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**“Polonorum vero nuncius pacis
et amicitie confirmationem
portabat.” Reflections on the
Meeting of Two Rulers in the
Hungarian-Polish Chronicle**

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“Polonorum vero nuncius pacis et amicitie confirmationem portabat.” Reflections on the Meeting of Two Rulers in the Hungarian-Polish Chronicle

The article is a polemic with the opinion of Dušan Zupka about the meeting of two rulers, described in the 7th chapter of the Hungarian-Polish Chronicle. The author analyzes the broader context of the given source. Contrary to Dušan Zupka, he argues that the meeting is not a model of ritual reconciliation, as there was no conflict between Poland and Hungary. He regards the source partly as a hagiography and interprets it according to the requirements of the genre. He claims that Stephen's superiority over the ruler of Poland does not stem from diplomacy, but from his sanctity. The meeting with Prince Mieszko is more important for the narrative of the Chronicle than the scene of Saint Stephen's coronation. The bilateral act of confirming their friendship meets God's and the papal requirements of Stephen's legal reign. It also has a fundamental impact on the later part of the Chronicle, since the Polish prince resolved the crisis in Hungary after Saint Stephen's death.

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KEYWORDS:

Hungary, Poland, Saint Stephen, the Hungarian-Polish Chronicle, narrative, ritual, hagiography

The problem of ritual and symbolic communication in medieval Hungary was the main issue of the study by Dušan Zupka. The author has profoundly analyzed narrative sources from the Árpád period (1000–1301), examining scenes that describe the medieval rituals. The given book became important for historians interested in this field. However, some viewpoints should be re-considered or challenged about ten years after its publication. A good example is found in a chapter on the model ritual of reconciliation between Saint Stephen of Hungary and the prince of Poland,¹ based on the 7th chapter of the Hungarian-Polish Chronicle.²

In this article, I would like to present my opinions about this meeting interpretation as suggested by Dušan Zupka and conduct my own analysis instead. It should be noted that the two of us use two different methodological approaches. While Dušan Zupka reconstructs medieval rituals, I will focus on the textual reality of this chronicle and interpret the chosen chapter in the narrative framework. The main question is whether we should recognize the 7th chapter as a description of the actual model reconciliation, or not. Besides, my intention is to analyze the symbolic meaning of the above-mentioned meeting and to consider what role it plays in the longer narrative of this work.

I would like to emphasize that my aim is not to evaluate the Hungarian-Polish Chronicle in terms of its historical accuracy, nor to correct its peculiar narrative in order to align it with already established historical facts. Instead, I see the Chronicle as a coherent literary work, thus, interpret it within its own internal logic. Accordingly, Zupka's suggestion to identify the Polish prince as Bolesław – the historical ruler of Poland at the beginning of the 11th century – should be avoided if we actually need to keep certain clarity with regard to the narrative choices used in the Chronicle, which consistently refers to this historical person as Mieszko. Furthermore, the given source refers to him as the prince of Poland, who embraced the Christian faith.³ There is no doubt that the author refers to Mieszko I, the first historical and Christian ruler of Poland, who died in 992. Although the Chronicle's account diverges from our current state of knowledge, it still remains consistent with the Polish annalistic tradition. The factual year of Mieszko's death was not commonly reported in the Polish sources. For example, the so-called *Old Annals of the Holy Cross* do not provide the information about his death,⁴ also the author of the *Annals of Kamieniec*, relying on the Hungarian-Polish Chronicle, writes that Mieszko was still alive in the year of 1000 and did not correct it.⁵

¹ Dušan Zupka, *Ritual and Symbolic Communication in Medieval Hungary under the Árpád Dynasty (1000-1301)*, trans. Julia and Peter Sherwood (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2016), 148–152.

² *Chronicon Hungarico-Polonicum*, ed. József Deér, in *Scriptores rerum hungaricarum* 2, ed. Imre Szentpétery (Budapest: Academia Litter. Hungarica atque Societate Histor. Hungarica, 1938), 310–312.

³ Mescho, *Polonorum dux, christianam roborare cum suis amplexatus fidem* - *ibid.*, 307.

⁴ *Rocznik świętokrzyski dawny*, ed. August Bielowski, in *Monumenta Poloniae Historica* II (Lwów, 1872), 773.

⁵ *Rocznik kamieniecki*, ed. August Bielowski, in *Monumenta Poloniae Historica* II (Lwów, 1872), 777

The Problem of Vagueness

The Hungarian–Polish Chronicle is an anonymous work, now available in two redactions, a longer and a shorter version. Both contain the 7th chapter, which describes the meeting of the two stated rulers.⁶ The source recounts the history of Hungary from ancient times up to the reign of Saint Ladislaus of Hungary (r. 1077–1095). Three distinct parts can be identified in this work. The first one (chapters 1–4) describes the story of Attila, the second one (chapters 5–11) covers the life and the reign of Saint Stephen of Hungary (r. 997–1038), and the third one (chapters 12–13) depicts a series of events following Stephen’s death, primarily the crisis, which was solved by the Polish prince.

According to the Polish historian, Ryszard Grzesik, the Hungarian–Polish Chronicle was written at the court of prince Coloman (d. 1241), the younger son of king Andrew II of Hungary (r. 1205–1235). Coloman’s wife, princess Salomea (d. 1268), was a daughter of the High Duke of Poland, Leszek the White of Cracow (r. 1194–1198; 1199; 1206–1210; 1211–1227). Their marriage resulted from the so-called Treaty of Spiš (1214), under which Hungary and Poland formed an alliance. Based on the concluded alliance, a joint expedition to Halych was undertaken, where the Hungarian prince Coloman was installed. He was also crowned the king of Galicia (probably in Esztergom at the turn of 1214 and 1215).⁷ Coloman and Salomea lost their kingdom in 1221, which was conquered by one of the princes of Rus, Mstislav Mstislavich (d. 1228). After the fall of Halych, they had to withdraw to Hungary, to Coloman’s estates in Szepes. Coloman became the duke of Slavonia in 1226 and held the title until the end of his life. It is also worth noting that in the following year, 1227, Prince Andrew (d. 1234), Coloman’s younger brother, took military control over Halych and became its new ruler.⁸ Based on this information, Grzesik argues that the Chronicle was written at the Slavonian court of Coloman and Salomea. He believes that it may date back to 1227 or shortly thereafter, but certainly to the period before 1234, when prince Andrew died. He considers the Chronicle as an “intellectual action,” which intended to support the Hungarian claims to Halych.⁹ Martin Homza made

⁶ About the manuscripts of the Chronicle see: Ryszard Grzesik, *Kronika węgiersko-polska: z dziejów polsko-węgierskich kontaktów kulturalnych w średniowieczu* (Poznań: Poznańskie Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauk, 1999), 21–26. Lesław Spychała, “Korekta do tradycji rękopiśmiennej Kroniki węgiersko-polskiej. Domniemany przekaz Kodeksu Krasieńskich 6”, *Studia Źródłoznawcze* 52 (2014): 103–111; Stefan Albrecht, “Zwei neue Handschriften des sog. ‘Chronicon hungarico-polonicum’”, *Studia Źródłoznawcze* 53 (2015): 111–121.

