

Theses of University Doctoral (PhD) Dissertation

THE ACTIVITIES OF THE PERÉNYI FAMILY OF TERESES FROM THE BEGINNING TO 1458

WITH A SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON JÁNOS PERÉNYI, MASTER OF THE TREASURY

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I. OBJECTIVE OF THE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION, DELIMITATION OF THE RESEARCH TOPIC

In the last decades our historiography proved that in the 14-15th centuries the political power of the Hungarian Kingdom concentrated in the hands of the monarch and those baronial families who supported him. We can state with utmost certainty that without getting to know the detailed history of these families we cannot reconstruct the political elite and the chain of political events of this particular era. Nevertheless, all in all relatively few works have been written on the topic so far. Pál Engel, Elemér Mátyusz, András Kubinyi and Erik Fügedi all came to the same conclusion in the past, and by conducting their research on social and family history in the second half of the 20th century they laid down the foundations of the contemporary study of the Middle Ages. In most of their works, apart from some case studies, even these researchers tried to provide a rather comprehensive picture about the society and political elite of the era. Therefore contemporary researchers are rightly expected to construct as many complex works on family history as possible by utilizing the sources which have been made easily accessible by digitalization. In the recent past several researchers dedicated their attention to this area in their studies, and some doctoral dissertations were also written on the topic. We also decided to dedicate our dissertation to the investigation of the rise of a family, putting a special emphasis on the man who made this rise possible, by conducting a complex research using several perspectives.

Out of the three branches of the Perényi family, the first four generations of the Terebes branch (palatine branch) rose from the ranks of the gentry to the aristocracy in a mere one and a half centuries and even helped kings come to the throne. The activities of János Perényi (c. 1400-1458), Master of the Treasury, who had the longest political career within the family, can be researched very thoroughly and the available material is sufficient enough to provide information for the study of political and social history during the reigns of King Sigismund and the first Habsburgs. Despite of all of these facts historians have not paid special attention to this branch of the family. The studies written on the family chose the generations after János Perényi, Master of the Treasury, as the focus of their research. Therefore, this dissertation undertook the task of presenting the Perényi family's history, beginning with the first known member of the family, called Orbán (1271), until the death of János Perényi, Master of the Treasury (1458).

First of all it is necessary to explain why we abruptly end our reasoning at the death of the Master of the Treasury in 1458. The first reason is provided by the family's history of landholding. János, Master of the Treasury, was the last person who preserved and even

increased the family estates during his life and could also maintain the social and political influence of the family. His death brought about a new chapter in the life of the Perényis of Terebes. A few years later his sons conspired against King Matthias which resulted in the loss of almost half of their estates. While the members of the family had been very active in the acquisition of estates since the beginning, during the lives of János' sons the family experienced an enormous trauma and temporarily their social and political role also became less significant. The time interval of our investigation was also significantly determined by the coincidence which linked the strengthening of royal power to the death of János, who was a crucial figure of the “troubled times”. It can even be regarded as symbolic that János as a young nobleman grew up and was socialized in the Sigismund-Era, in his mature adulthood he fought during the civil war, in the period of the first governorship and during the reign of Ladislaus V, and finally he gave over the relay to his descendants at the dawn of a new era and he himself departed this life. The third and also conclusive perspective in the periodization of our research was driven by the intention to create a complete dissertation in its entirety. It would far exceed the extent and scope of a doctoral dissertation, if we attempted to discuss the activities of several family members from different time periods, relying on completely different types of sources. For instance, to investigate the career of palatine and governor Imre Perényi (†1519) and Péter Perényi, Voivode of Transylvania and Protector of the Crown (†1548), we can rely on a relatively large number of late medieval sources. To research the life of judge royal Gábor Perényi (†1567), however, it is required to use the sources of the early modern period. We think it would be unfortunate to discuss these family members side by side with Imre Perényi, secret chancellor of the Sigismund Era (†1418) in one dissertation. In our opinion the available sources – with respect to their quality, quantity and availability – are so differentiated between the two end-points that, by maintaining the attempt to be exhaustive, our objective would not be achieved within these frameworks.

