

PÉTER KASZA

**“BECAUSE I CAN SEE THAT SOME [...] TELL THE EVENTS DIFFERENTLY TO HOW THEY HAPPENED...”**

**Comments to the Story of the Formation of István Brodarics’s *Historia Verissima***

During his tormented life, István Brodarics could try his talent and aptitude in various roles as he was a diplomat, a chancellor, a bishop—however, it is doubtless that he owed his fame to the short but dramatic report written on the battle of Mohács.<sup>1</sup> While it is impossible to imagine an article, study or monograph on Mohács that does not use and quote Brodarics’s text, it is a strange paradox of the Mohács-report that historical and literary sciences have relatively rarely dealt with the origin of the text, its reasons and circumstances.

We know about the origin of the text astonishingly little. Practically, the only certain data is that the text was published in Kraków on 18 April 1527 in Vietor’s press. At the same time, we do not know when exactly Brodarics started to think about writing the report, when he started the work and when he finished it. The literature is uncertain even about the place where Brodarics wrote the text: besides Maria Habsburg’s court in Pozsony (today Bratislava in Slovakia), the earlier literature raises the possibility that the text was written at the place of the publication, in Kraków.<sup>2</sup> It is also puzzling what aspects were leading Brodarics during work, and what purpose or purposes were served by the memoir. Nevertheless, I suppose that in our case the time and circumstances of the origin of the text are very meaningful and important, because the work was born in an extremely taut situation. On the one hand from political aspect, as the country was just being threatened by the danger of a civil war due to the conflict around the throne after János Szapolyai and Ferdinand Habsburg had been both elected for king. On the other hand, Brodarics personally was in a difficult situation since he was living through a period of total existential insecurity at the time of writing the report. In such a case, even the smaller differences in the answers to when, where, and why can cause serious shifts in the emphasis regarding the evaluation of the profile of the whole text.

In the following, I am aiming to answer these questions. Firstly, I would like to thoroughly analyse the circumstances of the origin of the text: to clarify what reasons made or could make Brodarics write the work, where and in what environment the text was written. In my opinion, knowing these circumstances will provide a significant help in surveying the purpose(s) of the writing as well.

<sup>1</sup> On 29 August 1526 the Hungarian army suffered a decisive defeat from the Turkish in the battle fought at Mohács. Louis II Hungarian king also died in the battle. The fight for his empty throne after his death seriously contributed to the final fall of the medieval Hungarian state.

<sup>2</sup> SZÉKELY Samu, *Brodarics István élete és működése* (The life and activities of István Brodarics), Történelmi Társulat, 1888, 230.

*The origin of the work*

Looking over the earlier literature on Brodarics, we can see that usually two details are mentioned in connection with the origin of *Historia Verissima*. On the one hand, Brodarics reported on the immediate antecedents of the tragedy at Mohács, the course of the battle and the death of the Polish king Sigismund's nephew, Louis II upon king Sigismund's request or rather his commission.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, he wanted to reply to the famous Viennese humanist, Johannes Cuspinianus<sup>4</sup> accusations thrown on the Hungarians,<sup>5</sup> which were formulated in his anti-Turkish rousing speech for the German estates and which was printed in Vienna in the end of 1526. The uncertainty around the time of the origin of the work is even bigger. Basically, only the *terminus ante quem* seems to be certain, which means that the text was written before 18 April 1527. Only Péter Kulcsár, who prepared the critical edition of the work, encountered to give a more exact date than this. He writes in the preface to the critical edition that the work was written after Brodarics had arrived at Buda, that is between 18 March and 18 April 1527.<sup>6</sup> Kulcsár argues that the text refers to Szapolyai as king,<sup>7</sup> thus in his opinion it was written after Brodarics

<sup>3</sup> Only this reason is mentioned by the author of the first Brodarics study, Samu SZÉKELY (*Brodarics...*, 257), and Brodarics's first monographer, Pongrác SÖRÖS (*Jerosini Brodarics István*, Budapest, 1907, 82–83).

<sup>4</sup> *Johannis CUSPINIANI Oratio Protrepctica ad Sacri Romani Imperii Principes et Proceres ut Bellum Suscipiant contra Turcum...*, Viennae Austriae, s. a. [1526]. Johannes Cuspinianus (Spieshaymer, Schweinfurt, end of 1473–Vienna, 19 April 1529), humanist, doctor, diplomat. He started his studies in Leipzig in 1490. From 1492 he taught in Vienna, in 1493 he received the title *poeta laureatus* from the emperor Maximilian I. In 1500 he was appointed the rector of the Vienna university and he kept his title for several years. After the death of Konrad Celtis (1508), he taught poetics and rhetoric at the university in Vienna, and he undoubtedly became the leading personality of the Vienna humanist group. From 1510 he accomplished diplomatic missions several times. He actively participated in the preparation of the kings' meeting in Wiener Neustadt and he said to have been to Buda various times on this occasion. Until the end of his life, he was working on his works on the story of the consuls and Roman emperors, which he intended to make his life's major work but which were only published after his death (*Caesares*, Strassburg, 1540; *Consules*, Basel, 1553). Cuspinianus was a regular visitor at Matthias' library; he brought several Corvinas to Vienna, which in this way have been saved from the devastation of the Turkish times.

<sup>5</sup> Lajos Hopp mentions both Sigismund's commission and Cuspinianus' *Oratio* among the reasons: HOPP Lajos, *Az „antemurale” és „conformitas” humanista eszméje a magyar–lengyel hagyományban* (The humanist idea of “antemurale” and “conformitas” in the Hungarian–Polish tradition), Budapest, Akadémiai, 1992 (Humanizmus és Reformáció, 19), 80–81; and so does Emma Bartoniek: BARTONIEK Emma, *Fejezetek a XVI–XVII. századi magyarországi történetírás történetéből* (Chapters from the history of Hungarian historiography in the 16–17<sup>th</sup> century), Budapest, 1975, 9. Besides, based on the Hungarian literature, Marianna D. Birnbaum also mentions these two reasons in her book: MARIANNA D. BIRNBAUM, *Humanists in a Shattered World: Croatian and Hungarian Latinity in the Sixteenth Century*, Los Angeles, 1986, 109.

<sup>6</sup> Stephanus BRODERICUS, *De Conflictu Hungarorum cum Solymano Turcarum Imperatore ad Mohach Historia Verissima*, ed. KULCSÁR Péter, Budapest, Akadémiai, 1985. *Introductio*, 12.

<sup>7</sup> János Szapolyai was crowned on 11 November 1526 in Székesfehérvár. His rival, Ferdinand Habsburg was chosen only on 17 December 1526.

had changed sides.<sup>8</sup> As on 18 March 1527 Brodarics is in Dévény (today Devín in Slovakia),<sup>9</sup> which is a zone of Habsburg interest, but on 24 March he is already at the convention called by Szapolyai in Buda,<sup>10</sup> Kulcsár considers 18 March as *terminus post quem*. I am going to return to the problems of dating later, but firstly let us examine the above-mentioned reasons which have led to the birth of the work.

