HENRY VIII AND THE NEW HUNGARIAN POLITICAL ÉLITE IN 1526-1527
(THE ANGLO-HUNGARIAN RELATIONSHIP AFTER THE BATTLE OF MOHÁCS)

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1. Louis II (1516-1526) and his court before the battle of Mohács

The young Louis II was the King of Hungary before the battle. He was a member of the Polish Jagello dynasty. Wladislaw II’s (1490-1516) son was born on 1 July 1506 in the castle of Buda. Louis’s mother – French princess and Hungarian Queen – Anne of Candale died after the difficult birth (on 26 July). But the premature infant crown prince survived. This is the reason why it was disseminated – in many unhistorical works – that the Hungarian prince was a foolish, sickly child; but these do not reflect the facts, and many contemporary writings refute them.

„Louis was a handsome young man [...]”, wrote Stephen Brodarics, „his soul was simple and not at all fierce, he had a wonderfully recipient mind, and he was leaned by itself to an everything true and honest on this point, moreover he was diligent in handling of weapons, riding, hunting and such a youthful things and in other deeds of valour. He was frank, steady and when you trusted a secret to him, he kept that.”

Vincenzo Guidoto, ambassador of the Signory, wrote the next report in 1525: „Louis the royal King of Hungary, he completed his 20th year in the past first July [this is a false fact R. B.], he is slenderly-built, and taller than his contemporaries, his shoulder is broad, his body is fine, but not so fair-faced, his eyes are kindly, his nose and lips and other physiognomy are very strongly marked. He is well developed, strong, tireless, outstanding in the handling of weapons, and in the specifically Hungarian tournament, and also the best of hunting, he fear’s

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2 Brodarics István (c. 1470-1539) was a canon, assistant of chancellery and bishop of Syrmia before the battle of Mohács. He escaped from the Turk, he went to Pozsony, thereafter to Poland. Later he was the bishop of Pécs and Vác and ambassador of John I. Kujáni: „Brodarczsok” (1913) 753-763; Kujáni: „Brodarics István, etc.” (1914) 35-36; Sőrös: Jerosini Brodarics István (1907); Botlik (2005) 47-48., 53; Botlik: „Az 1531. évi krakkói alku” (2003) 582-585; Székely: „Brodarics István, etc.” (1888) 235-236.

3 Brodarics: De conflictu Hungarorum, etc. (1527); see Mohács emlékezete (1979) 13. (hereafter cited as MoE.) or Acta Tomiciana (hereafter cited as AT.) vol. VIII.
neither from cold, nor from hot. He likes the bow and crossbow, the rifle and the likes, which he uses."

Louis's father lived to see his son crowned as the King of Bohemia (in 1508) and Hungary (in 1509). The nine-year old child king was engaged to Mary of Habsburg. Louis II acceded to the throne at the age of 10 in 1516, upon the death of his father, Wladislaw II. The young king became orphaned, nobody cared for him and he was unaided. George of Brandenburg, one of his guardians, taught him for example orgy and facile morals. Louis's uncle, Sigismund I (1506-1548), King of Poland, tried to withdraw him from orientation of Habsburg, but the Polish king was far from Louis's court.

The Turkish menace increased year by year. The treasury of the Kingdom was empty, the gallant warriors of the border ran away from the royal palaces because of the back pay. Suleyman the Magnificent (1520-1566), with his great army captured the fortress of Belgrade in 1521. The Hungarian army passively stood by on the field of Mohács (ca. 135 miles from Belgrade). In the Kingdom of Hungary there were hostilities between the gentrys and aristocrats. Some privileged persons looted the state, free of inhibitions, while the royal court starved. Mary of Habsburg (1506-1558), the consort of Louis II. arrived in Hungary in 1521. The handsome young couple lived for nearly one year in Bohemia.

The danger of a Turkish offensive grew from strength to strength. Louis called the Christian princes and the pope to the help of Hungary, but they were busy because of the Italian war. Henry VIII (1509-1547), the English King, sent subsidy with Sir John Wallop in September of 1526, but too late. Louis II was defeated by Suleyman's army at the field of Mohács on 29 August 1526.

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4 MoE. 170-171.  
5 Bruckner: „Magyarország belső állapota, etc.” (1926), 18.  
6 Ibid. 16-19.  
9 Ortvay: Mária, etc. (1914) 93-97; Kubinyi: „Habsburg Mária királyné, etc.” (2005), 13-14; Bruckner (1926) 18., Botlik (2005) 33.  
10 Wallop (c.1490-1551) was a courtier of Henry VIII. He loathed Wolsey Chancellor. „Sir Thomas Cheney and his friend John Wallop, were determined to break Wolsey's monopoly power, and they seized every opportunity to poison the King's mind against him.” Wallop fought against Francis I's army in 1543. Weir: Henry VIII, etc. (2001) 276., 284., 458; Mackie: The Earlier Tudors, etc. (1957) 320-321; Botlik (2005) 40-41.  
2. Henry VIII and the battle of Mohács

Henry VIII got to know quickly what happened in the Hungarian Kingdom. The court of Henry received many letters, reports and information about the situation of Hungary, but many of them were false.

Louis II sent some letters to Henry VIII, in which he implored help, however the English King had very important cases in Italy. Henry’s ambassadors followed with attention, most of all, the eventful Italian cases, too. Girolamo Ghinucci and Sir Gregory Casale wrote to Cardinal Thomas Wolsey from Rome on 4 August 1526 that the Turk had arrived at Belgrade, and the conquering army got across the Sava River.

Antonio Giovanni da Burgio sent three letters from Buda. The last letter, which had been written before the battle of Mohács, was sent to Peter Vannes on


15 Girolamo Ghinucci (Jeremy Ghinucci, 1480-1541) was a papal administrator, later diplomat and Cardinal. Ghinucci became bishop of Ascoli in 1512. He was the bishop of Worcester from 1522 to 1535, and the papal nuncio in England. Ghinucci was the English ambassador to Spain in 1526. He advised on Henry VIII’s moves to divorce Catherine of Aragon. (Henry had the marriage annulled in 1533.) Pollard: *Henry VIII* (1902); Mattingly: *Catherine of Aragon* (1950), 123-173.


