

# **DOKTORI ÉRTEKEZÉS TÉZISEI**

Zoltán Czövek

## **EXPENSES LIST, INVENTORY, TESTAMENT**

**STUDIES ON LATE MEDIEVAL SOURCES**



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### **Studies on Late Medieval Sources**

#### *I. The Subject*

The dissertation consists of three parts, the topics of which are based on five sources: three lists of aristocrats' expenses, an inventory – a list of pieces of royal treasure from 1521 – and Osvát Túz, Bishop of Zagreb's will from 1499. The first list of expenses was written in 1459, the second in 1516 and the third in 1524, the oldest one can be connected with Sebestyén Rozgonyi, the other two with the Kanizsais. The first two (published) chapters contain full source texts with introductory studies. The third part is an analysis of a published document: here, since the publication is unnecessary, I give a detailed description of the text of the will. (The introductory study of the first chapter can be divided into three parts because it deals with three sources.) One can get pieces of information primarily on the material culture of the late medieval Hungarian royal and aristocratic courts from the five documents (in addition to it, the expenses lists give an inside view of functioning of the great lords' courts), but there are some notes of (sometimes national) political importance in them as well, the dissertation is based on these latter ones, which are highly valuable. The chapters become parts of the dissertation on the one hand because of their similar content of politics and biographies, on the other hand, because all the chapters deal with the text of the five sources as a primarily important thing: I give a full text publication and the most accurate description possible respectively. First and foremost, in all the chapters I examined the relations between those influential persons whose names we find in the five sources and those (great lords and the King) who gave the order to write down the sources and with whom the sources can be connected respectively. The brief expenses list from 1524 is an exception: only one person can be identified in it, the great lord to whom the goods listed in the source were bought. I do not write much about this document.

The topic of the dissertation is unusual, since biographers of great historical persons and authors of writings on political history do not base their works on sources which can be used as those of material culture (of course, wills can be exceptions from this point of view in a way). At the same time, significant persons with whom sources like the five ones can be connected were at the head of political affairs. Prelates and secular aristocrats themselves were political factors whether they wanted it or not, temporal lords were those even if they did not hold any public offices. Of course, some members of aristocratic families did not take part in politics, either voluntarily or perhaps of their relatives' will, but because of high rate of mortality they must have known that their turn might come at any time to take control of the estates and to represent the family's interests at local and national level. So we can say that it is useful to notice the political background behind the expenses lists, inventories and wills of any prelates or great lords, even if these sources do not refer to politics in a direct way (testaments always do so). As for those of monarchs and their wives, political background is more obvious in them, but it must not be forgotten that in the late middle ages wives of Hungary's Kings were political factors, partly independent, with appropriate incomes and estates.

Only one of the five sources does not make any reference to politics in a direct way. This is the expenses list from 1524, because except László Kanizsai one can find no other influential persons in it: in fact, he is the only person mentioned by name. As to the other four sources, this is not the case. Political references are the most obvious in connection with the episcopal testament: when a great lord or a prelate made his will, it itself meant a political action. Biographers always consider testaments as very important sources, which give a summary of a life from a certain point of view. For example, the amount of wealth portioned out, the names of those who got it and of those who had to carry out the decisions of the will, tell us much. Politics can be connected with the document in another way if we are so lucky (as the example in the dissertation shows us) as to know (at least, partly) the history of the fulfilment of the testament.

One can tell us about the inventory from 1521 and the expenses list from 1459 that these are sources which "can be found but cannot be sought". As for the inventory, we can make sure of it from the title immediately, but in the other case, we have to read a part of the document in order to do so, and it is not always simple to make out its letters. The inventory is a rarity because of its full content, the expenses list is one because of its notes of political significance: they show us some tiny details of a very important phase of the aristocrats' rebellion against King Matthias (Prof. András Kubinyi dealt with this document but he did not

mentioned them). Working up the topic of the expenses list from 1516 gives us an example of how sources like this can help us to show that which noblemen, lesser and more powerful, served in a great lord's court. These pieces of information are to be added to ones we can get from sources of other types, such as official documents or letters-to-be-sent. What I write about the list from 1524 suggests that sometimes the political background of a lord's expenses list can be outlined even if there is no political reference in it.

