

# Hungary and the Second Crusade\*

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*In honorem J. W.*

The aim of the present study is to survey and analyze the role played by Hungary during the Second Crusade and through this scholarly goal it is to bridge the gap which can be observed in Hungarian historiography.

The historiography of the Crusades as far as Hungary is concerned has recently been accomplished by Attila Bárány.<sup>1</sup> Bárány dedicated considerable attention to the works<sup>2</sup> of Pál Gerő Bozsóky, whose contribution to the historiography of the crusades is profound, albeit somewhat sentimental and apologetic on behalf of the Church. Notwithstanding the fact that it is not a scholarly monograph in *stricto sensu* since there are no references given at all either to sources or other secondary works. At the same time, Bárány reflected only briefly upon the studies published by András Borosy,<sup>3</sup> however, he proved to be much more objective, that is he avoided taking sides, in his appraisal of Hungary's involvement in the crusades than Bozsóky. Bárány emphasized that Bozsóky was the first scholar to study systematically the primary sources and the secondary literature of the crusades. As a matter of fact, this is also true for Borosy. Both historians were very much aware of the basic literature on the crusades, but recent, international scholarly trends hardly affected their views. In addition, Bárány's survey begins with the role of King Andrew II (1205–1235) during the Fifth Crusade and thus the events of the eleventh–twelfth centuries are almost completely omitted from the study.

It seems that relatively few pieces of information could be gained on the role played by Hungary in the Second Crusade, either by reading contemporary (or late medieval) sources or the relevant secondary literature. Hungarian scholar-

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<sup>1</sup> A. Bárány, „Crusades and Crusading in Hungarian Historiography,” in *Europe and the World in European Historiography*, ed. Cs. Lévai, Pisa 2006, 129–18.

<sup>2</sup> P. G. Bozsóky, *Keresztes hadjáratok* [Crusades] Szeged 1995; P. G. Bozsóky, *A jeruzsálemi latin királyság* [The Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem] Szeged 2004.

<sup>3</sup> A. Borosy, “A keresztes háborúk és Magyarország I–II,” [The Crusades and Hungary], *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 109:1 (1996), 3–41; 109:2 (1996), 11–52.

ship has largely neglected the crusade as a specific area of study and, partly owing to this neglect, a number of unfounded judgments have been made. At the same time, scholarly works have been published which focused on the domestic and foreign policies of rulers of the Hungarian Kingdom in the twelfth century. These works have provided unknown insights into how the kingdom was governed or at least have highlighted new scholarly approaches and perspectives that historians might employ in the future.<sup>4</sup>

The American, James Ross Sweeney, originally published his views in English on Hungary and the crusades in 1981,<sup>5</sup> and fortunately he also published his work in Hungarian.<sup>6</sup> The title of the Hungarian publication is somewhat misleading, as it refers to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, although the article does not fully discuss the role played by Hungary during the First and the Second Crusades. The chronological span of the article reflected the fundamental elements of Sweeney's thesis. He divided the role played by the Kingdom of Hungary during the early crusades (that is, before c. 1291) into three periods. According to this thesis, Hungary played a rather passive role in the course of the first five decades of crusading. In the course of the crusading campaigns until the 1160s Hungary served as supplier territory for the passing armies. It underlines among other factors that Christianity has not yet rooted deep enough in the once pagan Hungarian society. Sweeney, however, focused on the following decades, that is the transition period of 1169–1195 when the idea of crusading, as well as the ideal of a crusader knight, spread and took root in Hungarian society. The peak of this social change was manifested in the crusader vow taken by King Béla III (1172–1196) of Hungary<sup>7</sup> and, by its extension, to his son, Prince Andrew. King Andrew's (1205–1235) participation in the Fifth Crusade was apparently the most that Hungary had contributed so far to the crusade movement. As Sweeney dedicated only a couple of sentences to his "early period", his Hungarian readership could not gain much information about the first five decades of crusading.

Zoltan J. Kosztolnyik's monograph, published in 1987, proved to be a remarkable advance in the crusade's historiography, as he dedicated a whole chapter to the role played by Hungary in the Second Crusade.<sup>8</sup> Although the work was published by an author of Hungarian origin, he did not comment upon or indeed fol-

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<sup>4</sup> For instance, the attempts to place the whole question into the context of international politics. See F. Makk, *The Árpáds and the Comneni. Political relations between Hungary and Byzantium in the twelfth century*. Budapest 1989.

