

EAST CENTRAL EUROPE:
BETWEEN THE BALTIC AND THE ADRIATIC

OSTMITTELEUROPA: ZWISCHEN OSTSEE UND ADRIA

VOLUME / BAND 2

ISSUE / HEFT 1



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The University of Debrecen
Faculty of Humanities
Institute of History



2026

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Published by / Herausgegeben von:

University of Debrecen

Issued by / Veröffentlicht von:

The University of Debrecen Faculty of Humanities, Institute of History

Address / Adresse:

H-4032 Debrecen, Egyetem tér 1.

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All articles were reviewed through a double-blind peer review process / Alle Beiträge wurden in einem Double-Blind-Peer-Review-Verfahren begutachtet.

ISSN:

Print: 3058-0501

Available online at / Online verfügbar unter:

<https://ojs.lib.unideb.hu/eastcentraleurope/index>

(Editorial support by University of Debrecen University and National Library / unterstützt durch Universitäts- und Nationalbibliothek der Universität Debrecen)

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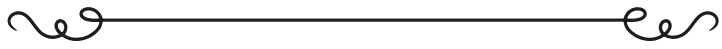
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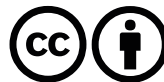
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Articles / Artikel






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Contributions to the Venetian-Hungarian Alliance and Anti-Ottoman War of 1501–1503

ABSTRACT

In my research, I examine the diplomatic relations between Venice and the Kingdom of Hungary during the Jagiellonian era. Through Venetian narrative sources, my study presents the anti-Ottoman war of 1501–1503, a period during which both parties were engaged in conflict against the Sultan. In my work, I devote particular attention to the writings of Girolamo Priuli, a diarist who is less known to the international scientific community. Hailing from a merchant family and working as a banker, Priuli was a member of the Venetian Great Council (Maggior Consiglio), which allowed him to receive first-hand information regarding the news influencing the state's foreign policy. In his diaries, he made detailed and relatively accurate entries that contain a wealth of information concerning the Kingdom of Hungary. His eight-volume diary covers the period between 1494 and 1512, an exceptionally active era for both countries.

In this study, I intend to present the diplomatic relations between the Kingdom of Hungary and Venice through the accounts of Priuli and the well-known Marin Sanudo from 1500–1503. In this context, I will address the financial subsidies provided by the Republic to Vladislaus II for the maintenance of troops, as well as how the Venetians evaluated these Hungarian military operations. To this end, I will utilize source fragments that have hitherto escaped the attention of historical scholarship.

Keywords: Republic of Venice, Jagiellonian era, diplomatic history, Anti-Ottoman wars, Girolamo Priuli

Introduction

The events of the anti-Ottoman war taking place between 1501 and 1503 have already been thoroughly explored by both Hungarian and international historiography.¹ These accounts have presented in detail the course of military operations, the objectives and strategies of the belligerents, as well as the back-

¹ For its most recent summary, see: Pálosfalvi, Tamás, *From Nicopolis to Mohács*. Leiden–Boston, 2018. See also: Fisher, Sydney Nettleton, *The Foreign Relations of Turkey, 1481–1512*. Urbana, 1948.

ground and functioning of the political and military alliance established between the Republic of Venice and the Kingdom of Hungary. Consequently, the aim of the present study is not to refute or rewrite these well-founded interpretations, but to include in the investigation narrative sources that have hitherto escaped the attention of Hungarian historical scholarship. These contributions may shed new light on our current knowledge, making their understanding indispensable for researchers of the period. My primary source base is the diary of Girolamo Priuli, which is lesser known even in international literature, though I also make use of the widely known diary of Marin Sanudo.

The manuscript of Girolamo Priuli has heretofore escaped the attention of historical scholarship, despite contributing numerous additions to our understanding of the era. The Venetian author was active as a merchant and banker during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. His diary, written between 1494 and 1512,² contains a multitude of entries that provide valuable insights into contemporary public opinion, as well as Venetian-Hungarian relations and the perception of the events of the war. The source is particularly significant because it records events from a personal perspective, often independently of official ambassadorial reports, thereby offering a more nuanced picture of the political and social context of the period.