17 B.L. Cotton MSS.: Vitellius B. VIII. 108.


19 Nandoralba, Beograd (SCG), in medieval Hungarian: Nándorfejérvár or Nándorfehérvár or Landorfejérvár etc. (Original sense: ‘Whitecastle’.)

20 Burgio (?-1538) was the nuncio in Hungary before the battle of Mohács (from 1523 to 1526). He escaped with Maria of Habsburg from Buda to Pozsony, thereafter he went to Rome. Burgio was in conference in London from 1530 to 1533. Bartoniek: *Mohács Magyarországa* (1926), 33-124; MoE. 179-180.

21 The humanist Vannes (c. 1488-1563) became secretary to Wolsey and Henry VIII in
19 August 1526. The enemy occupied the citadel of Pétervárad (Petrovaradin) by that time, and built a long and strait bridge next to Eszék (Osijek).

Louis II encamped at Tolna, waiting for aid from Poland, Bohemia, Germany and England, but his army came dilatorily. Lots of Hungarian nobles still weren’t under arms, example John Szapolyai, (or: John of Szapolya) vaivode of Transylvania, was late as well. Louis’s army made raise difficulties against the enemy’s crossing.

The next news was sent by Lee to Wolsey Chancellor from Granada on 4 September that the Hungarian army had been defeated by the Turks. Next day (on 5 September) Burgio wrote from Pozsony (Bratislava) – the significant city of North-west-Hungary – to London. He had reason to believe that the young Louis king was certainly dead. Sir Brian Tuke reported John Hacket from Antwerp on 14 September that Suleyman’s army had defeated the Hungarians, and the King of Hungary was dead. Tuke wrote that, after all, if Louis II had had more money, he would have destroyed the Turks. John III (1521-1557), King of Portugal, sent an ambassador with a credit about significant amount of money (50,000 ducats) to Hungary through France, but Francis I (1515-1547), King of France, kept him back. The reason of this was that the Portuguese ambassador was identical with an Emperor’s ambassador. Hacket wrote again four days later, he meditated in his letter upon how he could help to the King of Hungary, and how England could send money the Hungarians. Then came a report from Hungary on 20 September 1526. This two-page report says „the Turk entered Buda on the 9th, and killed everyone over 13 or 14 years of age. He kept no prisoners, but sent those under age...”

1517. He was the ambassador of Henry in Rome. Weir (2001), 149.


Henry’s ambassador to Spain.

B.L. Cotton MSS.: Vespasianus C. III. 255.

L&P. vol. 4. 1098-1099. cf. MoE. 242-244.


Tuke (c.1472-1545) was a secretary to Henry VIII, and clerk of the council at Calais in 1510. Later he was Henry’s Treasurer of the Chamber and sheriff of Essex and Hertfordshire. „Tuke was a cultivated humanist and correspondent of Erasmus, and a fussy civil servant who liked things to be done the traditional way. In 1532, he wrote an elegant preface to the first printed edition of Chaucer’s Canterbury Tales.” Weir (2001), 149-150, 236; Pollard: „Tuke” (reprint 1993), 1222-1223.

B.L. Cotton MSS.: Galba B. IX. 27.

Ibid. Galba B. IX. 29.

„Nova Hungarica allata ex Pettovia die XX. Septembris.” L&P. vol. 4. 1114.
to Turkey. He has burnt many towns. The King, after his defeat, was drowned in a
marsh; whither his horse had carried him. Those lords of Hungary who have
escaped are not making any attempt to recruit the army, but are committing worse
cruelties than the Turks, spoiling and burning their own domains. [...] The vaivode
of Transylvania has 50,000 men-at-arms, but dares not leave his own country, for
fear of the vaivode of Wallachia, who, though a Hungarian, is half an Infidel. The
Turk had in his army 300,000 men, and sent forward to the first engagement
70,000 men. In the van were 30,000 horses. The Turks began the attack, and met
with a rather hot reception. When they came near the Turkish guns they divided
into wings. For a whole hour the firing was furious, and the Hungarians were
routed, with great slaughter of bishops, lords, and great men”.

The letter of Ghinucci to Wolsey\(^3\) was better than the report from Hungary
on 20 September. The bishop of Worcester wrote that Louis’s dead body had not
been found since the battle. Excellent good facts were in this letter about the
Suleyman’s army. The ambassador of England was informed that the Turkish force
killed 15 to 20 thousand men in the battle, and 20 to 25 thousand Hungarian people
were killed after the victory. The enemy’s army consisted of 150,000 light horses
and 30,000 foot\(^3\) besides the Turk had 800 cannons and 15,000 arquebuses.
Against this, the Hungarian army consisted of only 30,000 light and 10,000 heavy
horse, and 15,000 foot. The English ambassador fairly estimated that the
Transylvanian army maximum 15,000 horses were coming toward Mohács during
the battle. Margaret of Savoy, daughter of Maximilian I, wrote to Henry VIII about
from the case of Hungary on 20 September 1526.\(^3\) She thought that Louis II
wasn’t dead, and he could escape.\(^3\)

Henry’s ambassador to Rome wrote to Peter Vannes about the news from
Hungary on 23 September.\(^3\) Casale informed Vannes that Clement VII wanted to
convene a peace conference with Charles V, Francis I and Wolsey, between
Narbonne and Perpignan. Casale hoped that with Wolsey’s mediation this peace
would be concluded, and after that an expedition arranged to drive the Turk out of
the Hungarian Kingdom. Casale thought that after the peace everybody and
everything could be ready for a holy sacred enterprise against Suleyman’s army
and for the liberation of Hungary. Casale hoped that the Turk would be forced out
of Hungary. That was the last hope of Hungary. Casale understood that the Turkish
naval force hadn’t great ships, and they didn’t use ordnance and gun for infantry.

