

THE PRICE OF ASCENDING TO THE THRONE. SIGISMUND OF LUXEMBURG'S FIGHT FOR THE THRONE OF HUNGARY AND NORTHWESTERN HUNGARY IN PLEDGE*

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Cuvinte cheie: Sigismund de Luxemburg, interfluviul Váh-Dunăre, ascensiunea la tron, zalogire, tranzacție financiară, margrafi din Moravia

One of the key moments of Sigismund of Luxemburg's ascension to the Hungarian throne was the Moravian margraves' military intervention in Hungary in 1385. Thanks to it, Sigismund became ruler of the country, but in return he had to cede the territory between the Váh and Danube rivers. This paper deals with this decisive event of Sigismund's rise to power, and more precisely, with the way the territory came under foreign rule, how it was administered by the margraves during this period, and how Sigismund recovered it.

Preceding events

Charles IV's son had to take a long and difficult journey until he managed to be crowned as Hungarian king, and until he could get rid of the obligations that he had taken upon himself meanwhile. According to his father's plan, he was not chosen for the Hungarian throne, but with the change of the political climate and due to an unexpected turn of events, in the end there was a real opportunity for Sigismund to become the Hungarian ruler.

According to the initial plans of the emperor, Sigismund would have married the daughter of Frederick V, Burgrave of Nuremberg, but establishing familial ties with the Angevin dynasty turned out to be more important because of the Polish-Hungarian personal union; with this marriage the Luxemburgs

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could gain not only the throne of Hungary but that of Poland as well. In 1372, King Louis I made a promise that he would give one of his daughters to Sigismund in marriage. Three years later a matrimonial contract was concluded for the marriage of Mary and Sigismund. At this time, the Polish inheritance was assigned to them, but because King Louis' older daughter, Katelin – who would have inherited the Hungarian throne through being the fiancée of the French prince Louis Valois – died, they would have ruled over Hungary, too. In addition, his father bought the margraviate of Brandenburg for him, which elevated its title holder to prince-elect of the Holy-Roman Empire. This bright future for the young Luxemburg seemed to be unreachable when King Louis died and Sigismund's ascension to the thrones became uncertain. Louis obliged the Polish magnates to take a solemn oath to support Sigismund's claim, but after his death they demanded that Sigismund set up his residence in Poland if he wanted to be crowned. Moreover, some of the nobility openly refused to recognize Sigismund as their ruler and wanted Prince Siemowit IV of Mazovia instead, despite Sigismund's military efforts to achieve his general acceptance. Furthermore, because his marriage to Mary was regularly postponed by Queen Elizabeth and the barons on her side, it seemed that his Hungarian coronation would never materialize either.¹

Under such circumstances, Sigismund decided to use force to rise into power in Hungary², but since he lacked substantial military power³, he had

¹ Elemér Mályusz, *Kaiser Sigismund in Ungarn, 1387–1437* (Budapest: Akadémia Kiadó, 1990), 7–22. Julius Bartl, "Political and Social Situation in Slovakia at the Turning Point of the 14th and 15th Centuries and the Reign of Sigismund of Luxemburg," *Studia Historica Slovaca* 9 (1979): 41–44; Márta Kondor, "Fejdelmi frigyek, választási ígéretek: Luxemburgi Zsigmond első koronái" [Royal covenants and election promises: Sigismund of Luxembourg's first crowns] in "Köztes Európa" vonzásában. *Ünnepi tanulmányok Font Márta tiszteletére* [Under the influence of Zwischeneuropa. Studies in honor of Márta Font], ed. Dániel Bagi, Tamás Fedeles, Gergely Kiss (Pécs: Kronosz, 2012), 277–281; Szilárd Süttő, *Anjou-Magyarország alkonya: Magyarország politikai története Nagy Lajostól Zsigmondig, az 1384–1387. évi belviszályok okmánytárával I–II* [The twilight of Anjou Hungary: The political history of Hungary from Louis the Great to Sigismund, with a chartulary about the kingdom's inner conflict, I–II] I, (Szeged: Belvedere Meridionale, 2003), 67–72; Hoensch Jörg K., *Kaiser Sigismund. Herrscher an der Schwelle zur Neuzeit 1368–1437* (Munich: Beck, 1996), 48–57. Daniela Dvořáková, "Jošt a Uhorské královstvo," [Jobst and the Kingdom of Hungary] in *Morava v časech markraběte Jošta* [Moravia at the time of Margrave Jobst], ed. Jan Libor (Brno: Matice moravská pro Výzkumné středisko pro dějiny střední Evropy, 2012), 44.

² Probably the siege of Žilina castle (Zsolna) was the first military act Sigismund took toward acquiring the Hungarian throne. Süttő, *Anjou-Magyarország* I, 65–66. Dvořáková, "Jošt a Uhorské královstvo," 45.

³ At the beginning of May 1385 he had already started to recruit soldiers for the military campaign against Hungary. Süttő, *Anjou-Magyarország* I, 98.

to ask his cousins, the Moravian margraves' Jobst and Prokop, to intervene. On 9 July 1385, he promised in pledge parts of the margraviate of Brandenburg (Altmark and Priegnitz) for 50 000 Prague groschen for his cousins' military aid. In the same charter, he promised them the territories situated west of the Váh River with the condition that if they acquired these by arms or treaties they were entitled to hold these possessions under their authority until the costs of their military undertakings were paid off.⁴ At that time, Sigismund had not yet been crowned king of the kingdom; he was only Mary's spouse, but this did not stop him from making this promise as the future ruler of the country.⁵ This authorization was at the basis of bringing the lands between the Váh and Danube rivers under Moravian control.⁶

General mobilization had started before the charter was composed; the townsmen of Bratislava (Pozsony) expected the arrival of the main army on 3 June, but smaller numbers of Moravian troops might have arrived prior to this.⁷ The fighting lasted from the summer of 1385 until autumn, when most of the territory had been conquered. With Charles of Durazzo's arrival in the country, Sigismund left for the Czech Lands and returned to Hungary only after Charles' death, in the spring of the following year, in the company of his brother

⁴ ...hie disseit des Wages, es were mit macht, oder mit teidigen oder sust ...abtreten für alle scheden die sie genommen hetten und empfangen, das sullen sie ynnehaben geruesamlich und in gewere desselben von uns gesacht werden un darynne behalden als lang, uncz yn vor die egenanten scheden genug getan werde. Berthold Bretholz, Vincenz Brandl, *Codex diplomaticus et epistolaris Moraviae. Urkundensammlung zur Geschichte Mährens 1375–1408*, vol. XI (Brünn: Mährischen Landes-Ausschusses, 1885) (hereafter CDM), 331; Süttő, *Anjou-Magyarország* I, 94. Four days later, Sigismund's brother, Wenceslas, king of the Romans, gave his consent to the pledge. Dvoráková, "Jošt a Uhorské kráľovstvo," 46.

⁵ There are other examples of candidates for the throne donating domains away or promising estates situated in the country they wanted to rule. Ladislaus of Naples was crowned king of Hungary in Zadar in July 1403. Even before his coronation, when he was still in Naples, he donated away a castle in Slavonia. Iván Borsa, Norbert C. Tóth, Elemér Mályusz, Tibor Neumann, *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár 1387–1424, I–XI*. (Budapest: Magyar Országos Levéltár, 1951–2009) (hereafter ZsO) II, 2226. He made other deeds of donation and even granted privileges to several settlements, *Ibid.*, 2275, 2341, 2517, 2519.

