KING JOHN I OF SZAPOLYAI'S DIPLOMAT: ISTVÁN BRODARICS

STJEPAN BRODARIĆ, DIPLOMAT NA DVORU KRALJA IVANA ZAPOLJE

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SUMMARY

John of Szapolyai needed qualified Humanist diplomats in order to retain his rule. One of his most reliable adherents was Stjepan Brodarić (István Brodarics). He often carried out negotiations in Poland where he had developed close relationship with the royal court. Brodarics also conducted missions in Venice, in the French court and in the Vatican. He participated in the negotiations with Ferdinánd of Habsburg, and he played a key role in the conclusion of the Treaty of Várad. It was also him who prepared the marriage between Szapolyai and Isabella of Jagiellon. His contemporaries regarded him as an outstanding diplomat.

Key words: John of Szapolyai, diplomacy, Stjepan Brodarić (István Brodarics), Poland, Ottoman Empire, 16th century, Treaty of Várad (1538)
Ključne riječi: Kralj Ivan Zapolja I., diplomacija, Stjepan Brodarić (István Brodarics), Poljska, Osmansko carstvo, 16.stoljeće, Velikovaradski mir (1538)

The defeat of the Hungarian army by the Ottomans at the battle of Mohács (1526), as it is well-known, had far-reaching consequences. While the expanding Ottoman Empire posed an increasing threat to the entire country, the lack of unified political leadership further aggravated the political difficulties. After the death of Louis II (Jagiellon) at the battle of Mohács, the majority of the nobility elected the former voivode of Transylvania, John of Szapolyai to be king in the same year. However, the others supported Ferdinand I of Habsburg. The source of the conflict between the two kings and their adherents lay in the fact that both of them regarded themselves as the only legal king. In fact, both kings were elected and crowned legally and thus, both of them were legitimate rulers of the Kingdom of Hungary. The extraordinary public legal situation resulted in considerable tension and hostility between the two political parties. The armed clashes broke out as early as 1527 and they lasted with varied success and intensity until the conclusion of the Peace of Várad in 1538. The peace treaty between John I and Ferdinand I brought the civil

Stjepanu Brodariću je 2010. podignuta spomen-ploča u rodnom Herešinu / A memorial to Stjepan Brodarić was erected in his native Herešin in 2010.

war to a temporary standstill. King John's Humanist politician and diplomat, István Brodarics played a key role in making the peace treaty and in the diplomatic warfare of the 1530s.[1]

After his ascension to the throne, John of Szapolyai had only a small number of Humanist courtiers and even fewer reliable diplomats.[2] However, building up his rule required the formation of a royal court with the usual staff, and he was in great need of experienced, educated people capable of conducting diplomatic missions. It was important for the king that in the uncertain conditions his kingship would be acknowledged in as many foreign countries as possible, he was eager to find allies and to establish contacts worthily with other rulers. Obviously, some of these people had worked in the former royal court that had broken up after the battle of Mohács. During the years following the election of the two kings, the majority of the church and political leaders was "on the move". Thus, they changed sides depending on the current military or political successes of the elected kings, and considering which of the rulers could seemingly guarantee more secure future for them, their family and their estates. During the political warfare around the royal election, John I managed to win over several outstanding politicians and advisors who would support him until his death. Of them, there were many people of Croatian-Dalmatian origin, like Tranquillus Andronicus, János Statileo, the young Antal Verancsics, Ferenc Frangepán, or Frater György Utyeszenics (Martinuzzi), the person with the greatest power and influence. Some of these clergymen attended Italian universities, started their career in the court of Louis II, and due to their qualifications they could fulfil courtly tasks and royal commissions. These people, an excellent example of whom was István Brodarics, were familiar with Humanist letter (epistle) and memoir writing as these formed a part of the highly educated intellectuals' everyday life who regarded these activities worthy of people skilled in classical education.[3]

The widely travelled Brodarics, who had acquired his Humanist education in Padua and Bologna, made an ecclesiastical career[4] (as was usual in his days), and as the royal chancellor of Louis

[1] For a summary of the period: Pálffy, Géza, The Kingdom of Hungary and the Habsburg Monarchy in the Sixteenth Century. (CHSP Hungarian Studies Series No. 18.) Boulder, CO 2009.; Idem: Povijest Mađarske – Ugarska na granici dvaju imperija (1526.-1711.) Zagreb, 2010.

[2] Barta, Gábor, Humanisták I. János király udvarában. (Humanists in King John I's Court.) In: Magyar reneszánsz udvari kultúra. Ed.: R. Várkonyi Ágnes. Budapest, 1987. str.194

[3] Kasza, Péter, A szó elszáll. Az írás megmarad? Brodarics István levélírói tevékenységéről. (Words Fly Away. Is Writing Eternal? On the Letter Writing Activity of István Brodarics.) Publicationes Universitatis Miskolciensis. Sectio Philosophica Tomus XIV. Fasciculus 2. Miskolc, 2009. str.193-216

[4] Kasza, Péter, Egy karrier hajnala. Adalékok Brodarics István tanulmányainak és családi viszonyainak

II he had carried out diplomatic services even before 1526. He had mainly travelled to Rome and to the Polish royal court on behalf of King Louis and his wife, Mary of Habsburg, as Louis's uncle, Sigismund I of Jagiello ruled Poland at that time (1506-1548).

