activities, his effort to augment the number of

²³ FRANKÓI, *Pázmány... és kora*, I, 320 and II, 447ss; III, 382–383; FRANKÓI, *Pázmány*, 285; HANUY, *Pázmány... levelei*, I, n. 278. 463 (688); II, n. 916. 1082 (730); JANKOVICS JÓZSEF, *Pázmány Péter ismeretlen végrendelete 1637-ből*, *Lymbus* 2 (2004) 61–69; JENEI FERENC, *Pázmány Miklós veszprémi főkapitány, AVeszprém Megyei Múzeumok közleményei I*, Veszprém 1963, 161–170; ZDENEK POKLUDA, *Magyarországi nemesek földbirtoklása Cseh- és Morvaországban a XV–XX. században*, *Levéltári Közlemények* 46 (1975) 235–277, 268 and 273.

²⁴ Prímási Levéltár [Primatial Archives] (PL), Archivum Saeculare (AS), Acta radicalia, Classis T, *passim* between n. 93–261 (*capsae* 40–42) (and n. 402). Cf. *Archivum Saeculare I: Acta Radicalia et Protocollaria* (Útmutató az Esztergomi Prímási Levéltárhoz 3), ed. by GÁLFFY ZSUZSANNA–HEGEDŰS ANDRÁS–TÓTH KRISZTINA, Esztergom 2001, 96–114.

²⁵ FRANKÓI, *Pázmány... és kora*, I, 5ss; FRANKÓI, *Pázmány Péter*, 7ss; KARÁCSONYI JÁNOS, *Pázmány Péter atyafiságáról*, *Magyar Sion* 11 (1897) 948–953; ZSÁK J. ADOLF, *Kitérítette Pázmány Pétert a katolikus vallásra*, *Nagyvárad* 1901, 1–28; KARÁCSONYI JÁNOS, *Pázmány Péter ifjúsága és rokoni összeköttetései*, *Religio* 66 (1907) 351–353 and 366–368; LÁNYI EDE, *Pázmány Péter fejlődése*, *Egyházi Lapok* 58 (1935) 339–343 and 59 (1936) 5–8 and 55–57; SÍK, *Pázmány*, 6ss; ŐRY, *Pázmány... tanulmányi évei*, 9ss; ŐRY–SZABÓ, *Pázmány*, 11ss; BITSKEY *Pázmány*, 10–11; BITSKEY ISTVÁN, *Pázmány I. Péter*, *Esztergomi érsekek* (ed. by Beke Margit), Budapest 2003, 284–291, 284–285.

his estates, his legal actions and well-outlined family strategy. There is a significant part of the documents of the virtually reconstructed family archives which relates to the Tholdys; to his step-mother, Borbála Tholdy, his brother Albert and his son, György Pázmány.

* * *

On the basis of the documents on the official function of Miklós Pázmány it is certain that he could be only one of the four noble judges and not yet a *vicecomes* at the time of his son's birth in 1570. In 1568, 1572 and 1576 László Lessy and Balázs Bojthy held this office. The first reference to Miklós Pázmány as a second *vicecomes* appears on 18 June, 1577. In 1583, his colleagues in the administration of Bihar County were Miklós Váncsody, János Szőke, István Nadaby and Boldizsár Olozoy, noble judges, scribe Lukács, *iuratus notarius*, Péter Kónya, scribe Máté and György. The first *vicecomes* was all along Bojthy, whose municipal house was near István Bocskai's.²⁶ The Pázmány mansion was situated also in the oldest and most illustrious district of Várad, in the district of "Venice". In 1603 only the estate existed. The building may have been ruined during the Turkish siege of 1598.²⁷

²⁶ Direcția Județeană Bihor ale Arhivelor Naționale, Oradea (Nagyvárad), Fond Nr. 67 (Inventar Nr. 101), Microfilm rol. 1–8, rol. 5, pa. 13, n. 24 and 28; rol. 8, pa. 22, n. 21 (cited below as "Nagyvárad, Ugray–Bölöni family archives"); PL AS Act. rad., Class. T, n. 165. 167. 201. 223.

²⁷ See Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár Országos Levéltára (MNL-OL), Magyar Kamara Archivuma, Acta Iesuitica (E 152), Registrata, Residentia Magnovaradiensis, fasc. 3, n. 2 (38. d., fol. 139) and fasc. 2, n. 6 (38. d., fol. 34). n. 7. (fol. 35). n. 5 (fol. 29–32).