Historians usually consider expenses lists, inventories and wills as sources of material culture. In the expenses lists, usually processes, happenings and changes can be followed as time goes on, while inventories show us a momentary situation. But these sources can and must be analysed from the point of view of politics as well. Testaments are regular quarries of information for historians of material culture (wills are inventory-type sources in the sense that they show us a momentary situation), but in their case, political connections are much more evident.

I really did not want to give complete biographies of the persons I dealt with, not even their full political biographies. I list in many cases the offices held by these men, but I only wanted to introduce them. I worked up political and biographical facts in detail only in dealing with topics important in connection with the background of making the five sources I considered as starting points. So in the first chapter I write at full length about the pieces of evidence that Sebestyén Rozgonyi and László Kanizsai were two of the closest allies of János Hunyadi and later on those of King Matthias. (This László Kanizsai is not identical to the lord of the same name mentioned in the 1524 source.) In connection with the aristocrats' rebellion in 1459, I write only about those biographical facts of political importance which can be related with this event, I do not deal with another deeds of Kanizsai and Rozgonyi at that time. In the second chapter, on the one hand I examined the Austrian and German connections of Ambrus Sárrkány, János Bornemissza and János Gosztonyi, and on the other hand, their relations with Queen Mary and each other. In the third chapter, I wanted to write about Osvát Túz, Bishop of Zagreb's connections only with those favoured in his testament (I did not manage to find facts for all of them), but I had to analyse the quarrels between the Túz family and János Corvin, and the relations between Miklós Újlaki and that family as well, after all.

In addition to the political and biographical analysis, another aim of the dissertation was to publish the five sources and make them known in full respectively. The sources in the Appendix of the first chapter had been known for researchers, but the treasure inventory in the Appendix of the second chapter had been completely unknown before publication. (When dealing with the latter I got to know that Orsolya Réthelyi did so at the same time as well.) It

is unnecessary to publish the testament because Tkalčić did that work in an excellent way. There are some misprints in his text, in the dissertation I call the readers' attention to these. Sometimes one or two details of the will are quoted by Hungarian historians, but I think that this document deserves more interest so I describe it in my own words in full, not neglecting any instructions in it.

From the five sources considered as starting points one can get pieces of information of many kinds about the very highest level material culture of the age. We can read about items of jewellery and other (for example, ecclesiastical) ornaments, food, different kinds of cloth, items of horse equipment, a journey etc. The expenses lists contain facts (for example, prices) in connection with economic history. But I wrote about all of them little or nothing. If I really had dealt with material culture and economic history, it would have exceeded my possibilities. It would have needed other kind of research, for instance, on the literature of archaeology and art history. In addition to the five central sources, it would have wanted the use of other similar ones. The whole of that work would have made me write another dissertation.

There are practical reasons as well why I chose these five sources to be analysed and published respectively. As for the expenses lists, it was easy for me to make sure that they had not been published (while longer research was needed to ascertain the same in the case of the treasure inventory, which is an extremely rare source). The Nádasdy Archives, where they are found, is very rich in documents like these, but only few of them are published. In selecting the expenses lists their length was a significant factor. I chose the testament on the one hand because one can get to know crucial things about Osvát Túz from it, on the other hand because few episcopal testaments are extant from the age.

There are a lot of expenses lists from great lords compared to the number of royal treasure inventories and prelates' wills. But if we take all medieval sources into consideration, we can say, of course, that all of the five documents are rare, because most medieval sources of Hungary are about estates and estate rights. (It is necessary to mention that most of the wills of noblemen deal with estates exclusively.)

## *II. The Methods*

As for the use of the sources, I wanted to collect all the published ones as far as possible. In addition to them, in order to solve certain important problems, I used unpublished sources as well, I found these with the help of the electronic database of the National Archives of

Hungary (Magyar Országos Levéltár, hereafter: MOL), in which the facts of all the medieval documents of the one-time Kingdom of Hungary can be researched. I used narrative sources in every chapter. I relied on historical literature in writing the second chapter for the most part, I did so in the case of the third chapter the least. It is not by chance, it shows that to what extent the topics of the separate chapters had been worked up by historians. I needed foreign literature practically in the case of the third chapter only. It is necessary to mention that while I was writing the dissertation, research possibilities were improving fast year by year because of publishing some documents collections, basic works and periodicals on CD-ROM. I studied not only the photographs and photocopies of the four sources published in the dissertation, but also the original manuscripts. I compared the text of the testament published by Tkalčić not with its original but with its copy.