The death of King Louis brought about a change also in Brodarics's individual life: he had to decide which of the two new kings he would support.[5] The earlier monographs dealing with the politician's life placed a great stress on the issue, and some of them blamed him for changing sides. Brodarics supported the widowed Mary and Ferdinánd until March 1527 but then he left the Habsburgs secretly and sided with John officially. The authors tried to find the reasons motivating him to change sides after a few months of transition. In my opinion this period of sounding out wass a normal and completely understandable behaviour in those troubled months, and Brodarics cannot be condemned for it. Obviously, as a high-rank official of the former royal court, first he was on the side of the widowed queen and the Habsburgs: his former office by the king, as well as the uncertainty of the future and the royal election made him support this side. Beside Ferdinánd, Sigismund I Polish king also aspired to the Hungarian throne for a while, and the other candidate, John of Szapolyai, the fearful Ottoman-beater voivode of Transylvania had been regarded a really wild and dangerous person in the court of Louis. The aristocrats and church dignitaries having worked in the former royal court were suspicious of John, thus it would be understandable if Brodarics had been afraid of Szapolyai at the beginning.

On the days following the battle of Mohács, like the majority of royal councillors and high-level officials, Brodarics remained with Queen Mary who had fled to Bratislava. However, the situation changed by next spring, because after the coronation of John I (11 November 1526), the country had a legitimate king. Moreover, most of the nobles supported King John who held almost the whole territory of the country in his hands. Ferdinánd was elected by a group of aristocrats in December 1526, but he was crowned only in November 1527, thus, in the spring of 1527 it was uncertain whether he would be crowned legally. Brodarics might have though that John won the rivalry between the two kings. Moreover, although Ferdinánd fervently wished the Hungarian throne in his letters and declarations, he did not even come to Hungary, and his acquisition of the territory was uncertain. As Brodarics wanted to continue his ecclesiastical and administrative career, he had to join the king being in the stronger position. Perhaps Ferdinánd even made his choice easier when he replaced Brodarics with Tamás Szalaházy as chancellor. Although he was still considered as one of the politicians with the highest rank in the royal court of Queen Mary, Ferdinánd's decision clearly indicated his "demotion".[6] However, he could hope to regain his lost properties and dignity on John's side. Besides, the Polish royal court that Brodarics highly appreciated also preferred John as they had sent a numerous and noted deputation to the assembly electing him as king. Brodarics also had to consider his personal goals, and in

kérdéséhez. (Dawn of a Career. Data to the Education and Family Relations of István Brodarics.) Századok 142. (2008) str. 1187-1208.

5 The data and events related to Brodarics's life are taken from the following works. I will not cite them later. Székely, Samu, Brodarics István élete és múködése. (Life and Activity of István Brodarics.) Történelmi Tár 1888. str. 1-34., 225-262. Sörös, Pongrác, Jerosini Brodarics István. (István Brodarics of Jerosin.) Budapest, 1907., Kujáni, Gábor, Brodarics István levelezése. (Correspondence of István Brodarics.) Történelmi Tár 1908. str. 258-292., 321-346., Kujáni, Gábor: A Brodaricsok. (The Brodarics Family.) Századok (1913) str. 753-763., Kujáni, Gábor, Brodarics István szereplése János király oldalán. (István Brodarics's Activity on King John's Side.) Századok (1914) str. 34-51., 107-125.

6 Réthelyi, Orsolya: Mary of Hungary in Court Context. PhD Thesis, Central European University, Budapest, 2010. str.113-115.

the spring of 1527 he saw the future brighter on John's side.[7] Interestingly enough, Elek Thurzó, one of the most serious supporters of the Habsburgs wrote a letter to Ferenc Batthyány on 22 March 1527 in which he mentioned Brodarics's changing sides. In his letter Thurzó still referred to the politician as the chancellor. He also added that Brodarics had left secretly, and he did not know the reason for his leaving.[8]

Brodarics remained on John of Szapolyai's side in the 1530s, but – as this study will touch upon it later – he seemed to waver several times. His prestige is clearly seen from the fact that the historian Farkas Bethlen regarded it important to stress in his work about the history of Transylvania that John had been crowned with the approval and in the presence of István Brodarics the bishop of Vác and the royal chancellor.[9]