\(^3\) Ibid.
\(^3\) From Rome, on 23 September. B.L. Cotton MSS.: Vitellius B. VIII. 129.
\(^3\) “XXX\(^m\) peditum”
\(^3\) B.L. Cotton MSS.: Galba B. IX. 31.
\(^3\) B.L. Cotton MSS.: Vitellius B. VIII. 126.
The ambassador’s information was not reliable. The army of the Turks was strong and versatile many-sided, because Suleyman had very good and fast light cavalry, excellent strong janissary infantry with arquebuses and early rifle, perhaps the best heavy artillery of the world, only the fleet was the vulnerable point of the army.\(^\text{38}\)

Expert’s report of Casale was unfortunately mistaken on the European peace, therefore those Hungarians people who were the protectors of John I (1526-1540), and who were opposed to the Habsburgs, remained without aid. Other English ambassadors were not so much optimistic as Casale.

„All Christendom is in danger from the Turk, now that the King of Hungary has been defeated and slain”,\(^\text{39}\) wrote Campeggio\(^\text{40}\) to Henry VIII from Rome on 24 September. Clerk\(^\text{41}\) sent news from Hungary to chancellor Wolsey\(^\text{42}\) that the Turk had stricken in the battle and „God forbid they should be true”,\(^\text{43}\) prayed for Christendom in his letter, taken the Louis King prisoner.

Burth received a letter from John Hastings that „the Turk has either slain or taken the King of Hungary and his whole army”\(^\text{44}\) The events in Hungary shortly influenced on the Italian war, because Ferdinand of Habsburg entered into competition with John Szapolyai for the royal power.\(^\text{45}\) Therefore the Archduke redeployed his Italian army on Bohemia, and later on Hungary.\(^\text{46}\) He explained that with his army he wanted to fight against the Turk — and this was promised for the Hungarian nobles too —,\(^\text{47}\) but Ferdinand did not lift a finger in this case, he was satisfied with the occupation of Hungary, and his ambassadors initiated armistice negotiations with Suleyman.\(^\text{48}\) The French army observed the Italian military movements of the Archduke. „After regretting the calamity of Hungary and death of the King [Louis], he says the Archduke had recalled the soldiers whom he was

\(^{38}\) Brummett: Ottoman Seapower, etc. (1994), 149-150.


\(^{40}\) Lorenzo Campeggio (c.1472-1539) was an Italian humanist and Cardinal, bishop of Bologna from 1523 to 1525. He was the papal legate on Henry’s divorce from Catherine of Aragon in London. Campeggio was one of them who excommunicated the English King in 1535.

\(^{41}\) John Clerk (?-1541) was a Doctor of Laws, archdeacon of Colchester, dean of Windsor and judge in the Court of Star Chamber, and Dean of the Chapel Royal in 1519. He was an English diplomatist and the bishop of Bath and Wells from 1523. Weir (2001) 255.

\(^{42}\) L&P. vol. 4. 1122. (From Orleans on 27 September 1526.)

\(^{43}\) Cf. B.L. Cotton MSS.: Caligula D. IX. 250.

\(^{44}\) L&P. vol. 4. 1123.


\(^{46}\) Ibid. 587.


\(^{48}\) Két tárgyalás Sztabulban (ed. Barta 1996) 19; Turetschek: Die Türkenpolitik Ferdinands I, etc. (1968), passim.
going to have sent to Italy, to defend his own frontier against the Turk.”

Sir John Wallop left London for Hungary in early September 1526 to meet the King of Hungary and the Hungarian nobles. Wallop’s task was the permanent intelligence about the true news of Hungary. He directly reported to Wolsey. Wallop arrived to Antwerp in the middle of September, and then he went on toward central Germany. Wallop wrote a letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury from Cologne on the Rhine at the end of the month. The English ambassador waited for Sir Hermann Rynge in the town of Cologne. Rynge brought the news from Hungary. Wallop wrote that some said that the King of Hungary had died in the battle, certain people said that Louis II had drowned in the river Danube, “and others that he escaped into Bohemians.” Rynge sent “a book of what has been concluded at Spires. The Archduke has requested the bishop of Mayence, Trere, and Cologne, and the count Palatine to levy immediately the money granted at Spires for resistance against the Turk.” (A year later it was proved that the Archduke this money had been sent against John I the King of Hungary.)

It is probable that Wallop wrote to Wolsey on 6 October, in this letter sent to the Cardinal two different bulletins, and one of them was written in Latin, the other in German. The first letter was written by somebody, that 30,000 men joined to the vaivode — who was the son of Stephen Szapolyai, the earlier palatine of Hungary (from 1492 to 1499) — and his intention was to the king. There is not exact information on how many people went with John Szapolya, but some thought this force had consisted of 6,000 light cavalry. 

Who went missint after the battle of Mohács? „The bishop of Warden, Funffkirchen, and Raab, the Affi Jancosch, Sarchani Dunbrosch, Corlatzky, Philip Móré (Móré Fülöp) was a provost of Eger (in 1510), secretary of King Louis II (1512), bishop of Pécs (Funffkirchen) from 1523 to 1526 and sheriff of county of Baranya. MOL. Df. 210 750., Df. 246 285., Dl. 56 396; Botlik (2003), 582; Botlik (2005), 49-53. He was Blasé Paksy (Paksy Balázs) from 1525 to 1526. MOL. Df. 47 609., 48 996., Df.