⁷ Márta Font, “Coloman, the King of Galicia: The Problems of Coronation,” in *Specimina Nova Pars Prima Sectio Mediaevalis* 10, ed. Gergely Kiss and Gábor Barabás (Pécs: University of Pécs, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Institute of History, Department of Medieval and Early Modern History, 2019), 86. See also: Karol Holly, “Princess Salomea and Hungarian–Polish Relations in the Period 1214–1241,” *Historický časopis* 55 (2007): 5–32.

⁸ See: Márta Font, “II. András orosz politikája és hadjáratai,” *Századok* 125, no. 1–2 (1991): 129–130.

⁹ Grzesik, *Kronika węgiersko-polska*, 211–212. Ryszard Grzesik, “Księżę węgierski żonaty z córką Mściśława halickiego. Przyczynki do problemu czasu i miejsca powstania Kroniki węgiersko-polskiej,” *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 102, no. 3–4 (1995): 33–34. Critical remarks on Grzesik’s hypothesis: Judit Csákó, “A magyar-lengyel krónika és a hazai elbeszélő hagyomány,” *Századok* 148, no. 2 (2014): 309–310.

similar conclusions. He agrees with Ryszard Grzesik that the work was written at the court of Prince Coloman, but he dates it to the period when the prince stayed in Spiš, between 1221 and 1226.¹⁰

The argument in favor of Slavonia as the place where the Chronicle was composed is further supported by the Croatian tradition regarding the king who was killed by his own subjects.¹¹ Grzesik states that the author of the Chronicle was familiar not only with the Hungarian and South Slavic (Croatian) historical tradition, but also with the Polish one. Moreover, he was undoubtedly familiar with the *Life of Saint Stephen* by Bishop Hartvic (c.1100).¹² He depicted the reign of Stephen, using this hagiographical work. Knowing this will be of great importance in the following part of this paper.

The credibility of the Hungarian-Polish Chronicle remains an open question. The work is already known for being vague. One Polish scholar described it as "cicer cum caule" – a chaotic mixture, or gibberish.¹³ Meanwhile, György Györffy, one of the most prominent Hungarian historians, referred to it as "the most confused work of medieval historiography."¹⁴ Some scholars even scorned the Chronicle, the source without any historical value.¹⁵ There are, however, certain reasons to challenge such interpretations.

Although the Hungarian-Polish Chronicle is based on many different traditions, its author uses them in a highly peculiar manner. The source conflates many historical figures into a single narrative, also invents new, non-historical rulers or describes events that are otherwise unknown and historically dubious. A good example lies in the character of prince Bolesław of Poland. He could be identified with Bolesław the Brave, the first king of Poland (r. 992–1025). On the other hand, there are some vague traces that he is also based on the other Bolesławs – Bolesław II the Bold (r. 1058–1079) and Bolesław III the Wrymouth (r. 1102–1138).¹⁶ The fictional Bolesław from the Chronicle intervened in the Hungarian cases after the death of Saint Stephen.

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¹⁰ Martin Homza: *Uhorsko-poľská kronika Nedocenený prameň k dejinám strednej Európy*, (Bratislava: Libri Historiæ, Post Scriptum, 2009), 22–27.

¹¹ Ryszard Grzesik, "Chorwacja i Węgry w Kronice węgiersko-polskiej," *Balcanica Posnaniensia* 26(2019): 76–78, <https://doi.org/10.14746/bp.2019.26.4>. See also: Nemet Dražen, "Smrt kralja Zvonimira – problem, izvori i tumačenje," *Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest Filozofskoga fakulteta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu* 38, no.1(2006): 79.

¹² Gábor Thoroczky, "A Hartvik-féle Szent István-legenda datálásának kérdéséhez," in *"Magyaroknak eleiről," Ünnepi tanulmányok a hatvanesztendő Makk Ferenc tiszteletére*, ed. Ferenc Piti (Szeged: Szegedi Középkorász Műhely, 2000), 569–591.

¹³ Gerard Labuda, *Mieszko II król Polski (1025-1034). Czasy przełomu w dziejach państwa polskiego* (Kraków: Polska Akademia Umiejętności, 1992), 179.

¹⁴ "A középkori történetírás legzavarosabb alkotása." György Györffy, *István király és műve*, (Budapest: Gondolat, 1977), 284. Own translation.

¹⁵ Henryk Łowmiański, *Początki Polski: z dziejów Słowian w I tysiącleciu n. e.* 5 (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1973), 582.

¹⁶ According to Ryszard Grzesik, the author of the Chronicle used a lost Polish chronicle, which should have described the reign of Bolesław II the Bold, who intervened in the Hungarian cases. Since Bolesław II had a bad reputation, the chronicler changed him to Bolesław I the Brave. Ryszard Grzesik, "Polish and Hungarian Historical Tradition in the Hungarian-Polish Chronicle," *Prace Historyczne* 148, no. 4 (2021): 656–657. Paweł Żmudzki states there are some similarities to Bolesław III. See: Paweł Żmudzki, "Liber de passione martiris i Vita maior s. Stanislai. Na marginesie książki Wojciecha Drelicharza o idei zjednoczenia królestwa," *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 122, no. 4 (2015): 868.

Actually, the historical Bolesław the Brave died in 1025, thirteen years before the death of Saint Stephen (d. 1038). Another interesting example includes princess Dąbrówka, the mother of Bolesław the Brave. The historical princess lived in the middle of the 10th century. However, according to the Hungarian-Polish Chronicle, she was still alive and politically active after the death of Saint Stephen, in other words, in the middle of the 11th century.¹⁷ There are many other examples of non-historical events and persons described in the given chronicle. I would argue that this source does not deserve the scorn it was subjected to. On the contrary, the “alternative” history makes the Chronicle an interesting example of medieval historiography.

Dušan Zupka's Interpretation

Based on the Hungarian-Polish Chronicle, Dušan Zupka refers to a war between Poland and Hungary at the very beginning of the 11th century. The conflict was quickly brought to a close, partially due to papal diplomacy. Bolesław the Brave (992–1025) and Stephen of Hungary (997–1038) met in Esztergom, in April 1001.¹⁸ Zupka then quotes a lengthy passage from the 7th chapter of the Hungarian-Polish Chronicle, which serves as the primary source for his interpretation.

Zupka claims that there are many similarities between the analyzed meeting and other contemporary reconciliations. He mentions that “the course of the meeting had been planned and agreed in advance through envoys of both parties”, which is illustrated by the quotation with a brief description of the diplomatic mission of Bishop Lambert. Zupka also analyzed the place where the meeting was held. He notes that Esztergom was a border town, i.e. it was located on a common border between Hungary and Poland. He further on argues that this setting symbolizes equality between the two rulers and their countries. On the other hand, he admits that the Hungarian king had a symbolic superiority since the meeting was organized on the Hungarian side of the border. Zupka claims that the purpose of the meeting was to end the conflict between Poland and Hungary, and to affect a reconciliation between their rulers. In his opinion, the war was fought over the Principality of Nitra (today a part of Slovakia). Another reason for the conflict was that Bolesław did not receive the papal crown, which was instead granted to Stephen. This is why Stephen, the king of Hungary, demonstrated his superiority over Bolesław, the prince of Poland, by wearing a ceremonial robe and a crown.¹⁹

Zupka then analyzes the ritual elements of their reconciliation. He considers a face-to-face meeting, a kiss of peace, a joining of hands, a joint participation in religious ceremonies, and a public oath as a part of the restoration of concord between the monarchs. In addition to these elements, he draws attention to a feast and the gifts which Saint Stephen bestowed upon the Polish prince, who was actually his guest. Zupka characterizes the meeting as “interactive” and argues that it ended in a compromise. Bolesław

¹⁷ Prince Bolesław and Dąbrówka are mentioned in the 12th and the 13th chapters of the Chronicle. *Chronicon Hungarico-Polonicum*, 317–320.