In the beginning, Brodarics was careful in his approach toward King John, and he also used a mediator. It was not a lesser person than the Polish king who turned to János Statileo, King John's envoy in Krakow in the spring of 1527, and recommended Brodarics to the Hungarian ruler. Brodarics had earned his reputation and gained trust in the Polish court earlier. It is clearly indicated by the fact that in a letter written by Sigismund I as early as September 1526, the king asked the Hungarian politician to inform him about the Hungarian affairs as he had gained several pieces of news but he had confidence only in him.[10]

Brodarics needed King John in order to continue his career, but it is also true for the other party. Szapolyai also needed the educated man and experienced diplomat familiar with the highest courtly political life and who had outstanding Hungarian and foreign relations. Thus, the king soon entrusted him with a challenging task. Brodarics started his service on John's side in the Polish court, where he was sent with his later permanent colleague, Ferenc Frangepán[11] in the autumn of 1527. The goal of their mission was to ask Sigismund I to command Jan Tarnówski to sent the 2000 soldiers requested by John of Szapolyai to Hungary. Brodarics and Frangepán were successful, and they could gain even more soldiers.

Brodarics was sent to the Polish court in the early spring of 1528 when he stayed in the Krakowian house of his friend Andrzej Krzycki. They had probably made friends during their university studies in Bologna.[12] At that time Brodarics also "helped" in the Polish chancellery as the

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7 Sörös, P., István Brodarics of Jerosin, str. 64-77.

8 Bethlenfalvi Thurzó Elek levelezése. (Források a Habsburg-magyar kapcsolatok történetéhez.) [Correspondence of Elek Thurzó of Bethlenfalva. (Sources on the History of Habsburg-Hungarian Connections.)] I. 1526-1532. Közreadja és bevezetót írta: Erdélyi Gabriella. Budapest, 2005. (Lymbus kötetek I.) str. 93.

9 Bethlen, Farkas, Erdély története I. A mohácsi csatától a váradi békekötésig (1526-1538) I-II. könyv. (History of Transylvania. From the Battle of Mohács to the Treaty of Várad.) Ford.: Bodor András. A jegyzeteket írta és a mutatókat összeállította: Pálffy Géza. Budapest-Kolozsvár. 2000. str. 58-59. However, Farkas Bethlen was mistaken here as Brodarics was appointed bishop of Vác only in 1537.

10 A lengyel királyi kancellária Libri legationum sorozatának magyar vonatkozású iratai II. 1526-1541. (The Documents related to Hungary of the Libri legationum Series of the Polish Royal Chancellery.) Közreadja: Tóth Péter. Miskolc, 2003. str. 34.

11 Ferenc Frangepán (1490?-1543) was a Franciscan friar, from 1528 the archbishop of Kalocsa, and from 1538 the bishop of Eger. He was King John's diplomat and advisor. After John's death he changed sides. Sörös, Pongrác, Frangepán Ferenc, kalocsai érsek, egri püspök. (Ferenc Frangepán, archbishop of Kalocsa and bishop of Eger.) Századok (1917) str. 429-471., 545-576. Sörös, P., István Brodarics of Jerosin, str. 82-84.

12 Andrzej Krzycki (1482-1537) was a Polish Humanist and poet. He attended the University of Bologna, belonged to the Polish Erasmists and was hostile towards the Reformation. His mother, Anna, was the sister of Pjotr Tomicki Polish deputy chancellor. Krzycki became the canon of Krakow and the secretary of Sigismund 's first wife, Borbála Szapolyai in 1512. After her death (1515) he received the title of

wording of a diplomatic instruction by Sigismund I can be connected to him.[13] Brodarics developed very good relationships with the most influential members of the Polish royal court, including Szydłowiecki chancellor and Pjotr Tomicki deputy chancellor. Their correspondence was continuous and intensive between 1527 and 1532.[14]

The 1530s was a decade of desperate and incessant struggle between the two kings, when both of them attempted to remove their rival from the scene. The strongest supporter of the recognition of John's rule was the Polish king who had generously renounced his Hungarian claims to John's benefit and who truly wanted and promoted the peace treaty between John and Fedinánd. Thus, it was not by chance that John's diplomacy developed the strongest possible relations with the Polish court. Moreover, there had been a dynastic connection between the two kings as Szapolyai's sister, Borbála was Sigismund's first wife from 1512 to 1515. In those years King Sigismund had significant influence over John and the course of the peace negotiations. Polish diplomats organised and settled several meetings and truce negotiations between the two kings from as early as 1527.[15]

John suffered a serious defeat by Ferdinánd in March 1528, and he had to flee to Poland where he stayed in the castle of Tarnów, close to the Hungarian border. John summoned Brodarics there. Brodarics's trip was financed by Tomicki deputy chancellor, and the two men even met for a short political conversation on the way to Tarnów.[16] Brodarics and his colleague, Ferenc Frangepán tried to persuade King John to negotiate with Ferdinánd on a possible agreement. They were successful, and in July 1528 they informed Tomicki that they had managed to persuade their ruler to start negotiations.[17] However, John's intention was only temporary as he put forward such demands that the Polish court and Brodarics himself thought Ferdinánd would not satisfy.