Through his official activities, Miklós Pázmány as an acting local authority was in touch with both István Bocskai and the father of Gábor Bethlen, Farkas Bethlen. To understand the often examined controversial relation of the archbishop and the prince, it is worth analysing their fathers' slight but palpable conflict, or at least their ambivalent relation.²⁸

With the help of the documents of the administration of the *vicecomes* and the other documents of the family archives, we can specify the time of Miklós Pázmány's decease. Judging from the signs an unexpected event happened according to the new Gregorian calendar after 27 November, 1584, or rather 16 December, but certainly before 25 February, 1585. The earliest identifiable copy of the coat of arms of the Pázmány family illustrating three ostrich feathers – which later became well-known as the emblem of the Catholic University – was on the two charters issued as a *vicecomes* in November. Its blurred version survived in the mark of the signet ring of Miklós Pázmány.²⁹

* * *

From the documents of the cases running inside the Pázmány family, it appears that Miklós Pázmány must have been the head of the family. Not Farkas Pázmány, who was considered to be older and a step-brother by the literature. Farkas Pázmány lived longer than his brother; his age can be estab-

²⁸ PL AS Act. rad., Class T, n. 205 and *ibid.*, ad n. 211, fol. 8 (Farkas Bethlen to Balázs Bojthy and Miklós Pázmány vicecomites of Bihar, Marosillye, 3 January, 1579).

²⁹ PL AS Act. rad., Class T, n. 205 and 206; cf. also note 47 below.

lished from the documents, he was born around 1530. As a consequence, Miklós Pázmány was born in the decade of Mohács. The history of the three generations of the Pázmány family: Miklós Pázmány († 1584/85), Péter Pázmány († 1637) and Count Miklós Pázmány († 1662) spans over almost the whole Hungarian Early modern period from the Battle of Mohács to the Peace of Vasvár.³⁰

In the family cases, at first Miklós Pázmány represented his nephew, Gáspár Pázmány, Jr as his legal guardian then as his representative. Later, their relation became spoilt; moreover, they also carried on a lawsuit against each other. The documents of the legal cases between 1577 and 1584 and the documents of the arbitrary measures of 1583 preserved the contribution of the *vicecomes* of Bihar in Latin and his statements in Hungarian given through his lawyers.³¹ In connection with the examination of a murder in 1580, the detailed topography of Panasz, which estate served the title of nobility, its everyday life and many of its inhabitants appeared from the complete obscurity.³² (The texts of the pleadings of the lawyers and the testimonies can be read in the *Appendix*.)

The names of the serfs can be further increased by the serf bonds preserved in bulk. These documents, all in Hungarian and with rather primitive writings, have significant biographi-

³⁰ PL AS Act. rad., Class T, n. 200; PL AS Act. rad., Class. T, ad n. 211 (fol. 10), Mihály Csáky locumtenens to Miklós and Farkas Pázmány (“*Egregiis dominis Nicolao et Volphgango Pazman etc. Amicis et fratribus nobis observandissimis*”), Kolozsvár, 23rd October 1569; NAGY IVÁN, *Magyarország családai czímerekkel és nemzékrendi táblákkal I–XIII*, Budapest 1987–1988 (repr.), IX, 174–175.

³¹ PL AS Act. rad., Class T, n. 165. n. 166. 175. 176. 177. 178. 200. 202.

³² PL AS Act. rad., Class. T, n. 189. 190. 191. 192.

cal documentary value in some cases. On Saint Nicholas day in 1581 – straight from nothing – János Pázmány appears on the side of Farkas Pázmány as a witness, who was either an uncle, or a cousin of the future cardinal.³³ In contrast to the majority of such documents, the bond, which was sealed on 19 August, 1582 in Szalonta among others in front of the new relatives, István Tholdy and Luca Tholdy, is not addressed only to Miklós Pázmány, but also “to Miklós Pazmanj and to my son, Péter Pazmany”. This is the first written reference to the existence of Pázmány. Knowing his strong nobiliary self-consciousness, it is symbolic that his appearance takes place in such “feudal” act in a local stage of history.³⁴

Excursus

As an unexpected result of the research, the same can be hold about Gábor Bethlen due to the bonds of the Pázmány–Tholdy family. In the bond, issued in 1592 by “János Warga, the serf of the late valiant knight Farkas Bethlen’s son, Gábor Bethlen” and his companions, the reference to the 12-year-old Gábor Bethlen is not the only reason why our research on Pázmány exceeds. As rare information, the arrangement of the case of Ilona Nagy, a serf-widow who lost her honour, offers an overlook to the history of the borderland of the Principality and the Ottoman Hungary, namely, after the diocese had ceased to exist and the control of the county locally became loose, not only did the self-administration of the villages and the feudal structure, the serfdom function, but seemingly it also devel-

³³ PL AS Act. rad., Class. T, n. 191.

³⁴ PL AS Act. rad., Class. T, n. 240. On the serfdom in the contemporary Principality recently: BOGDÁNDI ZSOLT, *Jobbágyok Kolozsvárra költözése a fejedelemség korában. 16–17. századi jobbágyfelszabadítások a kolozsmonostori jegyzőkönyvekben*, Erdélyi Múzeum 74 (2012) 3, 68–87.

oped an adequate administration, a legal language and formulas in Hungarian.³⁵ The scheme was visibly compatible to the presbyterial system of Calvinism. Later, this compatibility could not be a neglected aspect in the Hungarian consolidation of the denomination of Swiss-French origin. However, only certain sub-parts of the new confession got active at the beginning. Mainly those, which were “user friendly” on the part of the recipients: simplified services in vernacular languages, which were neither obligatory on Sundays, the communal election of the pastor, etc. According to the signs, the presbyterial system itself was not yet; since the licentious woman was pardoned by the landlord at the “jurist, pious” persons’ advice. The pious here is a general locution, it also appears elsewhere. The moral judicature is a manorial, communal action, but with the participation of the traditional rural community. The parish, the congregation and the presbytery has no faint reminiscent yet. However, the occurrence of the old festivals is more frequent. Not only in the documents of the county, in the charters of the secularised chapter and the *conservatorium* of Várád, but also in the serf bonds. They had still certain effect at that time. For instance, their official validity due to the legal force ensured by the old form. The festivals of the saints, especially of the patron saints, could not be got rid of with one blow among the older generations.