#### *The commission by Sigismund*

First of all, let us take a look at Sigismund's commission. Its existence seems to be supported by the facts that Brodarics's work was published in Kraków, and while the author—although in a covert form—blames the Christian kings for leaving Louis and Hungary alone in the life-and-death struggle against the Ottomans, he finds tricky excuses for Sigismund and the Polish for staying away.<sup>11</sup> So it seems to be logical that the work written by Sigismund's commission should be published in Kraków and should try to save Sigismund and the Polish from the accusations of backing out on the Hungarians.

However, the final argument for the commission by Sigismund is provided by a certain letter written by Sigismund to Brodarics, which can be read in the 8<sup>th</sup> issue of *Acta Tomiciana*. This issue contains the diplomatic documents and writings from 1526, such as the Polish diplomacy's correspondence in connection with Mohács. Among these, we can find Sigismund's notorious letter, which reads as follows: "Reverendissime in Christo pater. Audientes vestram paternitatem ex tam ingenti naufragio serenissimi nepotis nostri et istius regni Hungariae salvam utcunque evasisse, cepimus non mediocre voluptatem et in tanto dolore, quo tenemur, quod utique paternitas vestra incolumis sit, cuius in nos fidem et observantiam habemus compertissimam. Et *proinde rogamus illam describere nobis non gravetur, quid certi istic sit, cum de salute ipsius serenissimi nepotis nostri, tum etiam de rebus hostilibus et statu illius regni Hungariae; nam varii rumores huc quotidie ad nos deferri solent, sitque eius erga nos propensionis et observantiae, qua consuevit.*"<sup>12</sup>

As we can see, the letter is quite short. In a few lines, Sigismund is expressing his joy that Brodarics has survived the battle and then the main point is coming: he is asking

<sup>8</sup> Following the defeat at Mohács, Brodarics escaped to Pozsony, and there he joined the remaining of the court gathering around Maria Habsburg. Thus in late 1526, early 1527 he practically belonged to the Habsburg side.

<sup>9</sup> FRAKNÓI Vilmos, *Magyarország történetét érdeklő okiratok a külföldi piacon* (Documents with interest to the history of Hungary in the foreign market), Századok, 1877, 58–61.

<sup>10</sup> FRAKNÓI Vilmos, *Magyar országgyűlési emlékek* (Records of the Hungarian parliamentary assemblies), I, Budapest, 1874, 127–128.

<sup>11</sup> "Nam de rege Poloniae Sigismundo, patruo regis alia prorsus ratio esse videbatur, quod is foedus cum Turca paulo ante pepigerat extremum excidium a suis regnis, quando aliter inter tot Christianorum principum dissidia non posset, vel hoc pacto avertere conatus, neque videbatur princeps integerrimus et fidei observantissimus contra confederatum principem auxilia ulla praestiturus." BRODERICUS, *De Conflictu...*, 27.

<sup>12</sup> AT, VIII, 222. (My italics – P. K.)

Brodarics to inform him about the fate of his nephew, Louis, about the activity of the enemy, the Ottomans, and the current situation of Hungary. It is definitely not a classic commission contract but with a little benevolence it can be interpreted as being one.

I must admit that initially this letter was not suspicious to me and I readily accepted that these lines above are the text of the commission. However, considering it more thoroughly I noted that basically nothing in the letter suggests that Sigismund encouraged Brodarics to write the story of the battle. He rather asked him for information on the given situation, the movements of the Turkish troops and in general on the overall situation of Hungary, Poland's *antemurale*, or bastion. We could say that the letter rather requested a "political" and not a "historical" report from Brodarics.

The lack of date on the letter could have contributed to the misunderstandings (by the way not only the text in the printed volume of *Acta Tomiciana* has no dating but the manuscripts either<sup>13</sup>), and besides it could have been written anytime in the fall of 1526 before Louis's body was found and the news about it reached Kraków.<sup>14</sup>

As I have said, I did not question the probative force of the letter at first. I only started to make a more exact study on its dating because I wanted to use it to more precisely determine when Brodarics began to compile the report or to think about compiling it.

The question of Louis's death seemed to be a natural starting point. Based on the letter, it is clear that Sigismund did not have trustworthy information about Louis's fate when the letter was being written. Even if he heard rumours about the tragedy, those did not completely confirm the news about his nephew's death. Thus I have examined the correspondence of the Polish court in October–November 1526 to see since when there were no doubts about Louis's death. According to my basic concept—if we start from the dating of the Sárffy letter—the Polish court could have been somewhat uncertain about

<sup>13</sup> The most reliable manuscript can be found in the Biblioteka Narodowa in Warsaw: Teki Górskiego Tomus 29, 40r.

<sup>14</sup> The captain of the Győr fortress, Ferenc Sárffy informed Brodarics about finding Louis II's body on 19 October 1526. The text of the letter was edited in Georgius PRAY, *Annales*, V, 121–122. It was translated by Emma Bartoniek and published in Hungarian in the volume *Mohács emlékezete* (The memory of Mohács) but the dating here is incorrect. Bartoniek dates the letter, which was written "ex arce lauriensi feria VI. post Lucae Evangelistae", to 14 December. Bartoniek identifies this with the Friday after Saint Lucia's day (13 December) and as Lucia's day was a Thursday in 1526, the next Friday would be 14 December. In his article written about the problems around the date of the letter, Richárd Botlik convincingly proves that the letter was not written on the Friday following Lucia's day but on the one after the Evangelist Luke's day (18 October) which accidentally also was a Thursday in 1526, thus the next Friday was 19 October. See more details: BOTLIK Richárd, *1526. október 19. Adalékok Sárffy Ferenc győri várparancsnok jelentéséhez* (Additional data to the report of the commander of the Győr castle, Ferenc Sárffy), *Századok*, 2002, 669–679. Botlik's reasoning is supported by a letter by Brodarics written to Christoph Szydłowiecki, Polish chancellor on 14 November 1526. This contains the following: "Mitto ad vestram illustrissimam dominationem paria litterarum eius, qui fuerat missus ad corpus regium perquirendum." (*Elementa ad Fontium Editiones*, XXXIV, *Documenta ex Archivo Regiomontano in Poloniam Spectantia*, pars IV, edidit Carolina LANCKOROŃSKA, Romae, 1975, 72.) In all probability, the reference relates to Sárffy's letter, which Brodarics could not have forwarded to Kraków if it had been written only in December.

this until the middle of October the latest, so the letter of Sigismund must have been written in September, maybe in the beginning of October.

