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DIPLOMATS AND SUPPORTERS  
OF MATTHIAS CORVINUS – SEALS OF THE TREATY  
OF ÓFALU/SPIŠSKÁ STARÁ VES 1474

**Abstract**

Historiography is increasingly focusing its attention on the diplomatic history of the period of Matthias Corvinus. There have been numerous analyses of his relations with the Papal Court, the Bohemian orders and the Holy Roman Emperor. Matthias' conflict with the Jagiellons is on its own a separate chapter. We find relatively few original documents amongst the sources that relate to the subject, therefore, if we have the opportunity to examine some of these with regard to a certain topic, we must take advantage of it. Several charters relating to Matthias' peace treaty with the Jagiellons in 1474 in Ófalu/Spišská Stará have survived in their original form, so in addition to the diplomatic process of the peace treaty, we can also inspect the seals of the negotiating parties on the original charters.

In the present paper, after a brief historical introduction and describing the research background, I will make a detailed examination of three charters that were issued by the Hungarian side. The documents show who from the Hungarian and Polish sides took part in the negotiations, and the surviving seals of the six Hungarian participants. The paper describes in a nutshell the careers of the negotiating parties, and gives a description of the surviving seals, accompanied by pictures. Because of its short form, the paper cannot attempt to provide a synthesis of diplomatic history, nevertheless, it aims to publish the biography of the “peacemakers”, and to present a specific source type.

**Keywords:** diplomacy, negotiations, seals, Hungarian-Polish relations, fifteenth century, Matthias Corvinus, Jagiellons, Treaty of Ófalu/Spišská Stará Ves 1474

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## BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In the fifteenth century, the connections between Hungary and Poland were relatively good from 1423 to 1424. The situation started to escalate in the 1460s, mainly along the alliance systems during the struggle for the Bohemian throne. In the spring of 1471 the king of Bohemia, George of Poděbrady died and the king-electing diet of Kutná Hora proclaimed Vladislaus Jagiello ruler of the Kingdom. Matthias, who also had claims to the title, could not accept this. Meanwhile, a group of Hungarian prelates and lords who were dissatisfied with Matthias, called prince Casimir Jagiellon, the younger son of Casimir IV Jagiellon, King of Poland upon the Hungarian throne. Prince Casimir advanced with his armies against Hungary on 2 October 1471. Here, however, very few people joined him. Casimir stayed for a while on Hungarian soil then returned home at the end of 1471. In the second half of 1473, there several Polish intrusions into Hungary took place and even some castles fell into Polish hands. As neither party was able to resolve the conflict with arms, Matthias sent envoys to treat for peace, in response to the call from Casimir IV. On 21 February 1474, the trustees of the two kings issued peace documents in Ófalu/Spišská Stará Ves in Szepes/Spiš county<sup>1</sup>.

## RESEARCH HISTORY

My attention was brought to the issue by the publication of the original Hungarian-related charters kept in Warsaw. In 2014, I had the opportunity to examine in person the related charters in the Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych w Warszawie [The Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw]. Building primarily on the previous researches of Péter Tóth and his expert help, I have identified 98 charter texts that were to be published. In 2017, we started publishing. In the first round we published the charters from the Angevin period, then the reign of Sigismund, and in the third round, the Hunyadi period<sup>2</sup>. The primary criterion of selection was originality, that is, we only examined

<sup>1</sup> For brief summaries on Polish-Hungarian relations in the fifteenth century, using the most recent literature in Hungarian and English, see: László PÓSAN, *Luxemburgi Zsigmond és az első toruńi béke (1411)*, [in:] *Varsóban őrzött magyar vonatkozású oklevelek (1388–1427)*, szerk. Ádám NOVÁK, Péter TÓTH (Fontes Memoriae Hungariae, vol. 2), Debrecen 2018, pp. II–XI; Sobiesław SZYBKOWSKI, *Polish-Hungarian Relations between 1437 and 1490. A Short Introduction*, [in:] *Varsóban őrzött magyar vonatkozású oklevelek (1439–1489)*, szerk. Ádám NOVÁK, Orsolya TÓTH, Péter TÓTH (Fontes Memoriae Hungariae, vol. 3), Debrecen 2019 (hereinafter FMH 3), pp. V–XXI; Antonín KALOUS, *Matyáš Korvín. Uherský a český král*, České Budějovice, 2009, pp. 146–149; Krzysztof BACZKOWSKI, *Między czeskim utrakwizmem a rzymską ortodoksją czyli walka Jagiellonów z Maciejem Korwinem o koronę czeską w latach 1471–1479*, Oświęcim 2014, pp. 92–97.