The Background of the Venetian-Hungarian Alliance

The turn of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was an extremely turbulent period in the life of Venice, defined primarily by the Italian Wars and the threat posed by the Ottoman Empire. Consequently, in April 1499, the city-state entered into an alliance with King Louis XII of France and Pope Alexander VI,³ into which they attempted to involve the Kingdom of

² The critical editions of the first, second, and fourth volumes were published between 1912 and 1941: *I diarii di Girolamo Priuli*, a cura di Arturo Segre e Roberto Cessi, Città di Castello–Bologna, 1912–1941, 1, 2, 4 vol. In. *Rerum Italicarum scriptores. Raccolta degli storici italiani dal cinquecento al millecinquecento*, ordinata da L.A. Muratori, nuova edizione riveduta, ampliata e corretta con la direzione di Giosué Carducci – Vittorio Fiorini – Pietro Fedele, Città di Castello, [poi] Bologna, 1900–1975. Vol 24. [hereinafter Priuli I., Priuli II. or Priuli IV.] Critical editions of the last four volumes have not been produced to date; these can be consulted at the Biblioteca del Museo Correr under the shelf mark Cod. Cic. 3784.

³ Pálosfalvi, *From Nicopolis*, 2018. 300.

Hungary as well, since it was the only Christian power capable of opening a new land front against the Ottoman Empire. However, the process of establishing the alliance was far from simple, as can be learned from Priuli's diary. On the one hand, Vladislaus II requested the annulment of his marriage to Beatrice of Aragon in exchange for joining the alliance, as they had produced no heir.⁴ On the other hand, Venice's dire financial situation further complicated the commencement of cooperation with the Kingdom of Hungary, as the maritime expansion of the Ottoman Empire significantly curtailed the city-state's trade. The loss of Lepanto in 1499, followed by that of Modon and Coron in 1500, signified the fall of three strategically important distribution centers. In this regard, Priuli noted that the *poveri* Venetian fathers were in a very dire predicament, as they received no assistance from the Christian world, and moreover, their own forces were insufficient against the Ottoman Empire. For this reason, they genuinely feared that they might lose all their maritime possessions.⁵ At the same time, it is important to note that allying with the *Serenissima* became important for Vladislaus II as well, given that the Turks were attacking not only the maritime territories of the Republic but also its inland – Dalmatian – territories, which bordered Hungary.⁶ Based on Priuli's account regarding this, we learn that various reports arrived from Hungary, such as that 16,000 Turkish cavalry had assembled in Bosnia in the direction of the province of Friuli; which, if true, would pose a serious threat. Therefore, the Venetian fathers made such preparations in that region as their means permitted.⁷

Venice's constant military expenditures, particularly the maintenance and development of the fleet, almost completely exhausted the city-state's treas-

⁴ “Questo Re d’Ongaria con ogni studio tentava che Il Sommo Pontifice, dovesse disfar Le sui nozze, perche non havea fioli legitimi (...)” BMN Cod. It. VII. 130. fol. 375.; Nemes Gábor, “Pietro Isvalies bíboros veszprémi püspök”, In: Karlinszky Balázs – Varga Tibor László (eds.), *Folyamatosság és változás. Egyházszervezet és hitélet a veszprémi püspökség területén a 16–17. században*. Veszprém, 2018. 9–46. 10–11.

⁵ The listed ports were considered important stations for Levantine trade; here, galley crews could rest and resupply with fresh water and food. Furthermore, one must not overlook their strategic position regarding the defense of the city-state, for thanks to their geographical location, they served the defense of the Adriatic Sea and thus, Venice itself. For this latter reason, Modon and Coron were also referred to as the two eyes of the Republic. Fisher, *The Foreign Relations*, 1948. 70–77.; Priuli II. 53.

⁶ Pálosfalvi, *From Nicopolis*, 2018. 300.

⁷ Priuli II. 49.

ury,⁸ and thus many opposed the alliance to be concluded with the Kingdom of Hungary and the payment of the associated annual subsidy of 100,000 ducats.⁹ Consequently, the debate continued for four days in the Senate, an event recorded by both Sanudo and Priuli.¹⁰ Reading the two diaries together, a picture emerges that presents in detail with what difficulty a consensus was reached regarding the accord between the two countries, as well as the reasons that stood behind their arguments. Upon comparing the two texts, the differing positions of the authors become immediately apparent. While Priuli, the merchant and banker, is present as an external observer acting as an analyst, concentrating on the arguments and causal relationships, Sanudo, who himself participated in the decision-making – “I, Marin Sanudo, (...) of the *savi ai ordeni*, was appointed to write a letter to our envoys in Hungary to conclude the agreement regarding the 100,000 ducats,”¹¹ – records the internal dynamics of the political process, the course of the voting, and the personal roles played.