Based on the above mentioned reasons, the researched period is confined to the activities of castellan Péter Perényi, chancellor Imre Perényi and János Perényi, Master of the Treasury, placing a particular emphasis on the latter one. The framework of the dissertation is a thorough review of the history of the family's landholding. Since in this era power was measured by the extent of estates, the family members naturally aspired to increase their lands. In our opinion they subordinated everything to this aim, therefore it is obvious that the guideline of our reasoning should be the acquisition of lands. However, even the possibly most accurate implementation of this would not meet the requirements of modern historiography. Therefore, within the limitations of the sources, we also wish to analyse the

choice of residence, social network, use of crest and seal and building constructions of this large landowner family. Furthermore, it is also one of our basic intentions to describe the underlying content of those information about the family members which became tropes and, if necessary, to question them.

At the end of our paper we publish the majority of the data we used in an orderly, transparent form. The content of the sources regarding the individual estates and lands are made public in tables and are also shown on maps. We hope that these could be used as supplementary materials for future synthesizing works on local history or historical geography. We collected the charters and letters issued by János Perényi, Master of the Treasury, on his own right and added to these the ones which only had confirmation. By doing so a complete index of seals became available which is also included at the end of our paper. A genealogical table of the family in question must inevitably be part of a dissertation on family history; therefore, based on the scarcely available information in the related literature and in the sources, we also provide a revised family tree showing the Terebes branch of the Perényi family.

II. PRESENTATION OF THE APPLIED METHODOLOGY

A methodical and systematic exploration of sources preceded the writing of the dissertation. Charters are the most important materials for the study of the Middle Ages in Hungary, consequently we placed an emphasis on the collection of these documents. All the known archival documents dated before the battle of Mohács are held in the two collections of the National Archives of Hungary (Archives of Diplomas and Charters and Protographic Collection of pre-1526 Documents) and have been available online (Database of Archival Documents of Medieval Hungary) since 2009. Based on these materials our first step was to reconstruct the correspondence of the Terebes branch of the Perényi family. This was mostly accomplished by selecting the archives of several families (for example the Zichy, Homonnai and Drugeth families) and the archival records of the treasury. The charters concerning land rights provide the backbone of the dissertation which was strengthened by analysis on political, social and art history. By doing so we deepened the research on family history. The collection of specific sources required for such analysis was not only done in the above mentioned database, but also in other archives abroad, for example in Bratislava, Prešov, Warsaw and Vienna. For the study of seal usage of the Master of the Treasury or that of the use of the Perényi coat of arms, it was inevitable to find and systematize the seals used by family members. Apart from the archival records we also included manuscripts and material sources (e.g. rolls of arms, tombstones) in our research. For the analysis of the vassal network it was also necessary to investigate not only the sources on the Perényi family, but also the material related to the gentry who acted as vassals of the family.

A special emphasis was laid on the investigation of the residency of the family members which played a crucial role in the location of the family's core territory, or most important sphere of influence. We predominantly used the Hungarian analogies (e.g. the works of Kubinyi and Neumann) of the German based residency or living space research methodology. Our investigations on political history were not confined to linear storytelling. We defined the relationships of the researched individuals (secret chancellor Imre Perényi and János Perényi, Master of the Treasury) with other persons or entities as well, for example the relationships they had with the monarchs (King Sigismund, Ladislaus V), or with such Great Officers of State as László Pálóci or János Hunyadi, and in case of the Master of the Treasury his connections with the cities (e.g. Prešov, Bardejov, Levoča). The Terebes branch of the Perényi family was one of the largest landholder families, and several dozens of gentry families entered their service as vassals. Apart from researching the offices held by vassals,

we also reconstructed three more significant careers, pointing out the possibilities and the disadvantages provided by the Perényi family's vassal network.

With the help of all these we get a more complex picture about the family members as large landholders on a regional level and as significant politicians on a national level. In addition this leads us to a better understanding of 14-15th century Hungarian history.