<sup>2</sup> *Varsóban őrzött magyar vonatkozású oklevelek (1350–1386)*, szerk. Ádám NOVÁK, Péter TÓTH (Fontes Memoriae Hungariae, vol. 1), Debrecen 2017.

those charters (in their entirety) that survived in original form. The reason for this was to be able to draw conclusions regarding seal usage, and the history of the diplomatic relations between the two countries. The textual or seal evidence of most charters provides information on the names of participants or those who confirmed the charters. Many of them have been known to historians for centuries. However, there are some charters whose issuers can only be identified through examining the seals. This task is fairly easy with regard to the peace treaty of 1474. The names of the participants and authenticators are included in the text of the charter; thus, we only have to identify the seals.

#### THE CHARTERS OF THE PEACE TREATY

The negotiations at Ófalu/Spišská Stará Ves were concluded in three charters, the originals of which have survived. All three are well-known in Hungarian and Polish historiography. The first testifies that Matthias and Casimir concluded a perpetual peace treaty via their agents on 21 February 1474. The means by which future conflicts between the two rulers and the inhabitants of the two kingdoms were to be settled are described in the charter in detail. The first to publish the text was Maciej Dogiel, who was followed by Carolus Wagner and Stephanus Katona. Although its copy is not included in the Diplomatic Photo Collection of the National Archives of Hungary, it was registered in the database of our research group<sup>3</sup>.

On the same day, the negotiating parties established measures to maintain peace and mutual friendship on behalf of their kings. They agreed through envoys to call on those fighting in Żmigród for an eight-day armistice, and to do justice to the grievances of the Hungarian side. After this, the Hungarian troops had to move out from the city within four or five days, and king Casimir granted them free passage. The Hungarian lords gave their word to intervene with their king with regard to the return of castle Musina, and, in return the bishop of Kraków would bring justice upon those who committed robbery or hostilities in the castle. It was stated that a two-year armistice would be concluded with the voivode of Moldavia, and agreements on the thirteen cities of Spiš – pledged by King Sigismund to Poland – would be maintained<sup>4</sup>.

The third charter was meant to settle the conflicts between Matthias, king of Hungary, and Vladislaus, the firstborn son of the King of Poland Casimir. By their agents they concluded a three-year armistice agreement. The means

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<sup>3</sup> Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych w Warszawie [The Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw], Zbiór Dokumentów Pergaminowych [Collection of Parchment Records] (hereinafter AGAD, Dok. Perg.), no. 5582; FMH III, no. 69, pp. 141–144; Memoria Hungariae „Magyarország a középkori Európában” (hereinafter MH), online database: <https://lendulet.memhung.unideb.hu/> [accessed online 10 October 2021], no. 11512–11519.

<sup>4</sup> AGAD, Dok. Perg., no. 5583; FMH 3, no. 70, pp. 145–147; MH, no. 11520–11527.

by which they would deal with the violators of the armistice agreement were regulated in detail. The texts of both charters were first published in 1894 by Anatol Lewicki. The intact seals of six Hungarian envoys are appended to each charter<sup>5</sup>.

TWO SIDES OF THE NEGOTIATING TABLE:  
THE HUNGARIAN AND POLISH ENVOYS

In his charter issued in Eperjes/Prešov on 10 February 1474 Matthias Corvinus authorizes Gabriele Rangone, bishop of Transylvania, Osvald Thuz Svetoladislavski, bishop of Zagreb, Emeric Szapolyai, ispán of Spiš, John Pongrác Dengelegi, former voivode of Transylvania and royal chief constable<sup>6</sup>, and George Handó, provost of Pécs, as well as Caspar Berendi Bak, provost of Spiš to negotiate with the Polish envoys in his name<sup>7</sup>.

