

Joachim Bahlcke: Ungarischer Episcopat und österreichische Monarchie. Von einer Partnerschaft zur Konfrontation (1686-1790). Geistwissenschaftliches Zentrum Geschichte und Kultur Ostmitteleuropas E. V. an der Universität Leipzig. Forschungen zur Geschichte und Kultur des östlichen Mitteleuropa. Band 23. Franz Steiner Verlag Stuttgart, 2005. 516. p.

An internationally recognised foreign historian rarely commits an independent monography based on fundamental research to some part of Hungarian history. It is particularly true when they do not deal with a tragic phase of Hungarian history rich in cataclysms but with a peaceful period (the epithet »peaceful« is relative, of course, because one can see the expression »confrontation« already in the subtitle). However, the professor of the University of Stuttgart, Joachim Bahlcke has done the very thing when he has thoroughly written up the relations between the Hungarian Catholic clergy and the Habsburg government in the 18th century. He has analysed the issue from so far unexplored points of view, thus his work provides several novelties for Hungarian scholarly public, too.

The author has worked with a huge number of bibliographical items, and has not only used syntheses in Hungarian, Croatian, Slovakian and Czech languages but has amply drawn on contemporary pamphlets, diaries and manuscripts. Moreover, he has revealed primary sources in different archives and has properly fitted them into the text.

The author attempts to depict a development in the relations between the Catholic clergy and the modern Habsburg Monarchy where several contradictions can be observed. The two most important questions are the following: 1. Why no other than the devout Catholic rulers (Maria Theresa, Joseph II) did firm steps against the Hungarian Catholic elite? 2. Could the church be depicted as a monolith whose all segments acted in the same interests? The answer for the second question is probably »not«, thus Bahlcke duly distinguishes between lower and higher clergy and explores only the latter one. The higher clergy could be regarded as a single interest-group whose aims and relations can be properly tackled. The author has concluded that under Leopold I the dynasty and the clergy placed confidence in each other. This relationship steadily worsened in the 18th century and the two parties confronted directly at the time of Joseph II's death. Although due to the plentiful sources the process can be traced, the picture should be modulated because Hungarian Baroque church history cannot be depicted as an unambiguously negative process, even if many of the enlightened Habsburg rulers' measures deteriorated the relationship with the Catholic clergy. Thus, in our opinion the subtitle of the book is a bit sharp. However, the author is right when using a central thought for the analysis, because lacking it the textual cohesion would lose.

The author rightly starts the discussion with the description of the medieval state of affairs and the reign of Stephen I and his organisation of the church, and in reality one can read the introduction to the subject matter on the first 90 pages. However, the detailed depiction of the medieval and early modern church history exceeds the framework of a general introduction. Bahlcke's decision might be justified by the facts that he might have wanted to inform German readers about the preliminaries and that he has collected significant data

about the earlier period and might have wanted to share his knowledge with the readers. Still, we consider the introduction a bit ill-proportioned. If the structure were a bit more coherent, it would have been more effective.

However, several factors may justify the detailed introduction. On the one hand the author well describes the fact that likewise the Holy Roman Empire the Kingdom of Hungary had a specific structure. Several provinces with different status belonged to the suzerainty of the Sacred Crown of Hungary and this variety should be traced in the hierarchy of the church organisation. On the other hand, one can understand the church and the religious policies of the 18th century Habsburg rulers only being aware of the medieval and early modern state of affairs.

An incontrovertible merit of the book is its exploration of the 17th-18th-century history of the Hungarian church from new points of view. On the one hand it shows in details the legal questions related to the dioceses and the appointment of the ecclesiastical leaders. The arguments used by Bahlcke have been partly mentioned or completely neglected in Hungarian historiography. On the other hand, the book estimates the tendencies in church policy from a Viennese point of view. It is very important because the 18th-century rulers fundamentally determined the church policy of Hungary. Apart from the logical description of the interests and arguments of the Habsburg government, the author places the rulers' motivation in economic and socio-political context. In this respect one can be glad that a foreign historian deals with the matter but because of it the presentation of the Hungarian interests and motivations is a bit overshadowed.

The author's task was not easy since despite the undoubted results of early modern church history we still know little about the survival of the network of Catholic institutions and their role in decision making and in the middle or upper levels of public administration. The role of the higher clergy was obviously more important than it was suggested in earlier - mainly Protestant - church historical works. Several new writings have been published recently, out of which we should highlight Antal Molnár's monography about the abbey of Báta and the works of Péter Tusor. The conclusions of them should be used in a later publication of the book.

The appointment to Episcopal benefices was the central problem in the 18th century. The merit of the book is that it describes the background of the issue in its complexity and shows the arguments Maria Theresa could refer to in details. In relation to it the author reveals the sources of Ádám Ferenc Kollár who worked out the ideological and legal argumentations and the reasoning based on them. The author cites parts of the texts, which promotes wider and more differentiated understanding of the guidelines of the church policy.