Besides, John began to hope he would be able to inflict a defeat on Ferdinánd. At the end of October 1528, when John's newly recruited army won a victory in Upper Hungary, Brodarics returned to the country, and John began to recover the country from the Habsburgs.

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chancellor in the court of the king's second wife, Bona Sforza. He became the bishop of Przemysl in 1523, although he preferred to stay in the Krakowian court. After the battle of Mohács he backed Sigismund I's claim for the Hungarian throne for a while, and later he became a supporter of the peace with the Ottomans. He was appointed the archbishop of Gniezno in 1535. He corresponded with Melanchton. He sent several of his literary works in Latin to Erasmus. As an extraordinarily educated man with an eccentric taste, he organised a large Humanist court. Halina Kowalska: Andrzej Krzycki. In: Contemporaries of Erasmus. A Biographical Register of the Renaissance and Reformation. Vol. 2. Eds. Peter G. Bietenholz and Thomas B. Deutscher. University of Toronto Press, 2003. str. 275-278.

13 Acta Tomiciana. Tomus Decimus Epistolarum. Legationum. Responsorum. Actionum et Rerum Gestarum; Serenissimi Principis Sigismundis Primi Regis Poloniae Magni Ducis Lithuaniae. Red.: Stanislaw Górski. X. Posnan, 1899. 129 skk.; Sörös P., István Brodarics of Jerosin, str. 86-87.

14 Pjotr Tomicki (1464-1535) attended the universities of Krakow and Bologna. He was a royal secretary from 1506, the deputy chancellor from 1515, the bishop of Poznan from 1520 and the bishop of Krakow from 1524. He was a Humanist statesman whose name can be connected to the creation of the collection of the copies of the documents of the Polish royal chancellery (Acta Tomiciana). It contains Brodarics and Tomicki's letters. See also: Kasza, P., Words Fly Away,

15 Bárdossy, László, Magyar külpolitika a mohácsi vész után. (Hungarian Politics after the Disaster at Mohács.) Budapest, 1943. Botlik, Richárd, Az 1531. évi krakkói alku. Titkos megállapodás az I. Ferdinánd párti erdélyi területek katonai utánpótlásának kérdéséről. (Agreement in Krakow in 1531. A Secret Agreement on the Military Supply of the Transylvanian Territories on Ferdinánd's Side.) Századok 137. (2003) str. 597-601.

16 Acta Tomiciana X., str. 273-274.

17 Ibid. str. 278.

In March 1529 Brodarics resolved upon a strange decision. He left Hungary and went to Tomicki in Krakow. The reason for his travel needs further research. Tomicki not only received him but also applied for Sigismund's support. Brodarics could feel himself at home in the Polish court, he developed his Humanist relations and he received widespread recognition for his work about the battle of Mohács. Brodarics's appreciation in the Polish court is indicated by the fact that one of his poems was introduced by the description of its author as an educated, wise and honest person.

John recalled Brodarics in May 1529 but he only returned to Buda at the end of July, after he had conducted negotiations with Szydłowiecki, the castellan of Krakow and Antonio Rincón, the envoy of the French king.[18] Brodarics's first important diplomatic mission started in December 1529. He should have gone first to Venice, then to the French king, Francis I and finally to the Pope staying at that time in Bologna. He should have advanced John's issue and, if it had been possible, he should have obtained some support. Arriving in Venice after a long and tiresome journey, he received news that the Pope had excommunicated King John on 22 December. The reason behind this papal decision was the diplomatic manoeuvre of Ferdinánd who had accused Szapolyai of conspiring with the pagans and betraying the whole Christendom. Brodarics immediately started his activity in his king's interests. He persuaded the Venetian leadership not to announce the excommunication publicly and attempted to gain military assistance from the Signoria. Meanwhile, he entered into negotiations with the Holy See in order to convince the Pope that Ferdinánd's slanders were not true. However, Ferdinánd's envoy, Andrea Dal Borgo stayed in the papal court in Bologna, and he managed to prevent Clement VII from hearing Brodarics. Thus, the Hungarian diplomat could only submit a written a report to the Pope with the support of the English envoy. In the report Brodarics revealed the Hungarian events after the battle of Mohács and his king's point of view.[19] He also explained that his ruler had accepted the sultan's help because this had been the only way to save the country from its complete occupation by the Ottomans. He also added it was Ferdinánd who did not want to come to an agreement.[20]

The Hungarian envoys did not succeed in obtaining financial assistance from Venice, but they continued their journey to the French king. This delegation included King John's old adherent, the bishop of Transylvania János Statileo/Statilić, and the French diplomat Antonio Rincón also travelled with them.[21] Their aim was to receive some support from the French king against the Habsburgs, but their mission was fruitless.