### *III. The Most Important Accomplishments*

The title of the first chapter is *Three Expenses Lists from the Nádasdy Archives*. The oldest of the three lists dates from 1459 (its reference is: MOL DL 26363), it must be that of Sebestyén Rozgonyi, voivode (more or less the viceroy) of Transylvania, it contains the expenses spent on mainly food for him and his *familiars*, i. e. members of his court. Most of the entries date from the days between presumably 17 and surely 30 April but there are some from 24 June and perhaps from 5 and 12-13 May. The date 24 June can be an error.

Rozgonyi and László Kanizsai, who is findable in the list as well, were two of the Hunyadi dynasty's most important and faithful followers, I enumerate the facts of it in the dissertation. But at the very end of November 1458 Kanizsai deserted King Matthias and joined the discontented great lords: he was present with his brother Miklós at the electing Emperor Frederick III as King of Hungary on 17 February 1459 in Németújvár. (Differences arose between László Kanizsai and Miklós Újlaki, the most important leader of Frederick's Hungarian followers, I write about it in the dissertation.) Rozgonyi remained loyal to the King, he took the oath of allegiance to Matthias in Buda on 10 February 1459, together with János Lábatlani and László Paksi, the *Comites Siculorum* (leaders of the *Székelys*, of Transylvania), who are findable in the expenses list as well.

After the battle of Körmend, in which King Matthias's army was defeated by Frederick and his Hungarian supporters on 7 April 1459, a turning point took place in the history of the great lords' rebellion, that is why Matthias's rule did not get endangered seriously. A most significant event of that sudden turn was that László and Miklós Kanizsai

changed sides immediately after the battle. We get to know from the expenses list that László went to Esztergom, where he was entertained in all probability by Archbishop Dénes Szécsi, the head of the Church of Hungary, it must have been he that turned with the Kanizsais' matter to the monarch or to Sebestyén Rozgonyi, who were in Buda at that time. It can be known from the first two lines of the expenses list that Rozgonyi or his *familiares* had probably a talk with Kanizsai on 17 April in Esztergom. Two days later, on 19 April Archbishop Szécsi, Rozgonyi and the two *Comites Siculorum* were present among others at the meeting of the so-called smaller (or continual) royal council, where the main topic was the agreement to be reached between the King and László Garai's widow surrendering to Matthias at that time. (László Garai was another leader of the lords electing the Emperor as King of Hungary on 17 February, but he died very soon after this event.) The Kanizsais' case must have been discussed then, too. We can get to know from the expenses list that after it Rozgonyi and the two *Comites Siculorum* went to László Kanizsai to Esztergom the same day (19 April) and all of them (Kanizsai included) went to Buda the following day. László Kanizsai took the oath of allegiance to the King in his brother Miklós' name too and promised in writing to be loyal as well. So Matthias forgave them on 24 April. After solving the problem of the Kanizsais at the cost of great concessions, the King thought it to be right to promise Rozgonyi in writing to give him his lost estates back as soon as possible, taking his merits into consideration. It was a gesture from Matthias, its date was 30 April. The following days László Kanizsai and Rozgonyi had to go to the western borderland in order to defend the country against a great new attack, which finally did not take place. On 20 May they were near the area of the war, they wanted to attack Kőszeg. Fights went on for long.

In the dissertation I write about the *familiares* mentioned in the expenses list too.

The list of expenses from 1516 (its reference is: MOL DL 26176) contains items dating from between 3 and 12 May. This source is about the expenses spent by the "*dominus magnificus*" on lesser and greater things for himself and his *familia* (court), for example on fancy goods, food, items of horse equipment, goods for vehicles etc. Money given to boatmen is findable in the list too. This source must contain the expenses of one of the Kanizsais. The arguments for it are these: in the first part of the list there are facts of a journey from Buda to Sárvár, the main residence of the Kanizsai family (the "*dominus magnificus*" himself also travelled); János Kanizsai's name appears (twice) in the text.

The third argument is that some of the *familiares* found in the expenses list can easily be identified: they are members of illustrious or well-to-do noble families or at least members of such families having peasants and these notable families' connections with the Kanizsais

can be explained simply, but there are *familiares* in the source who can be connected with the Kanizsais not by their family but directly in their own person. I write about the facts of these connections in the dissertation.