¹⁸ Zupka, *Ritual and Symbolic*, 148.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 150–151.

could retain the Duchy of Nitra, which was formerly a part of Hungary. However, he was required to acknowledge Stephen's royal title.²⁰

Dušan Zupka finally considers the credibility of the given source. He acknowledges many controversies that are related to the Hungarian-Polish Chronicle. Zupka, thus, admits that the description of the meeting may not be "wholly accurate." Nevertheless, he believes that "this kind of ritual encounter could undoubtedly have taken place in the 11th century Hungary" and "the author of the Hungarian-Polish Chronicle is likely to have framed the meeting in the context of ritual actions existing in his time."²¹ Zupka ends his reflections on the meeting between Stephen and Bolesław just like this.

The Question of the Hypothetical Hungarian-Polish War

Dušan Zupka also addresses the issue considering the royal title of Bolesław I of Poland and the credibility of the Hungarian-Polish Chronicle in footnote number 33, where he refers to other historians' opinions.²² The first one includes Martin Homza's interpretation, which follows the earlier reflections made by František Hrušovský.²³ Both of them consider the Hungarian-Polish Chronicle a credible source for the turn of the 10th and the 11th century. Homza believes that Bolesław the Brave took the area of Duchy of Nitra in retaliation for not receiving the royal crown. Bolesław had to make peace with Hungary under diplomatic pressure from the pope and the emperor. The treaty led to a compromise. The Poles did withdraw from Nitra, but Bolesław installed Prince Ladislaus the Bald from the cadet branch of the Árpád dynasty. This way the Duchy of Nitra formally remained in the Kingdom of Hungary. Homza argues that this part of the Hungarian-Polish Chronicle reflects the political context of the second decade of the 13th century, when tensions between Poland and Hungary arose because of the violations of the terms stated in the Treaty of Spiš (1214).²⁴

Jan Steinhübel also draws on the interpretation suggested by František Hrušovský. Therefore, he believes that *The Life of Saint Stephen* by Bishop Hartvic describes the historical tension between Poland and Hungary for the crown.²⁵ He also argues that Poland conquered the Duchy of Nitra, a claim he bases on the *Deeds of the Princes of Poland*.²⁶ Steinhübel additionally states that the southern and the eastern borders of the given

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²⁰ Zupka, *Ritual and Symbolic*, 151.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 152.

²² *Chronicon Hungarico-Polonicum*, 310-313.

²³ František Hrušovský, *Slovenské dejiny* (Martin: Matica slovenská, 1940), 65.

²⁴ Martin Homza, *Chronicon Hungarico-Polonicum. Uhorsko-pol'ská kronika. Nedocenený pramen k dejinám strednej Európy* (Bratislava: Post Scriptum/Libri Historiae, 2009), footnote 83, 151-152. Martin Homza, "Politické dejiny Spiša do zaciatku 14. storocia," in *Historia Scepusii 1*, ed. Martin Homza and Stanisław Sroka (Bratislava: Katedra slovenských dejin UK FiF; Kraków: Instytut Historii Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2010), 134-135.

²⁵ *Legenda sancti Stephani regis ab Hartvico episcopo conscripta*, ed. Emma Bartoniek, in *Scriptores Rerum Hungaricarum 2*, ed. Imre Szentpétery (Budapest: Academia Litter. Hungarica atque Societate Histor. Hungarica, 1938), 413-414.

²⁶ "Galli chronicon," in *Monumenta Poloniae Historica 1*, ed. August Bielowski (Lwów: 1864), 399. Newer edition: *Anonima tzw. Galla Kronika czyli Dzieje książąt i władców polskich*, ed. Karol Maleczyński (Kraków: Polska Akademia Umiejętności, 1952), 16.

Duchy were described in the 7th chapter of the Hungarian-Polish Chronicle.²⁷ He points out that a half of the Chronicle is a word-for-word copy of the *Life of Saint Stephen*, while the other half includes excerpts from the lost *Gesta Ungarorum vetera*. He sees *The Life of Saint Stephen* as a credible source to take in this context. Since the reports of the Polish-Hungarian border (or, in Steinhübel's interpretation, the Nitrian-Hungarian border) are very detailed, these "cannot deny their Esztergom origin" and were created still in the 11th, or at the beginning of the 12th century. Steinhübel concludes with a notably optimistic remark like this: "we thus know about the incursion of Bolesław the Brave from two old, reliable sources independent of one another, from Poland and Hungary."²⁸ However, the issue is far from straightforward.

The interpretation made by Steinhübel is not correct; the 7th chapter of the Hungarian-Polish Chronicle is not a word-for-word copy of the *Life of Saint Stephen* by Bishop Hartvic. Although this chapter is really based on the *Life of Saint Stephen*, there are still many differences between the two texts.²⁹ Therefore, it cannot be concluded that the Chronicle was written at the turn of the 11th and the 12th century, but rather in the 13th century, as Grzesik and Homza suggest. The Chronicle consequently provides no reliable evidence to support the hypothesis according to which Bolesław the Brave invaded the northern part of the Hungarian Kingdom.

The second source that Steinhübel mentions, the *Deeds of the Princes of Poland*, is also problematic in this case. It cannot be disputed that the anonymous author of *the Deeds* described the Polish-Hungarian border on the Danube: "[Bolesław the Brave] numquid non ipse Vngaros frequencius in certamine superavit, totamque terram eorum usque Danubium suo domino mancipavit."³⁰ The cited laconic passage is the only one, suggesting such a delineation of the border. Ryszard Grzesik has recently addressed this issue, arguing that the passage should be interpreted within the broader rhetorical context of the *Gesta*. He suggests that the reference to the Danube border was not tied to an incursion into present-day Slovakia, but rather to Bolesław's conquest of Moravia. In Grzesik's view, the Polish border on the Danube did exist, but was situated in a region different from what Slovak historians have proposed. At the same time, Grzesik does not claim that the border described in the Hungarian-Polish Chronicle has no basis in history. He actually argues that it reflects the historical border of the Principality of Nitra. According to his interpretation, the narration of the Chronicle was a reflection of the Polish intervention in Hungary during the reign of Bolesław II the Bold, who supported Ladislaus against his cousin, King Solomon of Hungary. In other words, the Polish tradition conflated two distinct historical events into a single narrative.³¹

²⁷ Ján Steinhübel, *The Nitrian Principality. The Beginnings of Medieval Slovakia*, trans. David McLean (Boston/Leiden: Brill, 2021), 380-381.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 382.