So if this is really some kind of a “commission letter”, Brodarics could already be concerned with writing the story of the battle in October 1526. However, I have come to a somewhat surprising discovery when I was thoroughly reading the letters written about the defeat at Mohács in the cited volume of *Acta Tomiciana*. The relevant volume of *Tomiciana* contains several letters from the first months after Mohács, most of which are unfortunately undated, but their content proves that they were born in the weeks following the battle. These were partly written by Sigismund, partly by other Polish statesmen to various potentates of Hungary, from Queen Maria through the voivod of Transylvania, Szapolyai to Baron Burgio.<sup>15</sup> Let us take a closer look at some of these letters!

The first one is also an undated letter written to Maria Habsburg, in which Sigismund is asking her to inform him about Louis’s fate and other developments as soon as possible. I am citing it: “Accepimus infelicissimum nuncium, prostratum esse cum exercitu suo per Turcos serenissimum nepotem nostrum, dominum Ludovicum, tantamque in eo stragem commissam, ut de salute illius maiestatis non sit satis compertum. [...] *nosque cum de vita serenissimi coniugis sui tum etiam de rebus omnibus, quam celerius poterit, certiores facere dignetur.*”<sup>16</sup>

The second and third extracts are from a letter from the Polish vice chancellor, Piotr Tomicki to Brodarics and from another one from Sigismund to Baron Burgio. Paying attention to the italicized parts, we can see that both writers are asking the addressees, Brodarics and Burgio for information on Louis’s fate and Hungary’s situation.

“De interitu serenissimi domini, domini Ludovici, regis, tametsi iam propemodum apud nos conclamatum sit, tamen quia nescio, qui iique non ingrati et propterea non reiecti rumores spargantur, fore adhuc nonnullam spem de vita eius maiestatis.

Maiestas domini mei mittit istuc nuncium cum litteris. *Ego plurimum rogo vestram reverendissimam dominationem, ut quicquid certi et explorati cum de his, tum de ceteris habuerit, simul et reliquiae dominorum Hungarorum, quid praesefarant, quidve praetendant, quorsum animus et cogitationes suas dirigant, quid consilii in tam ancipiti fortuna capiant, quem sibi praesesse destinaverint, me litteris suis facere velit certiore.*”<sup>17</sup>

“Quia cum de salute illius maiestatis, tam etiam de reliquis rebus, uti se habent, adhuc plane incerti sumus, mittimus istuc nuncium nostrum, ut de omnibus quam primum certiores esse possimus rogamusque tam magnificenciam, ut nobis significare velit, quid cum illius maiestate et statu istius Regni sui agatur.”<sup>18</sup>

Finally here is a fourth one, another letter written to Maria, in which the italicized part is again really important: “Quamvis significavit iam nobis maiestas vestra per suum nuncium casum et interitum serenissimi coniugis sui et nepotis nostri desiderantissimi, *tamen*

<sup>15</sup> AT, VIII, Sigismund to Maria, Nr. 173 (213–214) and Nr. 176 (215); to János Szapolyai, Nr. 175 (214–215); to Burgio, Nr. 186 (223).

<sup>16</sup> AT, VIII, 213–214. (My italics – P. K.)

<sup>17</sup> AT, VIII, 222–223. (My italics – P. K.)

<sup>18</sup> AT, VIII, 223.

*quia post adventum hic nostrum non cessant varii rumores de illius maiestatis vita et quidem in dies magis invalescere [...] Plurimum rogamus maiestatem vestram, ut tam de vita ipsius serenissimi nepotis nostri quam etiam de rebus hostilibus et statu praesenti istius regni Hungariae nobis significare nobisque certum documentum, quid tandem indubie credere debeamus, praestare dignetur, nam et iusta, quae illius maiestati iam paravimus, distulimus exsolvere huiusmodi rumoribus de incolumitate ipsius [...] permoti.*<sup>19</sup>

If we compare the boldfaced part of the last letter to the supposed commission letter addressed to Brodarics, the similarity strikes us immediately: “Et **proinde rogamus illam describere nobis non gravetur, quid certi istic sit, cum de salute ipsius serenissimi nepotis nostri, tum etiam de rebus hostilibus et statu illius regni Hungariae;** nam varii rumores huc quotidie ad nos deferri solent...”<sup>20</sup>

I suppose that the quoted texts are self-explanatory. As mentioned before, most of the letters about Mohács in Acta Tomiciana are undated, but there are a few among them which are dated. Their purpose, wording and tone is similar to the undated ones,<sup>21</sup> which supports the opinion that also the others were written in the confusion of the first weeks following the battle of Mohács, when the Polish king and the diplomacy was doing everything to obtain information on Louis II’s real fate and Hungary’s situation as soon as possible.

The diplomatic hustle is not causeless if we consider that Sigismund, as Louis II’s uncle, could aspire to the Hungarian—or rather the Bohemian—throne. However, to be able to do that, he needed to know something sure about Louis’s fate. The tactics of the opposite side is just as obvious as Sigismund’s one. On the day after the battle, Queen Maria was already informed about Louis’s death by Ulrich Czettrich who saw the king drown in the stream Csele. Even if we suppose that initially she was hoping for Louis to have survived, her hopes were certainly dissolved in a few days.<sup>22</sup> Instead of this, no one in Maria’s environment confirms Louis’s death to the Polish court, which is again in connection with the aspirations for the succession.<sup>23</sup> From the beginning, Maria’s aim

<sup>19</sup> AT, VIII, 215. (My italics and boldface – P. K.)

<sup>20</sup> See note 12.

<sup>21</sup> We know the letter written to Sigismund by the bishop of Eger, Pál Várday on 13 September 1526 (AT, VIII, 215–217) and the response to it sent on 17 September (AT, VIII, 217–218). Both letters are pondering over the situation after the battle.

<sup>22</sup> Louis’s death was considered a fact in the Habsburg family already in early September. Ferdinand announces it as a certainty to Margaret archduchess in his letter written on 18 September 1526. *Magyar történelmi okmánytár brüsszeli levéltárakból* (Collection of Hungarian historical documents from archives in Bruxelles), I, 1441–1538, ed. HATVANI Mihály, Pest, 1857, 41–43.

<sup>23</sup> Brodarics’s letter to Kraków on 6 September: “Regia maiestas [...] nondum tamen pro certo sciri potuit ubi sit. [...] Non possum ullo modo mihi persuadere, eum periisse.” AT, VIII, 220–221. Pál Várday on 13 September: “Scripsi etiam regiae maiestati—dicitur enim vivere et Posonii esse sed grave vulnus habere—ne desperaret, sed reliquas belli colligeret; [...] sed a regia maiestate nuncius meus nondum rediit, quare de vita eius nihil adhuc accepi.” AT, VIII, 215–217. Only on 29 September, Elek Thurzó writes to Sigismund as a sure fact that King Louis has died in the battle: “Expectavimus hactenus feliciora, sed iam pro dolor! pro comperto est, quod maiestas sua strenue et insigniter cum hoste pugnando, inclinata acie nostrorum nostrisque

was to ensure the Hungarian and the Bohemian throne to her brother, Ferdinand. Nevertheless, she needed time for the necessary political manoeuvres, therefore she sent (or perhaps had her people send) news to Kraków in which Louis's death was floated in order to make the Polish diplomacy unsure and hesitating.<sup>24</sup> Considering this all, it is understandable that the Polish diplomacy made efforts to finally gain credited information about the Hungarian events.