It is necessary to enumerate the arguments because in addition to the Kanizsais, there are other great lords with whom the expenses lists of the Nádasdy Archives from the 1510s and 1520s can be connected. It is because the medieval part of the Nádasdy Archives consists of not only the archives of the Kanizsais but of other aristocratic families as well. In 1516 there were two adult men in the Kanizsai family, László and János, so this source must contain the expenses of one of them, most likely those of László. They must have taken part in the Diet of Buda and the Rákos field, beginning on 24 April 1516, ending in the middle of May.

The third list (its reference is: MOL DL 26326) must be that of a Buda general merchant, containing the items of goods delivered for László Kanizsai (he was the *Comes* of Vas county then) between 20 March and perhaps 1 April (or 28 March) 1524: mainly spice and cloth but among other things orange and sugar as well and in addition to them, a loan of twenty florins, which is the greatest sum on the list. One can think that it is a receipt of a merchant of Buda because Kanizsai must have been in Buda at the time mentioned, since he signed a contract of mutual inheritance with his brother-in-law, János Drágfi there some days before, on 11 March, with the King's approval. There was another reason for the lords' staying in the capital in these days: the great royal council met in March (perhaps this meeting continued in April), it discussed the Turkish threat.

The title of the second chapter is *A Source on the History of Hungarian Royal Treasure from 1521*. This source is an inventory of pieces of treasure taken out of the royal treasury of Buda on 16 November 1521 (its reference is: MOL DF 276719), which list contains probably the King's gifts intended for his future wife, Mary of Habsburg on the occasion of her coronation (and their wedding perhaps). János Gosztonyi, Bishop of Győr and the Queen's Chancellor was present at the taking out of the treasure in addition to three other people, two of whom were secular aristocrats: János Bornemissza, the *Comes* of Pozsony county, the Castellan of the castle of Buda at the same time and Ambrus Sárkány, Baron of Ónod, the *Comes* of Zala county. The fourth man present was one of the royal secretaries and the Provost of The Blessed Virgin Mary's Collegiate Chapter of Eger, namely Miklós Bácsi, he wrote down the list. All of the four persons were members of the smaller (continual) royal council.

Ambrus Sárkány can be considered a royal diplomat and an expert in foreign affairs, namely in Austrian connections. He was sent several times by Kings Wladislas II and Louis II to the Habsburgs to negotiate with them. Sárkány took a part in realizing the marriages of Louis II and his older sister, Ann, as a diplomat. As for Sárkány's connections with Mary, he cannot be counted among the Queen's close confidants, but relations between them were good.

The other secular aristocrat present at the taking out of the treasure, János Bornemissza, was one of Wladislas and Louis's most important and influential confidants. Relations between Bornemissza and Mary changed for the worse, because the Queen and her followers, who were trying to strengthen the royal power, did not like his might, especially his holding sway over the capital as the Castellan of the Buda castle.

After examining the connections between Bornemissza, Sárkány on the one hand and the Habsburgs on the other, the dissertation shows us the relations between the two aristocrats. They had been probably friends for a long time. We know some facts of the good relations between Sárkány and Gosztonyi as well. As Queen Mary's Chancellor, Gosztonyi was on the most intimate terms with her, out of the three aristocrats present at the taking out of the treasure.

Summarizing all of these things, I would like to suggest that these three dignitaries: Sárkány, Bornemissza and Gosztonyi got the order to take out the treasure mainly because of their being on familiar terms with the King, Mary and each other.

The title of the third chapter is *Osvát Túz of Szentlászló, Bishop of Zagreb's Will from 1499*. Túz was one of the most important prelates of his age, he was the Bishop of Zagreb from 1466 until his death on 16 April 1499. The will, dated from the episcopal palace in Csázma on 15 April, was approved by Wladislas II on 12 May in Buda. The most significant point in the will is the bequeathing of thirty-two thousand florins to the country for the construction and repair of the four most significant southern border castles: Nándorfehérvár (Belgrade), Jajca, Szabács and Szörény. The Bishop stipulated that this huge amount of money must not be administered by the royal Treasurer, but one or more suitable persons must be elected by the prelates, great lords and noblemen, i. e. the Diet, to spend it honestly. Túz donated ten thousand florins for the construction of the main church of his diocese, the Zagreb cathedral (named after King Saint Stephen).