²⁹ Hartvic did not mention the meeting with the prince of Poland - compare the text of the Chronicle with the 9th and the 10th chapters of the *Life of Saint Stephen*, 412-416.

³⁰ *Anonima tzw. Galla Kronika*, 16.

³¹ Ryszard Grzesik, "Polska i węgierska tradycja historyczna w Kronice węgiersko-polskiej," *Slavia Occidentalis* 26, no. 2 (2020): 24-25, <https://doi.org/10.15804/hso200301>.

At the beginning of the 11th century, undeniably there was a tension between Bolesław the Brave and Stephen I. It is evidenced in the Chronicle of Thietmar, the Bishop of Merseburg, who mentions that one of Saint Stephen's kinsmen, Prokuj, sought refuge at the Polish court.³² However, based only on this information, it seems difficult to ascertain the existence of a direct military conflict between the two rulers. Following Ryszard Grzesik's interpretation, I still claim that there is no source-based evidence for supporting the existence of a historical conflict over the Principality of Nitra at the beginning of the 11th century.

The Meeting in a Broader Narrative Context

At this stage, my aim is to contextualize the sources used for describing the given meeting in order to conduct a more detailed analysis of the narrative in the Chronicle. According to the Hungarian-Polish Chronicle, Saint Stephen was a son of Prince Géza of Hungary and the Polish princess Adelheid, a sister of Mieszko.³³ When the above-stated prince died, Stephen sent Bishop Astric to Rome to ask Pope Sylvester II for a crown. By a twist of fate, his uncle, Mieszko of Poland, simultaneously sent Bishop Lambert to Rome with the same request. The Polish bishop arrived first, and the pope initially promised him a crown. During the night, God sent one of his angels to the pope, declaring that Poles were unworthy of kingship. He accused them of being false Christians, marked by arrogance and lacking in culture. The angel foretold that the Hungarian envoys would arrive the following day and revealed that their ruler, Stephen, was the one truly deserving of the royal title. Obeying this divine message, the Pope reversed his earlier promise. Despite his initial commitment to the Poles, he granted the crown to the Hungarian bishop, along with the apostolic cross for his king. This decision caused sorrow among the Polish envoys. To prevent a potential conflict between uncle and nephew, the Pope imposed an obligation on the Poles to form an eternal alliance with the Hungarians.³⁴

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³² [Bolesław] Habuit hic quandam urbem in confinio regni suimet et Ungariorum sitam, cuius erat custos Procuji senior, avincolus regis Pannonici, a suis sedibus ab eodem, ut modo, antea expulsus - Thietmar, Episcopus Merseburgiensis, *Chronicon*, ed. Robert Holtzmann (Berlin: Monumenta Germaniae Historica SS rer. Germ. N. S., 9, 1935), 496.

³³ *Chronicon Hungarico-Polonicum*, 305-306. About Adelheid: Martin Homza, *Mulieres suadentes - persuasive women: female royal saints in medieval East Central and Eastern Europe*, trans. Martina Fedorová and al. (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2017), 171-183.

³⁴ Prefixa itaque die, qua corona miro opere preparata Meschoni Polonorum mittenda erat, nocte qua procedebat, pape per visum angelus Christi nuncius astitit, cui dixit: Crastina die, hora prima ignote gentis stirpis, orientalis Ungarie nuncios ad te venturos esse cognoveris, qui sue gentilitatis abiecta ferocitate, humiliter prostrati suo duci Stephano a te regiam cum benedictionis apostolice munere flagitabant. Coronam ergo, quam preparari fecisti Meschoni duci Polonorum, Ungarorum duci, prout petent nuncios eius, cures sine concertatione largiri sibi que eam cum regni gloria pro vite sue meritis scito deberi. Illi autem, cui postulata fuerat, non erit data, quia generatio de ipso exhibit, que plus delectabitur in silvis crescendis, quam vineis, plus in tribulis crescendis et herbis superfluis, quam frugibus et frumentis speciosis, plus feras silvarum, quam oves et boves camporum, plus canes, quam homines, plus iniquitatem, quam iustitiam, plus traditionem, quam concordiam, plus tyrannidem, quam caritatem. Eruntque quasi belua, vorantes homines et bestias et quasi 'genimina viperarum' rodentes cor terre sue, 'obliviscentes Domini, creatoris sui', confidentes in stulta potentia sua et non credentes dictis

Astric and Lambert met in Venice and proceeded together to the Hungarian court at Székesfehérvár. Upon their arrival, Bishop Astric announced that he had brought the crown and the apostolic cross, while Bishop Lambert declared that he had come bearing peace and friendship. Saint Stephen expressed his gratitude to both envoys and ordered that the story of the Polish-Hungarian friendship should be recorded for future generations. Stephen was then crowned with the papal crown at Székesfehérvár during a ceremony dedicated to the Virgin Mary. During the mass, the newly crowned king offered the kiss of peace to all, while the assembled people venerated his saintly hand and the royal ring. A second liturgy was celebrated in honor of the Saints Peter and Paul, and the festivities concluded with a one-day feast.³⁵

prophetarum sanctarum. 'Quia ego Dominus Deus fortis ulciscens in quartam et quintam generationem' et 'affligentes me affligam', nec pertransibit apud me malum impunitum et bonum irremuneratum. Post hoc generationi eorum sequenti me 'miserens miserebor' et eam exaltabo et corona regni coronabo. Modo vero fac ut dixi. Et statim 'discessit angelus sanctus ab eo. Iuxta ergo huius visionis modum prescripta sequenti die, hora prima presul Strigoniensis civitatis, Astriquus nomine ad papam pervenit, qui officium iniunctum sibi proderet exequens, sancti ducis Ungarorum ordine gesta referens, ab apostolica sede, que supradiximus, insignia postulavit. Quibus auditis valde gavisus Romane sedis pontifex, coronam prout fuerat postulata, benigne crucem insuper ferenda regi velut in signum apostolatus misit. Benedictionis ergo apostolice litteris, que cum corona et cruce simul privilegiate erant, excommunicationis nodo roboravit. Mox presul Ungarorum Astriquus, ut fidelis nuncius, apostolica sede accepta benedictione a cardinalibus et curialibus romane curie petita licentia letus et exultans Ungariam veloci cursu properavit. Crastina autem die venit Polonorum presul Lambertus, coronam et benedictionem duci suo Meschoni, que eo die dari pollicita fuerat, humiliter se summi pontificis pedibus provolvens, memorie reduxit. Cui respondit papa dicens: Venit nuncius cognati domini tui, ducis Ungarie et 'subripuit benedictionem' avunculi sui. Cum autem hec presul audiret, 'eiulans cum clamore' cepit deprecari sanctum papam, dicens: 'Numquid solam tamen habes benedictionem pater.' Domino meo obsecro, ut benedicas. Cui respondens sanctus pater dixit: 'Penitentiam agite' de peccatis vestris, quia etsi Dominus Iesus Christus offensus est is vobis ad presens, in posterum restituet vos gratie sue propter cum corona temporali et eterna. Hiis auditis nuncius submisso vultu in terram turbavit seipsum. Quem cum intuitus fuisset papa et eum turbatum fuisse coniecisset, ne desperaret sic eum consolatur: Non dubitet tua religio de Dei misericordia, nec putet a vobis Deum omnino recessisse et vestram Christianam gentem oblivioni dedisse, si nepotem ducis tui, Stephanum in regem genti Ungarorum, que ferox et indomita est christianitas, coronare et dyademate honorare per angelum sanctum suum mihi in visione precepit. Vobis autem ad honorem et gloriam fecit Dominus, qui per matrem suam, que soror est principis Polonorum, domini tui, ad fidem christianam virum suum, ducem Ungarorum lesse cum exercitu suo prudentissima allocutione convertit et filium suum sub protectione sanctorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli posuit. Ne ergo inter avunculum et nepotem, inter exercitum Polonorum et Ungarorum invidie et odii fomes oriretur et Dominus Deus in causa est statuimus et confirmamus excommunicationi et indignationi sanctorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli subdimus eos, qui primo insurrexerint, sive Poloni in Ungaros, sive Ungari in Polonos, donec in devotione ecclesie et fide pura christiane perstiterint - *Chronicon Hungarico-Polonicum*, 308-309.