We can draw two conclusions based on the above. On the one hand, I suppose it is unquestionable that the letter addressed to Brodarics on the 222<sup>nd</sup> page of the 8<sup>th</sup> volume of Acta Tomiciana was written in September 1526, that is in those few weeks when there was no certain information about Louis's death in the Polish court. On 29 September, Elek Thurzó is already writing to Sigismund about Louis's death as a fact; in his letter written to the Hungarian estates on 11 October, King Sigismund is also dealing with the issue as a well-established fact. On the other hand, I am also convinced that the precise dating of the repeatedly mentioned Sigismund-letter does not bring us closer to determining the exact time when Brodarics's work was born. I suppose that the letters from Poland that I have cited earlier would not be valued differently to what they are: letters requesting information. Based on the correspondence of the time and the wording, we can state that most probably the letter written to Brodarics had the same purpose. Thus in my opinion, it can by no means be read as a request for creating a historiographical work.

It might be another argument supporting the lack of request that Brodarics is not writing a recommendation to the work. In the humanist practice, it would be very unusual that somebody receives a commission, or money in a given case, to write and publish a piece of work, and then he does not praise his Maecenas within the frameworks of a preface or recommendation.<sup>25</sup> However, it is of no doubt that the work was published in Kraków and that Brodarics treats the Polish in a very subtle way in it. So far this has been explained with Sigismund's commission. But if this argument is annulled, what can be the explanation for Brodarics's method? I am soon going to return to its suspectable reasons. But before that, let us examine the other reason, Cuspinianus' *Oratio*, which is also said to be the motive for writing the work.

in fugam conversis, equo, cui insidebat, graviter in proelio vulnerato, volens tandem manus hostiles nonnisi tertiusmet effugere, in quadam profunda fauce Danubii una cum equo decidens miserabiliter extinctus est." AT, VIII, 224–225. (My italics – P. K.)

<sup>24</sup> Proving the king's death suddenly becomes urgent when by the middle of October 1526 the Bohemian estates appear to be inclined to elect Ferdinand: to do this, incontrovertible proof is needed about Louis's death. Therefore, defended by the soldiers of the Győr captain Ferenc Sárffy, Czettrich is sent to find Louis's corpse. This would have been a very risky enterprise earlier as the Ottoman troops have not left Hungary's territory until 12 October. In connection with concealing Louis's death see BARTA Gábor, *Illúziók esztendeje* (A year of illusions), *Történelmi Szemle*, 1977, 6; BOTLIK, *op. cit.*, 670.

<sup>25</sup> Although we must treat this possible argument carefully since we do not know the first edition of the Brodarics text from 1527. Thus we cannot claim with full confidence that the work did not include a recommendation to Sigismund.

*The Oratio of Cuspinianus*

If based on all the above we accept that Sigismund's request did not exist or at least it cannot be proved, in this case the motivation which Cuspinianus' speech meant gains a special significance, and it becomes the first—or seemingly the only—reason.

This as such throws new light upon the problem: if we accept that Brodarics's major reason for writing the story of the battle was to confute the statements of an *oratio* blaming the Hungarians, we requalify one of the most famous texts of Hungarian historiography from a basically descriptive work to a polemical essay.

We are going to return to this question when we are analysing the possible purposes of the work, but firstly let us examine if Cuspinianus' *adhortatio* can possibly be one of the reasons for writing the Brodarics-work. Two "deficiencies" have made it possible for me to ask this question. One is that Brodarics neither names Cuspinianus in the text of *Historia Verissima*, nor he mentions him in his (remained) correspondence either. This means that we do not have direct proof from the author himself.

The other is that Hans Ankwicz von Kleehoven, who wrote a monograph on Cuspinianus, does not think that the exhortative speech in question would have significantly affected the contemporaries or would have had any special anti-Hungarian tone.<sup>26</sup> So at first sight it may seem that perhaps we are only facing another legend rooted in the Hungarian literature since Brodarics does not mention Cuspinianus, and the foreign literature does not know anything about the possible connection of the two works.

However, if we read Brodarics's text more thoroughly, our initial doubts about the Cuspinianus-effect fade. There are several hints in the text which basically make it evident that Brodarics was having polemics (even) with Cuspinianus when he was writing his work. Let us take a closer look on these hints!

As the motive for writing the text, Brodarics explains in the preface that in his experience a few people report on the events differently to how they really happened, and their explanation for the defeat is not the ups and downs of fortune but the Hungarians' sins and betrayal.<sup>27</sup> This starting does support the idea that Brodarics's writing is a text with a polemising purpose, which intends to reflect on some text or texts of anti-Hungarian tone. Still, this hint does not refer to Cuspinianus with the necessary evidence at all. However, when describing the circumstances of King Louis's death, Brodarics is saying the following: we might note it with indignation that in his speech about the matter a

<sup>26</sup> Hans ANKWICZ VON KLEEHOVEN, *Der wiener Humanist, Johannes Cuspinian*, Graz-Köln, 1959, 237–239. By effects made on the contemporaries, Kleehoven did not necessarily mean literary reflections but rather any practical consequences that the exhortative speech caused. However, he would have probably mentioned the literary effects as well if he had known Brodarics's work and the supposed connection between the two texts.