III. NEW SCIENTIFIC ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE DISSERTATION

1. From the Ruined Castle of Szuhogy to the Aristocracy – The Terebes Branch

The available literature described the Perényi family as a homogenous entity, although it had split quite early to three separate branches due to the sons of the first known ancestor of the family, called Orbán. Besides, the acquisition of wealth of the Terebes branch was demonstrated by the fact of land acquisitions, which sheds little light on the length of this process and on the services provided by the family members to the different monarchs. In the first chapter of our dissertation we discuss the origins of the family and how the Terebes branch came to existence. We point out how a small landholder with uncertain background could make his way in the world in the second half of the 13th century which was characterized by troubled domestic affairs.

The most important role in raising the fortunes of the Terebes branch fell on Péter Perényi who worked tenaciously and painstakingly, taking one small step after the other, to establish the wealth of the family. He did all he could to obtain new estates in the neighbourhood of the ruined castle of Szuhogy which he acquired earlier. He served King Louis in many fields, especially in the north-eastern counties, receiving assignments as castellan and count. In light of the more than 20-years-long process of land acquisitions, it becomes more comprehensible how conscious King Sigismund was in his policy of granting lands to the new members of the aristocracy. While previously Péter acquired half a dozen smaller lands and villages, during the reign of Sigismund he and his sons received four castles with estates around them in less than five years. By this means they became significant great landholders not only on a regional, but also on a national level. The careers of his sons show quite well what kind of prize they had to pay for the new grants which they received by the favour of the king. Miklós and János were constantly near the king, providing mainly military support for the monarch who strove to stabilize his rule. This did not go without gratification; the king gave not only estates to his supporters, but also other privileges, for instance market rights. The career of Miklós Perényi, former ban of Szörény, shows perfectly that at the beginning of the 1390s the members of the new aristocracy who were loyal to King Sigismund found it hard to hold important positions on the long run. Following a military defeat, Miklós was neglected and lost his positions. The battle of Nicopolis brought a new impulse to the life of the family. Although Miklós and János tragically fell in the battle, their younger brother, Imre took over the leadership of the family and was able to revitalize the career of the family.

2. The „Csorbakő Branch” of the Perényi Family

If we strictly considered only the process of the history of landholding in case of the Perényi family from the times of Orbán until the age of Imre Perényi, Master of the cupbearers, it would become clear that from the perspective of land rights the descendants of István Orbánfi continuously had the need and also the means to be independent from the other branches of the family. The dissertation demonstrates this in case of András and Péter, and one generation later also in case of Miklós, Ban of Szörény, and Imre, Master of the cupbearers. In our paper we emphasize that if we did not analyse the family from by considering the whole history of the Terebes branch of the Perényi family, but investigated every generation separately, the land acquisition policy of the family members would gain a new meaning. This can contribute to a better understanding of their political activities. A prime example of this is the so-called “Csorbakő branch” of the Perényi family, which, although it only existed for a short period of time, can be seen as a real sub-branch of the Terebes branch, similarly to the “Patak” branch which was accepted as a sub-branch in the literature a long time ago.

The applicability of the terminology is proven right by Imre Perényi and the independence of his family from the perspective of land right. By acquiring Csorbakő with the adjacent lands in 1403, Imre, who was the Master of the cupbearers at that time, got hold of his own estates, completely independently from his nephews. This gratification from Sigismund was more than a mere grant of lands. Imre’s participation in the putting down of the rebellion of 1403 raised him from his previous position and lifted him up to the immediate circle of Sigismund. After 1405 as a secret chancellor he had the chance to gain new estates and by this means to increase the wealth of his own family. In his last years the deterioration of his health hindered him from being near to Sigismund, but his influence endured: he still took part in the management of the country’s domestic affairs. He was willing to spend his wealth on acquiring new estates and he even had enough money left to pay for his sons to be near Sigismund and to ensure that they have numerous attendants. In his lifetime his family became a crucial part of the kingdom and he laid the foundations for the future of his sons. Sigismund’s confidence invested in Imre was never shaken between 1396 and 1418. Although he could not take part in the political aspirations of Sigismund after 1412, it was his deteriorated health which hindered him from doing so, not that he would have fallen out of favour. On the other hand, in a way the advantages of his move away from power were reaped by Sigismund and the members of the new, ambitious families, like the Pálóci family. While the former could surround himself with fresh, quick to act men, the latter could gather ground