⁶ During the negotiations held at Győr in the following year, Sigismund confirmed that the territory was subdued with his approval *super bonis, que sunt inter flumina Vag et Danubium sita, a nobis obtinere noscuntur*. CDM, XI, 355.

⁷ According to the same source of information, the castle of Ostrý Kameň (Éleskö) was already under the authority of a certain John Nyderspewger, thus the conquest of the territory could have started earlier, Süttő, *Anjou-Magyarország*, II, 228; Magyar Országos Levéltár [Hungarian National Archives] – Diplomatikai Levéltár (Collectio Diplomatica Hungarica) [Archives of Diplomats] (hereafter DL) 42328. In spite of all this, the two margraves were at Brno at the beginning of July and they were present in Hungary only in August. Süttő, *Anjou-Magyarország* II, 228. DL 42328. Dvoráková, "Jošt a Uhorské kráľovstvo," 45–46.

Wenceslas, German and Czech ruler, and his cousins.⁸ In May, in Győr, negotiations were conducted among Queen Elizabeth, her daughter Mary, Sigismund, and the Moravian margraves and they agreed that King Wenceslas should be the arbitrator in the dispute.⁹ The final point of the resolution of Győr touched upon the issue of the territories west of the Váh River. According to this, although Sigismund was the one who gave the territories as collateral to the margraves, it was still not he but Queen Mary who had to clear the debt he had accumulated. She would have had to pay them 200 000 Hungarian golden florins from the royal revenues in Bratislava, Trnava (Nagyszombat) or Šintava (Sempte) before 11 November. However, if payment were made the occupied territories would have had to be ceded to Sigismund and not to Mary.¹⁰ Another interesting point of the treaty is that it names only Jodok as the conqueror of the lands between the Váh and Danube, and as a consequence the money had to be paid to him.¹¹ All this happened despite the fact that Prokop took part in subjugating the lands at his brother's side¹², although he was probably not present at the negotiations.¹³

⁸ For the events, see Mályusz, *Kaiser Sigismund*, 18–22; Dvoráková, “Jošt a Uhorské kráľovstvo,” 46–48; Süttő, *Anjou-Magyarország I*, 101–126.

⁹ CDM, XI, 351, 354.

¹⁰ *Et huiusmodi solucione facta plenarie dicte summe ducentorum millium florenorum auri legalis ponderis, extunc idem Jodocus marchio Moravie predictas terras et castra cum eorum pertinenciis dare et tradere debet ad manus dicti fratris nostri Sigismundi, de ipsis ulterius disponendum.* CDM, XI, 357. Mályusz, *Kaiser Sigismund*, 21; Süttő, *Anjou-Magyarország I*, 133–134.

¹¹ *Item de et super terris et earum pertinenciis, quas dictus patruus noster Jodocus marchio Moravie in regno Ungarie inter flumina Danubii et Wag acquisivit, dicimus pronunciamus et eiam diffinimus, quod dicta domina Maria de bonis regalibus regni Ungarie dicto Jodoco marchioni Moravie vel eius certis nunciis desuper mandatum suum habentibus dare assignare et persolvere debet...ducenta millia florenorum bonorum auri legalis ponderis de Ungaria...* CDM, XI, 357; Süttő, *Anjou-Magyarország I*, 134. Dvoráková, *Jost a Uhorske kralovstvo*, 50.

¹² Although the two brothers were fighting on the same side in their military expedition in Hungary, it remains a question whether they joined their forces in a single army. This is relevant because apparently they controlled the lands between the Váh and Danube rivers separately, divided between them. For instance, the town of Bratislava was under Margrave Jobst's command, while the Szentgyörgyi family regained the castle of Malinovo from Prokop, ZsO I. 860, 1334. Furthermore, on 1 January 1389 Jobst promised 20 000 shock Prague groschen for Procop's Hungarian castles, CDM, XI, 456. This sum was around 60 000 Hungarian golden florins (20 groschen to 1 golden florin), which was a bit more than one fourth of the 200 000-florin sum of redemption stipulated by the adjudication at Győr. This might have been the way the conquered territory was divided among the margraves. On the exchange rate see: Jiří Sejbál, *Dějiny peněz na Moravě* [The history of money in Moravia] (Brno: Blok, 1979), 173.

¹³ In the charter of 11 May 1386 Sigismund, Jobst, and Procop together acknowledged Wenceslas as arbitrator in the dispute, yet the document was only sealed by Sigismund and Jobst, “*Presencium sub nostrorum Sigismundi et Jodoci predictorum sigillis testimonio litterarum*,” CDM, XI, 355. Magyar Országos Levéltár [Hungarian National Archives] – Diplomatikai

Already at this time there was tension in the brothers' relationship; in 1381 they were fighting with each other over the Moravian estates of their brother John.¹⁴ Later, the northwestern Hungarian lands became the source of another dispute, which probably began with the negotiations at Győr.

The Váh-Danube interfluve under Moravian rule

Sigismund's self-proclaimed chronicler, Eberhard Windecke, provides information about exactly which lands were subdued by the margraves:

During that time, the Moravian Margraves Jobst and Procop marched against Hungary with a powerful army, and attacked and conquered many towns and castles of the Hungarian counties situated in the vicinity of Moravia; among these were: Dobrá Voda (Jókő), Korlátka (Korlátkő) Ostrý Kameň (Éleskő), Plavecký hrad (Detrekő), Červený Kameň (Vöröskő), Devín (Dévény), Branč (Berencs), Trnava, Skalica (Szakolca), Svätý Jur (Szentgyörgy), Pezinok (Bazin), Modra (Modor), Bernolákovo (Cseklész), Bratislava and other castles too.¹⁵

As this map illustrates, the Moravian conquest stretched to two counties to differing extents.¹⁶ In Nyitra only the northern and northwestern part of the county was conquered¹⁷, but in Pozsony they managed to subdue larger parts of

Fényképgyűjtemény (Collectio Diplomatica Hungarica) [Collection of Diplomatic Photographs] (hereafter DF) 287486.

¹⁴ Moravian Margrave John Henry had three natural and one illegitim son (*Johannes Bastardus*). Among his natural offsprings he divided his wealth, with Jobst receiving the largest share of it. However, first he fought with his brother John Sobieslaw for further domains, and when John died (around 1381), then with his other brother, Procop, for John's estates. In the end the conflict was solved only through external mediation, Jaroslav Mezník, "Die Finanzen des mährischen Markgrafen Jost," in *Acta Creationis, Unabhängige Geschichtsforschung in der Tschechoslowakei 1969–1980, vorgelegt dem 15. Internationalen Kongress für Geschichtswissenschaften, Bucharest 1980*, ed. Vilém Precan (Hannover: Selbstverlag, 1980), 74–77. Ondřej Schmidt, "Jan z Moravy, patriarcha aquilejský († 1394) a Jan Soběslav, markrabě moravský († cca. 1381) [John of Moravia, Patriarch of Aquileia († 1394) and John Sobieslaw, Margrave of Moravia († ca. 1381)," *Časopis Matice moravské* 132 (2013): 40–41.