The starting point of the negotiations, namely the resentment of the Hungarian King, Vladislaus II, is outlined in greater detail by Priuli, in which he sheds light on the political pressure that urged the decision. He highlights that the Hungarian King was “very vexed with the Italian powers”, as they

⁸ Jászay Magda, *Velence és Magyarország. Egy szomszédság küzdelmes története*. Budapest, 1990. 194. In this regard, it must be noted that in early 1501, Sultan Bayezid II offered peace to Venice, as alongside his war in the Mediterranean, he already foresaw an impending attack from the direction of Hungary, and a rebellion had also begun in Anatolia. However, the Republic rejected the Turkish initiative, as at that time it enjoyed the support of several European monarchs – the Pope, and the French, Spanish, and Portuguese kings – and the conclusion of the alliance with the Hungarians was becoming increasingly tangible. Fisher, *The Foreign Relations*, 1948. 78.

⁹ We know from the diary of Marin Sanudo of the report by Sebastiano Giustinian and Vettore Soranzo, according to which the Hungarians were only willing to negotiate further on the condition that they receive at least this amount. *I diarii di Marino Sanuto*, a cura di Rinaldo Fulin. Venezia, 1880. 3 vol. [hereinafter Sanudo III.] 566–567.

¹⁰ The reason for this diverging perspective is most likely that while Sanudo maintained his diary on a daily basis, Priuli recorded events spanning multiple days under the entry of a single day, often doing so several days later. Consequently, he interpreted Venice’s diplomatic actions retrospectively, which may have caused certain decisions to appear in a different light in his account. Priuli dates his entry to July 29, 1500, when the assembly likely began, and discusses the Senate deliberation and voting in a single paragraph. Sanudo discusses the events over several days, between August 1 and 3, 1500, in multiple installments. I have retained the names mentioned by Sanudo in their original form as they appear in the text edition.

¹¹ Sanudo III. 573–574.

“fed him only with words”, but did not send the money. Priuli understands the Hungarian standpoint: the King felt that “they are mocking him and holding his crown in low esteem.”¹² In contrast, Sanudo starts *in medias res* with the listing of the names and ranks of the decision-makers, as well as the presentation of the specific proposals of the deliberations.¹³

Regarding the content of the debates, the two sources complement each other excellently. Priuli groups the arguments thematically. As a banker, he emphasizes the economic rationality of the opposing camp, according to which “from 100,000 ducats (...) a massive naval fleet could be equipped”, and moreover, this money “would return to the Venetian subjects”, whereas the aid given to the Hungarians would be lost. Priuli also recalls the historical experience, according to which in the time of King Matthias, the money sent to Hungary “brought little, or indeed no benefit.”¹⁴ Sanudo, by contrast, links these same concerns to specific persons. We learn from him that “*Sier* Lunardo Loredan, Procurator, spoke against (the alliance)”, who explicitly stated: “we will only spend our money and achieve nothing.”¹⁵ While Priuli describes principles, Sanudo records the political skirmishing; “*Sier* Piero Duodo (...) spoke so poorly that he almost drove the water to our mill”, and indeed, he even captures the Doge’s uncertainty and departure.¹⁶

Regarding the arguments in favor of the alliance, Priuli highlights the strategic advantage: if the Hungarians attack, the Sultan “will be forced to divide his soul and his thoughts in two”, as he would be forced into a two-front war. He believes the agreement would be to the “honor” of the Republic, yet he considers it a costly and unnecessary expense.¹⁷ Sanudo focuses on the technical details here as well. He lists those supporting the conclusion of the alliance, “*Sier* Domenego Bollani, Councillor (...) and *Sier* Polo Pixani, Knight”, then presents the specific motion: “Venice should conclude the general alliance and give 100,000 ducats.” He does the same with those opposing the alliance, as well as with those who intend to bring into existence a larger-scale alliance including Western Christian monarchs. For Sanudo, the debate thus appears not on an abstract plane, but as a maneuvering between the various “opinions”.¹⁸

¹² Priuli II. 22.

¹³ Sanudo III. 573.

¹⁴ Priuli II. 22.

¹⁵ Sanudo III. 573–574.

¹⁶ Sanudo III. 576–577.

¹⁷ Priuli II. 22–23.

¹⁸ Sanudo III. 576–577, 580.