It is worth examining who was entrusted by the ruler with the task. The diplomatic side of the delegation was certainly represented by the two bishops and the two provosts<sup>8</sup>. Rangone was born presumably near Brescia around 1410. He joined the Order of Friars Minor in the 1430s, after which he was ordained and acquired a doctorate in theology. He participated in the crusader movements of 1456 as the disciple of John of Capistrano, and following the siege of Belgrade he was active in Bohemia, and became involved in taking measures against the Hussites. He was repeatedly elected Franciscan provincial governor of the kingdom. Since George of Poděbrady did not assist him in his religious activities, Rangone was pleased to support Matthias in the struggle for the Bohemian throne. In 1470 he went to Rome, this time as an envoy of Matthias. He became bishop of Transylvania in 1472, chancellor in 1474, secret chancellor in 1475, and from 1476 he was the chief- and also secret chancellor until 1480 as the bishop of Eger<sup>9</sup>. Matthias, in order to recognize the services of Rangone and to gain greater influence in the papal court, strove to appoint him as cardinal, which he was able to achieve in 1477. Rangone died in Rome in 1486.

<sup>5</sup> AGAD, Dok. Perg., no. 5580; FMH 3, no. 71, pp. 148–150; MH, no. 11528–11535.

<sup>6</sup> Royal chief constable: see the charters of above.

<sup>7</sup> AGAD, Dok. Perg., no. 5579; FMH 3, no. 68, pp. 139–140; MH no. 11509–11511.

<sup>8</sup> In German see: Petr HLAVÁČEK, *Im Dienst der Christenheit: Der Franziskaner und Diplomat Gabriel Rangoni von Verona (†1486) und seine Wirkung in Italien und Ostmitteleuropa*, [in:] *Hofkultur der Jagiellonendynastie und der verwandter Fürstenhäuser / The Culture of the Jagellonian and Related Courts* (Studia Jagellonica Lipsiensia, vol. 6), hrsg. v. Urszula BORKOWSKA, Markus HÖRSCH, Ostfildern 2010, pp. 107–118. In Hungarian see: Ilona KRISTÓF, *Gabriele Rangone (Veronai Gábor) pályája (1410/20–1486)*, [in:] *Mátyás király és az egyház*, szerk. Tamás FEDELES, Pécs 2019, pp. 65–83.

<sup>9</sup> *Magyarország világi archontológiája, 1458–1526*, kötet 1: *Főpapok és bárók*, szerk. Norbert C. TÓTH, Richárd HORVÁTH, Tibor NEUMANN, Tamás PÁLOSFALVI (Magyar Történelmi Emlékek: Adattárak), Budapest 2016 (hereinafter Arch. 1458–1526, kötet 1), pp. 35, 37, 69.

Osvald Thuz Svetoladislavski, born in 1438, was of a lower noble family from Zala county, and he chose an ecclesiastic profession at an early age<sup>10</sup>. Undoubtedly, he owed his bishopric to the interventions of John Thuz, his relative who was also a lesser noble that rose to baronial rank when serving the Hunyadis, and held several high dignities under the reign of Matthias. The Thuz family had originated in Somogy county, and derived from the Bő genus. When Osvald Svetoladislavski was a clergyman at the Veszprém diocese, he was appointed bishop of Zagreb by Pope Paul II in 1466. At the same time, Paul II also appointed him governor of the Benedictine Abbey of Pécsvárad, which office he held until 1488. Between 1490 and 1492 he was the royal treasurer under Vladislaus II, and between 1490 and 1498 he was the holder of the Budafelhévíz provostry, and in 1495 the Galgonca/Glogonca provostry as well<sup>11</sup>. He was one of the most significant Hungarian prelates of the period.

George Handó came from a market town, Kálmáncsehi in Somogy county, from a family of wealthier tenants or market townspeople<sup>12</sup>. He enrolled at the university in Vienna in 1445, then studied in Florence and Ferrara, where he acquired a doctorate in canon law as well as in arts. He made it to the court of Matthias by the help of Dénes Szécsi, archbishop of Esztergom. From 1465 he filled the vacant seat of the Great Provost of Pécs. The king assigned him various diplomatic tasks, primarily, he sent him to Rome as an envoy. Alongside Matthias he participated in the Moldavian campaign and the armistice negotiations conducted with the Ottomans in the late 1460s. He had a great part in the king's engagement with Queen Beatrice of Aragon. Matthias's confidence in him did not cease even after the conspiracy led by Archbishop John Vitéz. He took part in the imperial diet in Augsburg in 1473, after which he continued to receive several other diplomatic and political tasks from Matthias. He held his provostry until his death in 1480 and in the meantime, between 1466–1467, he was also chancellor, treasurer between 1476–1478, as well as chief and secret chancellor<sup>13</sup>.