³⁵ Cum autem essent ad unum diem prope Albam civitatem nuncium ante se premiserunt et adventum suum felicem regi nunciaverunt. Quibus rex obviam cum episcopis et clericis populisque multis congregatis obviam exiit eosque gloriose et honorifice suscepit. Cum vero ab oratione surrexissent, coram omni populo, quomodo Dominus miraculose cum eis operatus esset, enarraverunt 'ad laudem et gloriam nominis sui'. Ungarorum autem nuncius dyadema regni coronamque auro et lapidibus pretiosis fabricatam crucemque pro sceptro ante ferendam in modum apostolatus pariterque cum confirmatione privilegiorum optulit. Polonorum vero pacis et amicitie confirmationem iussu apostolici porrexit. Cuius confirmationi rex coram omnibus consentiens, ad memoriam posterorum eam in scripto

A few months later, the Polish bishop returned to Hungary to remind King Stephen of the promise of alliance and friendship. Saint Stephen heeded the bishop's call and invited his uncle Mieszko to meet him. The Polish prince arrived at the Polish-Hungarian border along the Danube River, near the town of Esztergom, where he met Saint Stephen. Together, the rulers walked along the border to the fortress of Salis. The following day, they exchanged the kiss of peace before returning to Esztergom into the church of Saint Adalbert, the apostle of Poland and Hungary. A religious service was held there, attended by King Stephen and the clergy. The Bible was preached, and peace was proclaimed between these two nations. Subsequently, a treaty was drafted. The ceremony concluded with a mass dedicated to the Holy Trinity, followed by an eight-day feast.³⁶

I have decided to paraphrase such a lengthy passage from the source in order to provide the fullest possible context for the circumstances of the meeting. Upon careful reading of the Chronicle, I reached conclusions contradictory to Homza and Steinhübel's opinions, the ones to which Zupka refers. Nowhere in the Chronicle is there any indication that a Polish-Hungarian war ever occurred. Consequently, there is no mention of any conflict or tension between the two kingdoms. On the contrary, the author

redigi precepit. Post hec autem sancte Dei genitricis semperque virginis Mariæ incipitur officium: Salve sancta parens enixa puerpera regem. Infra missam vero osculum pacis omnibus prebet, alii vero manum sacram et anulum sacrum salutant et benedictionem ab ipso recipiunt. Quo finito presules eum clero, milites cum populo Kyrie cum laudibus congruis proclamant, Deum omnipotentem et sanctos apostolos Petrum et Paulum benedicunt, quod Sanctus Deo dilectus Stephanus ex unctione sacri crismatis perunctus dyademate regalis dignitatis feliciter coronatus est. Post hec autem regiam aulam introivit, epulis discumbunt et sic cum gaudio et letitia letum duxerunt diem - *Chronicon hungarico-polonicum*, 310.

³⁶ Post acceptum regalis excellentie signum, beatissimus vir Dei Stephanus Ungarorum rex episcopales ecclesias amplians regaliter disposuit, crucibus et vasis aliisque suppellectilibus ad ministerium Dei pertinentibus, secundum quod unicumque opus erat, sufficienter decoravit. Tribus vero post coronationis sue mensibus elapsis, accedens ad ipsum Lambertus presul civitatis Cracovie licentiam petiit atque de corroboratione pacis et amicitie ad memoriam reduxit. Cum que sine mora presulem Strigoniensem Astricum et principem militie Albam nomine ad avunculum suum Meschonem ducem Polonie transmisit, rogans ipsum, ut cum magnatibus suis in terminis Polonie et Ungarie conveniret. Qui congregato omni exercitu suo ad regem ante Strigonium venit ibique in terminis Polonie et Ungarie tentoria sua fixit. Nam termini Polonorum ad litus Danubii ad civitatem Strigoniensem terminabantur. Deinde in Agriensem civitatem ibant, demum in fluvium, qui Tizia nominatur cadentes, regirabant iuxta fluvium, qui Cepia nuncupatur usque ad castrum Salis ibique inter Ungaros, Ruthenos et Polonos fines dabant. Crastina autem die, orto iam sole conveniunt simul et osculum pacis acceperunt, simulque complexu manibus ad kathedralem ecclesiam Strigoniensem, que tunc in honorem sancti martyris Adalberti, Polonorum et Ungarorum apostoli novo opere fabricabatur, pervenerunt. Summo vero pontifice ad officium misse induto cum ministris sacri altaris aliisque pontificalibus campis et infulis ornatis ut stellis in celo nitentibus fulgebant regeque Stephano ornatu sacro vestito et dyademate regio coronato, ut 'sole inter stellas perfulgenti', post sacram processionem gradienti, super omnem populum ab humero et sursum eminenti. Facta autem processione verbum Dei predicant, privilegia sancte Romane curie aperiunt, audiente omni populo distincte legunt, utrique populo pacem et amicitiam corroboratam edicunt. Placuit omnibus et iuramento propriis manibus confirmaverunt. Post officium sancte trinitatis incipitur: benedicta sit sancta trinitas. Hostia vero sancta pro rege et principe et pro cuncto populo per presulem Astricum offertur, pace accepta missa finita ad tentoria sua redeunt, ibique in gaudio et letitia epulis et potibus, in cordis et organis, in tympanis et choris, in cytharis et fialis letos VIII duxerunt dies - *Chronicon hungarico-polonicum*, 310-311.

emphasizes the everlasting friendship between Hungary and Poland, which is a key issue for my study. The alliance, blessed by the pope and formed by Saint Stephen, is accorded a special, sacred status. The genesis of this alliance, moreover, dates back even further to the marriage of Géza and Adelaide. The consequence of this dynastic marriage was not only the Christianization of Hungary, but also the birth of Saint Stephen, whom the chronicler presents as a central figure in the narrative. Therefore, I cannot agree with Zupka's hypothesis that the Chronicle presents a model ritual reconciliation. The reason is straightforward: there can be no peace-making, without a preceding conflict or tension.