* * *

Besides the obtainment of the serfs and apart from some cases of arbitrary measures (like that of against János Borssoló of Ipp),³⁶ the main direction of Miklós Pázmány’s developing of his estate was the enforcement of the family legal claims and his matrimonial strategy. Already in 1569, he showed interest in the inheri-

³⁵ PL AS Act. rad., Class. T, n. 249.

³⁶ PL AS Act. rad., Class. T, n. 198.

tance of the Czibaks, who were related on the paternal side and died out. However, he had little chance against Mihály Csáky, governor.³⁷ According to the valid data of genealogy, the paternal grandmother of his wife, Margit Massay, Ágnes Czibak was the sister of Imre Czibak, who was murdered by the order of Gritti. As a consequence, theoretically, Miklós Pázmány's choice of spouse could have been influenced by the strengthening of his legal claim aiming at the Czibak-property, about the time when the family died out on male line. We do not possess closer proof, however, the concurrences are thought-provoking.

The legal case for the Csáky-inheritance started in 1579 was Miklós Pázmány's greatest personal undertaking. The family archives is considerably constituted by the endless line of its documents. Miklós Pázmány claimed that his mother, Kata Csáky's brother, Miklós Csáky (both were descendants of Gábor Csáky) had not assigned the obligatory *quartalitium* (the portion of inheritance given to the female member of the family). After Miklós Csáky had also deceased, his sons, Gergely and Mátyás became interpleaded. The stake was high. Miklós Pázmány demanded his mother's share of inheritance relating to the complete estates belonging to the castle and market-town of Körösszeg and to more than 20 settlements of Bihar County by the mill of the Körös River. His claims were significantly reduced during the legal battle, which was still open in 1587 and continued by his son, Péter. We do not have proof that the demanded goods were put in possession of the Pázmány family.³⁸ For his case, the *vicecomes* of Bihar County

³⁷ See above, note 30.

³⁸ PL AS Act. rad., Class. T, n. 179. 180a. 180b. 181. 186. 187. 195. 203. 204.

searched for documents at his distant relatives. He asked for the legal advice of distant experts. His assistant was his familiar, László Ederffy. His *missilis* written on 22 October, 1583 is a special value of the family archives.³⁹

The Csáky case represents Miklós Pázmány's efforts to raise his family to the elite of the Principality. Not only in respect of his claims of property. Gergely, the first-born of the rival family received Italian and Catholic education, which seemingly stimulated the ambitious nobleman. It offered an attractive possibility to his first-born to grasp the opportunity and obtain such education – even if not in Italy – in the newly established Jesuit boarding school of Kolozsvár. His decision might have been influenced by the fact that the school in Kolozsvár was the foundation of István Báthory. Namely, he had his son enrolled in the school of the king and prince. In regard to Péter Pázmány's education there was the same model as in the case of György Homonnai Drugeth, Ferenc Daróczy and others being close to the court, who pursued their studies in Prague and Vienna. In view of the sources, the paternal motivation can be understood concerning the not so irregular choice of school in this light.⁴⁰

³⁹ „*Generoso ac egregio domino Nicolao Pazman de Panaz vicecomiti comitatus B. Domino ac fratri observandissimo*”. PL AS Act. rad., Class. T, ad n. 211, fol. 12.

⁴⁰ Cf. LUKÁCS LÁSZLÓ–MOLNÁR ANTAL, *A homonnai jezsuita kollégium (1615–1619)*, Művelődési törekvések a korai újkorban. Tanulmányok Keserű Bálint tiszteletére (Adattár a XVI–XVIII. század szellemi mozgalmak történetéhez 35; ed. by Balázs Mihály–Font Zsuzsa–Keserű Gizella–Ötvös Péter), Szeged 1997, 355–399, 357 and 360–361; FAZEKAS ISTVÁN, *Adalékok az ifjú Bocskai István bécsi udvarban eltöltött éveibez*, *Studia Caroliensia* 7 (2006) 1, 73–85, 73–74; PÉTER KATALIN, *Esterházy Miklós* (Magyar Életrajzok), Budapest 1985, 60ss.