to prove their serviceability. In our dissertation we contradict an often returning trope, namely that as a secret chancellor Imre Perényi was in most cases near Sigismund and counselled him in the period between 1405 and 1418. Although he presumably had a free entry to the monarch, his everyday work was carried out by his deputies. At the beginning of his chancellorship his diplomatic and military commissions, while in his last years his deteriorating health kept him away from his king.

In the dissertation we put a special emphasis on the detailed description of the estates held by Imre and his family. Based on the available data we could make snapshots about the estates in various time periods and put a great emphasis on the economic significance of the individual estates. We raised and answered the question of which estate Imre found the most important of all, or which centre of his estates he saw fit to represent his power and wealth as a great lord and also to turn it into his family's home. The analysis of residency proved that Imre Perényi's customs of residing, the management of estates within his family, his foundation of a monastery, his burial, building construction and acquisition of lands all point to the fact that he paid great attention to the lands in Borsod and Abaúj counties, close to his castle at Csorbakő. He worked on his family's residency, so that his sons' future would be ensured and that they would not only have to rely on the income of the estates held commonly by the relatives. Until the beginning of the 1410s the secret chancellor, as the eldest male member of the Terebes branch, had the chance to use the incomes of all the Perényi estates for his own intentions. From 1409 onwards the young Miklós Perényi, son of the late ban Miklós and also a nephew of Imre, was present in the royal court and was the member of Sigismund's entourage for ten years. For a short time after the death of Imre in 1418, the incomes of the common estates were shared among five young adult family members, and on the long run among four of them; therefore the significance of separately held estates increased.

3. The Young Perényis: János and István

We can conclude that secret chancellor Imre Perényi laid the foundations of a "Csorbakő branch" within the Perényi family. We kept this in mind when we investigated the activities of his sons, János and István. Beside considering the importance of introducing the land acquisitions of János and István (e.g. Gömör, Fülek) and the activities of the two brothers as members of Sigismund's entourage (e.g. travels to Konstanz, military campaign to Bavaria, coronation of Sigismund in Rome), we investigated the period between 1418 and 1428 in its entirety as well. Following the death of chancellor Imre Perényi, his sons, István and János, were forced on a career path with restricted boundaries. They lost their influential father, Miklós, their cousin, got a baronial position by becoming Master of the horse, and they could

only rely on the family resources of Csorbakó, since the estate management of the Terebes branch was divided. We do not have detailed information about the split of the common estates, but our sporadic data suggest that we can suspect an unrecorded agreement, or a recorded by since then long lost written contract, or in other words a legal distribution of lands among the descendants of Péter Perényi. Based on the residency analysis we can state that between the acquisition of the estates of Patak in 1392 by Miklós, son of Péter Perényi, and the death of his son in 1428 we can differentiate two separate sub-branches within the Terebes branch. One of these originates from Miklós of Patak who had his residency in Patak, while Imre based his power on his estates in northern Borsod and southern Abaúj counties and established his centre in Csorbakó and the Csorbakó branch can be derived from him.

This situation changed with the death of Miklós, son of the late ban Miklós in 1428. We can see that, although the Patak branch lost its own estates, the commonly held lands of the Terebes branch and the separate “Csorbakó” estates merged into one in the hands of István and János. From one day to the other they gained power over seven estates, five castles, four country towns and more than a hundred villages. This had its effect in the country’s domestic politics as well. In five years’ time they emerged to the rank of barons, received several estates, counties and the castle of Fülek with all its lands – they were in the king’s favour and held sufficient amount of wealth as well. Following the death of István Perényi, János got hold of even more power. The income of the family estates were previously used to build up two political careers, now it all concentrated in the hands of János. At that time he was already in mature adulthood and his power and influence was unquestionable on a regional and also significant on a national level. In the last years of Sigismund’s reign he already received diplomatic commissions, thus he was amongst the political decision makers in 1437. At that time he had been in the court of the monarch for more than twenty years. He stepped out of his father’s shadow; he was not the son of the late chancellor any more, but a magnate of considerable power, the head of a significant family in the north-eastern region of the country. Being one of the most active members of the Sigismund-Era, he entered the service of King Albert, whose reign became the summit of János Perényi’s career.