Bahlcke has also touched adroitly the question of titular bishoprics which has been so far hardly touched upon by Hungarian church history writing. The author describes in detail how significant and irregular a role this church institution had in the 18th century. As the antecedent to it one has to bear in mind that during the civil war parallel to the appearance of the Reformation it happened several times that the same position was held by more people at the same time. This practice rearranged the hierarchy of the bishoprics. These causes contributed to the increasing number of titular bishoprics because new episcopacies

destroyed at that time joined the earlier titular ones. The Council of Trent stipulated the Episcopal obligation of residence but several bishops could not meet these requirements, thus the pope did not reinforce them. As a consequence, they could be regarded only as elected bishops by the king, »*electus episcopus*«. Although these positions rarely involved real power in church government, the rulers usually endowed their supporters with them, thus they had an important role in the formation of the absolute loyalty of the church towards the dynasty. Fortunately this chapter - in an adapted form - has already been published in Hungarian.

Chapter 2/5 also provides interesting data. In this unit the author shows different careers of Hungarian bishops through the lives of five different personalities (Imre Esterházy, Adam Alexander Patachich, György Klimó, Michael Friedrich von Althann and Pius Manzador). The selection is questionable but on the whole it is an appropriate scoop. Bahlcke has attempted to cover Hungarian Episcopal sees both chronologically and geographically and the chosen five personalities and careers reflect 18th-century trends.

In our opinion, despite its informativeness and abundance in data some essential momentum has been underestimated regarding either Catholicisation or the coexistence and conflicts of Protestant and Catholic congregations. For instance Baroque religious life, processions, saint's days or the so-called *pesti commissio* have been discussed very shortly. It is particularly striking when compared to the lengthy introduction.

The analysis of the composition and significance of the chapters in the modern era might have exceeded the framework of the book but it might have deserved a unit. Although historians know less about their early modern role than that of the bishops, their importance is undoubted. Appointments to an office of a provost or a canon had a great significance and they were closely related to appointments of titular bishoprics. Moreover, 18th-century Baroque bishops often held some position in a chapter before their election, thus the office of the canon was an important step in their career. During the 18th-century reconstruction bishops greatly rely on the members of the chapters, therefore when looking for the close colleagues of a bishop one has to explore the canons. However, this deficiency does not modify the merits of the conclusions of the book since it is a complete work without this issue as well.

Joachim Bahlcke reveals the historical connections between the legal personality concept of the Hungarian Sacred Crown and the Hungarian church organisation in Chapter 2/2 and he has supported his thoughts with an extended bibliography. Chapter 2/1 is also in close connections with the question, here the author describes the differences among the Hungarian, the Croatian and the Transylvanian church organisation. In this unit Bahlcke reveals the peculiarities of the three territories from the formation of the state by Stephen I onward. It is noteworthy that the author has used relevant Croatian works to the issue.

Chapter 3/2 is also closely related to the question. It is very important because Hungarian historians often forget about the special status of Croatia within the Kingdom of Hungary and Croatian historians make the demand for an independent national church again and again. The author has rightfully discussed the question in a separate chapter and we would like to add only some smaller supplements. The so-called *Dreeinigen Königreiche* that Bahlcke has

rendered as a fact was only an idea still in the 17th century and it did not become real at a state or an administrative level either in the next century. Therefore this concept can be only a simplistic form of the early modern Southern Slav territorial structure. Croatian Catholicism being part of a process has not been emphasised in the book, either. The particular system of Slavonian landed properties played a key role in it since the Zagrebian bishop was also one of the biggest landowners in the territory. In Hungary, on the contrary, bishoprics more and more impoverished and as a result the bishops' political influence decreased in the 16th century. Another cause of the peculiarity of Croatian Catholicism was the highly talented György Draskovics's Episcopal activity in the middle of the 16th century. Draskovics being the supporter of the stipulations of the Council of Trent started the reforms in his diocese very soon. Bahlcke is right at the macro level since as an offset against the Islam and Hungarian Protestantism, Catholicism and Serbian Orthodoxy were substantial parts of Croatian national identity. However, Lutheranism gained firm ground in Slavonian aristocracy in the 16th century and notable Calvinist communities survived in the neighbourhood of Valpovo until the expulsion of the Turks. Since Bahlcke has used works related to the issue, it must not have been a secret for him. Of course, these facts do not change the author's conclusions but help better understanding.

Due to the extremely wide usage of historical works and documents we would like to mention the lack of some archival sources only as the result of our obligation as the writers of the review. Bahlcke has analysed the state of the Hungarian higher clergy at a macro level, thus it is striking that he has neglected the materials of the Roman archives which would have provided him with proper argumentation. Several new publications have been issued recently which can be used in a future volume. Mainly the source publications of Antun Dević (*Đakovačka I srijemska biskupija. Biskupski procesi i izveštaji 17. i 18. stoljeće.* Zagreb, 1999.) and Mile Bogović (*Senjsko-modruška ili krbavska biskupija. Izvešća biskupa Svetoj Stolici (1602-1919)* Zagreb, 2003.) can be mentioned. Apart from the the documents of the Archiepiscopal Archives of Esztergom and the related sources of the regional Episcopal archives could have been used more widely because several positive changes have taken place in the diocesan archives - mainly of Kalocsa and that of Győr.

As a summary we can state that on the whole we have got to know a logical, well-structured and scrupulous work. Joachim Bahlcke's book written with the help of extended bibliography and using new points of view is both a useful reading and professional writing with several novelties for not only European readers but for Hungarian historians as well. We would willingly read the publication of the book by the professor of Stuttgart in Hungarian.

Gozsy Zoltán - Varga Szabolcs

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