The first reference to the other great case – for the Ártándy inheritance – is also dated back in 1579, namely his first years as a *vicecomes*. The coincidence is hardly accidental. The Ártándy case was not a personal one but his kin's action. Miklós Pázmány took legal action with three other for the inheritance of the childless Kelemen Ártándy, whose father Balázs Ártándy and the mother of Péter Pázmány, Sr. (namely the great-grandmother of the cardinal), Kata Ártándy were siblings. In June 1582 there were all in all 61 witnesses heard from the Pázmány family's genealogy. (The testimonies written down in Hungarian can be read in the *Appendix* [2].) The case was against István Bocskai. He gained the Ártándy properties, like the castle of Kerek, which became famous in connection with the siege of 1604, as a princely grant. With the direction of Miklós Pázmány, the heirs of the female line opposed his bestowal, though, late. The *vicecomes* of Bihar County had cases not only with the father of Gábor Bethlen, but also with István Bocskai, many times. According to the last reference of 1583, he got involved in a long case with him, already in front of the princely Supreme Court. Moreover, not completely without success; they could come to a temporary agreement. On behalf of his co-plaintiffs, he carried on negotiations. Finally, they waived their claims in return for “a suitable summa”; however, only in their names and not in their descendants'. Bocskai had also the heir Péter Pázmány seen wherefore. Yet, the self-assured Jesuit pupil rejected the performance of his request.⁴¹

⁴¹ PL AS Act. rad., Class. T, n. 182. 183. 184. 184a. 184b. 196. 197. 402; HANUY, *Pázmány Péter... levelei*, II, n. 692 and 693.

Miklós Pázmány felt confident enough in the launch of the great lawsuits concerning the family only as a *vicecomes*. That is why he had not initiated legal proceedings earlier, though, his claims were not new. Similar reasons can be found in the background of his late second marriage. The marital strategy of the noble families in the early modern period were not motivated by sentimental and rearing reasons, but by the intention of establishing the family's safety and further development, of gaining more wealth and increasing their influence and of widening their social network. This prospect could be ensured only by the Tholdys, beside or even prior to the Massays in the neighbourhood. He had to wait for the appropriate betrothed to reach her marriageable age. With obtaining the title of the *vicecomes* (first mentioned as such in 1577), also Miklós Pázmány could ensure a proper prospect for the new related family.

* * *

The documents relating to the new wife, Borbála Tholdy primarily enrich the biographical data of her and her family members. They recall those circumstances which Pázmány had to face while spending his school holidays from Kolozsvár until 1588 after the death of his father. The milieu of the family seems sombre due to the troubles occurring by the death of the head of the family. In the spring of 1588 "the late valiant Miklós Pázmány's wife, Lady Borbála Tholdi" had to appear before the chief justice of Várad due to her deceased husband's prior arbitrary measures and had to give back the charter ob-

tained for the Csáky-lawsuit, etc.⁴² The situation of the widow was further worsened by an inner family conflict. In the spring of 1587, she and Albert Tholdy testified against each other by mutually listing about 30 lawyers in particular. By linking with the case, György Pázmány's age was officially established in the documents, though, we do not exactly know why. His correct date of birth was April 1583.⁴³

The clash of the siblings was not unique; the mutual act of seeking legal advice did not prove to be unnecessary. The next conflict of the brother and sister is dated back to 1591. The subject of their discord was the will of their brother, Márk Tholdy. The document directly shows the fortunate financial situation of the extended family. Here we are satisfied with the data referring to the testator's confessional identity. The Jesuit mission was not the only one to do pastoral work around Várad, but also a certain Mihály priest. There was a Catholic church in Nagyfalu, Márk Tholdy could have been its advowee.⁴⁴

Miklós Pázmány's widow lost her case, though, the loss was only temporary. Later, she became one of the heirs of her brother. She shared the partitions of Albert's inheritance with the sons of her sister, Erzsébet Tholdy, Boldizsár and Zsigmond Kornis. Every data shows that Péter Pázmány's step-mother reached the seventeenth century, the beginning of her foster son's great period. In 1603, when her twenty-year-old son,

⁴² PL AS Act. rad., Class. T, n. 216 and PL AS Act. rad., Class. T, ad n. 211, fol. 6 (letter of Gábor Csáky, Kucsó, 21st April 1587).

⁴³ PL AS Act. rad., Class. T, n. 213. 214. 215.

⁴⁴ PL AS Act. rad., Class. T, n. 223 and 224.

György Pázmány sold the Pázmány-mansion of Várad, her name was not mentioned, which indicates that she was already gone.⁴⁵

From the mid-1580s, among chaotic family relations, Péter Pázmány could mainly rely on his uncle, Farkas from his kinsmen. His already mentioned care about his descendants cannot be accidental. Another close relative of his was also still alive. His maternal grandmother, Margit Massay's mother, Margit Felfalussy. It is not a bold assumption that instead of Pázmány's early deceased mother (according to Pázmány, in 1572) she, who was still active in 1584, got involved into the upbringing. She filled the gap until Miklós Pázmány's second marriage. In the person of Margit Felfalussy – whose first name is strikingly similar to his daughter's – it can be identified such an unknown female character that affected the child Pázmány more than Borbála Tholdy.