4. János Perényi, Master of the Treasury

Getting to know the political career of János, son of Imre Perényi, had held forth important results even before writing this dissertation. He was one of those Great Officers of State who were raised and reached adulthood in the stable system of Sigismund’s domestic politics. He was one of those few, who were at the peak of their political career during the post-Sigismund struggles for the throne, the governorship and the instable domestic

conditions. He was also the only secular aristocrat who maintained his estates and positions all along. Our objective was achieved in this dissertation: by getting to know his life in detail we also got closer to understand the processes of political, social and cultural history of the mid-15th century. Within the family, but also compared to his contemporaries, the life of János Perényi is well documented, therefore his two-decades-long career was investigated in three periods.

4/A. Perényi's Role in National Politics (1437-1446)

Among other grants, he was given the office of judge by King Albert and he also played an important role in inviting Wladyslaw to the throne. In the civil war he chose a unique tactic: he was the last great lord to choose a side. At first he sought to reap the benefit of war, later he himself had to endure the lack of public order and legal certainty. In this period a new neighbour moved next to Perényi, namely the Czech Jiškra, with whom he was in good terms, but he could not be entirely happy about the new neighbourhood. In one way or the other Perényi belonged to the more fortunate few. Unlike the Rihnó branch of the Perényi family he did not lose his estates. As the head of his family he stood his ground on his own without losing the right to his estates, even if some lands, like Veľký Šariš, were taken away from him. He fought a ferocious fight for regional power against the Pálóci family and finally emerged victoriously. Although he did not get a seat in Wladyslaw's consolidated cabinet, after the battle of Varna in 1444 he could not be kept aside, thus he preserved his previous status in domestic politics. Furthermore, he also maintained the possibility to move forward from there.

4/B. At the Side of the Governor (1447-1452)

By the end of 1446 János Perényi, Master of the Treasury, was over the hardest period of his life. Governor János Hunyadi realized that without the support and mediation of Perényi he could not hope to cope with Jiškra in the north-eastern region of the country. For this end, although he did not receive a serious role in the management of the country, Perényi was given a free-hand and power in the region. On behalf of János Hunyadi, he collected the emergency tax from the noblemen and more significant lords of Ung county; despite that János Pálóci was the count of Ung at that time. In Abaúj and Borsod counties he could enforce his will over his neighbours, ecclesiastical and secular aristocrats alike. In the 1450s he was gradually involved in national politics; his residences clearly indicate that he could participate in the council of the Great Officers of State and in the diet and he played an active role in organizing the return of Ladislaus V in 1452. His person proves that not only the outstanding persons of his age (e.g. Hunyadi, Cillei, Garai, Újlaki), but also the second line of politicians

played a crucial role in the shaping of events and power relations. Mátyás Gatalóci, Bishop of Vác, royal treasurer Mihály Ország, judge royal László Pálóci and Imre Bebek, Voivode of Transylvania, were all important factors, and János Perényi, Master of the Treasury, can also be listed amongst such people.

4/C. In the service of King Wladyslaw (1453-1458)

During the reign of Ladislaus V the Master of the Treasury undoubtedly pursued more active politics. He appeared more frequently in the council of the Great Officers of State and, although he did not make an open and clear political statement by joining to a “league” as it was customary at the time, his place in the political struggles is very well identifiable. His loyalty to the monarch is clearly visible and it is also inevitable that after 1454-55 he promoted the establishment of Cillei. The reason behind this is his position regarding land right, rather than his character which Boldizsár Mondschildel called “bonus Teutonicus”. According to this, at least one of his contemporaries saw Perényi as a loyal baron of the Habsburg-dynasty, this rather reflects his judgement concerning a given situation (1457), and not his unshakeable party alliance during the whole era, and it would be disadvantageous to suspect any motivation behind this. Undoubtedly, he intended to get back the estates (Veľký Šariš) he had lost in the civil war, and although he even supported János Hunyadi in order to do so at the beginning of the 1450s, after 1455 he could identify himself more with Ulrik Cillei.