<sup>27</sup> "Operae pretium fore putavi, si bellum, quod divus Ludovicus Hungariae et Bohemiae rex [...] proxime gessit, et in quo interiit, breviter describerem eo etiam consilio, quod video esse nonnullos, partim qui haec aliter, quam acta sunt, narrent, partim qui nostros alius aliam ob causam criminari non cessent atque hunc infelicem pugnae eventum non solitis rerum humanarum casibus sed nostrorum culpa falso adhibere nitantur." BRODERICUS, *op. cit.*, 21.



certain person dares to untruly call our people the traitor of his king.<sup>28</sup> Even without mentioning the name, this is already a more evident reference: to the best of my knowledge, only Cuspinianus published a speech or *oratio* on Mohács in the given period. Although his name is not mentioned here either, a few lines later Brodarics is further narrowing the circle when he is saying to be ashamed that this famous historiographer so ineptly dared to publicise something he does not have a proper knowledge of.<sup>29</sup> Cuspinianus, the illustrious humanist from Vienna, was mainly known as a historiographer. Finally one more additional thing. In Cuspinianus' speech, the most concrete accusation is brought against the soldiers of Esztergom, the huszars (cavalry), who started to loot the ships of queen Maria escaping from Buda.<sup>30</sup> Brodarics clearly reflects to the aforementioned part of the text when he is saying: although the cavalry caused some damage in the queen's ships, it is still very far from the truth to accuse our lightly armed soldiers, whom this person is calling huszars, with dishonouring the queen's maids and scornfully dancing in their slippers.<sup>31</sup>

So Brodarics's adversary was clearly a historiographer who published a speech on the battle of Mohács, and in that he mentioned—besides other accusations—the affray of the Esztergom soldiers that he called *vero nomine*, that is, on their real name, huszars (huzarones, husserones). This definitely presumes a person who knows the Hungarian situation quite well: as a diplomat of the emperor, Cuspinianus regularly visited Hungary and knew the circumstances very well. These hints and the reflective parts of the two texts necessarily prove that the unnamed adversary in Brodarics's text is Cuspinianus, thus it was his pamphlet that motivated Brodarics to write the work.

Nevertheless, there is a question arising: why does not Ankwicz von Kleehoven know about the effect that Cuspinianus' oration made in Hungary, namely on Brodarics? Why does not he take notice of the anti-Hungarian voices? Could it have escaped his attention? Naturally, such a case is possible, but other problems can also stand in the background.

<sup>28</sup> “Quo molestiore animo ferendum censeo, quod ausus sit quidam oratione etiam de hoc publicata, si oratio illa vocari debet, nostros sui regis desertores falso vocare.” BRODERICUS, *op. cit.*, 54.

<sup>29</sup> “Sed idem ille egregius historiarum scriptor, qui haec scribit, et qui tot convicia in gentem nostram ingerit, huius etiam cladis historiam ita scripsit, ut me pudeat eum ita imprudenter rem sibi ignotam in vulgus proderere fuisse ausum.” BRODERICUS, *op. cit.*, 54–55.

<sup>30</sup> “Ventum est in Danubio ad Strigonium Archiepiscopalem sedem. Tum husserones, incolae regni, Turcis longe saeviores et crudeliores, nulla pietate moti, nulla misericordia, navem unam onustam regia supellectile reginae auferunt, spoliunt et diripiunt. Nec tanta feritate satiati, nisi ludibrio etiam suam Reginam afficiant in tanta anxietate: muliebres vestes et puellarum soleas ex Gynaecio asportatas induunt, choreas faciunt, risus et subsannationes in timidum sexum iaciunt.” CUSPINIANUS, *Oratio Protreptica*, Francofurti, 1601, 76. (To my knowledge, neither the first edition of Cuspinianus' text from 1526, nor a modern, critical edition of it exists today. Thus my Latin citations are based on the text of an exemplar in the University Library of Szeged.)

<sup>31</sup> “Regina hac clade audita [...] trepide Posonium confugit rerum suarum magna parte per Danubium subvecta, in quibus et in his, quae civium Budensium erant, licet Andreas Orbonasz, qui arci Strigoniensi praeerat, nonnulla damna fecerit, tamen in huius rei commemoratione longe a veritate recessit ille, qui militibus nostris levis armaturae, quos vero nomine huzarones appellat, eam culpam impingit, quod puellas reginales inhonestius habuerint et in earum soleis per ludibrium saltaverint.” BRODERICUS, *op. cit.*, 58.

If we try to read Cuspinianus' text without bias as much as possible, we must realize that we are not facing a true "Hungarian-eater" at all! Due to the title, it is basically an anti-Turkish exhortative speech towards the German estates, which almost has the enthusiasm of a preacher (even according to Kleehoven); this ardour is not directed against the Hungarians. Although encouraging the German estates to take action against the Ottomans, Cuspinianus indeed makes a few cutting remarks on the Hungarians' sinful indolence, but he condemns the negligence of the Christian lords to the same extent. With even more emphasis, he scourges the incapacity of the German imperial conventions and the dipsomania of the lords as the peak of helplessness and incapability to decide. Last but not least, he makes a sharp and scornful onslaught on Luther, who condemned the armed intervention against the Turkish in his early writings, which Cuspinianus objects to.

I suppose that Kleehoven as a German reader was right in not considering Cuspinianus' *oratio* as an anti-Hungarian work when he was reading it, as the basic idea of the text cannot be regarded as that at all. After all, it would be strange to look for *anti-Hungarianism* in an exhortative speech *against the Turks!* However, considering what has been said above, we can confidently claim that—even if we cannot blame Cuspinianus' work with basic partiality—Brodarics definitely felt to be touched on a tender spot. Thus we can state that the Cuspinianus-*oratio*—in opposition to Sigismund's commission, which has turned out to be a legend—definitely had a role in the birth of *Historia Verissima*.

#### *Questions of dating*

In all probability, Brodarics started to write his own text after the publication of Cuspinianus' *Oratio*. So far, I suppose, I have managed to prove convincingly that Sigismund's letter from September is indifferent from the aspect of defining the date of origin of the work, thus we must start from the time of publication of Cuspinianus' oration if we are endeavouring to date the Mohács-report more exactly. Unfortunately, the Cuspinianus-text is undated as well, so we can only rely on internal arguments during the process of date determination. Hans Ankwicz von Kleehoven mentions two such arguments based on which he puts the date of printing the text to December 1526. Kleehoven argues that Ferdinand is mentioned as Bohemian *and* Hungarian king both in the body of the text and the recommendation put ahead of the speech and addressed to his chancellor, Bernhard Cles. Indeed, Ferdinand was elected Bohemian king on 24 October and Hungarian king on 16 December—and following his advisors' proposition he did not use the title of Hungarian king until his election in December so as not to hurt his future Hungarian dependants' constitutional sensibility.<sup>32</sup> Based on the above, Kleehoven says that the text could not be born before the middle of December 1526. His other important argument is that Cuspinianus—while trying to have the German estates and lords take action

<sup>32</sup> BARTA, *op. cit.*, 7.

against the Ottomans—emphasizes that “Ferdinandus, *Hungariae et Bohemiae Rex* [...], nullam obmittit occasionem, quin *proximo vere* [...] bellum suscipiatur contra Christi hostes” (my italics – P. K.), that is, Ferdinand, *king of Hungary and Bohemia*, is not going to miss one single occasion to take arms against Christ’s enemies *the next spring*. In Kleehoven’s opinion “the next spring” (*proximo vere*) means the spring of 1527, which only makes sense if the text was written in 1526. On the basis of the above, he concludes that Cuspinianus’ text could only be written in the second half of December 1526 and published in December 1526 or January 1527.<sup>33</sup>

Based on the above, what can we say now about the time of origin of Brodarics’ work? As already mentioned in the introduction, Péter Kulcsár puts its birth between 18 March and 18 April considering the fact that the text calls Szapolyai “king” so it could have been written after Brodarics’ change of sides, that is after 18 March.<sup>34</sup>

Kulcsár’s dating might be worth to refine so that the finished work was published on 18 April 1527 in Kraków, where firstly it must have been delivered and then edited and printed, thus the text must have been ready by the end of March the latest. The question of the starting date is however more problematic.