<sup>5</sup> J. R. Sweeney, "Hungary in the Crusades, 1169–1218," *The International History Review* 3 (1981), 467–481.

<sup>6</sup> Sweeney first delivered a lecture at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in 1982 and subsequently his "thesis" was published (in Hungarian) a little later: J. R. Sweeney, "Magyarország és a keresztes hadjáratok a XII–XIII. században," [Hungary and the Crusades in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries] *Századok* 118 (1984), 114–124.

<sup>7</sup> The Hungarian ruler provided a contingent for the marching troops of the Third Crusade although it never reached the Holy Land but returned from Byzantine territories.

<sup>8</sup> Z. J. Kosztolnyik, *From Coloman the Learned to Béla III (1095–1196). Hungarian Domestic Policies and Their Impact upon Foreign Affairs*. New York 1987, 126–140.

low the defective Hungarian literature. Thus he failed to reflect on the Sweeney-thesis, although he might have known of it before he submitted his manuscript. Nevertheless, an important feature of Kosztolnyik's work is that it allowed an international readership to become acquainted with the relevant parts of the Hungarian chronicle<sup>9</sup> augmented with an analysis. Kosztolnyik's work was crucial for the proper understanding of the train of events on the Second Crusade as well as for the motivation of the Hungarian chronicler. Although minor lapses<sup>10</sup> can be found in Kosztolnyik's work, he formulated adequate and relevant questions which definitely furthered the research in this field. For instance, on what basis Conrad III demanded subsidy in Hungary: as a Christian knight while on pilgrimage or as the leader of the crusading army? Has Conrad come to agreement with Géza II and the German ruler exceeded the conditions settled in advance? Some of his questions have not yet been answered satisfactorily. Moreover, he shifted the context of the whole circle of questions towards internal politics and thus broadened the horizon of the those scholars analyzing the role of Hungary.

Several remaining scholarly deficiencies were rectified by the monograph of Ferenc Makk, published in English in 1989.<sup>11</sup> He improved our knowledge of the twelfth-century Hungarian foreign policy, and placed particular emphasis on Hungarian-Byzantine relations. Regrettably, Makk did not utilize the results of either Sweeney and Kosztolnyik's endeavors,<sup>12</sup> nor the work of Virginia G. Berry.<sup>13</sup> At the same time, one must remark on the deficiencies in Berry's work too: the Canadian author relied heavily on outdated nineteenth-century secondary literature, although presumably there were more recent works at her disposal.

András Borosy intended to fill the still extant gaps in the historiography in 1996, and indeed the author dedicated a couple of pages to the crusader armies marching through Hungary during the Second Crusade.<sup>14</sup> One of the most unfor-

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<sup>9</sup> "Chronici Hungarici compositio saeculi XIV," ed. A. Domanovszky, in *Scriptores rerum Hungaricarum tempore ducum regumque stirpis Arpadianae gestarum*, ed. E. Szentpétery, 2 vols. Budapest, 1937-1938, (henceforth SRH) 1: 219-505.

<sup>10</sup> Kosztolnyik, for instance, always refers to Conrad III as emperor (instead of "king" or "emperor-elect") which is rather problematic as it derives from the uncritical reading of the primary sources.

<sup>11</sup> Makk, *The Árpáds and the Comneni*, 35-41.

<sup>12</sup> The latter presumably was due to the delay caused by the printing procedure: Makk used and referred the works of Kosztolnyik published in 1984.

<sup>13</sup> V. G. Berry, "The Second Crusade," in *A History of the Crusades*, Vol. 1: *The First Hundred Years*, ed. M. W. Baldwin, gen. ed. Kenneth M. Setton, Madison-Milwaukee-London 1955, 1969<sup>2</sup>, 463-512.