Caspar Berendi Bak was of noble origin from both parents<sup>14</sup>. He was born sometime in the early 1440s, so he could have been the same age as Matthias

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<sup>10</sup> In Italian: Stjepan RAZUM, *Osvaldo Thuz de Szentlászló. Vescovo di Zagabria 1466–1499*, Roma 1995. In Hungarian: Zoltán CZÖVEK, *Szentlászlói Osvát zágrábi püspök családi és politikai kapcsolatai 1499. évi végrendeletének tükrében*, Fons, vol. 20: 2013, pp. 455–499.

<sup>11</sup> Arch. 1458–1526, kötet 1, p. 56, 131.

<sup>12</sup> Tamás Fedeles examines him persons meticulously in his work on the personnel of the chapter of Pécs: Tamás FEDELES, *A pécsi székeskáptalan személyi összetétele a késő középkorban (1354–1526)* (Tanulmányok Pécs történetéből, vol. 17), Pécs 2005, pp. 373–375.

<sup>13</sup> Arch. 1458–1526, kötet 1, pp. 30, 68, 69, 130.

<sup>14</sup> Márton PIRHALLA, *A szepesi prépostság vázlatos története kezdetétől a püspökség felállításáig*, Lőcse 1899, 101–107. Most recently Tamás Fedeles dealt with his career in a study: Tamás FEDELES, *Mátyás seregéből az Úr szolgálatába. Esettanulmány az Apostoli Penitenciária*

Corvinus. His father John Bak, who came from Berend in Szatmár county, was a familiaris of governor John Hunyadi from 1446, thus it is not impossible that the later king and provost knew each other from their childhood. In 1456 he became a student of the faculty of arts of the University of Vienna. We can presume that he participated in the fightings in Jajce and against the Hussites and Upper Hungary, during which he developed good relations with Emeric and Stephen Szapolyai. Owing to this relationship in the early 1460s he became the head of St. Martin's Collegiate Church in Spišská Kapitula, which was under the family's patronage and served as their burial place. From this position he was appointed as provost of Spiš, following the coronation of Matthias in 1464. In the second half of the 1460s he studied canon law in Ferrara and Bologna. He studied in Bologna together with Thomas Bakócz, later archbishop of Esztergom, Peter Váradi, the would-be archbishop of Kalocsa, and Ladislaus Szokoli/Szakolyi, bishop of Csanád, and he was also consecrated as subdeacon here. He gained his doctoral degree in 1472, then went on a pilgrimage to Rome, where he served in the papal court and continued to deepen his knowledge. He probably returned home shortly before the peace of Ófalu/Spišská Stará Ves. Until his death in 1493 he was engaged in the improvement of the provostry. During his provostry the vault of the church was rebuilt, and he also had the windows and roofing renovated. The refurbished Gothic church was consecrated in 1478.

The secular leaders of the delegation were certainly responsible for the military defence of the royal entourage, and also represented the ruler's own intent. The Szapolyai family originated from Pozsega/Požega county, today in Croatia<sup>15</sup>. Emeric Szapolyai started his career in the service of John Hunyadi: for a while he presumably undertook secretarial tasks beside the governor. Before Matthias was elected king, he held the position of castellan of Nagybánya/Neustadt, then became head of the Nagybánya/Neustadt chamber (minting office) as a familiaris of the Hunyadis. From this he rose to be treasurer at the turn of 1458–1459, which was a baronial title. During the rule of Matthias he participated in subduing the Hussites in the Upper Regions of Hungary, as a result of which he received several north-eastern estates. He took part in the siege of Jajce, after which Matthias placed the fate of the southern borderline defence zones in his hands and made him governor of the Hospitaller Priory of Vrana. At the same time he was also the ban of Slavonia and Dalmatia-Croatia,

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*klerikusszentelésekben játszott szerepéhez Mátyás király korában*, Pontes – A PTE BTK Történettudományi Intézetének Évkönyve, vol. 1: 2018, pp. 95–114.