Even if our author was thinking about writing the story of the battle before the publication of Cuspinianus’ speech (we can neither exclude nor prove this based on our present knowledge), the fermenting effect of Cuspinianus’ text was definitely needed for the final decision. Based on Kleehoven’s dating, this means that Brodarics could not start to write his work before January 1527. Naturally, it can justly be mentioned that writing the text of 250 sentences, and so being relatively short, did not necessarily take weeks or months, thus Brodarics could write it in the second half of March—as Péter Kulcsár states it. However, he can also raise only one single argument to prove that Brodarics could not start the work before his change in March: the retentive effect of the Habsburg-environment.

Kulcsár is probably right in saying that a pro-Szapolyai report on the battle of Mohács could not really be born in the middle of the court in Pozsony. However, Brodarics was

<sup>33</sup> See more details on it: KLEEHOVEN, *Der wiener Humanist...*, 238; Hans ANKWICZ VON KLEEHOVEN, *Johann Cuspinian’s Briefwechsel*, Munich, 1934, 167. Ankwicicz von Kleehoven’s argumentation is true even if we suppose that “the next spring” theoretically could be said until February 1527 since the “next” (*proximum*) spring is the one of 1527 even in February. If we needed to rely only on the internal arguments of the Cuspinianean text, in the mirror of this we could rightly question the dating of the text to December, which would only be indisputable if Cuspinianus had written *proximo anno* (“next year”) instead of *proximo vere*. That is exactly why it is so important—maybe even for the confirmation of the date of the Cuspinianus speech—that Brodarics’ text definitely reflects to Cuspinianus’ one, thus it was for sure written after the publication of Cuspinianus’ work. Should we presume that Cuspinianus’ speech was only written and published in February, for the reasons to be examined later we “would not give time” to Brodarics to write his own work of reply.

<sup>34</sup> We know a letter addressed to Brodarics which is very difficult to authenticate: nor its original, neither any later Latin version of it is known. It is only available in a Hungarian extract created by Vilmos Fraknói, according to which Brodarics informed Ferdinand from Dévény on 18 March 1527 that he is leaving his camp and joining Szapolyai. (FRAKNÓI, *Magyarország történetét érdeklő okiratok...*, 57–63.) Indeed on 24 March, we already see him in Buda among the participants of Szapolyai’s convention.

not staying all the time in the court of Pozsony before his final change in March. By January 1527, his relationship with the Habsburg party around Maria has become quite aggravated. By that time, he has gradually been excluded from the inner circle, he has not been involved in the consultations and decisions, people have lost their trust in him. This might have influenced the fact that in March he was already staying in János Borne-missza's castle in Dévény and not in Pozsony. In his two letters written in Buda and sent to Poland, he himself gives us the information that he spent the last weeks in Dévény.<sup>35</sup>

Based on a sentence in *Historia Verissima*, we can conclude that Brodarics had already left Maria Habsburg's environment when he started to write his work: "About two hundred infantries of Elek Thurzó's arrived with a few cannons as he himself and the bishop of Veszprém stayed in Buda with the queen [...] *they are in the queen's service up to this day*".<sup>36</sup> As opposed to them, when Brodarics is writing these lines, he is probably *not* in the queen's service—or at least he is not near her—any more.

Let us summarize what has been said so far! About the date of birth of Brodarics's report, the only thing we can firmly claim is that it was ready by the end of March, beginning of April in 1527 and that Brodarics had started the work after 18 March the latest. Nevertheless, as it can be proved that Brodarics was not staying in Pozsony in queen Maria's court from the second half of February, we cannot exclude that he had already started to work on his writing before his arrival to Buda. Thus we can date the birth of *Historia Verissima* to February–March 1527.

On the above pages, we have thoroughly examined the reasons behind the writing of the work and we have tried to date the origin as precisely as possible. However, our reason for doing so was not simply some philology for its own sake. I am convinced that being aware of the historical and personal situation in which the work was being written, provides indispensable help for examining and understanding Brodarics's carefully rhetorized and manifold work. When in the following we are starting to examine the more obvious and the less obvious purposes of Brodarics's work, it will be important to remember that most probably the work we are talking about was born in a very uncertain, transitional period of Brodarics's life, (at least mostly) in February–March 1527.

<sup>35</sup> "Ego ex Posonio, ubi per hos menses superiores apud maiestatem reginalem, dominam meam gratiosissimam, *partim vero in castro Deven, quod est domini Bornemyzae*, fui, ad proximum regni conventum generalem redii..." AT, IX, Nr. 109, p. 111. "Perscripseram circa initia istarum divisionum post cladem illam lamentabilem a nobis acceptam vestrae reverendissimae dominationi omnem consiliorum meorum rationem. *Idem feci aliquot ante septimanis ex castro Deven, quo me contuleram, pertaesus et abhorrens potius ab his rebus, quas impendere videbam.*" AT, IX, Nr. 122, p. 125. (My italics – P. K.)

<sup>36</sup> "Venerunt et Alexii Thurzo ducenti fere pedites cum aliquot machinis, nam ipse cum episcopo Vesprensi Budae relictus erat apud reginam [...] qui in hanc usque diem in reginae obsequio permanserunt." BRODERICUS, *op. cit.*, 47.

*The aims of the work*

There is a question arising: if the commission by Sigismund did not exist, then was it only the indignation triggered by Cuspinianus' speech to give the pen into Brodarics' hand? That is, is this a basically polemic work? Although Brodarics' text is basically a historiographic work, it does contain various polemic elements. Zsombor Tóth, who has lately been examining the text from the aspect of its rhetoric structure, points out that "the memoirs give a report on Mohács in a special polemical situation; it must come through as a story and it must also prove convincingly the «differing reality» in relation to Cuspinianus' *Oratio*, which blames the Hungarians with irresponsibility".<sup>37</sup>

However, it seems to be possible that Cuspinianus is not the only one with whom Brodarics debates, even if we cannot identify any other opponents from the text of the work. In the sentences of the praefatio, Brodarics says the following: *some* tell the story differently to how it happened. It is possible that using the plural is a deliberate befogging, but it is also possible that Cuspinianus was not the only one with whom he intended to argue. If it is true, then who were the others?