It is interesting that the testament does not tell us anything about the immovable properties owned by the Bishop not as a prelate but as a private great lord, except a house in

Buda. We know some facts of his attempts to get estates, but it is problematic whether they were successful or not.

The Túz family got engaged in a great lawsuit with János Corvin, King Matthias's son in 1492 in order to regain their estates, confiscated by Matthias unlawfully in 1481. Then the monarch took away their Slavonian estates acquired some years before, more or less at the same time. János Corvin got these estates before his father's death (Matthias died in 1490). The lawsuit was not successful for the Túz family. After Osvát Túz's death, Alfonz Túz, János Túz's son (we do not know how János and Osvát were relatives) did not hope to be able to regain his patrimony, so he sold it to the King for forty thousand florins on 3 October 1499. It is sure that the King did not pay him this huge amount of money, only an insignificant part of it at most perhaps. (Of course, Alfonz Túz is one of those to whom the Bishop gave a part of his legacy testamentally, but János did not live when Osvát died.)

In the middle of the 1490s relations between Prince Lőrinc Újlaki and Osvát Túz were really bad. So it seems strange that the Bishop gave him presents in his will. Perhaps it is a gesture, one cannot think that they had become friends. It is probable that Túz wanted to pacify one of his greatest enemies and it was not possible to do so in the case of János Corvin because of the lawsuit mentioned above. The Bishop had to do so in the interests of the younger members of his family as well (in addition to the Túz descendants, they were the Dersfi scions, the Bishop was the guardian of the latter). The example of Prince Lőrinc Újlaki shows us that all of those remembered in the Bishop's will cannot be considered automatically as his friends, some of them were important for him because of his interests. We know some of the Bishop's friends who are not mentioned in the testament at all.

After Osvát Túz's death the Diet or the great royal council (there is more possibility of the latter) must have decided that the (in reality nearly) thirty-two thousand florins left for the border castles would be given to four great lords in equal parts. We know two of the four lords, they are Tamás Bakóc, Archbishop of Esztergom (and head of the Church of Hungary) and Miklós Bánfi. Bakóc and Bánfi are appointed as protectors of the will in it, we can only try to guess that the other two protectors, Domonkos Kálmáncsehi, Bishop of Várad and Józsa Somi, *Comes* of Temes county got one part of the thirty-two thousand florins each (all of the four protectors are given presents in the will). There is evidence that it is very likely in Somi's case. We know the spending of a small part of the thirty-two thousand florins only, but we do not know any examples of paying it away contrary to the spirit or the inner meaning of the will, except Bánfi's spending five hundred florins arbitrarily. (The money was applied not

only to the construction of the border castles but to the pay, armaments, food and other necessities of the soldiers serving in them.)

We know the paying away of the ten thousand florins left for the construction of the Zagreb cathedral, on the evidence of a list made by Lukács Szegedi, Bishop of Zagreb (an experienced financial expert), probably in 1505. This source shows us that Bishop Szegedi and the Cathedral Chapter of Zagreb co-operated in spending the money, they counteracted each other's influence on it. One can say that this amount of money was spent according to the instruction of Túz's testament.

Osvát Túz was very practical and successful in governing his diocese, which is proved by the fact that he possessed one of the greatest fortunes of moveable properties in Hungary when he died, as his will suggests. We know few facts of the fulfilment of the testament but these show that the country's leaders endeavoured to follow it or its inner meaning at least. It was executed not without problems, to the extent that questions arose from its fulfilment after so much time as forty years.

Two of the most important accomplishments of the dissertation are, of course, the publication of the sources and the full description of the testament.

#### *IV. Works Published on the Subject of the Dissertation*

1. *Forrás a magyar királyi kincsek történetéhez 1521-ből.* (A Source on the History of Hungarian Royal Treasure from 1521.) Fons 12. (2005) 423-442.
2. *A Source on the History of Hungarian Royal Treasure from 1521.* Majestas 13. (2005) (Berlin, 2006) 95-116.
3. *Három középkor végi számadás a Nádasdy-levéltárból.* (Three Late Medieval Lists of Expenses from the Nádasdy Archives.) Fons 14. (2007) 119-166.