The alive maternal grandmother is again mentioned in a case opened by Miklós Pázmány in 1580. The subject of the lawsuit was Lázár Felfalussy's wife, the maternal great-grandmother, Begina Nadányi's (the mother of Margit Felfalussy) unissued share of inheritance, namely again an obligatory *quartalitium*. The assumed (by the literature) guardian of Péter Pázmány, Ferenc Massay received the role of a legal representative only in the protracted execution of this case's favourable judgement.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ PL AS Act. rad., Class. T, n. 229; and note 27, above.

⁴⁶ Cf. ZSÁK, *Ki térítette Pázmányt*, 19 and 21; KARÁCSONYI, *Pázmány... ifjúsága*, 366–367. On Ferenc Massay: *Az erdélyi fejedelmek királyi könyvei. I: 1569–1602. János Zsigmond, Báthory Kristóf, Báthory Zsigmond királyi könyvei. Báthory Zsigmond királyi könyve 1582–1602* (Erdélyi Történelmi Adatok 7/3), ed. by FEJÉR TAMÁS–RÁCZ ETELKA–SZÁSZ ANIKÓ, Kolozsvár 2005, 163, n. 509.

Pázmány's guardian could be rather his step-mother, Borbála Tholdy.⁴⁷ Thus, not his maternal grandmother, Margit Felfalussy, who was still so active in 1584 that she personally travelled to Jászó to conclude a deal on 16 May about the village of Kérsziget in order to ransom his son, László from Turkish captivity.⁴⁸ (The affair was successful. Five years later, this László took measures to free his brother, Lőrinc.)⁴⁹

In 1588, when Pázmány left for Poland to start his noviciate in the Society of Jesus, it is possible that apart from his step-mother, he had to say goodbye to his Calvinist grandmother. After that he never saw his motherland again. However, he could have renounced his possessory rights and the inheritance of his ancestors only in 1593/1594.⁵⁰



⁴⁷ MNL-OL Harruckern család levéltára (P 418), fasc. 18, fol. 53–65 (Lit. X); cf. Esztergomi Főszékesegyházi Könyvtár, Batthyány-gyűjtemény, Cat. VII (Acta Excelsae Curiae Regiae), Tit. XL. s, fol. 453–460, 455; ELTE EKK Collectio Hevencensiana, tom. 9, fol. 167–168 (*Genealogia Cardinalis Pazmany ex scripturis familiae authenticis desumpta*).

⁴⁸ HAHN LAJOS, *Békés vármegye bajdana*, Pest 1870, 201.

⁴⁹ Nagyvárád, Ugray–Bölöni fam. arch., rol. 8, pa. 22, n. 34.

⁵⁰ IACOBUS FERDINANDUS MILLER, (ed.), *Epistolae, quae haberi poterant... Petri Pázmány... I*, Budae 1822, IX–X.

* * *

The often recurring motive of the literature on Pázmány is his letter addressed to Palatine György Thurzó on 20 August, 1616, in which he refutes in length the hysterical publicity conducted against him after his visitation in Upper Hungary:

“I also consider myself Hungarian, just like others. I like the honour and peacefulness of my motherland and nation and I desire to have them from God. I also like the privileges of the nobility and protect it in proportion to my means. Yet, though in the midst of forces, the Pázmány-kin has disintegrated, I can assure that my ancestors were benign noblemen since King Saint Stephen. My grandmother was Miklós Csáki’s daughter; my mother was of Massai-kin; Kelemen Ártándi, Imre Czibak were close kinsmen of my father.”⁵¹

The often quoted extract gains new context and dimension thanks to our research. Not only can we get to know the genealogy and distant ancestry better, but we can also get an insight into the closer-extended family milieu, in which Pázmány was born and brought up until the age of 14, or partly 18. The family model of Miklós Pázmány, a noble judge of Bihar then a *vice-comes*, shows us in detail the noble strategies of the sixteenth century motivated by the possibilities of social rise. The *vice-comes* of Bihar endeavoured to ennoble his family and to increase his wealth and estates, his influence and social network through the prestige and – at least enforceable – inheritance provided by descent, through comprehensive offices favouring his family,

⁵¹ HANUY, *Pázmány... levelei*, I, n. 32.

furthermore, through reasoned marriages and occasional arbitrariness of measures.⁵²

The conscious confessional attitude functionally fitted into this strategy. After the Catholic Báthorys had acceded to the throne, he married his second wife, who almost belonged to high nobility (the Tholdys were not *magnificus* yet) and was Catholic, his son was enrolled in the college established by István Báthory, where he received similar education as the rival Gergely Csáky. It was no secret for him what chances were afforded by the Italian education in the court of István Báthory – who arranged the important affairs of Transylvania also as a Polish king. His son's catholicisation was not likely to be opposed by him, quite the contrary. It should not be forgotten that the Protestant princely rule in Transylvania began to be institutionalised only under Gábor Báthory. Moreover, the Báthorys are the very ones who show that the existence of many denominations within one family has no disadvantages. The example of András Báthory, who adopted an ecclesiastical career at the instance of the family and became a cardinal in July 1584 and the prince-bishop of Varmia, clearly indicated to the Transylvanian public opinion that the opportunities hidden in the ecclesiastical career had not disappeared with the Middle Ages.⁵³ Miklós Pázmány, however, remained in the

⁵² Cf. PÉTER KATALIN, *Házasság a régi Magyarországon, 16–17. század* (Múltidéző Zsebkönyvtár), Budapest 2008; *Politika és házasság. Menyegzőre hívogató levelek a 16. századi Erdélyből* (TDI Könyvek 2), ed. by HORN ILDIKÓ–KREUTZER ANDREA–SZABÓ ANDRÁS PÉTER, Budapest 2005.