The atmosphere of the two descriptions becomes most divergent at the conclusion. Priuli, the external observer, conveys the intensity of the debates, noting that “the Venetian senators sweated through many shirts” during the four-day deliberation. Finally, he records the result factually: “a decision and resolution was made that they will conclude this alliance.”¹⁹ Sanudo, however, describes the night of the voting with meticulous precision. We sense the fatigue and tension: “since it was already late (...) the matter was postponed to the next day.” And at the final decision, the voting taking place “by torchlight”, which occurred “in the first hour of the night”, practically comes alive before our eyes. Finally, he reports the voting ratios exactly: “97 for the postponement, 103 for our opinion”.²⁰

The comparison of the two sources sheds light on how history is written on different levels. Priuli provides the answer to the “why”: we understand from it how the compulsion to face “two powers” and the threat of the Hungarian King drove Venice to pay. Sanudo, on the other hand, presents the “how”:²¹ thanks to his account, it is fascinating to discover that the alliance with the Kingdom of Hungary hung by a mere thread. It was in debates stretching into the night under “strict secrecy” where the personal convictions and oratorical skills of the Procurators and Sages ultimately decided the fate of the one hundred thousand ducats to be sent to Hungary.

The most significant obstacle was presented not by the voting of the monetary sum – as one might expect – but rather by the form of the alliance. For in early 1501, Venice enjoyed the support of several European states,²² and thus they wished to enter into an alliance against the Turk together with them, rather than exclusively with Vladislaus II. However, since this was not feasible, as they were compelled to act quickly²³ and the Hungarian King was also pressing them,²⁴ they ultimately contented themselves with an alliance involving “only” the Hungarians and the Pope. Although it is revealed in Priuli’s text that they

¹⁹ Priuli II. 23.

²⁰ Sanudo III. 580–581.

²¹ Sanudo was in favor of the agreement, for only those on his side spoke *sapientissime*; therefore, the endeavor to reach a solution is palpable in his interpretation.

²² See footnote 9.

²³ Following the rejection of the peace offer, Bayezid II initiated a massive naval expansion, during which 400 ships were built, including 200 light galleys and 50 heavy galleys. Fisher, *The Foreign Relations*, 1948. 78–79.

²⁴ See footnote 10.

reserved the possibility for the King of France and other monarchs²⁵ to join the alliance against the *infideles Turchi* as well.²⁶

The Hungarian monarch began military preparations before the establishment of the alliance concluded in May 1501;²⁷ indeed, he even launched a minor raid against the Turks before the disbursement of the promised aid had taken place. On March 26, 1501, Priuli noted that the Hungarians set out on a plundering expedition into Bosnia with 800 horsemen, but the Sultan repelled them.²⁸ Vladislaus II most certainly launched smaller attacks against the Ottoman Empire in order to convince the mistrustful Serenissima. With this, he achieved his goal, for under the terms of the alliance, Venice gave 100,000 ducats annually to the Hungarian party for the war against the Turk.²⁹ Following the disbursement of the first 33,000 ducats, in June, Vladislaus II dismissed the Turkish envoy from Buda.³⁰ Sanudo documents the entry into the alliance objectively and also publishes the full text of the proclamation of the League in his diary.³¹ In contrast to him, Priuli commemorates the agreement in a more representative tone that showcases the greatness and wealth of the city, highlighting that the news was received in Venice with celebrations

²⁵ They wanted to involve John Albert I, King of Poland, in the League as well, but he had just concluded a four-year truce with the Sultan at this time. Vladislaus II held out the prospect of persuading his brother to break the agreement, but ultimately this did not happen. Pálosfalvi, *From Nicopolis*, 2018. 303.

²⁶ Priuli II. 137.

²⁷ Fisher, *The Foreign Relations*, 1948. 70–73.

²⁸ Priuli II. 117.

²⁹ Under the terms of the agreement, the alliance was to last until the end of the Turkish war, and neither party could conclude a separate peace with the Ottoman Empire. The Pope provided 40,000 ducats annually, while Venice provided 100,000 ducats of support to Hungary so that Vladislaus II would march against the Turk with his army; however, should the Turks invade Friuli or Dalmatia, the Hungarian army was obliged to assist Venice. Fisher, *The Foreign Relations*, 1948. 79.

³⁰ Priuli II. 147.; The Hungarian King's reasoning was that too great a pressure was being placed upon him from the Christian powers and that he had to behave as a true Christian towards the infidels. From this, it is also clearly visible that Vladislaus II wished to downplay his own role in order to avoid a more serious conflict with the Ottoman Empire, as we shall see later on. Pálosfalvi, *From Nicopolis*, 2018. 305.; To this, it must be added that Vladislaus II personally bade farewell to the envoy and provided him with gifts as well. Kosáry Domokos, *Magyar külpolitika Mohács előtt*. Budapest, 1978. 91.