<sup>14</sup> Borosy, "A kereszties háborúk és Magyarország," 25-27. A relevant article remained, however, undetected by him as it was published roughly at the same time: H. Zimmermann, "Die deutsch-ungarischen Beziehungen in der Mitte des 12. Jahrhunderts und die Berufung der Siebenbürger Sachsen," in *Von Schwaben bis Jerusalem. Facetten staufischer Geschichte*. Sigmaringen 1995, 151-165. Reprinted in H. Zimmermann, *Siebenbürgen und seine Hospites Theutonici. Vorträge und Forschungen zur südostdeutschen Geschichte*. Festgabe zum 70. Geburtstag, Köln-Weimar-Wien 1996, 83-101.

tunate features of Borosy's work is that it utilizes the necessary primary source, but in abridged versions which do not provide all the relevant information as their context are omitted.<sup>15</sup> Borosy published his ideas in 2006, jointly with József Laszlovszky, in which he maintained his former arguments.<sup>16</sup>

The above-mentioned Sweeney thesis has not been criticized by any of the Hungarian scholars, although some of them have drawn a more detailed picture. Among the current crop of Hungarian scholars, László Veszprémy has enlarged Hungarian knowledge of the First Crusade by drawing on recent studies in international scholarship.<sup>17</sup> Several reasons could be listed why Hungary played a rather passive role in the course of the early crusades. This passive attitude also concerns the additional waves of military campaigns between those bearing the traditional numbering: those took place in the first half of the twelfth century. Among the significant elements of the argumentation can be found the fact of "timing" as it was inappropriate for Hungary. It is quite likely that King Ladislas I (1077–1095) would have taken the cross as he made lot of efforts to strengthen the fundamentals of the Catholic faith and its institutions in Hungary. It partly was reflected in his canonization in 1192. The Hungarian chronicle tradition went even as far as "establishing" a (legend and anachronistic) story about the attempt of the Western leaders of the First Crusade to win King Ladislas as the overall leader of the undertaking.<sup>18</sup> King Coloman's (1095–1116), Ladislas' successor's major concern was dissimilar after having ascended to the throne since he struggled for the consolidation of his power. Moreover, as crusading armies were not headed by crowned rulers at the end of the eleventh century, it is even more unlikely that the highest layer of Hungarian society, which was to some extent in-

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Hungarian readership "discovered" it after its Hungarian translation in 2005 (in *Aetas* 20:4 (2005), 124–136).

<sup>15</sup> A. F. Gombos, *Catalogus fontium historiae Hungaricae*, 3 vols. Budapest 1937–1938.

<sup>16</sup> A. Borosy-J. Laszlovszky, "Magyarország, a Szentföld és a korai kereszties hadjáratok," [Hungary, the Holy Land and the early Crusades] in *Magyarország és a kereszties háborúk. Lovagrendek és emlékeik*, ed. J. Laszlovszky, J. Majorossy, J. Zsengellér, Máriabesnyő-Gödöllő 2006, 84–85.

<sup>17</sup> L. Veszprémy, "Magyarország és az első kereszties hadjárat. Aacheri Albert tanúsága," [Hungary and the First Crusade. The evidence of Albert of Aachen] *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 118 (2005), 501–516. He also compiled an updated chronology of the passage of the crusading troops marching through Hungary; *ibid.* pp. 513–514.

<sup>18</sup> "Cumque celebrasset Pasca Domini in Bodrog, ecce nuncii de Francia et de Ispania, de Anglia et Britania ad eum venerunt, et precipue de Wyllermo fratre regis Francorum, et ei omnipotentis Dei iniuriam se ulcisci manifestaverunt et sanctam civitatem et sanctissimum sepulchrum de manu Sarracenorum liberare pensaverunt. Unde gloriosum regem rogaverunt, ut eis rector et gubernator in exercitu Iesu Christi existeret. Rex autem hoc audiens 'gavisus est gaudio magno', et in eadem festivitate a nobilibus Hungarie licentiatus est; tristabaturque tota Hungaria propter eum." "Chronici Hungarici," SRH 1: 417–418. See also, L. Veszprémy, "Dux et preceptor Hierosolomitatorum. König Ladislaus (László) von Ungarn als imaginärer Kreuzritter," in ... *The Man of Many Devices, Who Wandered Full Many Ways: Festschrift in Honor of János M. Bak*, ed. M. Sebök, B. Nagy, Budapest 1999, 470–471.

volved in pagan uprisings a couple of decades earlier,<sup>19</sup> had seriously considered seeking martyrdom as soldiers of Christ. There is no palpable signs of either religious fanaticism or the going on pilgrimage on a regular basis although the locals witnessed their Western European fellow Christian travelling towards the Holy Land on "Christ's business" from the first decades of the eleventh century.