⁵³ About the Báthorys with bibliography: KRUPPA TAMÁS, *Tradíció és propaganda keresztútján – Fejezetek Báthory Zsigmond udvarának kultúrájából* (Humanizmus és Reformáció 36), Budapest 2015.

majority denomination of his local community and his openings, and by fulfilling the expectations of theirs he raised his younger son as Calvinist.

The Transylvanian elite were not wide in the period, neither was it static.⁵⁴ The chances of Miklós Pázmány are shown by the fact that he endeavoured to move from the direct margin to the centre. His estates, family and official relations connected him with the Báthory, Bocskai, Csáky, Tholdy, Kornis, Kemény, Bethlen, etc. families. The hostile medium, which saw a rival in his person, can also be palpable. János Borssoló of Ipp – who sued him for arbitrary of measures and who became soon a princely prothonotary – did not accidentally undertake the counselling of the Csákys, who denied giving out the *quartalitium* and were explicitly malicious according to the records.⁵⁵

The legal quality of the family archives, the applied terms and the whole crowd of lawyers and scribes show such a Humanist and basically legal cultural background in Várad of 1570s and 1580s, which was older and perhaps stronger than that of the confessional aspect. The preservation of the way of dating that kept the feasts of the saints convincingly proves us. This educational model's speaking evidence that Balázs Weres,

⁵⁴ A current analysis of the years 1556–1588: HORN ILDIKÓ, *A batalom pillérei. A politikai elit az Erdélyi Fejedelemség megszilárdulásának korszakában (1556–1588)*, Academical dissertation ms., Budapest 2012, particularly 297ss; 298ss and 308–320 (303ss).

⁵⁵ PL AS Act. rad., Class. T, n. 198 and 195; JAKAB ELEK, *Kolozsvár története I–III*, Budapest 1870–1888, II, 307 and 317; BOGDÁNDI ZSOLT, *A kolozsmonostori konvent fejedelemségkori bítelesbeli tevékenysége (XVI–XVII. század)*, Debrecen 2011 (Doktori értekezés, DTE), 38. The printed version: *A kolozsmonostori konvent a fejedelemség korában* (Erdélyi Tudományos Füzetek 274), Kolozsvár 2012.

chief justice of Várad and Bihar County translated Werbőczy's *Tripartitum* into Hungarian in 1565. In the same year, it was published by a printing house in Debrecen.⁵⁶ The effect of the activity of the Humanist bishops in Várad, from János Vitéz to György Szatmári and from Zsigmond Thurzó to Ferenc Perényi survived Mohács and the secularisation of the bishopric. Its legal culture soundly prospered in the second half of the sixteenth century.⁵⁷ Miklós Pázmány's judicial speech given in Latin on 21 April, 1584 proves that he perfectly possessed this education.⁵⁸ His prominence is more distinctive in the qualified and crowded local legal circus. His leading position in the county drives to the conclusion that he acquired more profound practical and theoretical knowledge than his contemporaries. In all likelihood, in Várad. We cannot find his name in the register of foreign universities.⁵⁹

Péter Pázmány must have inherited his legal vein, moreover, partly his knowledge from his father, beside his self-esteem, deeply-rooted Hungarian noble identity and his respect and pride in his ancestors. Among his published documents, numerous protests made in front of chapters, reservation of

⁵⁶ BALOGH JOLÁN, *Váradinum. Várad vára I* (Művészettörténeti Füzetek 13/1), Budapest 1982, 72.

⁵⁷ Cf. for instance BUNYITAY VINCE, *A váradai püspökség története az alapítástól a jelenkorig I–IV*, Nagyvárad–Debrecen 1883–1884–1935, I, 269–377; TÓTH SZABÓ PÁL, *Nagyvárad az erdélyi fejedelmek és a török uralom alatt*, Nagyvárad 1904, *passim*; BALOGH JOLÁN, *Az erdélyi renaissance I*, Kolozsvár 1943, 195–196 and *passim*; JAKÓ ZSIMOND, *Váradai siralmas krónika. Könyvtár- és levéltárügy Nagyváradon a múltban és a jelenben*, Magyar Egyháztörténeti Vázlatok-Regnum, 2004/1–2, 93–114, 94–96.

⁵⁸ PL AS Act. rad., Class. T, n. 202.