Brodarics sent several letters to the Holy See from the French court in May 1530. In these letters he explained John's situation, and attempted to persuade the Pope to lift the penalty. Brodarics denied that the Ottomans had led their campaign against Vienna in 1529 because of King John, and added that Szapolyai had only wanted to defend his country and his kingship.[22] It is worth mentioning that one of the young Hungarian Humanists, Antal Verancsics became a trainee

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[18] Krzysztof Szydłowiecki (1467?-1532) was Polish royal deputy chancellor from 1509, great chancellor from 1511 to 1515, then voivode of Krakow and castellan of Krakow from 1527. See: Krzysztof Szydłowiecki kancellár naplója 1523-ból. (Diary of Chancellor Krzysztof Szydłowiecki from 1523.) Sajtó alá rendezte: Zombori István. Budapest, 2004.

[19] Fraknói, Vilmos, János király és a római Szentszék. (King John and the Holy See in Rome.) Századok (1902) str. 697-715., 793-809., 895-911.

[20] Sörös P., István Brodarics of Jerosin, str. 93-94.

[21] A Magyar Tud. Akadémia történelmi bizottságának oklevél-másolatai. (Copies of Charters of the Committee of History of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.) Ismerteti: Óváry Lipót. II. füzet. Budapest, 1894. str. 35-36. Nr. 159-160.

[22] Fraknói V., King John, str.798.

by King John's outstanding diplomats in these years. Verancsics was the provost of Buda and the nephew of bishop Statileo. In the 1530s, Verancsics studied a lot from Brodarics whom he regarded as his master. In the 1540s, Verancsics became the secretary and personal advisor of Szapolyai's widow, but he continued his ecclesiastical career on Ferdinánd's side from 1549, where he rose to the highest rank and became the archbishop of Esztergom.

Brodarics managed to return to Buda, although Ferdinánd was eager to capture the diplomats sent by King John to the western countries, and he attempted to hinder their journey and their mission. In 1530 Brodarics should have travelled to the Ottoman Porte in Constantinople, but as he arrived home only at the end of July, the king replaced him with Hyeronim Łaski.[23]

Meanwhile the armed clashes between the two kings went on in the country. The idea of the division of the rule over the country, that is the territory of the Kingdom of Hungary, stroke John for a while but Ferdinánd obviously wanted to rule the whole country. Thus, he tried to occupy Buda but the siege of the capital between October and December 1530 was unsuccessful, his army could not capture it. As a result, the two kings signed an armistice for three months on the basis of the status quo on 21 January 1530, and then it was extended for one more year.

In January-February 1532 Antal Verancsics replaced his master in a mission. First, he went to Venice and then to Rome to meet the Pope, where Verancsics attempted to persuade him to lift the excommunication that was regarded as invalid in Hungary due to a procedural defect. In Rome, like Brodarics himself, Verancsics was supported by the English envoy Gregorius de Casalis and he also stayed in his house. At the same time Brodarics had to conduct a more important mission. He had to travel to Regensburg to the imperial assembly convoked by Charles V, in order to prepare some new negotiations between John and Ferdinánd. As the representatives of the two parties could not agree on the scene of the negotiations either, the initiative remained fruitless at that time.

The former armistice between the two kings expired in April 1532. In spring Brodarics was in Transylvania where his task was to convince the hesitant Saxons to support King John. It was here, that he came into contact with Lodovico (Alvise) Gritti, the governor of Hungary appointed by Szapolyai.[24] Gritti considered Brodarics as his supporter as both of them were King John's adherents. At that time, in a letter written to Tomicki deputy chancellor, Brodarics pondered over the peace between the two kings. He thought there was a slimmer and slimmer chance of peace, although neither the sultan hindered the treaty. The main reason for the unsuccessful negotiations, as for the earlier ones, lay in the fact that neither of the kings recognised the other's right for the Hungarian throne, and both wanted to rule the whole country.

In the winter of 1532 and 1533 the two kings held negotiations along the river Danube in Megyer, in Óvár and in Bratislava. Brodarics had to participate in them, although they were not successful. Beside Brodarics, King John also appointed Ferenc Frangepán and Łaski as plenipotentiary commissioners for the negotiations at Óvár in February. Szapolyai's envoys requested Ferdinánd to hand over the whole country to John. The Habsburg diplomats played for time, and in the meantime they received news that Ferdinánd had concluded a peace treaty with the sultan. The negotiations collapsed although Cornelius Schepper, who had a high opinion of John's envoy, mentioned that Brodarics was "vir doctor et doctus", not only a doctor but also an educated man.[25] While Schepper, an outstanding diplomat of the Habsburgs, was devoting all his

[23] Pray, Georgius, Epistulae procerum Regni Hungariae I. Posonii, 1806. str. 352-354.; Hieronym Łaski

[24] Szakály, Ferenc, Vesztóhely az út porában. Gritti Magyarországon. 1529-1534. (Scaffold in the Dust of the Road. Gritti in Hungary.) Budapest, 1986.