¹⁵ Wilhelm Altmann, *Eberhard Windeckes Denkwürdigkeiten zur Geschichte des Zeitalters Kaiser Sigmunds* (Berlin: R. Gaertners Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1893), (pars 13), 14. Unfortunately, Windecke does not specify his source of information.

¹⁶ According to Julius Bartl, apart from the counties of Nyitra and Pozsony, Trencsén also was affected by the Moravian conquest. Bartl, *Political and Social*, 50. Trencsén is situated on the eastern side of the River Váh, while Sigismund's authorization for the conquest referred only to the lands west of the river. On the top of that, there is no any data proving that the parts of Trencsén County were subdued.

¹⁷ Windecke does not mention it, but also the town and the castle of Nitra (Nyitra) was taken by the Moravians. Pál Engel, *Királyi hatalom és arisztokrácia viszonya a Zsigmond korban (1387–1437)* [The relation between royal power and aristocracy in the Sigismund era (1387–1437)] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1977), 137–138. Dvoráková, "Jošt a Uhorské kráľovstvo," 46.

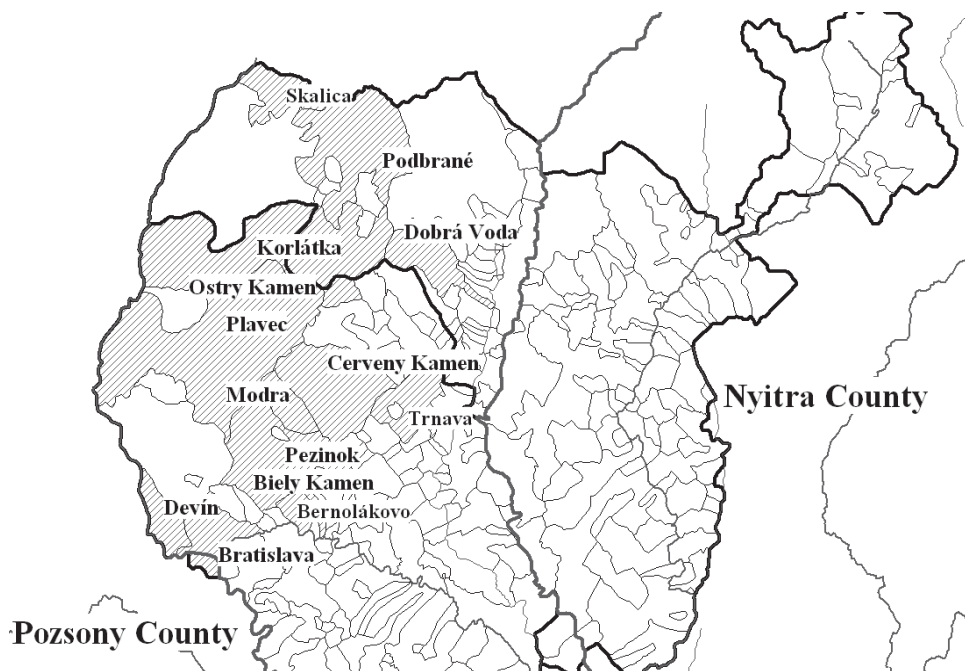


Fig. 1. The conquered territories (cross-hatched) according to Eberhard Windecke's information.¹⁸

the county under their command. Because the Váh-Danube interfluvium covered the entire Pozsony County, it is important to explore – beyond Windecke's information¹⁹ – how deep the Moravian troops penetrated into the county. A piece of data from the year 1388 claims that "certain Czechs" captured the castle of Drégely of Hont County.²⁰ It is questionable whether these "Czechs" were identical with the troops of the Moravian margraves because the castle lay far from the Váh and Danube rivers, and the available information states that they only had territories under their command in this area. Nevertheless, it is almost certain that their conquest extended further south than Windecke suggests, since they managed to capture the castle of Malinovo (Éberhárd),

¹⁸ The maps have been created with the help of the computer program: Pál Engel, *Magyarország a középkor végén: digitális térkép és adatbázis a középkori Magyar Királyság településeiről* [Hungary in the late middle ages: Digital map and database about the settlements of the Hungarian Kingdom] (Budapest: Térinfo Bt.- Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Történettudományi Intézete, 2001. CD ROM).

¹⁹ Windecke himself states that the list of the conquered settlements and fortifications is not complete, he ends his enumeration with *ander slos mere*. Altmann, *Eberhard Windeckes Denkwürdigkeiten*, 14.

²⁰ ZsO, I, 646.

which is situated south of the castle of Bernolákovo.²¹ Regrettably, there is no further data about the extent of the Moravian conquest, but the available information demonstrates that the margraves conquered most of Bratislava County but not all of it. This is demonstrated by the fact that during the Moravian rule Sigismund had deeds of donation for the county's domains.²²

In this period, there were eleven castles in the county²³, eight of which were certainly under Moravian authority. The remaining two were located near the borders of the county, Šintava close to the eastern border and Bernstein (Borostyánkő) near the western border. The map shows that castles surrounding Bernstein (Pezinok, Svätý Jur, Devín, Plavecký hrad) were all conquered; for this reason it might have happened that Bernstein was likewise captured.²⁴ Šintava was chosen as one of the possible locations where the 200 000 florins had to be handed over by Queen Mary. The two other such settlements, Bratislava and Trnava, were under the margrave's command, thus it might be that they selected places for paying the money which were under their rule. After the summit at Győr, until an agreement was reached about the returning the conquered northwestern territories, Sigismund did not visit the area²⁵; Šintava was the only

²¹ Pál Engel claimed that Malinovo castle was built by Margrave Procop around 1386, Engel, *Királyi hatalom*, 108. A charter from 1409 contradicts this, since the Szentgyörgyies stated in it that: *...praefatam ipse munitionem seu castrum Eberharth vocatam simul cum suis pertinenciis per praefatum Procopium marchionem temporibus dudum in pacatis ab ipsis violenter ablatum et receptum...* DL 9485. Fejér Georgius, *Codex Diplomaticus Hungariae ecclesiasticus ac civilis*. vol. I–XI (Buda: Typis typogr. Regiae Universitatis Ungaricae, 1829–1844) (hereafter Fejér), X/4, 748. In his later work focusing on Hungary's medieval archontology, Engel remained silent about the castle's history prior to 1390, Pál Engel, *Magyarország világi archontológiája 1301–1457*, I–II [The secular archontology of Hungary 1301–1457, I–II] (Budapest: MTA, Történettudományi Intézet, 1996), I, 307.

²² John and Desiderius Kaplai were granted Cifer village in January 1387, Süttő, *Anjou-Magyarország*, II, 439. The Cseklészi family received the custom of Bernolákovo in December 1387 and the village of Zeleneč (Kisszelincs) in April 1388 from the king as a donation. ZsO, I, 329, 492. For more about the villages and the custom see: Jenő Házi, László Koncsol, *Pozsony vármegye középkori földrajza* [The historical topography of medieval Pozsony County] (Bratislava: Kalligram, 2000), 199–205, 219, 486–488.

²³ Ostrý Kameň, Plavecký hrad, Červený Kameň, Devín, Svätý Jur, Pezinok, Bernolákovo, Šintava, Bernstein, Malinovo, Bratislava.

²⁴ The castle of Bernstein was under the jurisdiction of the *ispán* of Pozsony, and because the margraves appointed the *ispán* of the county in the period, they should have been in charge of it. There is a charter from 1388 in which Leusták Ilosvai called himself *Lewstachius de Pernstain*. Engel, *Archontológia*, I, 285. Nevertheless, *Pernstain* might have referred to Pajštún Castle of Vas County, which in German was likewise called Bernstein in the period.