### *Towards the Second Crusade*

Christianity had taken root in Hungary by the middle of the twelfth century. Indeed, neither the Christian doctrine, nor the Catholic institution was seriously threatened throughout the twelfth century, and the church benefited greatly from royal donations during this period. Given King Géza II's (1141-1162) policy towards the Church<sup>20</sup> it is quite plausible that he would have taken the cross if his foreign relations and domestic affairs had allowed him to do so. According to the extant sources, the political situation did not favor the participation of the Hungarian ruler in the Second Crusade. Time-consuming arrangements ensured that preparations for the campaign were conducted efficiently, although it seems, *argumentum ex silentio*, that the crusading bull, *Quantum praedecessores*, did not reach the Kingdom of Hungary.<sup>21</sup> There is no sign in the narrative sources that Bernard of Clairvaux had sent letters to Hungary as he did towards those territories that he could not visit personally such as England.<sup>22</sup> Nor it can be proven that, similar to other European countries, the Cistercians promulgated the notion of the crusade in Hungary, although it is possible that they did do since the Cistercian Order had settled in Hungary by the early 1140s. It is worth emphasizing, however, that despite their previous settlement, the Order's activities can only be observed from the 1170s.<sup>23</sup>

If recruiting for the Second Crusade was indeed well organised, why was Hungary omitted from the recruiting drive? Suggesting that Christianity had not sufficiently taken root or that the institution of the church was not developed satisfactorily is clearly not adequate. The call to arms reached the rulers of the Bohemians and the Poles,<sup>24</sup> who converted to Christianity around the same time as

<sup>19</sup> P. Engel, *The Realm of Saint Stephen. A History of Medieval Hungary, 895-1526*, London-New York 2001, 31.

<sup>20</sup> For instance, during his reign the Cistercians settled in Hungary (c.1142); he also promoted the foundation of the Hospitaller Order of Canons Regular of St. Stephen (c.1150).

<sup>21</sup> G. Constable, "The Second Crusade as Seen by Contemporaries," in *idem, Crusaders and Crusading in the Twelfth century*, Aldershot 2008, 276-277. It seems from the ongoing *Hungaria Pontificia* project that no trace of Eugenius III's call can be found in extant papal-Hungarian correspondence.

<sup>22</sup> Ch. Tyerman, *God's War. A new history of the Crusades*. London 2006, 280-281.

<sup>23</sup> L. Koszta, "Ciszterci Rend elterjedése Magyarországon a kolostoralapítások idején, 1142-1270," [The Spread of the Cistercian Order in Hungary during the foundation of their monasteries] *Magyar Egyháztörténeti Vázlatok* 5:1-2 (1993), 116.

<sup>24</sup> Ch. Lübke, *Das östliche Europa. Die Deutschen und das europäische Mittelalter 2*, Munich 2004, 517.

the Hungarians. Indeed, the call not only reached Wladislav II (1140–1172) and Boleslaw IV the Curly (1146–1173), but they themselves took the cross. A reasonable part of the Gregorian reforms and the indirect goals of Pope Eugenius III were directed towards the extension of the notion of *Ecclesia* into *Christianitas*, that is to give an active role to Christendom in its broader sense<sup>25</sup> it would have been a good opportunity to give the Hungarians a “chance” to prove that they belong to the same community. If, however, we approach from the relation of Conrad III with the Bohemian and the Polish rulers then the conclusion becomes somewhat dissimilar.

It seems that the major organizers of the crusade renounced such “interests” of *Christianitas* already during the preparations may point to the very political situation even though does not reply to all questions raised. The peculiarity of the Hungarian situation is partly rooted in that the kingdom was successively in conflict with the western Roman Empire, Byzantium or the papacy since the 1070s. After many decades of conflict, the rule of King Béla II (1131–1141) witnessed a relatively short period of peace which lasted until the mid-1140s. In 1146, not only did the peace came to an end, but the year also witnessed the beginning of the most intensive interval of Hungarian foreign policy since the settlement of the Magyars in the Carpathian basin at the end of the ninth century. It was her foreign policy which seems to have influenced Hungary’s participation in the Second Crusade.