[25] Magyar történelmi okmánytár a brüsseli országos levéltárból és a burgundi könyvtárból. (Hungarian

efforts to coming to a certain agreement, he was informed that John's commissioners by authorisation could have given up the country if they had received sufficient compensation.

John had to face serious diplomatic difficulties in 1534. The reason for them was the execution of his plenipotentiary governor Gritti by the voivode of Transylvania, as Gritti, abusing his power, had formerly killed the popular bishop of Várad Imre Czibak. Since Gritti was the sultan's favourite and a confidential man familiar with the Hungarian affairs, a massive retaliation against John could be expected. The sultan's anger could be controlled through the French king's mediation, where Verancsics had been sent as an envoy. Brodarics had to travel to Ferdinánd's court.

In October 1534, negotiations were conducted between John and Ferdinánd. However, as Ferdinánd analysed the situation in a letter written to Charles V, the Hungarians did not want to agree to the division of the country, and John's adherents would be willing to come to an agreement with him if he had promised he would have helped the country against the Ottomans.[26] The envoy of Venice reported at the beginning of 1535 that Ferdinánd's ambitions were unambiguously directed towards the acquisition of the whole Kingdom of Hungary.[27] At that time Brodarics established contact with the most influential person supporting Ferdinánd, the chief justice of Hungary, Elek Thurzó. However, as it was clear from a letter of the archbishop of Lund, Johann von Wese, he did not want to carry out negotiations with Thurzó until Ferdinánd handed over the whole country. As his request was refused, they did not meet.[28]

Nevertheless, the negotiations continued in spring 1535. The head of John's delegation was Brodarics again. He arrived in the imperial capital at the end of February with Elek Thurzó. They were later followed by Ferenc (Franjo) Frangepán (Frankopan) and Werbőczy. Since both kings expected the other to give up his royal title, the negotiations soon broke down. Brodarics had to go back to John's court to receive new authorisation. Brodarics himself met Ferdinánd several times and informed him that John would have agreed to hold his royal title until his death and then to cede his power to Ferdinánd.[29] In 1535 the negotiations collapsed and continued several times but the agreement seemed hopeless as John, who was supported by the Porte again, returned to his earlier point of view to demand the rule over the whole country. Brodarics followed his ruler's orders loyally, and continued his tireless but more and more hopeless travel between Buda and Vienna.

Nevertheless, King John slightly changed his point of view: at the negotiations in Vienna in October 1535, Brodarics and Frangepán put in his request according to which their king wanted to establish contact not with Ferdinánd but with the emperor Charles V.[30] Ferdinánd did not want to agree to it, but Szapolyai's messenger, Antal Verancsics soon brought the credentials in which King John sent Brodarics and Frangepán to the emperor, to Naples.

Historical Monuments from the National Archives of Brussels and the Library of Burgundy.) Összeszedte és lemásolta: Hatvani Mihály. I. 1441-1538. (Monumenta Hungariae Historica, Diplomataria I.) Pest, 1857. str. 196.

26 Óváry, L., A Magyar Tud. Akadémia, str. 61. Nr. 297.

27 Ibid. Nr. 298.

28 „[Brodarics] nihil cum illo [Thurzó] tractare voluit penitus nisi Regia Maiestas cedat Regnum in favorem Domini sui. Ita nihil tractatum est…" Johann von Wese to the emperor, 8 December 1534. Brüsseli I. str. 230.

29 Johann von Wese to the emperor, 8 April 1534. Brüsseli I. p.238.

30 Sörös, I., Brodarics of Jerosin, str. 123.

John also added a draft agreement to the credentials. Some of the points of the later Treaty of Várad could be recognised in this document:[31] John offered to renounce the whole country, including Transylvania but he wanted to use the royal title until his death; he would hand over Buda and Temesvár to the emperor and these could be given to Ferdinánd only after John's death or after the recapture of Belgrade. In return he requested his family estates and some other estates for him and his family under the name "szepesi hercegség" (Ducatus Scepusiensis). Moreover, John wanted to retain 17 counties, the cities in Szepes and some of the mining cities. John also expected financial compensation and a Habsburg wife for himself.

John's delegation first travelled to Rome where they could not meet the Pope as Ferdinánd's envoy, archbishop Wese hindered their mission. Then, in January 1536 the Hungarian envoys went to Naples to the emperor. Charles V did not refuse these points but Ferdinánd's envoy behaved in a hostile manner and attempted to minimise the amount demanded from Ferdinánd as well as to maximise the territories getting under his control. Brodarics hoped that through the emperor's mediation they would soon end the negotiations and conclude an agreement. However, their efforts proved to be fruitless.

It is interesting to mention that during the negotiations carrying out already in Oradea in August 1536 Brodarics and Ferenc Frangepán asked Ferdinánd to accept their services and then they would leave King John though they did not want to work against him in the future.[32] However, their offer remained without consequences.