<sup>15</sup> Tibor Neumann dealt with him in several studies, most recently he discussed the history of the family in detail. Tibor NEUMANN, *Két nádor és egy vajda, avagy a Szapolyaiak útja a királyi trónig*, [in:] *Egy elfeledett magyar királyi dinasztia: a Szapolyaiak*, szerk. Pál FODOR, Szabolcs VARGA (Mohács 1526–2026. Rekonstrukció és emlékezet), Budapest 2020, pp. 13–46.

and governor of Bosnia<sup>16</sup>. Together with his brother Stephen, they received from Matthias the title of perpetual *ispán* of Spiš, perpetuus comes. After this he was involved in Matthias' numerous military activities. In 1486, close to the end of his life he was elected palatine, which office he held until his death a year later.

John Pongrác Dengelegi was one of the army leader barons of Matthias<sup>17</sup>. His father, George Pongrác was the vice-voivode of Transylvania, and his mother Claire was a sister of John Hunyadi, i.e. a close relative of King Matthias. Supposedly, he was born at the end of the 1430s, and served John Hunyadi and his son, Ladislaus in the late 1450s. He quickly received a baronial rank from Matthias and became Master of the Stewards between 1460 and 1461. After that he became voivode of Transylvania, which office he held between 1462 and 1465, and during that time he was also the *ispán* of the Székely. Later, the king appointed him to this office two more times, for the second time in 1467 to 1472, and in 1475 to 1476 for the third time. He was the ban/banus of Szörény/Severin from 1465 to 1466, then during his second term as voivode, the county of Temes/Timiș was also under his jurisdiction between 1470–1472<sup>18</sup>. He participated in the unsuccessful Moldavian campaign led by Matthias in 1467. He passed away in 1476.

Only those copies of the documents of the peace of Ófalu/Spišská Stará Ves are known which were issued by the Hungarian party, and they have been luckily preserved by Polish archives<sup>19</sup>. However, from these we can also find out who represented King Casimir of Poland and Prince Vladislaus in the negotiations. The leaders of the delegation were Jacob, archbishop of Gniezno, John, bishop of Kraków, Dobiesław Kmita from Wiśnicz, castellan of Lublin, and John Rytwiański, marshal of the kingdom of Poland. The charters they issued did not survive, but an overview of their careers is briefly discussed below.

<sup>16</sup> Arch. 1458–1526, kötet 1, pp. 59, 80, 93, 102, 129, 139.

<sup>17</sup> His career was examined by Zoltán Kordé in several studies, cf. Zoltán KORDÉ, *Adalékok Dengelegi Pongrác János pályafutásának kezdetéhez – Vázlat*, [in:] *Hunyadi Mátyás és kora*, szerk. Attila BÁRÁNY, Máté KAVECSÁNSZKI, László PÓSÁN, Levente TAKÁCS (Memoria Hungariae, vol. 12), Debrecen 2019, pp. 136–142; Zoltán KORDÉ, *Az út kezdete: Dengelegi Pongrác János politikai felemelkedése*, Acta Historica, vol. 137: 2015, pp. 35–42; Zoltán KORDÉ, *Dengelegi Pongrác János harmadik vajdai ciklusa Erdélyben (1475–1476)*, [in:] *Arcana tabularii: tanulmányok Solymosi László tiszteletére*, vol. 2, szerk. Attila BÁRÁNY, Gábor DRESKA, Kornél SZOVÁK, Debrecen–Budapest 2014, pp. 567–582.

<sup>18</sup> Arch. 1458–1526, kötet 1, pp. 85, 86, 114, 122, 124, 149.

<sup>19</sup> The Polish envoys took it from Ófalu/Spišská Stará Ves to Kraków, whence it was transferred to Warsaw together with the royal archive under the reign of Sigismund III Vasa (1587–1632). Then Russian soldiers moved it – among other charters – first to Saint Petersburg and later to Moscow, and finally returned to Warsaw after 1921. See more about the history of the Polish Archive in English: Ádám NOVÁK, *The Seals of the Monarch Electing Lords from the beginning of 1440*, Történeti tanulmányok, vol. 28: 2020, pp. 67–89.

Jakub Sienieński was born at the beginning of the 1410s in Sienna, in the Masovian Voivodeship, as a son of Dobiesław Oleśnicki, then castellan of Wojnica and later voivode of Sandomierz. His uncle was the first Polish cardinal, Zbigniew Oleśnicki. He studied theology in Rome and became a canon of Kraków in 1435. He was the secretary of King Vladislaus III and Casimir IV, and participated in diplomatic missions in Hungary in 1442 and in Rome in 1448. In 1455, he was appointed bishop of Kraków, but the pope did not approve of it. He represented Casimir in Mantua in 1459 in order to treat for a league against the Ottomans. In 1464 he became the bishop of Włocławek in the north, from which point he took part actively in the negotiations with the Teutonic Order to conclude the Thirteen Years' War in Toruń in 1466. In 1473 he was appointed archbishop of Gniezno, a position he held until his death in 1480<sup>20</sup>.