We need to remonstrate that even in this period he remained in the second line of politicians. His influence and power could not be compared to that of Garai, Újlaki or Hunyadi, but he would have been no match for Jiškra and Pálóci either. But one thing is sure: he was the most important person in the north-eastern region and enjoyed the trust of Ladislaus V. He summoned a partial diet in Terebes in 1454, appeased Komorovszi and Jiškra in 1456, brought about an agreement with Talafusz concerning Jasov and in 1457 he won the office of the Captain of the Upper Parts, although he did hold this office longer than half a year.

In view of his activities between 1438 and 1458 we can state that his biggest achievement was to stay alive. Although this is a very simple fact, if we take a fresh look at it, this was not a negligible achievement. We have seen the tragedy of many similar families from this period. The career of Simon Rozgonyi, Bishop of Eger, skyrocketed but after his death his family was left without a patron. The Bebek family of Vámos had had four grown men at the beginning of the troubled times, but many of them died early, and although Imre Bebek, Voivode of Transylvania, had a glorious career, his family became insignificant after

his death. The Perényi families of Nyaláb and Rihó lost a significant amount of their estates and, unlike the Terebes branch, they did not have any reserves and found themselves in dire conditions. The life of the Nyaláb branch during the reign of Matthias was determined by the legal fight for their estates, and the latter branch completely vanished from the rank of barons. Only those could maintain their power who impersonated continuity between the Sigismund-Era and the reign of Matthias. Although László Pálóci gained a position as a baron during the reign of Albert, he had served under King Sigismund as well, and although he took the losing side several times, he did survive and could preserve his position in the office of judge royal during the reign of Matthias. After the death of his brother, István, János Perényi, Master of the Treasury, had to stand his ground on his own with all the advantages and disadvantages of this situation. Although by conceiving at least three sons, he made sure his bloodline would not perish, his incidental death in the midst of the civil war would have put his widow and young sons in a situation in which they would have had to face an insurmountable task. Only three years after his death his family gave another important office holder to the royal council as István, son of János, was granted the office of the Master of the stewards. By passing away in the first year of the reign of Matthias Hunyadi he made it possible for his sons to start over “with a clean slate”.

4/D. Twenty years in the office of Master of the Treasury

The life of János Perényi cannot be understood without a detailed investigation of his relationship with the cities, which has many aspects. The first aspect is the legal process which led to the evolution of a special group of eight free royal cities and consequently to the transformation of the court of appeal of these cities and the role of the János Perényi in this process. The second aspect was the economic relationship of Perényi as a great landholder aristocrat with the cities. The third aspect is that his long career as Master of the Treasury provides us the possibility to investigate the seal usage of the Master of the Treasury.

In 1456, when he was already in office, the first charter of the Master of the Treasury was recorded and accepted. The charter itself has long been known in the literature, but in view of Perényi's career this process can be understood better. In our dissertation we undertook the task of investigating this topic as well. Relying on the documents issued by János Perényi, it was easy to reconstruct the topic of sitting in judgment as Master of the Treasury. It is quite evident that he held meetings with the commissioners of the cities on the following days: 14th of March, 1439, 1st of April, 1447, 16th of June, 1447, 13th and 18th of September, 1452, 11th and 24th of January, 1454, 9th, 13th and 19th of March, 1456, and possibly also on the 20th of March, 1451, 28th of January, 1451 and 28th of February, 1458.