In his letters written to Miklós Oláh at that time, Brodarics hinted at the fact several times that he had not left Queen Mary of Habsburg of his own will, but in a way he had been forced. Brodarics returned desperately to Buda via Vienna but Szapolyai appointed him bishop of Vác as a reward for his efforts (1537).

Brodarics had to travel to Krakow again at the beginning of May 1537 where he prepared the marriage between his king and the Jagiellon princess, Isabella.[33] Then, he went to Kremnica to negotiate with Ferdinánd's envoy, archbishop Wese.

Brodarics and Frangepán offered their services to Ferdinánd for the third time during this meeting. Brodarics said to Wese they had spared no efforts to enter into a peace treaty but John was still unwilling to agree. The main reason for the fruitless negotiations was that they could not agree upon the control over the larger estates, including the Szapolyai family estates. Brodarics added, he had said two years before if there had not been a leap forward, he would have left his king and supported Ferdinánd. However, he claimed that he would not act against John. Neither Wese, nor Ferdinánd expressed great enthusiasm about this offer as it was a bit untrustworthy of two diplomats so far having worked against the Habsburg interests.[34] They might have thought it was some kind of machination or misleading manoeuvre. The negotiations went on, but there was no hope for an agreement as neither king was willing to hand over their territories. In October Brodarics and Frangepán also claimed they would change sides if there was no agreement, but their offer remained unanswered.[35]

The negotiations went on in December. King John mainly insisted on the possession of Transylvania and Kosice, but Ferdinánd's commissioners required their handing over as John had

[31] Brüsseli I. str. 318. skk.

[32] Johann von Wese to the emperor, Oradea, 20 August 1535. Brüsseli I. p.362.

[33] Veress, Endre, Izabella királyné: 1519-1559. (Queen Isabella.) Budapest, 1901.

[34] Sörös, P., Brodarics of Jerosin, str. 130-131.

[35] Ibid. p.134.

occupied the latter under an armistice. The parties prolonged the armistice for three months at the end of December. Wese was constrained to continue the negotiations as he thought John's demands were exaggerated, while Brodarics insisted on an agreement on the basis of "uti possidetis".

Finally, King John signed the Treaty of Várad on 24 February 1538, and Brodarics had to take the document to Ferdinánd. However, first he had to travel to Krakow to continue the negotiations about the future marriage of John and to propose Princess Isabella.

Brodarics arrived in Krakow in May 1538, where also the engagement took place secretly. Then, he went to Wrocław, where Ferdinánd signed the Treaty of Várad on 10 June. John's six counsillors (the bishops of Eger, Transylvania, Várad and Vác; Péter Perényi and the chancellor Werbőczy) also swore to keep the points of the peace treaty. Ferenc Frangepán promised in writing that he would do his best for the realisation of the peace.[36] Brodarics also negotiated with the Pope's envoy, and he asked the Pope to lift John's excommunication. The envoy said that John should initiate this process, and they agreed that Ferenc Frangepán would travel to Rome to submit King John's humble request.[37] Finally, the problem was resolved by a letter of Paul III and next year by a papal envoy. They did not mention the excommunication at all, and it was understood that the previous Pope gave the absolution.

After the conclusion of the Treaty of Várad, Brodarics's life became calmer. His main achievement was this treaty, as he had travelled and made all possible efforts for almost a decade to make this agreement. Brodarics retained his relationships with the nobles on Ferdinánd's side and with the Habsburg ruler even after the conclusion of the peace treaty. He also mediated between György Martinuzzi and Ferdinánd.[38]

His next and last mission was to travel to Krakow in the middle of January 1539, where he went with Péter Perényi, Werbőczy, Boldizsár Balassa and a deputation of almost a thousand members. Their task was to escort their future queen, Isabella to Hungary. On 31 January 1539, a symbolic wedding was held in the throne hall of the palace in Krakow. Then, they left for Hungary. The wedding took place in Székesfehérvár on 2 March 1539 but the celebrations were held in Buda on the following days.

Later Brodarics was not entrusted with any more important tasks. The Pope recognised the bishops appointed by John, including the bishop of Vác. Brodarics still corresponded with his old friends, Miklós Oláh and Statileo, he even wrote letters to the Vatican. The provost of Buda, Verancsics held high opinion of Brodarics whom he regarded as his second father.[39]

This essay can only summarize Brodarics's diplomatic activity, but it reveals that he was one of the leading characters of King John's diplomacy. He was an educated Humanist and a politician who could be used for "varied" tasks. He conducted the tasks he was charged with conscientiously, he spoke many languages and was familiar with negotiations in foreign diplomacy. His contemporaries regarded him as a trustful diplomat. However, he did not agree with his king's measures several times, but he attempted to fulfil them. There are many issues in his life that need further research, one of them is the question why he wanted to leave King John's side on more

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36 Ferenc Frangepán's letter to Pope Paul III, 1541 s.d. Pray, G., Epistolae II., str. 97.