³¹ *I diarii di Marino Sanuto*, a cura di Nicolò Barozzi, Venezia, 1880, 4 vol. [hereinafter Sanudo IV.] 40–42.

lasting three days, fireworks were organized, and the alliance was celebrated with other joyful events, in accordance with custom.³²

Raids without a Strategic Objective

At the Diet held in May 1501, the Hungarian military leadership appointed four commanders to lead the campaign against the Turk: Palatine Péter Geréb and John Corvinus, Ban of Croatia, against Bosnia; and Péter Szentgyörgyi, Voivode of Transylvania, and Józsa Somi, Count of Temes, against Serbia.³³ Among them, the army of the latter was considered significant: according to sources, it consisted of 10,000 horsemen, 6,000 infantry, 1,200 wagons, and 32 cannons, which would have been sufficient even for a large-scale campaign. Nevertheless, the army lacked a clear strategic objective: it did not besiege fortresses, nor did it attempt to defeat the Turkish forces stationed in the Balkans; its activity was limited to raids.³⁴ Hungarian historical scholarship has so far found no explanation for Somi's restrained military action; however, Priuli's diary may serve with important insights for understanding this.

The raids began in the autumn of 1501; Józsa Somi ravaged the lands up to the border of Albania with his light cavalry and acquired significant spoils.³⁵ Following this, he marched to the vicinity of Smederevo (Szendrő), where he organized the defense of the retreat, during which he also repelled the Turkish troops. Meanwhile, Sultan Bayezid mobilized his Bosnian army to head towards Friuli, which indeed invaded the territories of Venice and Hungary: based on Priuli's diary, Vladislaus II made preparations to launch a war against the Turkish Sultan, for the Turks had invaded Hungarian territories. During the raids, they carried off many people and animals, for which every Hungarian lord wishes to take revenge. For this reason, it was judged in Venice that within a short time, the Hungarian King would be ready to

³² Priuli II. 137.; Huge celebrations were organized in Buda as well in connection with the birth of the League: a procession was held, a mosque was built in which "Mohamed's chest" was placed, which was spectacularly set on fire and burned, and furthermore, wine flowed from a huge fountain. *Le lettere di Tommaso Danieri dall'Ungheria (1501–1503). Edizione critica e commento.* Ed. Ferrazzi, Elena. Milano, 2020–2021. 69–70.

³³ C. Tóth Norbert, "Az 1501. évi tolnai országgyűlés. Adatok a királyi adminisztráció működéséhez", = *Századok* 143, 2009, 1455–1481. 1457.

³⁴ Pálosfalvi, *From Nicopolis*, 2018. 306.

³⁵ Pálosfalvi, *From Nicopolis*, 2018. 306.

finally launch a war against the Turkish Sultan.³⁶ Against the Turks, it was John Corvinus who took up the fight; although few sources regarding this have survived, Priuli confirms the information that Sanudo also preserved in his diary.³⁷

In addition to all this, we must highlight the fact that the oft-mentioned Venetian fathers were by no means satisfied with these border skirmishes. Initially, Priuli wrote of the Hungarian attacks in a hopeful tone, stating that the Hungarian army had begun to attack the territory of the Turkish Sultan and had set fire to two villages. In this connection, he notes that although this damage might appear slight compared to the desired results, this action on the part of the Hungarians was nevertheless better than any other measure.³⁸ Later, he noted on several occasions that in the opinion of many, the military maneuvers of the Hungarians were considered insufficient, which he phrased as follows: “there was more news that the Hungarian King was against the Turk than actual result.”³⁹ According to Priuli, the Venetian fathers desired that the Hungarians inflict greater damage upon the Turks.⁴⁰ Therefore, they welcomed the news of the Turkish counter-attacks, because they hoped that the two parties would thus fight each other with even greater determination.⁴¹

The objective of the Hungarian military leadership was presumably two-fold: on the one hand, to demonstrate military action favorable to Venice in order to secure further financial support, and on the other, to avoid a provocation that could have entailed a large-scale Turkish attack. The explanation for these observations is to be found in the military reorganization carried out between 1498 and 1500. With the death of Matthias in 1490, the well-functioning mercenary army dissolved, replaced by a reorganized militia of the portals (*telekkatonaság*) and a banderial army established by the end of the fifteenth

³⁶ Priuli II. 159.

³⁷ Priuli II. 183.; Pálosfalvi, *From Nicopolis*, 2018. 307–308.

³⁸ Priuli II. 170.

³⁹ Priuli II. 180.

⁴⁰ Priuli II. 183. This Venetian perspective must be supplemented by the fact that the unwritten rule of warfare between the Turks and the Hungarians was that the monarchs did not personally take the field, for that would have signified the commencement of a total war. Consequently, only raids took place, as Vladislaus II could not risk a large-scale campaign – despite the Venetians’ desire – for that would have meant the ruin of his country. Pálosfalvi, *From Nicopolis*, 2018. 313–314.