²⁵ Pál Engel, Norberth C. Tóth, *Királyok és királynék itineráriumai, 1382–1438* [Itineraries of kings and queens, 1382–1438] (Budapest: MTA, Történettudományi Intézet, 2005), 56–61. On 22 May 1388 there was an agreement about the redemption of the territory.

exception; he met his cousins there twice while conducting treaties about the status of the territory.²⁶ Even if this hypothesis is incorrect and the two castles were not captured, still the great majority of the county's castles, together with the private castles, were under their authority.

In July 1385, when Sigismund promised his cousins the lands west of the Váh River, he not only promised royal estates – which he as king-to-be could command – but essentially everything. Therefore, as expected, the Moravian margraves did not make any distinctions between royal, private²⁷ or church possessions when they entered the country. Regarding private domains, the Szentgyörgyi family (both branches) suffered the most as they lost not only Svätý Jur castle, from which they took their name, but also the castles of Pezinok and Malinovo together with their domains. The Cseklészi family's Bernolákovo castle was also captured by the Moravian troops.²⁸

Because most of the castles (if not all) in Pozsony County were under Moravian authority, it is not surprising that the whole county was under their administration. This is proven by the fact that during their rule over these lands they appointed the *ispán* (*comes*) of the county. The first surviving document that mentions a certain Smil *ispán* of Pozsony County is from 9 December 1385, however it is almost certain that there were earlier such documents which unfortunately have not been preserved.²⁹ *Ispán* Smil can be identified with Smil of Kunštát, who was probably the local representative of the interests of the margraves, as they seldom visited the subdued Hungarian lands.³⁰ The office of *ispán* was a baronial position in the Árpadian period, but during the 14th century

²⁶ First in May 1387, then two years later, again in May.

²⁷ Dvoráková, "Jošt a Uhorské kráľovstvo," 51.

²⁸ Engel, *Archontológia*, I, 292.

²⁹ DF 227039. Engel, *Archontológia*, I, 168. In this document Smil refers to an earlier charter issued by himself, which is why it is certain that he was the *ispán* of the county prior to 9 December 1385, Szilárd Süttő, "Adalékok a 14–15. századi magyar világi archontológiához, különösen az 1384–1387. évekhez," [Additional data for the 14–15th century Hungarian lay archontology, especially the years 1384–1387] *Levéltári Szemle* 52 (2002/4): 33.

³⁰ The two brothers might have come into the country in the second part of July 1385 and they probably left Hungary around the end of October. After this, they came in May only to discuss the situation of the occupied lands. First they met Sigismund in May 1386 in Győr (Prokop's presence here is questionable), then in May 1387 and 1388 in Šintava. Václav Štěpán, *Moravský markrabě Jošt (1354–1411)* [Moravian Margrave Jobst (1354–1411)] (Brünn: Matice moravská, 2002), 807–810, 822–23. Apart from seldom visiting the country, they were not troubled with the administration of the territory. Apparently, Prokop was not involved in the issues of the subdued lands, only Margrave Jobst dealt with some of them. He mainly focused on the affairs of Bratislava, even when he was not present in Hungary, ZsO, I, 464, 520, 634; Dvoráková, "Jošt a Uhorské kráľovstvo," 53–55. On March 1388 he addressed an order to the burghers of Bratislava from Brno, ZsO, I, 464.

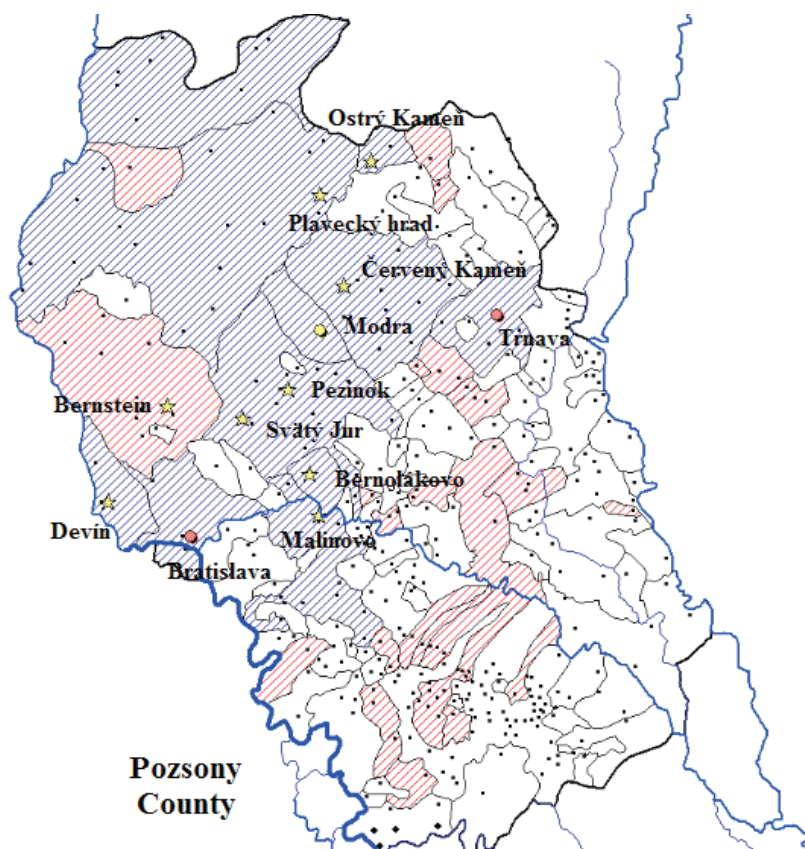


Fig. 2. The conquered territories in Pozsony County (blue cross-hatching) and the lands under the jurisdiction of the *ispán* (red cross-hatching). The overlaps are not indicated.

this honorary title was abolished. However, the *ispán* of Pozsony County was an exception³¹ and usually the list of dignitaries ended with the name of this office-holder.³² Thus, Smil of Kunštát could justly consider himself one of the barons, since he held one of the most prominent offices in the kingdom. For him, this was not a mere title, but he actively took part in the county's administration by making decisions in court cases together with the noble magistrates³³, by giving

³¹ István Tringli, "Megyék a középkori Magyarországon," [Counties in medieval Hungary], in *Honoris Causa: Tanulmányok Engel Pál Tiszteletére* [Honoris causa: Studies in Honor of Pál Engel], ed. Tibor Neumann, György Rácz (Budapest: MTA Történettudományi Intézete, 2009), 508.

³² Norbert C. Tóth, "A főpapi székek betöltésének gyakorlata Zsigmond király uralkodása alatt," [The practice of filling vacant episcopal sees during the reign of King Sigismund] *Gazdaság és Társadalom* (2012/ special issue), 102–103.