#### *Receiving the crusading armies: tensions all around*

The strained relations between Hungary and the western Roman Empire derived from the expansionist politics of the emperor-elect, King Conrad III of Germany, which are evident in a letter sent by the king to the Byzantine Emperor, John II Comnenus, in 1142.<sup>26</sup> The German king stated that the neighboring territories of Germany belong within the sphere of interest of the western Roman Empire, and thus the rulers of these countries owed obedience to him. Although Géza II was not a vassal of Conrad III, a pretender to the Hungarian throne, a certain Boris,<sup>27</sup> provided the German ruler with potential political leverage. The first signs of the deterioration in the relations between Hungary and the Empire appeared around 1145 following the cancellation of the betrothal, agreed in 1139, between Sophia,

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<sup>25</sup> Y. Katzir, “The Second Crusade and the Redefinition of *Ecclesia*: *Christianitas* and Papal Coercive Power,” in *The Second Crusade and the Cistercians*, ed. M. Gervers, New York 1992, 4.

<sup>26</sup> “Gesta Friderici Imperatoris auctoribus Ottone episcopo et Ragewino praeposito Frisingensibus,” ed. R. Wilmans, in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores*, 20, ed. G. H. Pertz, Hannover 1868, 363–364; F. Makk, *Ungarische Außenpolitik (896–1196)*, Herne 1999, 117.

<sup>27</sup> Boris (*Kalamanos*) was born of the second wife of King Coloman, the Russian Euphemia. However, the Russian king never acknowledged him as his legitimate son. The wife of Boris, Princess Anne (Arété) Dukaina was a relative of Joannes II Comnenus (1118–1143), thus Boris occasionally bore the titles of *krales* and *panhypersebastos*.

sister of Géza II and Henry (IV) († 1150), son of Conrad III.<sup>28</sup> However, Hungary did not react to this re-buff at this point. At the same time, the marriage between the Byzantine Emperor, Manuel Comnenus, (1143–1180), and the German Princess, Bertha of Sulzbach, in 1146,<sup>29</sup> caused losing political ground for the Hungarian foreign relations even though the forming alliance was primarily launched against the Southern Italian Normans. One of the most important features of Hungarian foreign policy was to attribute particular importance to its geopolitical situation in which the kingdom might easily find itself surrounded by enemies, and this situation could have manifested itself in a Byzantine–German alliance.<sup>30</sup> These fears appear to have been realized when Boris attacked Hungarian territory in the Spring of 1146 with the help of Austrian–Bavarian mercenary troops. This military undertaking achieved some success on the western edge of the Hungarian realm,<sup>31</sup> but the city of Pozsony (modern Bratislava, Slovakia), which the allies occupied, had recently been regained by the Hungarian ruler.<sup>32</sup> Since Géza II was well aware that it was probably Conrad III who stood behind the attack, the Hungarian king avoided a prompt counter-strike. Instead, he first started promoting by subsidies the Duke Welf VI, Margrave of Tuscany (†1191)<sup>33</sup> in the hope that the duke would engage Conrad III far from the frontiers of Hungary. Since Welf VI also received political and financial support from King Roger II of Sicily (1130–1154)<sup>34</sup>, parallel to the Hungarian–German opposition, the Hungarian–Byzantine conflict apparently sharpened. Moreover, as Pope Eugenius III was in disagreement with Roger II,<sup>35</sup> the papal–Hungarian relations were also soured. Nonetheless, in autumn 1146, Géza II turned his attentions westwards in a bid to strike back for Boris’ invasion earlier in the year. Géza attacked the Margrave Henry II (Jasomirgott) of Babenberg (1141–1156), and the Hungarian king

<sup>28</sup> A détente can be observed in the Welf–Stauf relationship from 1142 and afterwards, according to Ferenc Makk, Conrad III pushed no more a German–Hungarian dynastic relation such a way. Cf. Makk, *The Árpáds and the Comneni*, 37.

<sup>29</sup> Makk, *The Árpáds and the Comneni*, 38.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. P. Stephenson, *Byzantium’s Balkan Frontier: A Political Study of the Northern Balkans, 900–1204*, Cambridge 2000, 211–217.