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49 This letter tidings from France on 28 September. („Ex litteris nuncii Gallia diei ultimi Septembris in Bles.”) L&P. vol. 4. 1134.
50 Angyal: „Erdély politikai érintkezése Angliával” (1900), 310.
52 Ibid. cf. L&P. vol. 4. 1126.
53 L&P. vol. 4. 1127.
54 B.L. Cotton MSS.: Vespasianus F. I. 18.
55 Cartledge: The Will to Survive, etc. (2006), 73-79.
57 Francis Perényi (Perényi Ferenc) was a canon, later bishop of Transylvania. Perényi became c.1519 the bishop of Várad and he was the sheriff of county of Bihar before the battle. See Magyar Országos Levéltár (hereafter cited as MOL.) Diplomatikai Fényképgyűjtemény (Df.) 247 555., 229 677., 209 963 and Diplomatikai Levéltár (Dl.) 60 941. Botlik (2003) 582.
58 Philip Móré (Móré Fülöp) was a provost of Eger (in 1510), secretary of King Louis II (1512), bishop of Pécs (Funffkirchen) from 1523 to 1526 and sheriff of county of Baranya. MOL. Df. 210 750., Df. 246 285., Dl. 56 396; Botlik (2003), 582; Botlik (2005), 49-53.
59 He was Blasé Paksy (Paksy Balázs) from 1525 to 1526. MOL. Df. 47 609., 48 996., Df.
Setzi Thanevisch, Unsorg Ferentzs, Tuhrzon Niclaus, Segethe, Mychwoll, Cedmemki, the bishop of Grayn (returned). The Waywoda is said to have written 'am Recasch gen oven aus', in the hope of becoming king [Louis]. It is to be feared the Turk will gain possession of all Hungary, and make further aggression if not withstood. The Turk defeated the king of Hungary on 29 August; he maintained the field, and inflicted great lesses upon the Hungarians; many great lords perished.

His Majesty got during the battle into a morass or ditch into which his horse had fallen with him, and the haste to get ever it was so great and violent that the person who rode with his Majesty could not help him, and thus he was killed; he is said to have fought bravely in the battle, so that his horse was wounded, and he was impeded in his flight; in this manner many of the most eminent noblemen were slain and perished.

Two long letters arrived to London from Hungary about the Turk at the end of October. The first letter was abstracted from Rorario's letter to Peter Vannes.
The Turk had set out towards Peter Varadin, and sent artillery and an army towards Constantinople. He had on the Danube 3,000 boats laden with Hungarian spoil. Among other things, bells of brass and all kinds of iron goods, 5,000 Hungarian prisoners, and 30 ships laden with Jews. It is thought the Vayvode has agreed with the Turk, and that the latter intends to set him up as King, for the Vayvode’s forces were marching towards Buda, and 300 men were occupying the castle. […] News has come to Aragusia, of Oct. 14, from Samandria, a town on the Danube, two days distance from Belgrade towards Constantinople, that the Turk had arrived there, leaving Hungary, as he had killed all the people except 100,000 whom he was taking with him, that he was returning to Constantinople because he had heard that one of his Sangiaes had been defeated on the confines of the Sophy. He did not wish the castle of Buda to be plundered, but gave it in custody to 60 Hungarians, making them swear to deliver it faithfully to their King. Of the 72 counties of Hungary, 12 have been plundered, and Buda and the other places visited by the Turk have been burnt."

Chancellor Stephen Brodarics wrote the second letter from Pozsony on 3 October. Brodarics had a narrow escape from the battle; during the fight he lost all his equipment. He returned only with a gown and half a pair of footwear to Pozsony. The chancellor addressed his letter to the palatine and captain of Cracow, who was the chancellor of the Polish King at the same time. The letter is a very important source. Brodarics thought that the Turk intended to attack the rest of Hungary next spring. He distrusted the aid of European monarchs, because he knew well that Europe was in discord. Brodarics gave a list of those who died a hero’s death at Mohács, the following bishops: „Gran, Colocz, Funfkirchen, Varadin, Javarin and Bosnia, and the following laity: the brother of the vaivode, Dragfy, Corlaczky, Trepka, Gabriel Peryimy, Hampo, son of..."
Thomas Jeecki, Fras. Orzaagh, Tarchay, Fekete Mihal, Johannes Paxy, Podmaniczky; many of the Bohemians. The palatine escaped to Pozsony, and the ban of Croatia got back.  

Mary of Habsburg, the dowager queen, could issue order to search for the corpse of her husband just after the retreat of the Turk (towards the middle of October). The body was found by the Bohemians royal chamberlain of Louis II. In the middle of October in 1526, the death of the young king was obvious to all the world in Francis Sárffy’s report, which fact is misdated in Hungarian historiography. The young King was buried at Székesfehérvár.

3. Henry VIII and the new Hungarian political élite  
The Polish court could not know Louis was dead at that time. Poland renewed the relations with John Szapolyai after Louis had lost the battle of Mohács. Sigismund I sent a letter to his nephew in which he wrote that he could rely on Szapolyai as onetime relative. John took the opportunity and he had crowned himself king on 11 November 1526 and made a promise to the Polish King that Sigismund August would succeeded him on the throne – if he died without any male heir. Hereupon the Polish helped John I King of Hungary a lot: they organized peace conferences for him; gave a well-educated diplomat to him as an assistant (Hieronim Łaski), and supported him with army as well against Ferdinand of Habsburg. The Archduke kept up a claim to the Hungarian Kingdom.

83 Ondrej Trepka (Andrew Trepka) was a Bohemian Royal Guardsman. MoE. 45.
84 See the 67th note.
85 Hampó Ferenc (Francis Hampó). MoE. 46.
86 Széchy Tamás (Thomas Széchy). See the 63th note.
87 See the 64th note.
88 See the 67th note.
89 Fekete Mihály (Michael Fekete) escaped after the battle. MoE. 45.
90 Paksy János (John Paksy) MoE. 46.
91 See the 67th note.
92 Stephen Báthory of Ecsed (ecsedi Báthory István, 1490-1530) became palatine on 28 May 1519. MOL. Dl. 89 137. Botlik (2005), 31, 44.
94 L&P. vol. 4. 1147.
95 Botlik (2005), 41.
(Eventually the Jagelló’s entered into a domestic relationship with the Habsburg dynasty in 1515. This agreement had an influence in 1526 on not only Poland but also on Hungary.)

A league was formed at Cognac on 22 May 1526, composed of France, England, the Papacy, Venice, Milan and Florence. John I joined the league on 2 July 1527. So the Kingdom of John in King John’s days was allied with England. John I called Henry VIII to help him against the Turk and later against Ferdinand of Habsburg.

Chancellor Wolsey gave an account of about the new Hungarian political elite to Henry VIII from his residence in Westminster: „I have received confirmation of the news from Hungary, and of the finding and burying of the King’s [Louis] corpse. A nobleman of great power there (John Zapol) has gathered a large army to oppose the Turk.”