³³ Imre Nagy, Farkas Deák and Gyula Nagy, eds, *Hazai oklevéltár 1234–1536* [Charters of the

orders instituting people into estates³⁴, and even by leasing domains pertaining to the castle of Bratislava.³⁵

Smil had another title besides the *ispán* of Pozsony County. From March 1386 he preferred to call himself *comes et capitaneus Poseniensis*. Indeed, there was already a captain of the town of Bratislava, a position that emerged after King Sigismund's death, so it is unlikely that the title was related to the town³⁶ but rather to the castle. Before Smil's arrival in Hungary, there is information about Nicolaus *capitaneus Poseniensis* from 1327³⁷, but because it is mentioned only once, probably this was only a title and not a real office. Smil is the second to have held this title, followed by Erik Silstrang in 1407³⁸ and Peter Kapler of Szullovic in 1413. There is no continuity regarding the office, the only common element that links the three of them is that they called themselves captains when the castle of Bratislava was under private authority. Erik Silstrang administered the castle and had held the title when the was under the authority of Princess Margaret of Bohemia, Sigismund's sister, and Peter Kapler had administered it when it was pledged to Burgrave Frederick VI of Nuremberg.³⁹ Pál Engel was the first to draw attention to the function of the captain by claiming that this

homeland 1234–1536] (Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1879), 315; Dvoráková, "Jošt a Uhorské kráľovstvo," 53–54.

³⁴ ZsO, I, 37, 676.

³⁵ ZsO, I, 445

³⁶ Judit Majorossy, "A pozsonyi városi elit és az udvar (az udvari nemesség) kapcsolatának megközelítési módjai a késő középkorban és a kora újkorban," [Ways of studying the relation of the urban elite of Bratislava and of the court (the court nobility) in the late middle ages and in the pre-modern era] *Urbs* 7 (2012): 175.

³⁷ DL 2452. *Pozsony város története III. Mellékletek Pozsony 1300–1526. évi történetéhez* [The history of the town of Bratislava III. Additions to the history of Bratislava between 1300–1526], ed. Tivadar Ortway (Pozsony: Stampfel Károly, 1894), 140.

³⁸ However, according to Tivadar Ortway's information a mysterious Nicolaus Flis is mentioned in 1400 as *Hauptmann zu Presburgk*, the title referring to the captain of the castle rather than the captain of the town (*stat hauptman*). Ortway's account is the only piece of evidence about his existence, far from being enough to find out whether he was a foreigner, if this was again only a title, or, if not, whether he held the office continuously. Ortway, *Pozsony város története* III, 187.

³⁹ Engel, *Archontológia*, I, 395. Sigismund pledged the town and castle of Bratislava, together with the castles of Gesztes and Komárno (Komárom) and other settlements and fortified places to Burgrave Frederick VI on 25 July 1410 until they yielded 20 000 florins revenue for him. Rudolf von Stillfried-Rattonitz, Traugott Maercker, *Monumenta Zollerana. Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte des Hauses Hohenzollern. vol. VI. Urkunden der fränkischen Linie: 1398 – 1411* (Berlin: Ernst & Korn, 1860), 618; János Károly, *Fejér vármegye története IV* [The history of Fejér County IV] (Székesfehérvár: Fejérvármegye Közönsége, 1901), 493. It is unknown exactly when these possessions were redeemed, but in 1414 Gesztes and Komárnó castles were still in pledge, therefore it is plausible to think that Bratislava Castle was in pledge during the captaincy of Kapler, Engel, *Archontológia*, I, 317, 344.

title became widely used due to fashion or because it may have been a new way of managing castles during Sigismund's reign. Furthermore, he also pointed out that foreigners were primarily the captains of castles in this period.⁴⁰ In the case of Bratislava Castle, it seems that the reason for the presence of captains of foreign origin was that at that time it was under foreign authority.⁴¹ The title of the *capitaneus* was probably an implementation of an already existing function in Hungary.

The contents of the treaty of May 1387 provide further information about how the margraves had extended jurisdiction in the seized lands (including Nyitra County). That section of King Wenceslas' arbitration which specified that Queen Mary had to pay 200 000 florins to recover the territories before 11 November was not met because Mary and her mother fell into captivity in the southern parts of the country. Therefore, Sigismund met his cousins at Šintava to conduct negotiations about the status of the territory between the Váh and Danube rivers after his coronation, when he was the legal and undisputed ruler of the kingdom. According to the agreement issued on 16 May 1387⁴², the margraves were authorized to appoint one of their own men to arbitrate at the *comital* court (*sedria*) together with the county's four noble magistrates, in accordance with the kingdom's customs. The only exceptions were cases falling under the jurisdiction of the royal court of justice.⁴³ Probably this point of the agreement referred to the appointment of the *ispán*, because it was his task to judge at the *sedria* along with the noble magistrates.⁴⁴ As noted above, Smil called himself *ispán* of Bratislava County as early as the end of 1385, thus this might have been only a formal recognition by Sigismund of an already existing status.⁴⁵

⁴⁰ Pál Engel, "A honor," [The honor] in *Honor, vár, ispánság* [Honor, castle, domain (ispánság)], ed. Enikő Csukovics (Budapest: Osiris, 2003) 90.

⁴¹ After these early attempts, the office was established later once and for all, from 1423 onwards George Rozgonyi called himself captain of Bratislava, Engel, *Archontológia* I, 395.

⁴² Elemér Mályusz elaborated some of the main points of the treaty, Julius Bartl and Daniela Dvoráková presented them briefly, Mályusz, *Kaiser Sigismund*, 345; Bartl, *Political and Social*, 50; Dvoráková, "Jošt a Uhorské kráľovstvo," 52–53.

⁴³ *Item, supradicti domini marchiones in comitatibus, quos apud manus eorum habent et tenent, possunt locare iudicem hominem ipsorum Hungarum, qui unacum quatuor iudicibus nobilium eiusdem comitatus secundum consuetudinem regni iudicabunt causas inibi emergentes, taliter tamen, quod ea que ad curiam nostram regiam iudicanda dinoscuntur pertinere, ad eandem curiam remittantur.* CDM, XI, 382.

⁴⁴ This task was often fulfilled by the *alispán* (*vicecomes*). Tringli, *Megyék*, 509–511. There are no data about the *alispánok* of Smil of Kunštát, but there is about Smil presiding at the *comital* court, ZsO I. 37, 634, 676.

⁴⁵ As stated by the agreement, the margraves would have to appoint one of their Hungarian

Another passage of the agreement dealt with possible conflicts between the inhabitants of the territory and the margraves. In such cases, Sigismund and his cousins had to delegate two people, each chosen by them, to settle the dispute.⁴⁶ Concerning the ecclesiastical revenues, they decided that Jobst and Procop would return all the ecclesiastical possessions and stop collecting any kind of church revenues. Furthermore, they would leave the granting of ecclesiastical benefices to the clergy, exactly as had been a common practice earlier. Here, again, the exceptions were the churches under royal authority, where the margraves could enjoy patronage right until the territory was returned.⁴⁷ Besides ecclesiastical issues, they dealt with the problem of private domains, too, regarding which the margraves promised that they would surrender all private properties to their just owners.⁴⁸ However, it was not stipulated in which form and under what terms. Lastly, Jobst and Procop had to assure their cousin, Sigismund, that they would not extend their authority further on either side of the Váh River and they would not introduce any kind of novelty.⁴⁹ The prohibition of novelties indicates that the Moravian margraves' rule in northwestern Hungary was considered only temporary. The authorization for seizing the territory from 1385 was valid only until their military expenditures were reimbursed. A long-term Moravian establishment was not among the options and the possibility of attaching these territories to Moravia did not even arise.