In times of peace or when the Master of the Treasury resided in Buda or Pest on the country's business, he held court for the cities. Between 1440 and 1445 Wladyslaw held Buda and Perényi could not act as Master of the Treasury, but after that period he personally contacted the commissioners of the cities on a regular basis. Compared to the previous period this can be regarded as definitely frequent and regular. The appraisal of the urban citizens and the political situation in the Upper Parts where Perényi had a close contact with the cities could play a part in this. The judicial work of Perényi as Master of the Treasury was remunerated by the towns by paying him an annual fee for the services of the office. Bardejov paid six forints in 1439 and 500 denarius in 1440, while Bratislava gave twelve forints in 1456 and eight forints in 1458. The incomes of Perényi as Master of the Treasury did not amount to much in sum; on the other hand it meant a solid income.

Concerning the relationship between the cities and the Master of the Treasury, we specifically need to analyse the linen bleaching case between Prešov and Bardejov. The sporadic records of the lawsuit lead to the conclusion that it was in the special interest of János Perényi to rule in favour of Prešov and to give the right of linen bleaching to this town. He did so despite the fact that the sources undoubtedly show that Bardejov did possess the right to bleach linen, while Prešov did not. The reason behind this must have been that Perényi had power-based and/or economic interest in promoting Prešov. For example the linen bleaching of Prešov could have been favourable for the nearby Perényi estates (Kučín, Hanigovce, Svinia), or it raised the value of the tolls of his estates, especially in case of the toll of Prešov in the estate of Veľký Šariš. Namely if Prešov had had the right to bleach linen and had engaged in this industry intensively, there would have been an at least partially increased demand for linen, which could have been grown in the Perényi estates. The commerce and wealth of Prešov would have increased to some extent as well, which would have meant higher incomes from duties, especially at the castle of Veľký Šariš where duty was collected on the commerce of Prešov. Perényi was persistent in promoting Prešov in this case even though Bardejov asked for his assistance against the levying of bratrik, or special tax. Jiškra, who de facto collected the duty on the commerce of Prešov but also needed the military and economic support of Bardejov, forbade linen bleaching for Prešov and through the county meeting of Sáros he supported the same town in the unlawful trade. The exact motivations cannot be reconstructed, but this example shows again how much Jiškra, Perényi and the towns depended on each other.

5. Representation

Nowadays the investigation of the representation is an inevitable part of a work on medieval family history. Although this is not the major subject of our dissertation, we found it important to systemize all the related information unearthed during our research and to make an attempt to organize them in a logical way for our reasoning. We discussed the use of the family coat of arms in a separate subchapter and as an outlook we provided the examination of the religiousness of the family members. It is quite evident that a handful of allusions in the literature and the sporadic sources are not adequate enough to definitively settle the questions raised; or at least not within the framework of this dissertation. The dissertation provides the possibility for thought-provoking and by doing so to lay the foundations for more detailed future research. In case of the use of the coat of arms we can state that although in this respect we have an especially good source-base for the Perényi family, the investigation of the origins of their coat of arms requires further targeted research abroad. As for the religiousness or the material culture we can state that the methodical publication of sources can provide more information in the future; therefore we cannot come to extensive, non-exhaustive conclusions. Perhaps we can provide the most detailed description on the built heritage of the Perényi family, since many known castles, mansions or sacral buildings have not yet been properly excavated. On the other hand we can conclude that the constantly increasing wealth of the Terebes branch of the Perényi family made it possible to devote money for the development of those castles which best served the purpose of reflecting the family's power. In case of Csorbakő chancellor Imre began a completely new construction, specifically to develop a representative family seat. In Füzér the developments did not only serve the purpose of strengthening the defences, since the construction of the residential building and the chapel indicates a drift towards representation and practical use. In Stropkov and Csinagyijovo the family had to create the management centres of distant but large estates, since these territories were being settled at that time and consequently their value rose as well. Even if it was not necessary to provide protection, these constructions could definitely establish the prestige of the estate managers. In other words, the built heritage and material culture of the family – at least what we know about them – confirm our statement. The family belonged to the second line of the largest, richest and most influential barons. Although we cannot report such significant constructions in case of the Perényi family as in case of the Garai or Hunyadi families, they devoted a significant amount of money to building constructions, putting a special emphasis on the appearance of these buildings, to the practice of their religion and to the maintenance of their family heritage.