Lee sent a letter to Wolsey, attached to a copy of a letter from the Nuncio in Hungary about what happened after the decisive defeat. He wrote that the vaivode „kept himself from the battle, which increases a suspicion that he had secret intelligence with the Turk.” The charge brought against him was injustice, because John I received opposite orders from the King before the battle. The rumour was also false by the Nuncio and the Archduke that the vaivode had secret intelligence with the Turk. Perhaps Szapolyai was in a business relationship with the Turk but nothing else. For example Tomori – the general of the Hungarian forces at Mohács – was in a business relationship with the Turk too. He made money of his goods against the Turk. He was in an awkward situation because he sold his goods to the Turk to have money, which he spent on the war against the Turk.

Sir John Wallop sent a report to Wolsey from Cologne on the Rhine again that the Turk hadn’t taken Vienna. But at Buda „he has killed all old and impotent people and those under age, making the rest slaves. He has thrown down divers castles, and is said to be making bridges over the Duno towards Austria, Styria, Carneton, and Crane.”

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103 About the Anglo-French alliance see: Scarisbrick (1972), 142-143; Mackie (1957), 316-317.
104 Correctly: John Szapolyai.
106 The address: „To my Lord Legate’s grace.” B.L. Cotton MSS.: Vespasianus C. III. 280.
107 L&P. vol. 4. 1154.
109 Danube river.
110 L&P. vol. 4. 1154.
The letter sent in early November from Henry VIII to Lee is a good read.111 "They must say", wrote the English King, "that the [French] King is glad to hear of the Emperor's zeal for the tranquillity of Christendom, the extirpation of horesy, and resistance against the Turks, who have gained possession of the kingdom of Hungary, which has always been a defence against them. They now intend to subjugate the whole of Christendom, which they will assuredly do unless Christian princes unite to expel them. There is no time to delay the conclusion of a universal peace, for arrangements should instantly be made to drive back the Turks before they get further footing in Germany or establish themselves in Hungary. [...] Supposes the Emperor is especially concerned in the expulsion of the Turk, in consequence of his claims to Hungary by the death of the late King without issue, as well as for his adjacent patrimonies."112 Henry VIII and his court recognized the situation in Hungary that the Emperor would be weakened in Italy when the Turk would launch an attack against Austria. The French King and the League took advantage of the opportunity. Clerk wrote to Wolsey113 about this possibility: "Next day the [French] King commanded us to come to him at a place three miles from Chartrea, where we were by three of the clock: and at his coming in, booted and in his riding gear, right sore a-cold, I showed him my letters, stating that although there appeared in the Emperor's late answer a better disposition, yet, if he were well pressed, the Turk being at this 'fordell' in the realm of Hungary, and Austria in such danger, the King and Wolsey thought he would condescend to better terms."114

John I of Szapolya, the newly elected and crowned King of Hungary, wrote to chancellor Krzysztof Szydłowiecki on 11 November 1526.115 This letter arrived at London certainly from Poland.

John Wallop wrote to Wolsey on 17 November again.116 John Broke117 brought the letters of Wolsey and Henry VIII to Wallop.118 News arrived from England: "Hackett writes that the bills of exchange cannot be sent till he knows Wolsey's pleasure concerning certain points in the contract. [...] Has tried him to see what he could do about the letters of Exchange; but he says there is little

111 B.L. Cotton MSS.: Galba B. IX. 214.
112 L&P. vol. 4. 1155.
113 B.L. Cotton MSS.: Caligula D. IX. 268.
114 Ibid. cf. L&P. vol. 4. 1156.
116 B.L. Cotton MSS.: Vitellius B. XXI. f. 5.
117 Broke was a servant of the English Chancellor and Cardinal. He was the mayor of Oxford from 1512 to 1514.
enough money for the lords and princes to aid Ferdinando against the Turk.”

Henry VIII made up his mind to that he would send 25,000 pieces of gold to the Hungarian King. But which one of them? To the Archduke or to the vaivode? That was a very difficult question. The Emperor Charles V confirmed Lee that the Bohemians had accepted the Archduke to be their King. The Bohemians crowned Ferdinand on 23 October. What about Hungarians? The coronation was not such a simple matter. The vaivode was the keeper of the Hungarian Holy Crown. This was the only extant crown that was suitable for the coronation. The vaivode took advantage of the situation. Wolsey wrote about this to Henry VIII from Hampton Court. He reported that „Hans Von Savenburge, brother of the marquis of Brandenburg, was on the 11th of November last chosen king of Hungary, and will stoutly oppose the Archduke. This will give additional encouragement to the Turks.”

Wallop also reported that the „Hungarians of the Low Country have elected as their king the earl of Wydar. It is said that it was he who fled from the king in the battle with 30,000 men. The Hungarians will not have any stranger for the king. Will not pass Vienna till he has his letters of exchange, unless there is chance of war against the Turks. It is thought there is more likelihood of war between Ferdinand and the new king of Hungary.”

A letter arrived to London from Cologne — but not from Wallop — that the King of Bohemia would make himself King of Hungary. An ambassador heard that Ferdinand would stop the Turks in Hungary. The court of the French King thought that the Turk would return to attack Austria or Italy in spring 1527. „Some think the Turk’s invasion of Hungary has had this effect; others believe it is an artifice, as the Emperor is sending forces by land and sea to Italy. Thinks Christian princes will not fail to unite against the Turk, who is now dangerous both to Sicily and Italy…” wrote Ghinucci to Wolsey. Campeggio wrote to Wolsey too, „affairs are very bad in Hungary. Twenty-two counties have chosen the Waywode...”

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119 L&P. vol. 4. 1180.  
120 B.L. Cotton MSS.: Vespasianus C. III. 301.  
121 Botlik (2005), 43.  
122 PRO. SP. I. 185.  
123 L&P. vol. 4. 1205.  
124 B.L. Cotton MSS.: Vitellius B. XXI. 12.  
125 The „earl of Wydar” is false fact. He was John Szapolyai, the vaivode (in Hungarian „vajda”) of Transylvania.  
126 L&P. vol. 4. 1206.  
128 L&P. vol. 4. 1214-1215.  
129 PRO. SP. VI. 552.  
130 B.L. Cotton MSS.: Vitellius B. IX. 6.
of Transylvania for their king.”