⁴¹ Priuli II. 185.

century.⁴² Although the Hungarian army recruited in this manner, numbering approximately 30,000 troops, appears sufficiently strong⁴³ – which would suggest that the indignation and dissatisfaction of the Venetians was justified, as they were aware of the combat value of the raised army – it cannot be expected of a freshly reorganized army to be seriously capable of engaging a seasoned and well-trained Ottoman army.⁴⁴ However, based on Priuli's accounts, it is clearly evident that despite all this, this costly friendship was worthwhile for Venice. For the Hungarian raids relieved the pressure exerted by the Ottoman Empire on Venice, thus placing the city-state in an economically more favorable position than if it had been forced to contend with the Sultan alone at sea.

The Turkish Counter-Strike and the Road to Peace

In response to the Hungarian raids, the Turks launched a major offensive, during which they captured important crossings and territories. In the territories of Hungary lying towards Bosnia, they occupied several villages and fortresses, carried off 4,000 people, and furthermore plundered many animals, thus returning home with significant spoils.⁴⁵ With the date of May 20, 1502, letters arrived from Hungary revealing that some Turks had occupied a few important crossings and places, and then laid siege to Jajce, which possessed great significance. Vladislaus II could no longer leave this unanswered; therefore, he took the necessary measures, as he greatly feared that they would lose the city.⁴⁶ Thus, the culmination of the campaign was the siege of the strategically important fortress of Jajce during the summer.

⁴² Kubinyi András, *Nándorfehérvártól Mohácsig. A Mátyás- és a Jagelló-kor hadtörténete*. Budapest, 2007. 218–219.

⁴³ B. Szabó János, “A Magyar Királyság hadszervezete és hadserege (1490–1529)”, In. B. Szabó, János – Fodor, Pál (eds.), *Új korszak határán. Az európai államok hadügye és hadseregei a mohácsi csata korában*. Budapest, 2022. 149–174. 156.

⁴⁴ Furthermore, the fundamental numerical superiority, as well as the mobilizing power and logistics of the Ottoman Empire, against which not only the Hungarian but any other European army would have stood no chance, must be highlighted. Fodor Pál, “Az Oszmán Birodalom hadszervezete és serege (1500–1530)”, In. B. Szabó János – Fodor Pál (eds.), *Új korszak határán. Az európai államok hadügye és hadseregei a mohácsi csata korában*. Budapest, 2022. 93–118. 99–117.

⁴⁵ Priuli II. 198.

⁴⁶ Priuli II. 208.

The success of the Turks was aided by several factors; on the one hand, during the winter, they had destroyed the fortress of Levács, which protected Jajce from the north.⁴⁷ On the other hand, a significant part of the Hungarian army had been disbanded during the winter, its reorganization had not yet taken place by the early summer period, and moreover, the treasury was unable to ensure the supply of the fortress's defenders. János Tárcai was appointed to lead the Hungarian relief army, who was only able to repel the Turkish advance – led by the son of Skender Pasha – with great difficulty. The enemy troops attempted to lure their pursuers into a trap with a feigned retreat, so that they could subject them to cannon fire; however, the Hungarians turned back in time, luring the Ottoman cavalry after them. As a result, it was ultimately the Turkish attackers who came under the fire of their own cannons.⁴⁸

Although Sanudo and Priuli reported on the same events, it is worth consulting both sources to obtain a complete picture of the events. Both sources recount that the Hungarian relief army successfully broke through the siege ring maintained by Skender Pasha's son at Jajce, inflicting casualties of approximately 400–500 men upon the Turks and capturing their commanders. The fundamental difference lies in their focus: whereas Sanudo emphasizes the logistical details of the military operation⁴⁹ – such as the date (July 2) and the successful delivery of food supplies – Priuli highlights the diplomatic resonance of the event, the celebrations in Venice, and the moral significance of the victory.⁵⁰

Despite the enthusiasm of the Venetians, the siege of Jajce and its supply problems highlighted the fact that the Kingdom of Hungary no longer possessed sufficient resources and motivation⁵¹ to continue the struggle. Meanwhile, Venice also had to face the fact that the maintenance of its arsenal and the support of the wars in Hungary, alongside other expenses, had exhausted the city's treasury; moreover, the citizens could not be burdened with further taxes. Ultimately, the cessation of hostilities became important for the Sultan as well, as he was struggling with an increasing number of internal

⁴⁷ Thallóczy Lajos, *Jajca (bánság, vár és város) története 1450–1527*. Budapest, 1915. CLXXV.