⁵⁹ *Erdélyiek egyetemenjárása a korai újkorban (1521–1700)*, ed. by SZABÓ MIKLÓS–TÖNK SÁNDOR (Fontes Rerum Scholasticarum 4), Szeged 1992.

rights, judgements and his analyses related to ecclesiastical and secular law can be found.⁶⁰ This is less characteristic of his predecessors and successors. When the unbelievably detailed documentation on his early years is explored, a more significant statement can be given: his knowledge acquired in his childhood is not only Protestant. He was also influenced by the local Humanist-legal circle. The humanism of Várad did not vanish, neither was it completely confessionalised during the two-three generations after Mohács.

The atavistic fear of the Turks was similarly determinant in his young age, especially during the months spent in Panasz. The Turkish captivity of his two maternal uncles, László Massay, Jr. and Lőrinc Massay shows his family's direct participation in the battles against the Ottomans.⁶¹

So far, the Jesuit character dominated in the portrayal of Péter Pázmány's personal growth, especially at MIKLÓS ŐRY. Furthermore, SÁNDOR SÍK, GYULA KORNIS, etc.⁶² only referred to the early years in general terms. In one extract, Pázmány himself calls the Society his "invigorating mother". Through our research, we can realise how and in what extent the family circumstances in Várad and in Panasz were determining. His likewise well-known lines: "I consider Várad and its surrounding country worthy of being defended by the whole Christianity for long" – which should be inter-

⁶⁰ Cf. HANUY, *Pázmány... levelei*, I. n. 176. 311. 326 etc.; II, n. 533. 534. 593. 898. 899. etc.

⁶¹ HAHN, *Békés vármegye hajdانا*, 201; Nagyvárad, Ugray-Bölöni fam. arch., rol. 8, pa. 22, n. 34.

⁶² ŐRY, *Pázmány tanulmányi évei*, op. cit.; SÍK, *Pázmány*, op. cit.; KORNIS GYULA, *Pázmány személyisége*, Budapesti Szemle 3 [n.s.] (1935) 133–161 and 286–319.

preted through the prism created by the result of our research.⁶³

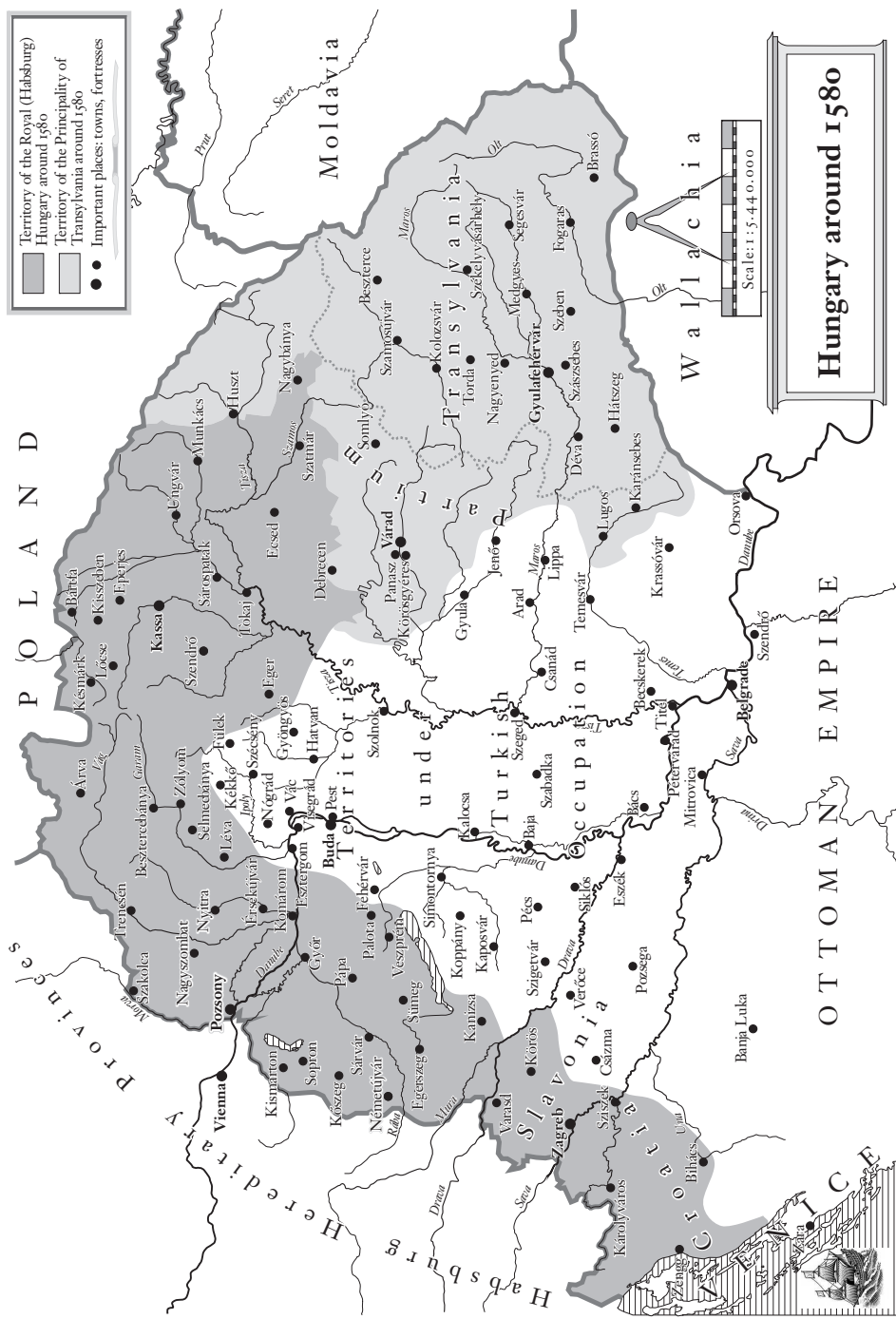
That geographical, social and cultural milieu opens for us which integrated the Pázmány family into the nobility of the principality. However, the ascent path was brutally broken by the death of Miklós Pázmány. The “disintegration of the kin” began at that time. The Pázmánys had not possessed such wealth and chances before. The earlier mentioned “forces” were the battles of the Turkish siege of 1598 around Várad, which not only levelled Panasz with the ground, but irreparable damages were made in the other parts of the estate: Tóttelek, Szomajom, etc were never rebuilt.⁶⁴ Despite the affluence of the Tholdy family, the financial situation of the widow of Miklós Pázmány and her son, György became more unfavourable. The vendition of the mansion in Várad – with reference to the rising costs of the corn – indicates this.⁶⁵