I have stressed above that the Hungarian-Polish Chronicle is full of non-historical or partially historical characters and events. I consider the story about the papal crown and the meeting of Saint Stephen with the Polish prince to be a literary fiction. Therefore, in my opinion, it is impossible to reconstruct medieval rituals accurately by analyzing the Hungarian-Polish Chronicle. It was created according to literary requirements, and it cannot be proven that the Chronicle faithfully imitates reality. The part of the work, which includes the meeting, is based on the *Life of Saint Stephen* and, consequently, describes the first king of Hungary as a saint. A hagiographical character of the work was obvious for the copyist of the so-called Zamoyski-codex, the oldest manuscript of the Chronicle. He entitles the work *Chronica Ungarorum iuncta et mixta cum cronicis Polonorum et uita sancti Stephani*.³⁷ Thus, the part about Saint Stephen is the one that should be analyzed, at least partially, as hagiography. The understanding of such context shapes both the interpretation and the nature of the chapter under examination. The events it recounts are concerned less with political history than with history conceived as a source of moral instruction. This reading of the Chronicle aligns with the preceding preface, where the chronicler expresses gratitude to God for the gift of faith bestowed upon the Hungarians.³⁸

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There are several questions connected to this meeting that deserve our attention. One of them is the border between Poland and Hungary. This should not be examined on the basis of a single scene, but rather analyzed within the broader context of the entire work. In the later part of the Chronicle, we can learn that prince Bolesław, the son of Mieszko, enthroned three Hungarian princes; they were Levente, Peter and Béla. After each of the three coronations, Bolesław led a military expedition. The first one was to the castle of Salis: "[Bolesław] coronavit filium regis Stephani, Leventam regio dyademate; Petrum vero et Belam duces constituit. Hiis itaque peractis secessit in terminos suos in castrum Salis, et ibi delectabatur in venationibus." When Levente died, Bolesław crowned Peter and then followed: "Dux [Bolesław] recessit in Carinthiam, et ibi metas posuit. Erat enim timor eius super omnia montana Carinthie et Almanie et Austrie, quia per Austriam cum victoria Poloniam reversus est in civitatem Cracoviam."

³⁷ Rps BOZ 28, National Library of Poland (Warsaw), 90r.

³⁸ *Chronicon Hungarico-Polonicum*, 299.

Then, after a visit to Hungary, Bolesław "dux per Rusiam Poloniam ingressus est."³⁹

The Danube and the land of Rus were mentioned in the Polish chronicles or annals, which are older than the Hungarian-Polish Chronicle. The anonymous author of the *Deeds of the Princes of Poland* wrote about the Polish border on the Danube (as previously quoted) and the conquest of Rus, which he regarded as the historical boundaries of Poland since the reign of king Bolesław the Brave.⁴⁰ Vincent Kadłubek, the author of the *Chronica Polonorum*, refers to these territories in a similar way.⁴¹ He also mentions the mountains of Carinthia as a place, from where the first Polish duke, Graccus, came to Poland.⁴² Moreover, all these places appear in the *Vita maior Sancti Stanislai*, composed around 1260 by Vincent of Kielce:

In descriptioibus quoque suorum annalium sub rege victoriosissimo Boleslao pio, Christiano filio, Mesconis, qui primus fuit Christianus, adducta felicibus in crementis, inclitis illustrata triumphis, amplissimum profecisse traditur in regnum, a Danubio siquidem magno flumine regni Hungarie usque ad Solavam fluvium Saxonie, a Kyoviensi quoque civitate, que est metropolis Ruzzie, usque ad montes Karintie sui imperii extendens palmites, longe a se positas quondam suo sceptro regebat exteras naciones.⁴³

The Hungarian-Polish Chronicle, however, predates the *Vita maior Sancti Stanislai* which is partially based on it.⁴⁴ This does not alter the fact that, in the 13th century, Carinthia, Rus, and the Danube were perceived as the historical frontiers of Poland, drawn during the reign of the powerful King Bolesław. An echo of this tradition can be found in the Chronicle. Bolesław's passage through Rus and Carinthia should thus be understood as part of the process of defining Poland's territorial boundaries. However, the border between Poland and Hungary, which is symbolized with the fortress of Salis, was already established during the meeting of Prince Mieszko and Saint Stephen. As I have pointed out above, the treaty made between Mieszko and Stephen did not end any war, but it was an act of confirmation of their friendship. Therefore, the Polish-Hungarian border can be seen as exceptional compared to Poland's other frontiers, as it was not established by the sword. Instead, it reflects the broader narrative in the Chronicle of an age-old, everlasting alliance between the two states.

³⁹ *Chronicon Hungarico-Polonicum*, 319.

⁴⁰ *Anonima tzw. Galla Kronika*, 16-17, 21-25. For more informations about the Polish medieval historical narrative of the early boundaries see: Piotr Węcowski, *Początki Polski w pamięci historycznej późnego średniowiecza* (Kraków: Towarzystwo Naukowe Societas Vistulana, 2014), 377-389; here: 377-379.

⁴¹ *Mistrza Wincentego zwanego Kadłubkiem Kronika Polska*, ed. Marian Plezia (Kraków: Polska Akademia Umiejętności, 1994), 41-42.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 9.

⁴³ "Vita sancti Stanislai Cracoviensis episcopi (vita maior)," ed. Wojciech Kętrzyński, in *Monumenta Poloniae Historica 4* (Lwów: Akademia Umiejętności 1884), 364-365.

⁴⁴ Marian Plezia, *Od Arystotelesa do „Złotej Legendy”* (Kraków: Pax, 1958), 453-457. Wincenty of Kielce also created the *Vita minor Sancti Stanislai*, which is an older work. In the *Vita Wincenty* described the boundaries of Poland, but he did not mention the mountains of Carinthia: "Vita sancti Stanislai Cracoviensis episcopi (vita minor)," ed. Wojciech Kętrzyński, in *Monumenta Poloniae Historica 4* (Lwów: Akademia Umiejętności 1884), 267-268.

It is also worth noting that, although the treaty and the delineation of the common border were made by both parties, the narrative presents Saint Stephen as the sole active participant in the meeting. The reader might get the impression that the given peace was primarily Saint Stephen's initiative, while Mieszko appeared entirely passive. Additionally, it is significant that Lambert, the Polish bishop, was the one who asked the Hungarian king to invite the Polish prince to confirm the peace. Zupka interprets this as preliminary negotiations and agreements conducted by envoys before the actual meeting.⁴⁵ In my opinion, it is not a part of the diplomacy between the two rulers. The bishop fulfilled God's will and executed the task assigned to him by the pope. We can read that the pope handed to the bishop of Cracow a confirmation of the friendship between Poland and Hungary, and Lambert took it to Saint Stephen: "Polonorum vero nuncius pacis et amicitie confirmationem portabat."⁴⁶ Theoretically, the bishop could have come back directly to Cracow and suggested prince Mieszko to invite another ruler. However, it would not have fallen within the scope of the broader narrative. The chronicler, or maybe we should call him the hagiographer, emphasized the holiness of Saint Stephen. He depicted him as a peacemaking king. Therefore, Saint Stephen plays a significant role during the meeting. His higher position and superiority were not rooted in the political factors such as peace settlements or royal titles, contrary to Zupka's implications. Rather, they stemmed from his sanctity and spiritual status.