I have written above that before the spring of 1527 we do not know any other text except for Cuspinianus' one, which deals with Mohács and has a printed publication. Indeed, we do not know any other text *in Latin*. But we know several papers in German, so called *Neue Zeytung*, which deal with the battle and King Louis's fate.<sup>38</sup> Knowing these, it is possible to imagine that Cuspinianus' *Oratio* was only the last straw on the camel's back. Even if we do not consider Cuspinianus' text explicitly anti-Hungarian, these pa-

<sup>37</sup> TÓTH Zsombor, *Fons vs. memoria? Retorikatörténeti megjegyzések Brodarics Istvánnak a mohácsi csatáról készült latin nyelvű beszámolójához* (Rhetorical historic comments on István Brodarics' report written in Latin on the battle of Mohács), Református Szemle, 2004, 706.

<sup>38</sup> We can find a good summary about the German magazines and folk songs dealing with Mohács: PUKÁNSZKY Béla, *Mohács és az egykorú német közvélemény* (Mohács and the contemporary German public opinion), in: *Mohácsi emlékkönyv* (Memorial album of Mohács), ed. LUKINICH Imre, Budapest, 1926, 277–294; FRAKNÓI Vilmos, *A mohácsi csatáról szóló egykorú újságlapok a Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum könyvtárában* (Contemporary newspaper pages about the battle of Mohács in the Library of the Hungarian National Museum), Magyar Könyvszemle, 1876, 8–14; BLEYER Jakab, *Magyar vonatkozású német történeti népelemek 1551-ig* (German historic folksongs with Hungarian relations until 1551), Egyetemes Philológiai Közlöny, 1897, 334–347, 417–436; HUSZÁR Imre, *Hazánkra vonatkozó külföldi újsághírek a XVI–XVII. századból* (Foreign pieces of news on Hungary from the 16–17<sup>th</sup> century), Századok, 1912, 517–520. The following is still authoritative regarding the source value of newspapers: BENDA Kálmán, *A törökkor német újságirodalmá a XV–XVII. században* (German journal literature of the Turkish age in the 15–17<sup>th</sup> century), Budapest, 1942. About their effect in the German Empire see HORVÁTH Magda, *A törökveszedelem a német közvéleményben* (The Turkish peril in the German public opinion), Budapest, 1937. We can gain information about the newspapers published in 1526 from several sources: APPONYI Sándor, *Hungarica*, Budapest, OSZK, 2004; KERTBENY Károly, *Magyarországra vonatkozó régi német nyomtatványok* (Old German prints relating to Hungary), Budapest, 1880; Carl GÖLLNER, *Turcica: Die europäischen Türkendrucke des XVI. Jahrhunderts*, I–III, Bucuresti, Acad. RPR, 1969–1978; HUBAY Ilona, *Röplapok, újságok, röpiratok az OSZK-ban 1480–1718* (Leaflets, newspapers, pamphlets in the National Széchényi Library 1480–1718), Budapest, 1948; S. Katalin NÉMETH, *Ungarische Drucke und Hungarica 1480–1720: Katalog der HAB Wolfenbüttel*, Munich–New York–London–Paris, 1993.

pers—basically functioning as the tabloids of that age—quite openly blamed the Hungarians with betrayal, collusion with the Turkish, cowardice and last but not least with disappointing their king. The tabloids written in German probably did not stir up the educated humanist Brodarics too much, but when similar accusations were worded in Latin to influence the public opinion of the elite, that could make him react.<sup>39</sup> The rumours spread by the papers could be easily exploited for the purposes of the political campaign, for arousing anti-Hungarian feelings. This definitely came in handy for Ferdinand who was about to lead an armed attack against Hungary ruled by Szapolyai then. In the light of this, Cuspinianus' phrase that Ferdinand will attack *Christ's enemies* in Hungary the next spring (that is 1527) might have a new interpretation.<sup>40</sup> The wording is expressive. Although the phrase could mean the Turks, Cuspinianus is not talking about them but about Christ's enemies. Apart from a few undoubtedly important southerner castles, there have been no Ottoman troops staying in Hungary yet that time, but the attack mentioned above could also be directed against Szapolyai, who was treated as the henchman of the Turks.<sup>41</sup> In the atmosphere of the forming armed offensive, Cuspinianus' anti-Hungarian comments had special emphasis. This could increasingly prompt for action Brodarics, who was endeavouring to hinder the preparing war between the two kings.

However, besides the political reasons, writing the text could also have personal motives, and here I suppose the problem analysed above is getting a special emphasis: when did Brodarics write the text?

We know from his correspondence that on 3 April 1527 he is already in Buda, and he is writing a letter to Tomicki partly for explaining himself, partly for expressing his gratitude.<sup>42</sup> In his letter, he is thanking that Sigismund, the Polish king has intervened in his interest, although he is not specifying what exactly this intervention meant. Only ten days later, he is again thanking his Polish friends for the help in his letter written to Andreas Cricius, bishop of Przemyśl.<sup>43</sup> Unfortunately, we do not know the letter that Sigismund could send to Szapolyai about this matter, but we do know a short, recommending letter, which the Polish king wrote in favour of the royal secretary, Miklós Gerendi in the same year. According to this letter, after the battle of Mohács Gerendi thought that he would the best if he joined Maria's court in Pozsony, but later when the events took a turn for the worse (this is not detailed in the letter) he rather wanted to return to his homeland. As he was afraid that

<sup>39</sup> See more details about it: KASZA Péter, *Bulvársajtó – retorika – történetírás: Megjegyzések Brodarics István Historia verissimájának keletkezéstörténetéhez* (Tabloids – rhetoric – historiography: Comments to the story of the formation of István Brodarics's *Historia Verissima*), Acta Historiae Litterarum Hungaricarum (Szeged), 29(2006), 123–133.

<sup>40</sup> "Ferdinandus Hungariae et Bohemiae rex nullam obmittit occasionem quin proximo vere coactis ex Bohemis, Moravis, Slesitis ex Imperio Principibus et proceribus immensis militibus et generoso exercitu bellum suscipiatur contra Christi hostes." CUSPINIANUS, *op. cit.*, 80.

<sup>41</sup> Ferdinand writes to Margaret archduchess to Bruxelles on 24 November 1526 that Szapolyai has made a deal with the Turk. See: *Magyar történelmi okmánytár brüsszeli levéltárából*, 45–47.

<sup>42</sup> AT, IX, 111–112.

<sup>43</sup> AT, IX, 125–126.

Szapolyai might be sore at him because of the months passed in Pozsony, he asked for Sigismund's intervention.<sup>44</sup> So Gerendi's "route" is very similar to Brodarics's one.