Sigismund, in return for all these obligations to his cousins, assured them that their rule in the conquered lands would be undisturbed and their rights would be respected until the redemption of the territory. The Hungarian king

men to arbitrate at the comital court with the noble magistrates. Smil was not Hungarian, but he was charged with this task even after the negotiations were over, ZsO, I, 634, 676.

⁴⁶ *Item si aliqua dampna et nocumenta inter regnicolas nostros parte ab una, et ipsorum dominorum marchionum in tenutis, que tenent in regno Hungarie parte ab altera evenirent seu fieri contingerent, ex tunc de parte nostri duo et ex parte dominorum marchionum similiter duo, quos duxerimus eligendos, hec eadem discuciant, cognoscant et faciant inter ipsos iusticiam expeditam.* CDM, XI, 382.

⁴⁷ *Item quod dicti domini marchiones omnes possessiones utilitates et decimas ecclesiarum dicaciones et exacciones earumdem ipsas concernentes reddere et dimittere debent, reddunt et dimittunt, sicut alias temporibus aliorum regum fuit observatum, ac eciam collaciones beneficiorum et ecclesiarum ad prelaturas et personas spirituales spectantes, exceptis collacionibus regalibus, que ad dominos marchiones spectare debent, quamdiu ipsa bona in Hungaria tenuerint, nec non citaciones, correcciones cleri, vocaciones ad synodos, visitaciones personarum ecclesiasticarum habeant processum pacificum, prout hactenus fuit observatum.* Ibid.

⁴⁸ *Eciam nobilium bona ac possessiones debent reddere et reddunt cum effectu...* Ibid.

⁴⁹ *...extra tenutas, quas nunc in Hungaria tenent, plura castra, civitates, terras, opida et villas regni eiusdem et regnicolarum tam ex ista quam alia parte fluvii Wag non debent per se aut per suos occupare aut aliquas novitates introducere...* Ibid.

was accompanied to the negotiations by some of his barons and prelates, who stood as guarantors for the contents of the document by sealing it.⁵⁰

Regaining the territory

The agreement concluded at Šintava in 1387 regulated the authority of the margraves in the region, but it did not touch upon the question of redemption. Sigismund guaranteed his cousins undisturbed rule over the territory until the time of retrieval, but the form this would take was not specified in the document. Since the 200 000 florins were not paid until the deadline, whether the sum of redemption remained unchanged remains a question. In the agreements concluded with the margraves, however, there is no mention of the possibility of redeeming the territory in instalments, but Sigismund began to collect money for it by putting royal possessions in pledge.⁵¹ First, on 31 January he pledged the village of Herenen, pertaining to the castle of Topolčany (Teplicany) of Nyitra County, to redeem the castles from the Czechs.⁵² Then, on 29 April, he pledged the castle of Pajštún (Borostyánkő) of Vas County to Archbishop John Kanizsai (and his brothers), who had taken part in the negotiations of the previous year. The king also needed money to retrieve a number of castles from the Czechs.⁵³ Later, on 9 July, he put Kamengrad (Kővár) castle of Pozsega County in pledge.⁵⁴ The original charter of the transaction did not survive, except for a later copy of its contents, therefore it remains unknown whether re-acquiring the captured castles was the reason for another pledge. The pledging was close in time to the two others, and the pledgee was the same Nicholas Treutel who was a participant of the negotiations at Šintava in 1387, therefore it is likely that the money was needed for the same expenditures as in the other cases. From these three pledges Sigismund gathered 8 600 florins, which was far from enough for redeeming the whole territory, but it might have been enough to regain one or two castles. In order to recover all the lands under Moravian rule, Sigismund met the margraves again at Šintava in May 1388.

Even though, Sigismund promised parts of Brandenburg, Altmark, and

⁵⁰ The following lords sealed the document: Bálint Alsáni, bishop of Pécs; John Kanizsai, bishop of Eger and court chancellor; Stephen Lackfi, palatine and voivode of Transylvania; George Bebek, the queen's master of the treasury; Emeric Bebek, *ispán* and judge royal; Frank Szécsényi, and Nicholas Treutel *ispán* of Pozsega. CDM, XI, 383.

⁵¹ Bartl, *Political and Social*, 50.

⁵² ...*pro... debitis quibus Bohemis pro liberatione et redemptione castrorum per ipsos occupatorum...*, DL 96613, ZsO, I, 417.

⁵³ ...*pro imminente nostra et totius regni nostri valida expeditione, presertim pretextu redemptionis nonnullorum castrorum nostrorum erga manus Bohemorum...*, ZsO, I, 521.

⁵⁴ DL 70822.

Priegnitz in pledge to his cousins, they could not take possession of them due to the resistance of the estates of Brandenburg.⁵⁵ Sigismund did not change his mind, but he strived to regain northwestern Hungary by pledging all of Brandenburg – with the sole exception of Neumark, the parts of Brandenburg situated east of the Oder River; for this he needed the approval of his brothers. Wenceslas gave his consent with the condition that the succession order laid out by their father should be changed. Furthermore, Sigismund also had to renounce his weekly revenue – provided by the chamber of Kutná Hora and bequeathed by Charles IV – in favor of Wenceslas.⁵⁶ The other brother, John, count of Görlitz, demanded Neumark. Apart from this, he wanted to change the succession order so that he could take over Sigismund's place. This would have provided him an excellent opportunity to inherit Bohemia in case of the demise of Wenceslas, who had no heirs.⁵⁷ It was not enough to have the consent of the brothers; the estates of Brandenburg had to be persuaded, too, which is why Sigismund invited their representative to hold negotiations at Trenčín on 16 March 1388.⁵⁸

During another summit at Šintava Sigismund finally managed to reach an agreement with his cousins. According to this, in order to restore Hungary to its old borders⁵⁹ Sigismund put the margraviate of Brandenburg in pledge for 565 253 florins, a sum double the 200 000 florins stipulated by the treaty of Győr. A time limit of five years was set for redeeming Brandenburg; if Sigismund failed to do so, then the margraviate would become Jobst and Procop's possession.⁶⁰ The reason behind this huge increase in the sum of redemption was that the 565 253 florins consisted of more items. Jaroslav Mezník proposed that it comprised the credits for the Czech nobles who served under Jobst in the military expedition of 1385, which Sigismund thus assumed.⁶¹ It is even more probable that the 25 000 gold florins that Sigismund promised to pay back to his cousins within five years during the meeting at Šintava of 1388 were part of this sum as well⁶², plus the 50 000 shock Prague groschen (around 150 000 florins)

⁵⁵ Hoensch, *Kaiser Sigismund*, 57; Süttő, *Anjou-Magyarország*, I, 134–135.

⁵⁶ After concluding the agreement, Wenceslas gave his consent to the pledging of Brandenburg on 28 June. Sigismund reached an agreement about it with the margraves on 22 May. Prior to this, Wenceslas authorized Jobst to conduct negotiations with Sigismund about the margraviate of Brandenburg, ZsO I. 500, 559, 622.

⁵⁷ Hoensch, *Kaiser Sigismund*, 72.

⁵⁸ ZsO, I, 467.

⁵⁹ *Volentes tamen regnum nostrum prefatum in suis pertinenciis, metis et terminis ac graniciis antiquis integre et plene reducere et reformare...*, CDM, XI, 420.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 422.

⁶¹ Mezník, *Die Finanzen*, 79–80.