Another important question concerns the two ceremonies depicted in the Chronicle – the coronation and the meeting of the two rulers. Both events are the result of a papal, or rather divine, decision. As the Chronicle states, the Pope bestowed the crown and the apostolic cross upon the Hungarian bishop as a gift for Stephen, meanwhile Lambert got the confirmation of peace he craved. Both envoys arrived together to the Hungarian court and offered the papal gifts to Saint Stephen:

Ungarorum autem nuncius dyadema regni coronamque auro et lapidibus pretiosis fabricatam crucemque pro sceptro ante ferendam in modum apostolatus pariterque cum confirmatione privilegiorum optulit. Polonorum vero pacis et amicitie confirmationem iussu apostolici porrexit.⁴⁷

The first of the ceremonies was preceded by a solemn and public confirmation of friendship with Poland by Stephen, who asked to write it down for further generations.⁴⁸ The coronation followed immediately thereafter. The chronicler clearly emphasizes the close connection between Stephen's royal title and the Hungarian-Polish relations. Following the narrative of the work, the confirmation of prior friendship was a necessary condition for the anointing of the Hungarian ruler. Only after this solemn act was completed could the coronation ceremony commence.

⁴⁵ Zupka, *Ritual and Symbolic*, 150.

⁴⁶ *Chronicon Hungarico-Polonicum*, 309.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 310.

⁴⁸ *Cuius confirmationi rex coram omnibus consentiens, ad memoriam posterorum eam in scripto redigi precepit - ibid.*

It was held in the royal city of Székesfehérvár and began with an *officium* devoted to the Virgin Mary: "Salve sancta parens enixa puerpera regem,"⁴⁹ which was usually sung during the votive office for Mary.⁵⁰ It perhaps refers to the new, royal status of Stephen, who, as a ruler, should have patterned himself on Jesus, the king of kings. However, it does not seem very probable. Nevertheless, the chronicler emphasizes Mary's role as the patroness of Hungary.⁵¹ During the coronation mass, Stephen offered the kisses of peace and blessed the people, who venerated his holy hand and sacred ring. Then they proclaimed *Kyrie eleison* and praised the Lord and the holy apostles Peter and Paul, because Saint Stephen was crowned and anointed with the holy chrism.⁵²

The second ceremony, a meeting of the two rulers, was a result of the intervention by the Polish bishop. He returned to Hungary to remind Stephen of the Pope's request to formally confirm the friendship with Poland. Since Stephen had already fulfilled this obligation before the coronation mass, his act was unilateral and incomplete. The alliance required mutual affirmation, which could only be achieved through a direct meeting between the two rulers. After the confirmation of the common border, they attended a religious ceremony:

Crastina autem die, orto iam sole conveniunt simul et osculum pacis acceperunt, simulque complexu manibus ad kathedralem ecclesiam Strigoniensem, que tunc in honorem sancti martyris Adalberti, Polonorum et Ungarorum apostoli novo opere fabricabatur, pervenerunt. Summo vero pontifice ad officium misse induto cum ministris sacri altaris aliisque pontificalibus campis et infulis ornatis ut stellis in celo nitentibus fulgebant regeque Stephano ornato sacro vestito et dyademate regio coronato, ut 'sole inter stellas perfulgenti', post sacram processionem gradienti, super omnem populum ab humero et sursum eminenti. Facta autem processione verbum Dei predicant, privilegia sancte Romane curie aperiunt, audiente omni populo distincte legunt, utrique populo pacem et amicitiam corroboratam edicunt. Placuit omnibus et iuramento propriis manibus confirmaverunt. Post officium sancte trinitatis incipitur: benedicta sit sancta trinitas. Hostia vero sancta pro rege et principe et pro cuncto populo per presulem Astricum offertur, pace accepta missa finita ad tentoria sua

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ According to the Medieval Music Manuscripts Online Database, the *officium* was usually sung during the votive office for Mary or during the Marian feast, for example *Annuntiatio Mariae*. Medieval Music Manuscripts Online Database, accessed 22.05.2025, <https://musmed.eu/chants?text=Salve+sancta+parens+&feast=All&genre=All&cid=>.

⁵¹ The motif of Mary as the protector and defender of Hungary will appear in another chapter of the Chronicle - *Chronicon Hungarico-Polonicum*, 313.

⁵² *Infra missam vero osculum pacis omnibus prebet, alii vero manum sacram et anulum sacrum salutant et benedictionem ab ipso recipiunt. Quo finito presules eum clero, milites cum populo Kyriel cum laudibus congruis proclamant, Deum omnipotentem et sanctos apostolos Petrum et Paulum benedicunt, quod Sanctus Deo dilectus Stephanus ex unctione sacri crismatis perunctus dyademate regalis dignitatis feliciter coronatus est* - *ibid*, 310. As I have stressed above, the Hungarian-Polish Chronicle is based on the *Life of Saint Stephen* by Bishop Hartvic, which also describes the coronation, however, not in such a detailed way. Hartvic does not mention the *officium*, *Kyrie eleison*, the veneration of Stephen's hand and ring, nor the prayer to saints Peter and Paul, which should be considered as the further invention (probably by the chronicler). See: *Life of Saint Stephen*, 414.

redeunt, ibique in gaudio et letitia epulis et potibus, in cordis et organis, in tympanis et choris, in cytharis et fialis letos VIII duxerunt dies.⁵³

Stephen and Mieszko came to Esztergom, which was known as the city of the archbishop. The mass was celebrated in the church of Saint Adalbert, a shared patron of Poland and Hungary.⁵⁴ Stephen's sanctity positioned him as the central figure in the ceremony, while Mieszko remained in the background, overshadowed by his nephew. The king of Hungary was distinguished in an unusual way. He was equal with the *summus pontifex*, i.e. the archbishop, and the rest of the clergymen, since they walked together in the sacred procession. It is also noteworthy that Stephen was clad in sacred attire, visually aligning him with the clergy. Moreover, Stephen was portrayed as a person, surpassing the assembled clergy, since they were only "like stars," meanwhile he was called the "sun" between them. When the procession ended, Stephen and the clergymen preached the Gospel, which is a task directly connected with the sacerdotal sense of the rulership. Then the two rulers proclaimed the peace and friendship between Poland and Hungary, and the treaty was written down and signed.

It is striking that prince Mieszko "vanished from sight" of the reader. In contrast to the king of Hungary, Mieszko is not explicitly mentioned as a participant in the sacred procession. However, the broader context indicates that he was probably among the clergymen and took part in the same activities as Stephen, including preaching the Gospel. This 'disappearance' is neither a reflection of Mieszko's inferiority nor a result of specific ritual reasons. Rather, it stems from the partial nature of the Chronicle seen as a hagiography, where the author intentionally highlights the virtues and central role of Stephen, the protagonist.

The hagiographic tone of the Chronicle has a fundamental impact on its interpretation. The author portrayed Saint Stephen as the holy man, which should be taken into consideration during the analysis of the two ceremonies. Although the coronation was undoubtedly an important event for Stephen, it was of lesser significance compared to the meeting with Mieszko. During the first ceremony, Stephen was crowned as monarch. The act of coronation and its accompanying rituals carried a strong spiritual dimension. Royal dignity was imbued with a priestly aspect, which included the responsibility for the salvation of one's subjects. Nevertheless, during the second ceremony Stephen was acting like a priest, for example, preaching the Gospel and walking in the sacred procession. Several differences stand out between the two ceremonies in favor of the meeting of the given rulers. The first one was held in the royal city, meanwhile the second one was in the archbishop's city, which gives it a more ecclesiastical character. The holy host was also offered to the king, prince and people – a detail absent from the coronation mass. Finally, the meeting ended not with a one-day, but an eight-day feast, which

⁵³ *Chronicon Hungarico-Polonicum*, 311.