<sup>31</sup> *The Deeds of Frederick Barbarossa by Otto of Freising, and his continuator, Rahewin*, tr. Ch. Mierow, New York 1953, 64–65.

<sup>32</sup> “Chronici Hungarici,” SRH 1: 453. Makk, *The Árpáds and the Comneni*, 36.

<sup>33</sup> “Historia Welforum Weingartensis,” ed. L. Weiland, in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores*, 21, ed. G. H. Pertz, Hannover 1869, 468; Burchardus Urspergensis, “Chronicon,” eds. O. Abel, L. Weiland, in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores*, 23, ed. G. H. Pertz, Hannover 1874, 344.

<sup>34</sup> For the political alliance of Roger II, Welf VI and Géza II, see, *inter alia*, F. Hausmann, “Die Anfänge des staufischen Zeitalters unter Konrad III.” in T. Mayer, ed. *Probleme des 12. Jahrhunderts. Reichenau-Vorträge 1965–1967*, Vorträge und Forschungen 12, Konstanz–Stuttgart 1968, 59. A. Haverkamp, *Medieval Germany, 1056–1273*. Oxford–New York 1988, 143. Zimmermann, “Die deutsch-ungarischen Beziehungen,” 96; H. Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West*. Cambridge 2002, 90.

<sup>35</sup> J. Richard, *The Crusades, c.1071–c.1291*. Cambridge 1999, 160.

dealt the German troops a heavy blow near the River Leitha.<sup>36</sup> Although Géza II regarded his own military action as a counter-strike, it was in fact a *casus belli* for Conrad III, and Conrad might have attacked Géza had he not taken the cross.<sup>37</sup> On the other hand, it is not surprising that Eugenius III did not want to recruit the Hungarian monarchy since doing so might have risked the whole expedition. It was, no doubt, "in the air" that if the troops do not take the offer of Roger II, by choosing the sea-road,<sup>38</sup> the majority of the crusading armies took the inland route which leads through the Hungarian Kingdom. Supposedly, the memory of the ill fated march of the irregular troops<sup>39</sup> of the First Crusade was still vivid for those who planned and prepared the campaign.

As part of their preparations, Eugenius III and King Louis VII of France contacted Manuel Comnenus and the rulers of Hungary and Sicily in order to ask for logistical support. A German assembly, convoked in the Spring of 1147, was informed of Louis' preparations, and it decided that those crusaders under the nominal leadership of Conrad III would follow the classic pilgrim route to Constantinople, and hence to Asia Minor and the Holy Land. Thus it was determined that the crusaders would pass through Hungary.<sup>40</sup> The prevailing tension between Conrad III and Géza II, however, caused a serious diplomatic burden. The Hungarian ruler was well prepared. He even appears to have used "intelligence": it had come to Géza's attention that the pretender, Boris, intended to travel to Hungary with the army of Conrad III.<sup>41</sup> According to Western historiography, Géza II was afraid of a counter-strike from Conrad III,<sup>42</sup> although this is rather implausible given that under the aegis of the crusading vow it was unlikely that crusaders would attack fellow Catholics. Admittedly, the chain of events concerning the crusader attack on the Catholic city of Zara during the Fourth Crusade makes us very cautious in this respect, but such an attack was unlikely in the middle of the twelfth century. In addition, the Hungarian chroniclers offer a different scenario.<sup>43</sup> They reveal that a group of Hungarian nobles attempted to support Boris in his plans for the Hungarian throne. Accordingly, Conrad III was not Géza II's major concern,<sup>44</sup> it was the possibility of a conspiracy or an open rebellion in his realm occasioned by the appearance of Boris. It is unclear how widespread support was for Boris, but we can suggest that he had as much support outside of Hungary as he did within the kingdom. It seems that he managed

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<sup>36</sup> *The Deeds of Frederick Barbarossa*, 67–68.

<sup>37</sup> J. Phillips, "Papacy, Empire and the Second Crusade," in *The Second Crusade: Scope and consequences*, ed. J. Phillips, M. Hoch, Manchester-New York 2001, 21.

<sup>38</sup> Houben, *Roger II of Sicily*, 88.