Jan Rzeszowski was born a member of the Półkozic genus at the beginning of the 1410s. He enrolled at the university of Kraków in 1428, then served Vladislaus III. He accompanied the king to Hungary in 1440 as the master of the cupbearers. Then he participated in the battle of Varna where he was taken captive. Having been released, he returned to Poland, where, following the death of his spouse, he became a clergyman. Around 1453, he was ordained as a priest and became a canon of Kraków in 1455. He served in the court and King Casimir appointed him treasurer. In 1471, he was responsible for the finances for the Bohemian campaign of Vladislaus and the Hungarian campaign of Casimir. In 1472 he was appointed bishop of Kraków and actively took part in Polish politics until his death in 1488<sup>21</sup>.

Dobiesław Kmita belonged to the Polish secular elite through his grandfather on his mother's side, Mikołaj from Michałów and Kurozwęki, voivode of Sandomierz. He was castellan of Biecz from 1458, and later became the castellan of Wojnic, then of Lublin from 1464. While in this position, he signed the Second Peace of Toruń and the Peace of Ófalu/Spišská Stará Ves. He was the first voivode of the newly organized Voivodeship of Lublin from 1474. In 1478 he was appointed voivode of Sandomierz, but a year later he died childless<sup>22</sup>.

Jan Rytwiański primarily owed his political career to his brother Dzierśław. Dzierśław was one of the most influential Polish secular lords of the period,

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<sup>20</sup> Feliks KIRYK, *Jakub z Sienna*, [in:] *Polski słownik biograficzny*, t. 10, Wrocław 1962–1964, pp. 364–367. Recently: Jakub NIEDŹWIEDŹ, *Panegiryk Do Jakuba z Sienna a początki poezji humanistycznej w Krakowie w XV wieku*, *Terminus*, t. 15: 2013, z. 4 (29), pp. 485–512.

<sup>21</sup> Feliks KIRYK, Janusz KURTYKA, Maria MICHAŁEWICZOWA, *Rzeszowski Jan*, [in:] *Polski słownik biograficzny*, t. 34, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków 1992–1993, pp. 70–80. See also: Bożena CZWOJDRAK, *Jastrzębce w ziemi krakowskiej i sandomierskiej do połowy XV wieku*, Kraków 2007.

<sup>22</sup> Feliks KIRYK, *Kmita Dobiesław*, [in:] *Polski słownik biograficzny*, t. 13, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków 1967–1968, pp. 87–88. See also: Renata TRAWKA, *Kmitowie. Studium kariery politycznej i społecznej w późnośredniowiecznej Polsce*, Kraków 2005.

thus he was able to put his younger brother in high positions. In 1462 he was appointed marshal of the kingdom. In 1474 he became the castellan of Sandomierz, then the voivode of Kraków from 1477 to his unexpected and early death in 1478. He took part in several foreign missions, mainly alongside his brother, thus he also signed the Second Peace of Toruń<sup>23</sup>.

It is clear that both rulers sent to the negotiations those prelates and lords who had the most diplomatic experience. From the Hungarian side Gabriele, bishop of Transylvania, and Jan, bishop of Kraków from the Polish side, are to be particularly highlighted, as they were actively involved also as commissioners, diplomats throughout the conflicts between the Hunyadis and the Jagiellons from the late 1460s. The tension between the parties was certainly palpable during the negotiations for Jan, bishop of Kraków, established financial foundations for the Polish intrusion into Hungary in 1471, while Emeric Szapolyai was responsible for organizing the defence. And among the unknown members of their entourage there may have been many who faced each other on the battlefields as well. Besides, the leaders could have known each other well, since Jakub, archbishop of Gniezno, participated in the Hungarian 'adventure' of Vladislaus III in 1440–1444, and many of the envoys had the opportunity to get to know each other during their studies in Italy or their stays in Rome.