What about the Pope? Clement VII “advises the king not to assist the Archduke against the Waywode, lest be compelled to turn for assistance to the Turk, but rather to persuade the Waywode to treat, and the Archduke to give him his sister in marriage, whom he has already asked.”

The sending of Henry’s aid was problematic: “A factor will be sent to conclude about the money. Thought that Tuke wanted ducat for ducat to be paid in Hungary, and that the principal should suffer no more loss than eight per cent. Perceives now that there is a fixed sum set apart for this. His intent has been given as little interest as possible, and keep the money in the realm. His contract with the Hooghstetters is left to Wolsey’s decision. A Hungarian ducat is esteemed here worth 50. st.; which difference in value, with the interest, will amount to $8 \frac{2}{3}$ per cent, but the merchants there say it should be $8 \frac{3}{4}$.”

A Venetian spy – called Nicolaus Hungarus – reported “a declaration of the choosing of John Vayvoda king of Hungary.” This letter arrived to London in the middle of January 1527. “The Vayvode led forward D. Stephanus Verbecius, a nobleman of great wisdom and authority, who was formerly ‘Palatinus’, and always protected the rights of the kingdom against tyrants. He asked them if they would have the archduke of Austria for their king, but all with one voice refused. He then asked them whom they would have, and they as unanimously named the Vayvode. This done, the exequies of the late king Louis were performed. On the next day, the 10th November, the Vayvode was elected King, and crowned on the day following, after which he sent for the Archduke’s ambassadors, and asked them what they wanted. They said that as they were not heard before the coronation, they would say nothing further, and asked pardon from the King, which was granted, and great honor was shown them. The Vayvode immediately sent the bishop of Segna as an ambassador to Venice, with orders to go thence to the Pope and to France. […] The King created count Christopher de Frangepani ban of Croatia and Illyria, and captain-general, and gave him 20,000 gold pieces for making preparations. He promoted Paulus Diaicus, bishop of

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131 L&P. vol. 4. 1233.
132 Ibid. 1240.
133 Ibid. and B.L. Cotton MSS.: Galba B. IX. 38.
134 His code-name was Magyar Miklós (Nicholas Hungarian).
136 Werbőczy István (Stephen Werbőczy, 1458-1541) was a great jurist, to short time palatine before the battle of Mohács. He was the Chancellor of John I after the battle. Barta: “Konszolidációs kísérlet, etc.” (1977), 640-670; Botlik (2005), 44.
137 Frangepán Kristóf (Christopher Frangepán, c.1470-1527) died on field at castle of Varasd in 1527. Barta (1977), 636; Botlik (2005), 45.
138 Correctly: Paulus Diaconus, Várday Pál (Paul Várday, 1483-1549). He was the first archbishop of Gran (Esztergom) after the battle of Mohács. He went over to Ferdinand I in
Agria, to the archbishop of Gran (Strigonium), and freed all the towns devastated by the Turks from all taxes for five years.\textsuperscript{139}

John Hackett began to write a letter at Antwerp, and he finished it at Mechline on 12 January.\textsuperscript{140} He reported to Wolsey that John Szapolyai, the „newly elected king of Hungary has sent his ambassadors to don Fernando, saying that he is glad of Fernando’s election to Bohemia, and he thought likewise he should be glad of his election to Hungary, for the Turk had sent to him offering him aid against any Christian princes who should attempt to dethrone him, if he were obedient and tributary to him – to which he would never consent, and with the friendship of Fernando and other Christian princes, he knew he was strong enough to win back all that his antecessor has lost, asking if Fernando would assist him.”\textsuperscript{141}

Meanwhile Wallop went to Augsburg, and he wrote a letter to Wolsey.\textsuperscript{142} The English ambassador informed him, that the Archduke and the King of Bohemia was sending a gentleman – named Salamanca\textsuperscript{143} – to ask Henry VIII for aid against the Turk. Ferdinand informed Wallop that „he will not allow him to go to Hungary”,\textsuperscript{144} because the King of Bohemia told a lie about the new King of Hungary. The Archduke said to Wallop „that the Turk has sent to the King of Hungary for yearly tribute of four pence a man per annum; – 100 pence make a ducat; – and it is thought he will agree, that the Turk may take his part against the King of Bohemia.”\textsuperscript{145} To tell the truth Ferdinand was hidebound in this case, and he moved heaven and earth that he would stain John Szapolyai’s honour. Wallop also reported some other news, that „Moldavia, Wallachia, and half Croatia will take the Wayda’s part. The Hungarians of the high country refuse him, saying that it was concluded in a parliament in the time of the late King, that if he died without issue the crown should devolve on Ferdinand; to which the Wayda agreed.”\textsuperscript{146} The English ambassador also wrote about the aid that „has been to the Fukkers, Welears and Howghstetters to inquire for the bills of exchange The Howghstetters tell him that Hackett and their Antwerp factor have agreed for 25,000 cr., and they are

\textsuperscript{139} L&P. vol. 4. 1247.
\textsuperscript{140} B.L. Cotton MSS.: Galba B. X. 40.
\textsuperscript{141} L&P. vol. 4. 1249.
\textsuperscript{142} B.L. Cotton MSS.: Vitellius B. XXI. 27.
\textsuperscript{143} Gabriel von Salamanca (c.1489-1539) was the Chancellor and Treasurer of the Archduke Ferdinand of Habsburg from 1521 to 1526. Rill: \textit{Fürst und Hof in Österreich}, Band 2. (2002).
\textsuperscript{144} L&P. vol. 4. 1249.
\textsuperscript{145} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{146} Ibid.
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waiting only for a letter from Wolsey.”

Uberto de Gambara, the bishop of Pola and the legate at Venice, also wrote to Wolsey in the middle of January that the Waywode’s ambassador – named Francis Josefics – was at Venice, and he informed the Signory of his Lord’s election to the kingdom of Hungary on St. Martin’s day. That was “the great grief of the Archduke, who it is thought will go to war about it.”