<sup>39</sup> More recently scholars seem to reappraise these contingents and do not regard them so scrappy any more. Cf. Veszprémy, "Magyarország és az első keresztes hadjárat," 504–509.

<sup>40</sup> J. Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: a short history*, 2nd ed. London 2005, 125–126.

<sup>41</sup> "Chronici Hungarici," SRH 1: 457–458. Makk, *The Árpáds and the Comneni*, 40.

<sup>42</sup> Berry, "The Second Crusade," 483.

<sup>43</sup> "Chronici Hungarici," SRH 1: 453–457.

<sup>44</sup> "Chronici Hungarici," SRH 1: 459. Makk, *The Árpáds and the Comneni*, 39.



to convince Conrad III to remove Boris from his army and thus not to increase the tension between the two kings.<sup>45</sup> It is somewhat odd that most scholars have neglected this aspect of Géza's concerns,<sup>46</sup> however, it may provide an explanation to several points raised by Kosztolnyik. For instance, the notion that the wealth of the Hungarian Church secured Conrad's passage through the realm.<sup>47</sup> According to the Hungarian chronicler, the German ruler who reached the country in the middle of June arrived "not as pilgrim of Christ but as thief and behaved as tyrant". Undoubtedly, the Hungarian Chronicle<sup>48</sup> depicts the German king unfavorably and also exaggerates the damages caused by the crusading army.<sup>49</sup> The question still remains, however, on what grounds did Conrad demand money in Hungary. Presumably, it was the charge incurred for keeping Boris away from Hungary; a payment based on an agreement between Conrad III and Géza II, but an arrangement that the Hungarian chronicler either did not know about or chose to omit from his text. Nevertheless, no recordable incident took place in the course of the march of the German troops. What is more, according to Kosztolnyik, relying upon Otto of Freising, Hungarians joined the crusading army in large numbers.<sup>50</sup> It is very unlikely that significant numbers of Hungarians joined the marching troops either spontaneously or in an organized way with no mention in the Hungarian chronicle composition. It neither seems probable that the German army, depicted very negatively by the Hungarian chronicler, attracted many locals. The exact numbers of troops, however, is not known. The 900,000 soldiers mentioned in a Byzantine source<sup>51</sup> is an exaggeration while the number of 70,000, occurring in Western sources, sounds more realistic.<sup>52</sup> Nonetheless, the German army left the Kingdom of Hungary on 20 July at Barancs (modern Braničevo, Serbia).

Odo of Deuil and the Hungarian Chronicle reveal that the French army, led by King Louis VII, followed the same route through Europe as that taken by the Germans. The French contingents advanced quicker than the Germans as they made use of the bridges which the latter had constructed to facilitate their ad-

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<sup>45</sup> Odo de Deogilo, "De protectione Ludovici VII. regis Francorum in Orientem," ed. G. Waitz, in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores*, 26, ed. G. Waitz, Hannover 1882, 62.

<sup>46</sup> Makk, *The Árpáds and the Comneni*, 39, 139:n97.

<sup>47</sup> "Chronici Hungarici," SRH 1: 458; Berry, "The Second Crusade," 483.

<sup>48</sup> "Chronici Hungarici," SRH 1: 458.

<sup>49</sup> "Chronici Hungarici," SRH 1: 458.

<sup>50</sup> "Gesta Friderici Imperatoris," 375. Berry, "The Second Crusade," 484. Berry mentions that Conrad was joined by a number of Hungarians. She presumably found evidence of this in the *Gesta Friderici Imperatoris*.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Richard, *The Crusades*, 161.

<sup>52</sup> Magnus presbyter Reichespergensis, "Annales Reichespergensis," ed. W. Wattenbach, in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores*, 17, ed. G. H. Pertz, Hannover 1861, 462; "Historia imperatorum auctore anonymo," in *Scriptores rerum Germanicarum*, ed. J. Burckhard Mencken, Lipsiae 1728, 3: 107; Rogerius de Wendover, "Chronica," ed. F. Liebermann, in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores*, 28, ed. R. Pauli, Hannover 1888, 29-30.