The only successful, lasting act of Miklós Pázmány's family strategy was the enrolment of his older son in the Jesuit boarding school. Besides the patronage of Ferenc Forgách and Melchior Klesl, this was the most determining turn of Pázmány's later career. The entry in the Society of Jesus cannot be regarded as an independent phase, since it is rather the re-

⁶³ „*Ego certe Váradinum, et eum, qui ei adiacet, tractum, dignum censeo, pro quo Christianitas universa diu depugnet*”. Pázmány to Thurzó, Pozsony, 14th November 1616. HANUY, *Pázmány... levelei*, I, n. 45.

⁶⁴ On the estates of the Pázmány family: BUNYITAY, *A váradai püspökség*, III, 325–326 and *passim*; REISZIG EDE, *Bihar vármegye nemes családai*, Borovszky Samu (ed.), Bihar vármegye és Nagyvárad, Budapest 1901 (<http://mek.oszk.hu/09500/09536/html/0005/32.html>), *passim*.

⁶⁵ Cf. note 27 above.



sult of his years in the Jesuit boarding school of Kolozsvár. While analysing his decision, the earlier research focused on the effect of spiritual motivation, the Sodality of Our Lady and on the role of certain monks (Szántó, Fanfonio, Capace and Ardolphus) in his life.⁶⁶ However, immanent angles also should be considered while analysing his choice of career by avoiding the underestimation of the role, weight and importance of these factors.

That very simple question should be raised for this, whether what alternatives he had in Transylvania as a secular Catholic nobleman in 1588. We should hardly have a vivid imagination to realize: Pázmány also raised this question before coming to his decision. Practically, he had no option for further study. The Jesuit boarding school in Kolozsvár was threatened by closing. Without a Maecenas, he did not stand a chance in Italy and Poland. István Báthory's peregrinational program was not continued and an ecclesiastical Maecenas simply did not exist. His attention to the problem as the archbishop of Esztergom is not accidental, also prior to the establishment of the University of Nagyszombat. Due to the change of his denomination, the acquisition of legal knowledge and practice in Várad – following in his father's footsteps – seemed hopeless. Neither did the circumstances of the princely court appear too tempting, especially under Zsigmond Báthory.⁶⁷ The military career was

⁶⁶ ŐRY, *Pázmány... tanulmányi évei*, 40–44.

⁶⁷ For the Transylvanian Princely Court with bibliography see JENY TÓTH ANAMÁRIA, „*Urunk udvarnépe*”, *Udvar és társadalma Báthory Gábor és Bethlen Gábor fejedelemsége idején a kolozsvári számadáskönyvek tükrében* (Speculum Historiae Debreceniense 11), Debrecen 2012, 6–18.

excluded by his slight physique, which was recorded also by the Baroque tradition.⁶⁸ The path, through which Gábor Bethlen had acceded to the princely chair, was unfeasible for Pázmány.⁶⁹ The continuance of his father's unfinished gaining of estates, his lawsuits and the management of the estates that he possessed only in half and were exposed to the Turkish plundering, could have been and were insufficient for the eighteen-year-old youth.

After the analysis of the imaginary career, one can conclude that the Society did not stand a real alternative for Pázmány's spiritual and mental horizon.

⁶⁸ GÁBOR KAPRINAY's notification is cited by: SÍK, *Pázmány*, 129. Cf. also CVH I/13, 324–325.

⁶⁹ On Bethlen recently: *Betblen Erdélye, Erdély Betblene. A Bethlen Gábor trónra lépésének 400. évfordulóján rendezett konferencia tanulmányai*, ed. by DÁNÉ VERONIKA–SIPOS GÁBOR et al., Kolozsvár 2014.