But some reports spoke the truth that “if the Archduke attempts the expedition he has in hand, it may produce great trouble, and drive the Waywode to an alliance with the Turk.” Certainly the diplomacy of the Habsburgs denigrated again and again the new Hungarian King. For example, Ferdinand thought that the Turk would intend to return to Hungary and go against Austria, and the vaivode would help the Suleyman’s campaign.

Ferdinand the King of Bohemia wrote a letter to Henry VIII from Prague on 11 March 1527. In his letter the Archduke was obviously raging; here are some examples about his charges: „the count of Scopuse, the waywode of Transylvania, has most unjustly invaded the kingdom, and occupied as much of it as he could, to it’s great injury. He refused to succor Nandoralba (Belgrade) when besieged by the Turks, and sent no forces to assist the King. The loss of that town gave the Turk free access to Hungary and other Christian countries. He similarly delayed to send his forces to assist king Lewis at Mohatsch. [...] His sole object has been to attain the crown. He caused himself to be crowned, notwithstanding the hereditary rights, which with me has through my wife. Unless he be put down shortly, his example will be dangerous to other princes. He is quite unable to protect Hungary from the Turk, but must either surrender it or make a disgraceful peace, for what Christian prince will help such a usurper?”

Wallop met Ferdinand, and the English ambassador wrote about his meeting to Wolsey chancellor. It was a very interesting and important meeting. Ferdinand said to Wallop (after dinner) „how untruely the Wayda served the king

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147 Ibid. 1249-1250.
148 Gambara (1489-1549) was an Italian Cardinal and the bishop of Tortona from 1528.
149 B.L. Cotton MSS.: Vitellius B. IX. 21.
150 Ferenc Josefics was the bishop of Zengg (Segni). Botlik (2003), 582; Botlik (2005), 54.
151 L&P. vol. 4. 1253.
152 Ibid. 1305. cf. B.L. Cotton MSS.: Vitellius B. IX. 64.
153 Ferdinand, the crowned King of Bohemia also called himself King of Hungary, but at first he wasn’t crowned, just elected Hungarian King.
154 B.L. Cotton MSS.: Vespasianus F. I. 78.
155 Sheriff of county of Szepes.
156 Louis II.
157 L&P vol. 4. 1323.
of Hungary at the battle, with the intent to make himself king; showed him his own title by his wife, and of the contr[act] by which, if the late King died without issue, the crown should go to the house of Austria; said that wheres Wallop was sent to aid the Wayda against the Turk, he did not believe he had any intention of attacking him, but would rather take his part, and if he would do so he had not the power, and he trusted the King would never help the Wayda against the Emperor or himself. [...] Asked for leave to go to Hungary; at which Ferdinand, being stirred with choler, said that if he went the king of England would do a great displeasure to the Emperor and to him; he was sure that if the King knew the truth Wallop would go no further; he trusted that the King would help him not only to make war upon the Turk, but also to gain Hungary; and he desired him to send one of his servants to the King in post, for he might have an answer in a month."

So the King of Bohemia stopped Wallop, and it was obvious that the English ambassador was a persona non grata at Prague. Wallop realized that he had no chance whatever to depart from Bohemia to Hungary or Poland. He corresponded in a great secret with John Szapolya, because Ferdinand’s court shadowed him. Wallop wrote to Wolsey, that „if the king of Beme makes war, the king of Hungary will be obliged to make peace with the Turk, and ask his aid, which he is quite sure of obtaining, but he says he will not make peace unless compelled.” Wallop sent a very important letter to chancellor Wolsey in the next month. He wrote that the King of Poland sent an ambassador to Ferdinand about a plan of the peace between the King of Bohemia and the King of Hungary. Sigismund I – the Polish King – wrote to Henry VIII, asking the English King to help him crossing „the impending war between the two rival kings of Hungary.” Sigismund in another letter gave thanks to Wolsey „for Wallop’s charge.” I wonder whether it was true or not that Wallop handed the aid to the Polish King and John Szapolya. It seems possible, but in secret. Wallop wrote again to Wolsey on 20 May 1527: „the King of Beme would not suffer me to pass into the royalme of Hung[archy], and who is being in the contre of Silesia, which joyneth

159 L&P. vol. 4. 1323-1324.
160 Wallop wrote this on 12 March. B.L. Cotton MSS.: Vespasianus F. I. 69.
161 Angyal (1900), 311-312.
162 Correctly: King of Bohemia.
163 L&P. vol. 4. 1325.
164 „Wryttyn at Wolmys in Moravya, the 26 day of Apryell 1527.” (Wolmys=Olmütz.) PRO. SP. VI. 527.
165 B.L. Cotton MSS.: Nero B. II. 102.
166 L&P. vol. 4. 1394.
167 Ibid. cf. PRO. SP. VI. 581.
168 The address: „To my Lord (Cardinal)’s good grace.” PRO. SP. VI. 581.
169 The King of Bohemia.
upon the frontiers of Pole,\textsuperscript{170} I desired His Grace to give me leave to see the King of Poles Court, wher to He was right well content. And at my coming thider, I declared unto His Highnes[s] the commission that I had to the King of Hung[ary] that dead is, and also the commission that I had to the Waywda, and how that I was stopped by the King of Beme. Moreover I shewid Him how the King’s Highnes[s] and your Grace gave me commandment that, if I came night his confines, how I should visit Him, and shew Him what love the King’s Highnes[s] and your Grace do beere unto Him, for that yowe both knew Him for so virtous a Prince, and that He so well defended that parties of Christendom from the malice and extreme persecution of Turks, Tartars, and Moscovites; and ferdermore for that He would in no wise that any ungracious sec of Luther should entrée into his co[u]ntries, and what good police He used therefore, for the which the King’s Highnes[s] and your Grace did not a lit[t]le rejoice. I assure your Grace He was very glad that it pleased the King and yow to send to visite Him saying that another sithen He was King nother in the time of his predecessor was never no English Embassadour in that parties.”\textsuperscript{171}