⁶² CDM, XI, 423. Bartl, *Political and Social*, 51.

for which Sigismund had promised parts of Brandenburg to the margraves back in 1385. In any case, the sum – already considered a fortune already by contemporaries – was so high that at the moment of signing the agreement it could be expected that Sigismund would not be able to repay it before the deadline.⁶³

Although an agreement was reached, it took some time until its contents were put in practice and finally brought changes for the subject territories. After the meeting in May nothing had happened; Smil of Kunštát still held the office of *ispán* of Pozsony.⁶⁴ At the beginning of the following year, in January 1389, Jobst could have given the Hungarian lands under his authority to Sigismund. On 1 January, Jobst absolved the burghers of Bratislava from their obligations towards him.⁶⁵ Smil ended his career of *ispán* of the county around the middle of the month, when Stibor of Stiboricz took over the office.⁶⁶ This meant that for the first time since the Moravian military expedition of autumn of 1385 – only from then onwards – the Hungarian king could control it. Margrave Jobst, the oldest male member of the Luxemburg dynasty, endeavored to obtain the leading role in the family, which for him meant the throne of the Holy Roman Empire.⁶⁷ Therefore he tried to squeeze his brother out of the rule of Brandenburg. This was the pretext of the contract concluded on 10 January 1389 between the two brothers, according to which Procop would hand over the Hungarian castles under his authority to Jobst in exchange for 20 000 schock Prague groschen.⁶⁸ If the contents of the contract had been implemented, Jobst would have commanded all the possessions in Hungary under Moravian rule, he alone would have owned Brandenburg. However, Procop did not receive the promised sum⁶⁹, consequently he kept his domains in Hungary.⁷⁰

The last episode of regaining the land situated between the Váh and Danube was a military expedition against the castles commanded by Margrave Procop. Not much is known about the expedition itself. It probably occurred around the spring of 1390, when a law-suit was postponed because the respondent took

⁶³ Jobst permitted Sigismund to keep using the title of margrave of Brandenburg. Hoensch, *Kaiser Sigismund*, 72.

⁶⁴ ZsO, I, 634.

⁶⁵ ZsO, I, 860.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 883.

⁶⁷ Mezník, *Die Finanzen*, 76; Hoensch, *Kaiser Sigismund*, 72.

⁶⁸ He would have paid the sum in installments of 2000 shock Prague groschen. CDM, XI, 456; Mezník, *Die Finanzen*, 79–80; Bartl, *Political and Social*, 52.

⁶⁹ Jobst paid money to his brother but not as much he promised, Mezník, *Die Finanzen*, 83.

⁷⁰ Daniela Dvořáková, *A lovag és királya: Stiborici Stibor és Luxemburgi Zsigmond: képek és történetek egy középkori magyar nemes életéből* [The knight and his king: Stibor of Stiborc and Sigismund of Luxemburg: Moments and stories from the life of a medieval Hungarian nobleman] (Bratislava: Kalligram, 2009), 48–49.

part in the siege of Dobrá Voda castle together with the royal army.⁷¹ Sigismund did not arrive on the spot until summer, but by then the fighting was over and he donated away the castle of Bernstein in a charter issued at Červený Kameň.⁷² Thus, both castles were in his possession at that time,⁷³ but it remains a question whether they were transferred by Jobst or had recently been re-conquered from Procop. The goal of the expedition was the re-capture of the royal castles; private fortifications had to be redeemed at the expense of their owners, despite the fact that they had come under foreign occupancy thanks to Sigismund. The Szentgyörgy family paid 4000 florins for the castle of Pezinok and 1900 for Malinovo⁷⁴, although, Sigismund tried to compensate for their losses, which is why he donated Bernstein castle to the family in the summer of 1390.⁷⁵ Besides the issue of the captured castles, a number of hostages had fallen into captivity during the Moravian conquest who were waiting for release. It was among the terms of Sigismund's coronation that any person taken into captivity by him or by any Czech would be released without making any payment. There is no information on whether this point of the terms was kept, but it is sure that for some reason it did not apply to Thomas (Temel) Szentgyörgyi.⁷⁶ He was only able to redeem himself from Margrave Jobst's detention in 1393 after selling one of his family's castles to raise the money for the ransom.⁷⁷

It took long time for Sigismund to rise to power in Hungary, which did not end with his coronation at Székesfehérvár on March 1387. Gaining the throne of the kingdom would have been impossible without his relatives' help, but it had a price: ceding the territory west of the Váh River. It took years and much effort to retrieve the lands even though the price he paid was not extremely

⁷¹ ...*Egidius filius Petri in obsessione castris regalis Jokv vocati existeret...*, DL 75579; ZsO I. 1414.

⁷² ZsO I. 1543.

⁷³ According to the secondary literature Sigismund managed to regain all the castles and settlements by 1390, Dvoráková, *A lovag és királya*, 49; Engel, *Archontologia*, I, 277, 299, 300, 308, 345. He donated away some of these castles in 1392 and 1394, which shows that they were certainly under his authority at that time.

⁷⁴ ZsO, I, 1334, ZsO, II, 5903. It is unknown when and for how much money the family bought back the castle of Szentgyörgy. Similarly, about the castle of Cseklész we all know that the king gave it in exchange for the castle of Appony. Engel, *Archontológia*, I, 292.

⁷⁵ Presumably for the same reason Nicholas Cseklézi received first the domain of Zeleneč (Kisszelincs) in April 1386 then the custom of Bernolákovo in December 1387. ZsO, I, 329, 492. Dvoráková, "Jošt a Uhorské královstvo," 51–52.

⁷⁶ ...*omnes captivos per ipsum dominum Marchionem, et alios quoscunque Boemos tempore sue pristinae guerre captivos, ... absque omni pactione et pecuniali solutione liberabit... dempto tamen et excepto signanter Thomlino de Sancto Georgio...*, Gusztáv Wenzel, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek az Anjou-korból*, III, [Hungarian diplomatic records from the Angevin era] (Budapest: MTA, 1876), 622; Dvoráková, "Jošt a Uhorské královstvo," 51.

⁷⁷ ZsO, I, 2773; Dvoráková, "Jošt a Uhorské královstvo," 51.

high. Although at the meeting at Šintava in 1388 it might have seemed that he had to sacrifice his family inheritance of Brandenburg for his rule in Hungary, the exchange of the two polities was still highly advantageous for him. However, after Margrave Jobst's death he even regained Brandenburg⁷⁸; thus, after the initial troubles, eventually he was in command of both of them.

Was it a pledging?

Although there seems to be a consensus that it was a pledging in the international and Hungarian literature regarding the legal status of the conquered territory⁷⁹, it is worthwhile discussing this question in detail because it is not so obvious. Approaching the question from the perspective of jurisdiction paints a more nuanced picture. In pledging, the right to the possession was not affected by the transaction; the pledgee held the pledge under his jurisdiction and only collected its revenues temporarily.⁸⁰ During the Moravian military occupation, the Hungarian king's authority was limited in the subject lands. Sigismund could not intervene too much in the affairs of the territory; he did not appoint the *ispán* of Pozsony and probably had no authority at all over Smil of Kunštát, who called himself captain or something similar. The situation is reflected well in the circumstance that after the arrival of the Moravian troops in Hungary, Sigismund visited the Váh-Danube interfluvium only once, after Charles the Short's death in April 1386, when he came back to Hungary in the company of his cousins. Then he issued two charters that were only related indirectly to the occupied territory; he simply borrowed money from Bratislava through them.⁸¹ After that, he never went beyond Šintava until the issue of the redemption of the territory was settled. Furthermore, during the Moravian occupancy Sigismund

⁷⁸ Mályusz, *Kaiser Sigismund*, 95–96; Jan Winkelmann, *Die Mark Brandenburg des 14. Jahrhunderts: Markgräfliche Herrschaft zwischen räumlicher "Ferne und politischer Krise"* (Berlin: Lukas-Verl., 2011), 100.