⁴⁸ Pálosfalvi, *From Nicopolis*, 2018. 316.

⁴⁹ Sanudo IV. 283–284.

⁵⁰ Priuli II. 216.

⁵¹ In the autumn of 1502, Vladislaus II had already contacted Bayezid II, as a result of which a preliminary truce agreement was reached between the two countries as early as November. Kosáry, *Magyar külpolitika*, 1978. 92.

problems that demanded a swift solution in the interest of preserving the unity of the empire.⁵² Consequently, by the second half of the year, the desire to conclude peace had arisen among all three belligerent parties.

The Conclusion of Peace

The conclusion of peace did not proceed smoothly, for although the Venetian envoy Zaccaria de' Freschi had already arrived in Istanbul in December 1502,⁵³ the Hungarian envoy, Márton Czobor, reached the city only in March 1503.⁵⁴ Consequently, although de' Freschi proposed postponing the negotiations until the arrival of the Hungarian envoy, this proved unfeasible. The reality of the situation was that Bayezid wished to negotiate separately with his two enemies and therefore strove to isolate them from one another.⁵⁵ For this reason, the city-state immediately contacted Vladislaus II through its envoys to conclude a defensive agreement for the duration of the peace. This was signed at the end of January 1503, stipulating that the two countries were obliged to come to each other's aid in the event of a potential attack. Furthermore, during the peace, Venice was to disburse 30,000 ducats annually in three instalments for the maintenance of the Hungarian border fortresses; however, this sum would automatically increase to 100,000 should war break out.⁵⁶

The text of the Ottoman-Venetian peace was drafted before the end of the year; however, serious disputes arose concerning the maritime conquests. Both parties made substantial demands regarding the territories,⁵⁷ and furthermore, the Turks also demanded a significant sum of money for themselves. Venice recognized and realized that prolonged bargaining would not facilitate the conclusion of peace. Regarding the delay in concluding the peace, Priuli expresses himself very emotionally:

⁵² Fisher, *The Foreign Relations*, 1948. 81–82.

⁵³ Fisher, *The Foreign Relations*, 1948. 83.

⁵⁴ Kosáry, *Magyar külpolitika*, 1978. 93.

⁵⁵ Fisher, *The Foreign Relations*, 1948. 83.

⁵⁶ Jászay, *Velence és Magyarország*, 1990. 199–200.

⁵⁷ Both the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Venice insisted on the island of Santa Maura (today: Lefkada), the reason for which is to be found in its excellent geographical location. For its control signified a maritime gateway towards Albania and the Peloponnese; thus, whoever possessed the island could exercise control over the region's commercial and naval routes. Fisher, *The Foreign Relations*, 1948. 82–84.

“the failure to conclude this peace now came very unfavorably for the State of Venice, so that this poor city, so worn down, might finally breathe a little, and no longer have to live in war, amidst trials and unbearable expenses. For truly, sometimes it is much better to possess less territory in peace than to hold many possessions but be constantly at war.”⁵⁸

For this reason, the Venetians made enormous concessions to the Sultan; among other things, they returned the recently recaptured island of Santa Maura, as well as the 14,000 ducats found in the fortress.⁵⁹ As a result, on May 20, 1503, the Doge also ratified the peace, which the Sultan had already signed in March.⁶⁰ The agreement between the Kingdom of Hungary and the Ottoman Empire proceeded much more smoothly. Under its terms, all border raids were ceased and trade could continue; moreover, they succeeded in including the Pope and several European monarchs in the peace treaty. Finally, on August 20, 1503, the seven-year Turkish–Hungarian truce was also concluded.⁶¹

Conclusion

The Venetian–Hungarian alliance of 1501–1503 serves as a prime example of the extent to which the late medieval balance of power was shaped by alliance systems between Christian states and the subsequent dissolution thereof. Initially, the cooperation between the two countries held significant potential for containing the Mediterranean expansion of the Ottoman Empire. However, the inconsistency of joint action – particularly the caution perceived on the part of Vladislaus II – undermined the effectiveness of the alliance, which, against the Ottoman army, had qualified as a vain hope from the very outset. While Hungary essentially maintained its status quo, Venice suffered severe losses, forfeiting several key ports, and was permanently displaced from the Eastern Mediterranean region. In contrast, the Ottoman Empire consolidated its position as a naval power, which contributed to the success of its subsequent conquests. Thus, the conclusion of the conflict signified not

⁵⁸ Priuli II. 263.