Brodarics most probably was in the same situation: as for some reasons, which we cannot detail now, his relationship with the Habsburg-party has deteriorated during the months in Pozsony, he presumably tried to prepare his return to Szapolyai's court with Polish help. Thus we may suspect some humanist craft behind the writing of the report on Mohács: as a reply to a text of an undoubtedly pro-Ferdinand humanist from Vienna who blames the Hungarians *as well*, he wrote an apology which seems to be extensively impartial with its basically lean style, but still its two basic features are salient. On the one hand, he takes special care about defending Szapolyai against the accusation of betrayal; and by writing the story of the contradictory commands sent to the voivod before the battle, he gives a creditable explanation on why Szapolyai could not arrive there on time.<sup>45</sup> On the other hand, he provides an elegant reason for why Sigismund, who made a ceasefire with the Turkish the year before, could not offer help to his niece in distress.<sup>46</sup> Thus we can read the text not only as a historiographic writing, but also as a classical humanist gift which a writer asking for patronage is giving to his future patron. It can be a telling sign that while Brodarics consequently calls Szapolyai "voivod" in his letters written from Pozsony (quasi adopting the approach of the Habsburg party that has never acknowledged Szapolyai as a king), in the text of the Mohács-report Szapolyai appears as someone who later became a *king*.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>44</sup> "Secretarius serenissimi domini Ludovici, nepotis nostri carissimi, dominus Nicolaus Gerendi, cum post infelicem et infaustam pugnam apud Mohacz commissam superesset cumque rebus suis optime consultum fore cuperet—ita ut homini proprium est curare—existimavit, commodissime se facere, si se ad reginalem maiestatem, tunc Posonii agentem, conferret, ubi existens, postquam rerum omnium seriem longe aliter, quam ipse forsitan opinabatur, cecidisse immutatamque esse cognosceret, constituit secum ad patriam redire et pedibus maiestatis vestrae se subicere. Verum quia interim veretur, ne quam propter eius hanc mutationem maiestas vestra erga eum indignationem conceperit, confugit ad nos obsecrans, ut eum maiestati vestrae commendaremus eamque ei placatam efficeremus." AT, IX, 207–208.

<sup>45</sup> "...quae res [that is, the aforementioned contradictory commands – P. K.] pro magna parte in causa fuit, ne wayvoda ad tempus praelii adesse potuerit." BRODERICUS, *op. cit.*, 33–34.

<sup>46</sup> "Nam de rege Poloniae Sigismundo, patruo regis alia prorsus ratio esse videbatur, quod is foedus cum Turca paulo ante pepigerat extremum excidium a suis regnis, quando aliter inter tot Christianorum principum dissidia non posset, vel hoc pacto avertere conatus, neque videbatur princeps integerrimus et fidei observantissimus contra confoederatum principem auxilia ulla praestiturus." BRODERICUS, *op. cit.*, 27. In addition, this kind of argumentation looks back on a long past then. Thuróczi writes in his *Chronicle* that already Wladislaus (Jagello!) I's defeat at Varna could be connected to his having breached the peace of Szeged, which had been sanctified with an oath. Indeed, the Polish diplomacy probably referred to the former pernicious consequences of the breach, which is supported by count Burgio's report from 13 August 1526. What is more! Even Cuspinianus mentions Wladislaus' defeat and death at Varna and he also connects it to disastrous breach—quasi surrendering in front of the Polish arguments for staying away. (The Polish king's benevolence is important for the Habsburgs as well!) In the mirror of this, Brodarics not only uses masterful arguments to acquit the Polish, but most probably he takes over and recites the official Polish argumentation as such. He could have hardly chosen a better solution.

<sup>47</sup> "Transsylvaniae praeerat Ioannes Zapoly comes Scepusiensis, is, qui paulo post regnum est adeptus, [...] tanta apud nobilitatem gratia et favore ut iam inde a puero omnes eum veluti regni successorem, si illud herede

Finally, I would refer back to the above-mentioned problem of the Kraków publishing. Brodarics obviously did not have enough money to publish his own work, but he had the necessary relationships in Poland. Besides, his text, which was not explicitly but basically still pro-Szapolyai, could not have been published either within the scope of interest of the Vienna court or in that of the Pozsony one. Nevertheless, a text supporting Szapolyai could absolutely fit into the politics of the Polish court, which was trying to mediate between Ferdinand and Szapolyai, but by acknowledging him as a king, it was still supporting the latter to a certain extent. Thus the publishing in Kraków is logical. Furthermore, it was in Brodarics's interest to acquit the Polish so as to gain merits in the court the help of which he definitely needed for approaching the Szapolyai party. Although from a different aspect, but in this way the two indirect proofs, which seem to support Sigismund's commission, also become reasonable (namely that the work was published in Kraków, and that it tries to clear Sigismund and the Polish of the charge of leaving Louis in trouble).

Lastly, I would like to mention one more possible purpose. Understanding the propagandistic character of Brodarics's text, Ágnes R. Várkonyi raised that the work could be written for the peace negotiations in Olmütz going on in the summer of 1527 with the purpose of influencing the European public opinion in Szapolyai's favour.<sup>48</sup> The idea rightly emerges as the negotiations in Olmütz were mediated by the Polish, which would mean a new explanation for the publishing in Kraków and for Brodarics's gallantry with the Polish, especially with Sigismund. The problem, I suppose, lies in the dates. Ágnes R. Várkonyi writes that the negotiations lasted from 15 April to 15 June 1527. However, the representatives of the two parties negotiated with each other only between 1 and 15 June; in April—according to the documents in *Acta Tomiciana*—they only signed the agreement about starting the negotiations in June.<sup>49</sup> Considering that *Historia Verissima* was published on 18 April 1527, and that the agreement about the June beginning of the peace negotiations was ratified on 26 March by Ferdinand and only on 14 April by Szapolyai, it can hardly be claimed that Brodarics, who was slowly getting out of the inner circle, knew too much about the upcoming negotiations and he wrote his work for the sake of those. However, it is absolutely possible that Szapolyai found the complete text suitable for the purposes of the political campaign when Brodarics presented it to him in March. So even if we reject the supposition that Brodarics wrote the Mohács-report for Olmütz, we cannot exclude the possibility that the upcoming negotiations played a role in its quick publishing.

legitimo vacuum remansisset, observarent, et in eum unum omnium oculi essent coniecti." BRODERICUS, *op. cit.*, 24. As another gesture toward Szapolyai, Brodarics pretends as if he did not know that there is a legal inheritor *by contract* even if Louis II dies without a descendant: Ferdinand Habsburg. During his stay in Pozsony, he probably heard this argument many times but still: he never says about Ferdinand that later he was also elected a king.

<sup>48</sup> R. VÁRKONYI Ágnes, *Alternatívák Mohács után* (Alternatives after Mohács), Budapest, 1996, 16; R. VÁRKONYI Ágnes, *Történetírás, kritika, emlékezet* (Historiography, criticism, memory), *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények*, 2007, 637.

<sup>49</sup> AT, IX, 127–129.