vance.<sup>53</sup> The rapid march through Hungary<sup>54</sup> was also aided by the fact that Géza II received the French ruler and his entourage in a much friendlier fashion than he did Conrad III.<sup>55</sup> It is worth noting the opinion of Z. Kosztolnyik who notes that the Hungarian chronicler depicted the French ruler in much more positive way than he did Conrad.<sup>56</sup> Reading between the lines, however, one may find another explanation for the “friendly” tone of the chronicler’s description. There is no doubt that Géza II gave numerous gifts to Louis VII; they also launched plans for cooperation in the future.<sup>57</sup> Moreover, the Hungarian king asked the French ruler to be the godfather of his offspring, the later Stephen III.<sup>58</sup> At the same time, we should note that Boris eventually arrived in Hungary with the French troops. This soon led to tension between the parties, especially when Louis VII refused Géza II’s demand for Boris’ extradition from the French camp by claiming that Boris was allowed asylum, even though Louis was very much aware that Boris’ primary goal when entering Hungary was to raise his claim the Hungarian throne.<sup>59</sup> The canonical considerations of this inconvenient situation were studied by Kosztolnyik.<sup>60</sup> Makk emphasized that the behavior of Louis was driven by political prudence. Louis regarded Boris as a relative of Manuel Comnenus who had expressed serious reservations concerning the Second Crusade.<sup>61</sup> Accordingly, Makk believes that Louis protected the pretender in a bid to avoid conflict with the Byzantines. According to the Hungarian chronicler, Boris realized that his status among the French was unsustainable and, being afraid of extradition, he finally managed to escape from the French camp.<sup>62</sup> However, Odo de Deuil, who was an eyewitness of the events, informs us that Boris remained in the company of the French and freely left Hungary under the protection of Louis VII.<sup>63</sup> After the negotiations between Géza and Louis had finished, the French army departed from Hungary although Géza II kept an eye on the marching army until it had definitely left for the Bulgarian territories.<sup>64</sup> Just a year later, the German and the Byzantine rulers reconfirmed their coalition against the Normans.<sup>65</sup> This alliance, however, hardly affected the fact that Géza II found his kingdom in almost complete political isolation. The escalation of the conflicts was

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<sup>53</sup> Odo de Deuil, *De profectione Ludovici VII*, 33.

<sup>54</sup> It lasted 15 days and thus it was indeed a remarkable rate of march. Odo de Deuil, *De profectione Ludovici VII*, 31.

<sup>55</sup> Berry, “The Second Crusade,” 488–489. Makk, *The Árpáds and the Comneni*, 40; Riley-Smith, *The Crusades*, 127.

<sup>56</sup> “Chronici Hungarici,” SRH 1: 459. Kosztolnyik, *From Coloman the Learned*, 131–133.

<sup>57</sup> Odo de Deuil, *De profectione Ludovici VII*, 35.

<sup>58</sup> “Chronici Hungarici,” SRH 1: 458.

<sup>59</sup> Odo de Deuil, *De profectione Ludovici VII*, 37. “Chronici Hungarici,” SRH 1: 459–460.

<sup>60</sup> Kosztolnyik, *From Coloman the Learned*, 133.

<sup>61</sup> Makk, *The Árpáds and the Comneni*, 40.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. “Chronici Hungarici,” SRH 1: 459–460.

<sup>63</sup> Odo de Deuil, *De profectione Ludovici VII*, 37–39.

<sup>64</sup> Cf. Odo de Deuil, *De profectione Ludovici VII*, 39.

<sup>65</sup> H. Vollrath, “Konrad III und Byzanz,” *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 59 (1977), 324.

perhaps obviated by the launching of the Second Crusade but quite soon Byzantine forces attacked Hungary in 1151.<sup>66</sup>

### *Conclusion*

A slight modification of the above outlined Sweeney-thesis is suggested. The reason for the absence of the active participation of the Hungarians during the Second Crusade was not owing to a widespread lack of Christianity or the weakness of the Catholic Church, it was due to the contemporary political milieu. Neither the organizers of the crusade nor the Hungarian king dared to risk involving the Hungarians more than they actually did. If we allow an ahistorical "play with thoughts" and imagine what might have happened if Conrad III had defeated Géza II before 1146, then the latter might have taken the cross and, as a vassal of the German king, gone to the Holy Land in the company of the Bohemian and Polish rulers.

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<sup>66</sup> W. Treadgold, *A History of the Byzantine State and Society*, Stanford 1997, 642.