⁵⁹ Priuli II. 249.

⁶⁰ Fisher, *The Foreign Relations*, 1948. 84–85.

⁶¹ Kosáry, *Magyar külpolitika*, 1978. 93.

merely the end of a regional war, but also an epochal turning point in the realignment of Ottoman-European power relations.

In addition to all this, it can be established that Priuli's diary does not necessarily provide new data; however, it complements and adds nuance to our existing knowledge. Nevertheless, as we have seen in connection with the conclusion of the Venetian–Hungarian alliance, although historical scholarship has long been familiar with Sanudo's diary – see the Hungarian references in the collection of Gusztáv Wenzel⁶² – researchers of the period may still discover numerous valuable sources within the original text editions.

⁶² *Marino Sanuto Világkrónikájának Magyarországot illető tudósításai I–II.* Ed. Wenzel Gusztáv. Budapest, 1869–1877.

EAST CENTRAL EUROPE: BETWEEN THE BALTIC AND THE ADRIATIC OSTMITTELEUROPA: ZWISCHEN OSTSEE UND ADRIA

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The East Central Europe: Between the Baltic and the Adriatic (ECE) is a peer-reviewed academic journal published by the Institute of History at the Faculty of Humanities, University of Debrecen. As its title suggests, the journal focuses on the history of Central Europe, covering the region between the Baltic and Adriatic Seas. This region was for centuries a crossroads and meeting point where diverse ethnic groups, religions, traditions, and political entities interacted in unique ways. In addition to studies directly examining the history of the region, the editors welcome methodologically and/or theoretically relevant contributions for the analysis of historical processes.

The journal seeks to create an interdisciplinary platform to facilitate dialogue and disseminate new research on the region, whose findings are often limited in international scholarship due to language barriers and the influence of national narratives. To support this goal, ECE is an open-access journal, published at least once annually, available in both print and online formats.

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Ostmitteleuropa: Zwischen Ostsee und Adria (ECE) ist eine begutachtete wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift, die vom Historischen Institut der Philosophischen Fakultät der Universität Debrecen herausgegeben wird. Wie der Titel schon andeutet, konzentriert sich die Zeitschrift auf die Geschichte Mitteleuropas, insbesondere auf das Gebiet zwischen Ostsee und Adria. Diese Region war über Jahrhunderte ein Schnittpunkt und Begegnungsraum, in dem unterschiedliche ethnische Gruppen, Religionen, Traditionen und politische Einheiten auf einzigartige Weise interagierten. Neben Studien, die Geschichte der Region direkt untersuchen, erwarten die Herausgeber methodisch und/oder theoretisch relevante Beiträge zur Analyse historischer Prozesse.

Die Zeitschrift möchte eine interdisziplinäre Plattform schaffen, um den Dialog zu fördern und neue Forschungsergebnisse über die Region zu verbreiten, deren Ergebnisse aufgrund von Sprachbarrieren und der Prägung durch nationale Narrative international nur begrenzt bekannt sind. Zur Unterstützung dieses Ziels ist ECE eine Open-Access-Zeitschrift, die mindestens einmal jährlich erscheint und sowohl in gedruckter als auch in digitaler Form verfügbar ist.

Impressum

Publisher / Verlag: The University of Debrecen Faculty of Humanities Institute of History

Responsible Publisher / Verantwortlicher Herausgeber: The dean of the faculty / Der Dekan der Fakultät

Responsible Editors / Verantwortliche Redakteurs: Attila Bárány, László Pószán

ISSN 3058-0501

Printed in Hungary by / Gedruckt in Ungarn von Printart Kft.

Editorial Office / Redaktionsbüro

H-4032 Debrecen, Egyetem tér 1, Magyarország

e-mail: lendulet.unideb@gmail.com

Homepage: <https://ojs.lib.unideb.hu/eastcentraleurope/index>

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Front cover / Titelfbild:

Hartmann Schedel, *Registrum huius operis libri cronicarum cum figuris et ymaginibus ab inicio mundi*, Nürnberg, 1493. (Schedelsche Weltchronik/Nürnberger Chronik/Chronicon mundi)

München, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Rar. 287. (<https://www.digitale-sammlungen.de/view/bsb00034024>)

Prussia, fol. 288v. / Dalmatia, fol. 268r.

Supported by / Gefördert durch:

University of Debrecen Thematic Excellence Programme “The Role and Image of Hungary in Medieval Europe Research Group”

HUN-REN-DE “Research Group Military History of Medieval Hungary and Central Europe”

Humaniora programme of the University of Debrecen

ISSN 3058-0501



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