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE SEALS

The pendant seals that were placed in natural coloured seal nests survived intact on all three charters, of which four were pressed into red, and two into green wax. On all three charters the seals follow one another from left to right in a strict hierarchical order, according to the addressing. First comes the red waxed seal of the bishop of Transylvania, then that of the bishop of Zagreb, which are followed by the seal of Szapolyai, who, as a count, held the privilege to use red wax. After the count of Spiš, Dengelegi, the former voivode placed his seal, who, despite not being in office, certainly held a prestigious place among the secular lords. The row ends with the red wax seal of the provost of the Pécs chapter, George Handó, and the one belonging to Gaspar Berendi Bak, provost of the collegiate chapter of Spiš. Here, too, the hierarchy of the Hungarian ecclesiastical organization is visible, in which the order of the bishops regarding wealth and prestige could be seen clearly: the bishop of Transylvania came before the one of Zagreb. After them came the secular lords, among whom Szapolyai was listed ahead of Dengelegi due not only to his prestige and wealth, but also his comital title, despite the fact that the latter was a close relative of Matthias. Similar to other poly-sigillic diplomas, the provosts followed

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<sup>23</sup> Wojciech FAŁKOWSKI, *Rytwiński Jan*, [in:] *Polski słownik biograficzny*, t. 33, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków 1991–1992, pp. 588–592.

the barons, and of the two provosts it was George Handó who was the more influential. The octagonal ring seal of Gábor Rangoni, bishop of Transylvania, is less known in literature. The Diplomatic Collection of the National Archives of Hungary holds a charter on which his seal survived in a visible form, under a wafer. Inside the beaded rim, in the field of the seal an angel turning slightly to the right can be seen. Unfortunately, it is not clear what the angel holds in its hand. Since the coat of arms of the bishop is not depicted on the seal, it can be presumed that the patron saint of the Transylvanian bishopric, Archangel Saint Michael could be seen on the seal's matrix. In this case the symbols of a fire-breathing dragon, a scale, and a sword may appear as attributes. In my hypothesis there is a Gothic letter 'G', and letter 'a' at the bottom of the two sides of the angel, which may be an abbreviation of 'Gabriel'. Approximately 16x18 mm<sup>24</sup>.



Figure 1. Seal of Gábor Rangoni, Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych w Warszawie [The Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw], Zbiór Dokumentów Pergaminowych [Collection of Parchment Records], no. 5582

Describing the next seal was an easier task, as its analogy is well-known from an exhibition of the National Archives, organized in the 1990s, which

<sup>24</sup> MH 11514, 11522, 11530, Figure 1.

presented seals form the Matthias-period. Following the description of Zsuzsanna Bándi, there is an escutcheon in the centre of the octagonal field, in which there is a mullet between a bend sinister of two, and a bishop's mitre above the escutcheon<sup>25</sup>. The segmented majuscule circumscription on the two sides reads: „OSWALDI – GRABIENSIS”. Approximately 13x17 mm<sup>26</sup>.



Figure 2. Seal of Oswald Thuz Svetoladislavski. Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych w Warszawie [The Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw], Zbiór Dokumentów Pergaminowych [Collection of Parchment Records], no. 5583

According to literature, Emeric Szapolyai used the same private seal from 1461 as treasurer, ban, governor of Bosnia, and perpetual *ispán* of Spiš until 1478, naturally, pressed into red wax as of 1465<sup>27</sup>. In the centre of the seal field, there is a wolf rampant in an escutcheon facing sinister, with a crescent to its sinister and a mullet to its dexter, and the escutcheon is held by an angel with

<sup>25</sup> Zsuzsanna BÁNDI, *A Magyar Országos Levéltár Mátyás-kori pecsétkiállításának katalógusa: 1990. április 6.–október 6.*, Levéltári Közlemények, vol. 62: 1991, pp. 57–150, p. 129, no. 124.

<sup>26</sup> MH 11515, 11523, 11531, Figure 2.

<sup>27</sup> Tibor NEUMANN, “Szinte királyi ház”. *A Szapolyai-család reprezentációja, cím- és címerhasználat a Mohács előtt*, [in:] *Egy elfeledett magyar királyi dinasztia: a Szapolyaiak*, szerk. Pál FODOR, Szabolcs VARGA (Mohács 1526–2026. Rekonstrukció és emlékezet), Budapest 2020, pp. 47–72, 61.

its wings spread. The majuscule circumscription on the two sides of the coat of arms reads „s eric – dzapoa” (with abbreviation marks above the letters “e”, “r”, and “o”). Approximately 23 mm<sup>28</sup>.