4. John I’s ambassador in England
Wolsey enclosed Wallop’s letters in his letter to Henry VIII,\textsuperscript{172} „stating that the king of Bohemia will not let him pass to the Waywode.”\textsuperscript{173} The English Cardinal was taken aback, when he met with John Szapolya’s ambassador in England.\textsuperscript{174} No one informed him that an ambassador would arrive in England (from Hungary): „where in the mean way bilwene Sitenborn and Feversham, encountered with me an Ambassadour tent unto Your Highness,\textsuperscript{175} by post from Vayvoda naming himself King of Hungary; a man of good eloquence, and, as it apperith, right wise, He made salutations – unto me from his master, saying he had letters unto me, for his ad[d]resse to your Highnes[s], from the same. […] So that after my coming to my lodging, and delivering of his letters, he shewed me, that his charge to Your Highnes[s], from his master, consisted in three things; first, to Salute Your Highnes[s], in his masters name; secondly to shew unto Your Grace the election of his master to the Kingdom of Hungary; thirdly, to desire your Highnes[s], that such aid and assistance, as Your Grace had appointed to gave to the late King of Hungary against the Turk, Your Highnes[s] would now gave the same unto his master, whom the nobilite there had chosen, as having just title to the crown, to

\textsuperscript{170} „Pole” = Poland.
\textsuperscript{171} PRO. SP. VI. 581. cf. L&P. vol. 4. 1423. and MHHD. V. I. 302-305.
\textsuperscript{172} PRO. SP. I. 189.
\textsuperscript{173} L&P. vol. 4. 1433.
\textsuperscript{174} Angyal (1900), 313; Botlik (2003), 585; Cartledge (2006), 83-84.
\textsuperscript{175} „Your Highness” = Henry VIII.
their head and King; considering that he entendith, with all his might and power, having convenient aid of christian princes, to jeopardy and expone his person, to defend that realm from the Turks malice.”

In another letter Wolsey wrote to Henry VIII that „if the where shall fortune and suceede, betwe[e]n your Highnes[s] and the Emperour, this Prince [Szapolya] may serve to a high purpose.”

William Knight also met Hieronim Łaski, the ambassador of the King of Hungary. Knight reported about his meeting to Henry VIII. „This day Se[i]gnior Jeronimo de Lasko ambassador for the new elect King of Hungary declared his charges before the King and his council only, without any other audience; which in the beginning of his oration spake of the miserable chance of Hungary and the[i]r with a good circumstance, the wing afterwards how by free election of the noblemen of Hungary. Vaywoda his master being choosen King refused for certain considerations t’ accept the same: nevertheless by importunity of the noblemen and communes of that contree he was in a manger compelled to take the governance upon him: being in ferme and good hope that all christ[i]an princes would accept and take in good part his election and admission unto the governance of Hungary.”

Lee informed Henry VIII from Valladolid that the King of Bohemia and John I agreed, but this information was false. The ambassador of Szapolyai left England on the 19th day of July. Wolsey walked with Hungarian ambassador to Calais and the chancellor from that place wrote to Henry VIII. „Sire, these shall be to give my most humble – thanks unto Your Highnes[s], that it hath pleased the

176 The address: „In Gardiner’s hand.” PRO. SP. I. 196. cf. L&P. vol. 4. 1471. MHHD. V I. 106-110.
177 The address: „To the Kinges most noble Grace, Defensor of the Faith.” PRO. SP. I. 205.
178 Ibid. cf. MHHD. V I. 115-116.
179 Dr. Knight (?-1540) was a beadsman, later secretary to Henry VIII. „Knight was another of Wolsey’s protégés; he had been educated at Oxford, taken holy orders, and been appointed a royal chaplain in 1515. He had served on various embassies and proved his worth as a versatile man of affairs. Later, the King would appoint him Bishop of Bath and Wells.” Knight went to Rome in 1527 to try to get Henry VIII’s marriage to Catherine of Aragon annulled. Weir (2001), 255; Scarisbrick (1972), 159; Gairdner: „New Lights on the Divorce, etc.” (1896), 685.
180 Łaski (1496-1541) was a Polish noble, the nephew of Jan Łaski archbishop of Gniezno. He came to Hungary in 1527. Łaski was the titular vaivode of Transylvania from 1530. He was accused of high treason in 1534. Urban: „Hieronim Łaski” (1973), 255; Botlik (2003), 584-597.
181 B.L. Cotton MSS.: Vespasianus F. I. 70.
182 PRO. SP. I. 213. cf. MHHD. V I. 118. and L&P. vol. 4. 1480-1481.
184 PRO. SP. I. 220.
same, by letters directed from your Secretary, to make me participant of such oration, as was made unto Your Grace, by seignior Jheronimo de Lasko, Ambassador from the new elect King of Hungary, and also of the most prudent answer made unto the same; wherein, in my poor opinion, nothing was omit ted, that ought to be spoken of or touched; and with the same I double not the said Ambassador is, and ought to be, satisfied and contented; and much the rather, that Your Grace hath made congratulations, for the assumption of his master to the crown there, tempered and qualified in so good man[en]er, that no displeasur[e] may of reason arise to the King of Boheme thereby.”

But Ferdinand’s army at Tokaj\textsuperscript{186} defeated John Szapolyai without aid of the League on 27 September 1527.\textsuperscript{187} Ferdinand of Habsburg acceded to the throne after defeating John I. Ferdinand I divided the Hungarian Kingdom in two parts with his German and Spanish soldiers. John of Szapolya made an alliance with the Turk, and Henry VIII declared the war against Francis I.\textsuperscript{188} This is the reason why England and Hungary drew off each other for a while.

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\textsuperscript{185} Ibid. cf. MHHD. V. I. 125.

\textsuperscript{186} In Hungarian: Tokaj.

\textsuperscript{187} Botlik (2003), 587; Mackie (1957), 320.

\textsuperscript{188} See the letter of John I to Francis I on 6 July 1527. B.L. Cotton MSS.: Vespasianus F. I. 76. Bowle: \textit{Henry VIII} (1964), 112-134.
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