⁷⁹ Süttő, *Anjou-Magyarország* I, 134–135; Dvořáková, *A lovag és király*, 48–49; Norbert C. Tóth, *Magyarország története 6. Luxemburgi Zsigmond uralkodása (1387–1437)* [The history of Hungary 6. The reign of Sigismund of Luxemburg (1387–1437)] (Budapest: Kossuth Kiadó, 2009), 23; Hoensch, *Kaiser Sigismund*, 55. Julius Bartl uses the word "collateral" when referring to the issue of the Váh-Danube interfluvium, by which he probably means pledging, since he uses the same term for the pledging of Altmark and Priegnitz in 1385. Bartl, *Political and Social*, 43–44.

⁸⁰ In one of his charters of pledge Sigismund stipulated that without his approval the pledged village could not be sold, alienated or given as security, DL 8993. For more see János Incze, "The Pledge Policy of King Sigismund of Luxembourg in Hungary (1387–1437)," in *Money and Finance in Central Europe during the Later Middle Ages*, ed. Roman Zaoral (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 92.

⁸¹ Süttő, *Anjou-Magyarország* II, 361, 367.

had the donation of royal domains of Pozsony County, but these were among the few possessions not conquered by the margraves' troops. Beyond these, the Hungarian king did not have any measures pertaining to the issue of the seized lands, which was only discussed at the first summit at Šintava. However, precisely this meeting proves that the territory was not entirely taken out of the king's authority. Even if the *ispán* of Pozsony County was appointed without Sigismund's knowledge, his approval was still needed for legitimizing it. Additionally, in December 1387 he donated the custom of Bernolákovo, which pertained to the castle of Bratislava, to the Cseklészi family.⁸² The castle was under the margraves' jurisdiction, yet Sigismund could donate its custom away without any problem.

Examining the phrasing of the documents related to the case, we get a similar picture. In the charter of June 1385 – with which the whole story began – Sigismund authorized his cousins to bring the lands under their authority without calling it a pledging. This was contrary to Brandenburg, which was deliberately called as such.⁸³ Nonetheless, in the next month, when the conquering of the territory was going on, he issued a charter assuring the burghers of Bratislava that although he would pledge the town to his cousins, they should not worry because he would redeem it.⁸⁴ Wenceslas' adjudication of Győr claims that the land was acquired by Margrave Jobst, but it does not specify on what grounds.⁸⁵ The document of the first agreement of Šintava is similar; it simply states that various settlements, domains, and fortified places pertaining to the crown of Hungary are under the authority of the margraves.⁸⁶ Nevertheless, it also brings up the question of redemption or redeeming the territory back.⁸⁷ The

⁸² ...*quoddam tributum nostrum regale, in dicta possessione sua Cheklez vocata exigi consuetum, ad castrum nostrum Posoniense pertinens...*, Ernő Kammerer, *A Pécz nemzetség Apponyi ágának az Apponyi grófok családi levéltárában őrizett oklevelei. I. 1241–1526* [The charters of the Appony branch of the Pécz kindred and of the archives of the family of the counts of Appony I. 1241–1526] (Budapest: Franklin Társulat, 1906), 218; ZsO, I, 329.

⁸³ See footnote 4. *Und vor dasselb gelt czu einer grosser sicherheit vormachen, vorschreiben und in pfandes weis vorsezen wir yn das lant, die alde Mark genant...*, CDM, XI, 331.

⁸⁴ *Nos civitatem nostram Posoniensem illustribus Jodoco et Procopio marchionibus Moraviae patruis nostris dilectis pignoris titulo obligaverimus.* Fejér, X/8, 181. This is not a common pledging contract just as the transaction itself was not usual.

⁸⁵ *Item de et super terris et earum pertinenciis, quas dictus patruus noster Jodocus marchio Moraviae in regno Hungarie inter flumina Danubii et Wag acquisivit.* CDM, XI, 357.

⁸⁶ ... *domini marchiones predicti assumunt et promittunt omnio castra, civitates, terras, opida et villas ad coronam regni nostri Hungarie spectancia, que in manibus ipsorum existunt et pro nunc tenent...*, CDM. XI. 381–382.

⁸⁷ ...*dum et quando nos ab ipsis redimere voluerimus, eadem secundum continencias litterarum inter nos et ipsos dominos marchiones prius emanatarum libere et pacifice sine contradiccione et dilacione tenentur et debent dare ad redimendum...*, Ibid.

last charter concerning the problem is the clearest in its wording; it mentions Sigismund's earlier document in which he pledged a number of settlements and castles.⁸⁸ Thus, there should have been a charter that has not been survived in which Sigismund pledged the conquered lands to his cousins.⁸⁹

In conclusion, it can be stated that the case of the Váh-Danube interfluvium cannot be considered as an ordinary pledge transaction. As presented above, the territory was first conquered by Moravian troops – following Sigismund's authorization – and later at some point its legal status was changed by pledging it to its conquerors by the ruler.

PREȚUL ASCENSIUNII LA TRON. ZĂLOGIREA UNGARIEI DE NORD-VEST ÎN LUPTA LUI SIGISMUND DE LUXEMBURG PENTRU TRONUL UNGARIEI

Rezumat

Sigismund de Luxemburg ar fi reușit cu greu probabil să ajungă rege al Ungariei fără ajutorul militar al margrafilor din Moravia. Studiul de față prezintă evenimentele din preajma ascensiunii lui Sigismund la tronul Ungariei și se concentrează pe soarta interfluviumului Váh-Dunăre, care a fost ocupat de trupele din Moravia și ținut sub stăpânirea margrafilor până la când au fost răscumpărate cheltuielile lor militare. În plus, studiul investighează măsura în care aceștia au reușit să supună teritoriile din comitatele Nytria și Pozsony, care au fost limitele stăpânirii lor aici, cum a încercat și a reușit, în cele din urmă, Sigismund să recucerească zona și care ar fi putut fi statutul legal al interfluviumului Váh-Dunăre în perioada stăpânirii moraviene.

⁸⁸ ...in ingressu nostro ad regnum Hungarie cum armorum gentibus pro eorum gratis et acceptis serviciis culmini nostro fideliter exhibitis, ex causis rationabilibus et iustis nonnulla et nonnullas castra, opida, civitates et villas mediantibus aliis nostris litteris ipsis titulo pignoris obligavimus tamdiu habenda et tenendas, quousque de certa pecunie quantitate satisfaceremus eisdem iuxta modum in dictis litteris expressatum..., CDM, XI, 420. Also the previous charter makes an allusion to an earlier charter of pledge, when it says that the territory would be redeemed under the conditions agreed in another document.

⁸⁹ This earlier document could not be the charter of June 1385 because Sigismund only promised the lands to his cousins in it, and could not be the adjudication of Győr either since King Wenceslas issued it.