37 Sörös, P., István Brodarics of Jerosin, str. 138-139.

38 Károlyi, Árpád, Fráter György levelezése. (Correspondence of Frater György.) Budapest, 1881.

39 „Stephanus Brodericus Vaciensis episcopus alter meum parens nondum convaluit. Medici existimant ejus aegritudinem diuturnam fore, et tandem in proxime hieme vitae plurimum timent, quod omnes vehementer dolemus." Antal Verancsics's letter to the bishop of Krakow Pjotr Gamrat. Buda, October 1526. Verancsics Antal összes munkái VI. köt. Vegyes levelek 1538-1549. (Complete Works of Antal Verancsics. Vol. 6. Mixed Letters.) Közli: Szalay Antal. (Monumenta Hungariae Historica Scriptores IX.) Pest, 1860. str. 44.

occasions. Brodarics was mainly the expert of maintaining relations with the Holy See, and carrying out negotiations and diplomatic missions with the Habsburgs. Szapolyai was represented by Łaski and Andronicus in Constantinople, while Brodarics, Frangepán and Statileo conducted diplomatic tasks in the western countries. Brodarics's activity also reveals that, like many of his contemporaries, he was a perfect Humanist "courtier".[40] He was one of the men appearing in the late medieval and early modern royal courts who – as a result of their qualifications, education and origin –, apart from their armed skills, could fulfil various administrative tasks.[41] The royal court characterises and symbolises the king and also the country for a certain measure. As King John faced with several difficulties in ruling his territories, the primary task of his court was to organise the military defence and secure his rule in the fields of public law and diplomacy. His court was the centre controlling the political life of the country rather than the centre of Humanist scholars and officials. However, although rather modestly, it could be characterised as one of the late Renaissance European royal courts.[42]

Brodarics was a member of the intellectual elite in King John's court, his ruler always relied on his opinion and knowledge. He fulfilled his tasks with considerable efforts. He would probably have done so, if he had had to serve Ferdinánd, by chance.

SAŽETAK

Kralj Ivan Zapolja I. trebao je kvalificirane diplomate, kako bi održao svoju vladavinu. Jedan od njegovih najvjernijih pristaša Stjepan Brodarić, koji je u kraljevo ime često vodio pregovore s Poljskom, gdje je s tamošnjim kraljevskim dvorom razvio bliske veze. Brodarić je također vodio misije u Veneciji, na francuskom kraljevskom dvoru, te u Vatikanu. Učestvovao je u pregovorima s Ferdinandom Habsburškim, te odigrao ključnu ulogu u zaključenju Varadskog mirovnog ugovora. Brodarić je bio taj, koji je ugovorio brak kralja sa Anom Jagelović. Njegovi su ga suvremenici smatrali izuzetnim diplomatom.

[40] Asch, Ronald G., Introduction: Court and Household from the Fifteenth to the Seventeenth Centuries. In: Princes, Patronage and the Nobility: The Court at the Beginning of the Modern Age c. 1450-1650. Ed.: Ronald G. Asch, Adolf M. Birke, Oxford, 1991. str. 1-31.; Kubinyi, András, Királyi udvar a késó középkori Magyarországon. (Royal Court in Late Medieval Hungary.) In: Idóvel paloták…Magyar udvari kultúra a 16-17. században. Szerk.: G. Etényi Nóra, Horn Ildikó. Budapest, 2005. str. 13-32.

[41] Vígh, Éva, Bevezetés. Udvar és udvari etika a XVI-XVII. századi Itáliában. (Introduction. Court and Cortly Ethics int he 16-17th Century Italy.) In: Idem: Az udvari élet múvészete Itáliában. Szöveggyújtemény. Szerk.: Vígh Éva. Budapest, 2004. str. 30-31.; Klaniczay, Gábor, Az udvari kultúra és a civilizáció folyamata. (Courtly Culture and Civilisation.) In: Magyar reneszánsz udvari kultúra. Szerk.: R. Várkonyi Ágnes. Budapest, 1987. str. 44-46.

[42] For the history of the Hungarian royal court: Almási, Gábor, A respublica litteraria és a császári udvar a 16. század második felében. (Respublica Litteraria and the Imperial Court int he Second Half of the 16th Century.) Aetas 20 (2005/3) str. 5-37.; Pálffy, Géza: A magyar nemesség I. Ferdinánd udvarában. (Hungarian Nobility in Ferdinánd I's Court.) Történelmi Szemle 45 (2003/1-2) str. 45-59.; Pálffy, Géza: A bécsi udvar és a magyar rendek a 16. században. (Viennese Court and the Hungarian Estates in the 16th Century.) Történelmi Szemle 41 (1999/3-4) str. 331-367.