⁵⁴ About the tradition of the church devoted to Saint Adalbert in Esztergom see: Csákó, *A magyar-lengyel krónika*, 323-324. Judit Csákó, "Néhány megjegyzés Albericus Trium Fontium magyar adataihoz," in *Történeti tanulmányok Draskóczy István egyetemi tanár 60. születésnapjára*, ed. Gábor Mikó, Bence Péterfi, and András Vadas (Budapest: ELTE Eötvös Kiadó 2012), footnote 34, 520-521.

emphasizes the special meaning of the ceremony. The aftermath of both ceremonies also provides valuable insights. The 6th chapter ends with the description of coronation and the next one begins with the information that:

Post acceptum regalis excellentie signum, beatissimus vir Dei Stephanus Ungarorum rex episcopales ecclesias amplians regaliter disposuit, crucibus et vasis aliisque supellectilibus ad ministerium Dei pertinentibus, secundum quod uniuersique opus erat, sufficienter decoravit.⁵⁵

Meanwhile, immediately after the description of the meeting, the chronicler writes that the king ordered the construction of a magnificent church dedicated to Mary, the perpetual Virgin. The church was lavishly bestowed and became independent of the jurisdiction of the archbishop. Then Stephen founded a monastery in the city of Rome, devoted to Saint Stephen the Protomartyr. Furthermore, he became a preacher and a "model of salvation" to the people. And last but not least, he began healing the sick – in other words, performing miracles.⁵⁶ This marks the greatest transformation that occurred in Stephen after the meeting with his uncle. After the coronation, but before the confirmation of peace, Stephen made a donation to the Hungarian church, which was undoubtedly pious, but it pales in comparison with his further activity.

Following the narrative of the Chronicle, the meeting with Mieszko, and the bilateral declaration of peace and friendship completed the process of Stephen's coronation in a symbolic and a spiritual sense. Although it is immaterial, the papal directive to form an alliance should be regarded as a kind of gift to Stephen, just like the crown and the apostolic cross. Together with the regalia, it constituted the foundation of his reign. It also sets the course for the Hungarian politics, and, as the subsequent chapters of the Chronicle reveal, it foreshadows future events that unfolded when the Polish prince resolved the crisis that had emerged in Hungary after Stephen's death⁵⁷.

⁵⁵ *Chronicon Hungarico-Polonicum*, 310.

⁵⁶ Erat interea rex idem fidelis in omnibus actibus suis, Deo perfecte deditus, per votum et oblationem semet ipsum cum regno suo sub tutela perpetue virginis, Dei genitricis Marię precibus assiduis offerens, cuius gloria et honor tam celebris inter Ungaros habetur. Et ut maiorem ipsius defensionis misericordiam consequi valeret, in ipsa regalis sedis civitate, que Alba nuncupatur, sub laude et titulo genitricis Dei famosam grandem ecclesiam opere mirifico construere cepit. Qua perfecta in consecratione ipsius ecclesie, ipsam sue regalis magnitudinis reservavit, que eam libertate corroboravit, ut nullus archiepiscoporum, vel episcoporum in ea cuiusque iurisdictionem habebat. Deinde canonicis, qui eam ad honorem Dei genitricis officiant, prehendat largas statuit. Construxit autem in ipso initio conversionis sue in civitate Ierosolimitana cenobium monachorum, quod ad victum cottidianum prediis et vineis locupletavit. Aliud quoque monasterium in urbe Romana prope Sancti Petri ecclesiam ad honorem sancti prothomartiris Stephani construxit ibique XII canonicos locavit et eos prediis et vineis ditavit, domos vero hospitales pro peregrinis recipiendis edificavit et bene muravit. Merito ergo in toto mundo famosum adeptus est nomen apostoli, quia etsi ipse evangelizandi non assumpsit officium, predicator tamen et magister eximius populis so lati u m prebens extitit. Quadam vero nocte monitu divino nemine sciente, solus ad ecclesiam venit, seque prosternens, orationem pro rege suo ad Dominum fudit. Cumque ibi languentem pauperem, febre depressum ingemiscere et clamare audiret, veste, qua erat indutus pauperem operuit, mox illi manum inponens ab infirmitate curavit – *Chronicon Hungarico-Polonicum*, 312.

⁵⁷ *Chronicon Hungarico-Polonicum*, 318–319.

Hence, the Polish-Hungarian treaty was a necessary condition for the legitimacy of Stephen's reign in the eyes of God.

Some of the historians cited above have suggested that Stephen held a certain superiority over Mieszko, and consequently, Hungary became more powerful than Poland. Nevertheless, it is an oversimplification of the issue. The Pope reminded Bishop Lambert that Stephen was Polish on his mother's side, and she made a significant contribution to the Christianization of Hungary.⁵⁸ As I have emphasized in the previous paragraph, the confirmation of peace played a significant role in the process of Stephen's coronation.

Therefore, Poland was a co-participant in the divine plan that culminated in Stephen's elevation to royal status. This may be something of an exaggeration, but it could be said that Poland had a share in the formation of his sanctity. Notably, Poland did not receive the promised crown and was accused by God of being sinful. Nevertheless, the Pope suggested that the royal title for the Polish prince was only a matter of time.⁵⁹

Conclusion

In this article, I have analyzed the description of the meeting between Saint Stephen and Prince Mieszko, taking into account the broader source context. This analysis has led me to the conclusions that differ from the views of Zupka, Homza, and Steinhübel. The main point of divergence is that I do not believe that the Hungarian-Polish Chronicle refers to a war or any form of tension between Saint Stephen and Bolesław the Brave. Therefore, it cannot be treated as a model of reconciliation. Since the meeting is described in the hagiographical part of the work, it is not a suitable source for the type of political study conducted by Zupka. On the other hand, the Chronicle is valuable for studying the development of the cult of Saint Stephen and for understanding how Poland and Hungary perceive their shared past. That is, the Polish-Hungarian friendship has been inscribed into the tradition, surrounding the very origins of the Christian Kingdom of Hungary. I have also concluded that the meeting with Prince Mieszko is more important for the narrative in question than the scene of Saint Stephen's coronation. The mutual confirmation of the Polish-Hungarian friendship was a concluding act of the coronation of Saint Stephen and, from the perspective of divine law, it legitimized his authority. Although Poles did not receive the papal crown and were even condemned for their sins, they also played a positive role, for they shared in the formation of Saint Stephen's sanctity.

⁵⁸ *Chronicon Hungarico-Polonicum*, 309.

⁵⁹ Wojciech Drelicharz, *Idea zjednoczenia królestwa w średniowiecznym dziejopisarstwie polskim* (Kraków: Towarzystwo Naukowe Societas Vistulana, 2012), 110; Węcowski, *Początki Polski*, 323.

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