Figure 3. Seal of Emeric Szapolyai, Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych w Warszawie [The Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw], Zbiór Dokumentów Pergaminowych [Collection of Parchment Records], no. 5583

The next seal that is appended to the charter is the largest in diameter. The owner of the *sigillum* pressed into green wax is the former voivode of Transylvania, John Pongrác Dengelegi, who seems not to have changed his seal after having been appointed into baronial office, since the impression corresponds with the one placed under the text of a charter issued in 1470. Zsuzsanna Bándi described the seal on the basis of this: A spoked wheel can be seen in the field of the seal in a coat of arms, a knight’s helmet rests on the shield and mantling fills in the space, with glowing light around<sup>29</sup>. The majuscule circumscription bordered by a continuous line reads: S IOH[AN]IS PONGRACZ DE DEGELEG WOYVODE. Approximately 29 mm<sup>30</sup>.

<sup>28</sup> MH 11516, 11524, 11532, Figure 3.

<sup>29</sup> Zs. BÁNDI, *op.cit.*, pp. 85–86, no. 33.

<sup>30</sup> MH 11517, 11525, 11533, Figure 4.



Figure 4. Seal of John Pongrác Dengelegi, Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych w Warszawie [The Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw], Zbiór Dokumentów Pergaminowych [Collection of Parchment Records], no. 5583



Figure 5. Seal of George Handó, Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych w Warszawie [The Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw], Zbiór Dokumentów Pergaminowych [Collection of Parchment Records], no. 5582

The impression of George Handó, provost of Pécs, authorized the charter with an octagonal seal without circumscription, pressed into red wax. There is a square Spanish escutcheon within the rim that resembles a twisted cord, with a lily emerging out of a crown. The lily appears again above the shield. Approximately 13x17 mm<sup>31</sup>.

The seal of Gaspar Bak, provost of Spiš, follows a similar pattern with a slight difference, namely that it was pressed into green wax and instead of a lily, the figure of a bird emerges from the crown, perhaps an eagle or a raven. Approximately 12x14 mm<sup>32</sup>.



Figure 6. Seal of Gaspar Bak, Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych w Warszawie [The Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw], Zbiór Dokumentów Pergaminowych [Collection of Parchment Records], no. 5583

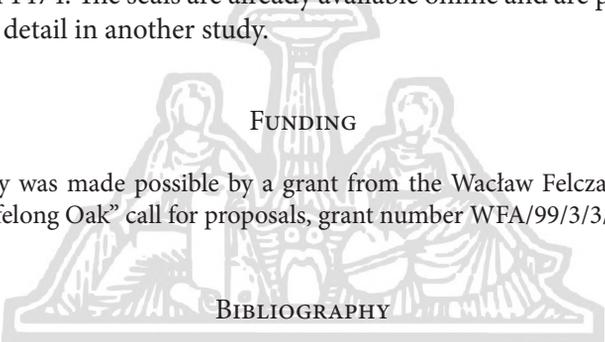
#### EPILOGUE

It is clearly visible from the above that both Matthias Hunyadi and the Jagiellons took the armistice and peace negotiations very seriously, and they sent the crème de la crème of their loyal barons to Ófalu in Spiš County. They were tried and experienced diplomats, who, due to their ranks and entourages, were

<sup>31</sup> MH 11518, 11526, 11534, Figure 5.

<sup>32</sup> MH 11519, 11527, 11535, Figure 6.

able to give prominence to the negotiations. Many were able to put aside their differences and the harms they caused one another, in order to give way to the will of their rulers: to make peace again between the two great powers of Central Europe. Although the Polish copies of the diplomas have not survived, the diplomas issued for the Polish party have still retained six imprints in excellent condition, several of which are less known. The seals described above fit well into Hungarian traditions in terms of design, wax usage and coat of arms. This is particularly interesting in the case of bishop Rangoni, who, as a high priest of non-Hungarian origin, presumably, used a bishop's ring seal, in accordance with Hungarian tradition. By describing the seals, we have moderately contributed to the processing of the seal material of the Matthias period. However, a snapshot of the seals of Hungarian ecclesiastical and secular dignitaries can be obtained primarily from the charter ratifying the peace treaty of Ófalu, issued in April 1474. The seals are already available online and are planned to be presented in detail in another study.



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