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Hungary through the eyes of an Austrian humanist.
Wolfgang Lazius' chorography of Hungary, *Regni Hungariae
Archaeologiae libri tres.*
Theses of the PhD dissertation

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I. Objective and content of the thesis

The aim of the dissertation is twofold: on the one hand, I would like to publish a transcription of the first book of *Archaeologiae Hungariae libri tres* (hereinafter: *Archaeologia*) as part of the thesis, and to provide a critical apparatus for its publication; on the other hand, I would like to examine and present Wolfgang Lazius' description of Hungary along various guiding lines and questions.

The *Archaeologia*, which forms the backbone of the dissertation, is the work of an Austrian author whose name and work are less known to the Hungarian public, although he is connected to Hungarian history by many strands (and works). Therefore, I began my essay with an introduction to the life and activities of Wolfgang Lazius, in order to give the reader an idea of who the author of the *Archaeologia* was.

Wolfgang Lazius, a Viennese humanist of the 16th century, was a true polymath, who devoted his life to historiography and cartography, as well as medicine, and was made head of the Imperial Collection of Coins and Antiquities by Ferdinand I. He was an extremely prolific author, but he did not leave behind any medical theory, but rather earned a reputation as a cartographer and historian. In the historiographical overview, I wanted to point out that the boundaries of research are best drawn along the lines of manuscript and print, and that Lazius' writings that were published in print were therefore examined. Although there have been a number of studies of Lazius' work, they have concentrated mainly on his cartographic work. The historical writings that make up the bulk of his oeuvre, which have survived in manuscript and await processing, have become the focus of research in the last decade.

Since the geographic literature of our time and the genre of humanistic geography are quite different - one need only think that in the Renaissance era, the description of the land was part of the subject of historiography – I felt it necessary to outline the characteristics of humanistic geographic literature at the beginning of chapter two.

The next sub-chapter of the second chapter covers the subject of the descriptions of Hungary, since Lazius' *Archaeologia* is not the only geography of Hungary of the period, but a piece of the chorographic literature on Hungary in the 15th and 16th centuries, and so in order to assess the place and significance of the *Archaeologia* it is worth briefly reviewing the corpus of texts of which it was part. This chapter of the dissertation examines the description of Hungary by Pietro Ransano, Antonio Bonfini, Johannes Cuspinianus, István Brodarics and Miklós Oláh along the following lines:

- 1) the date of the work's creation and whether it was published in the period,

- 2) Whether the description of Hungary is a stand-alone work or a geographical introduction,
- 3) Reception.
- 4) Whether it is a complete or partial description of the country,
- 5) Whether the description of the country is accompanied by excursuses.

However, the *Archeologia* should not be interpreted only as part of the chorographic literature on Hungary, since Lazius also wrote chorographies on other areas, so it became necessary to present these works in general, since, just as I could not get a complete picture of the *Archeologia* without knowing the other writings on Hungary, I could not get a complete picture of Lazius' other works on similar subjects without a review of his other works. Apart from the atlas of the Austrian territories, *Typi chorographici Austrae* which also appeared in print, Lazius' *Interpretatio chorographiae utriusque Austriae, Descriptio Austriae ultradanubianae* and *Descriptionis inferioris Austriae sive Norici Ripensis, Austriae historiae fragmentum Lazii* concentrate on the Austrian territories, but these works have survived in manuscript form. The latter work, moreover, has come down to us in fragments. Lazius wrote two chorographies of Hungary, *Des Khünigreichs Hungern sambt seinen eingeleibten Landen, gründtliche und warhafftige Chorographica bescreybung* and *Regni Hungariae Archaeologiae libri tres. Des Khünigreichs Hungern* also appeared in print, as did *Typi chorographici*, and this is the only one of Lazius's chorographies to be written in German, while the others are in Latin. Finally, I have closed the series of descriptions of the territory with a work on Transylvania, *Descriptio Daciae sive Transylvaniae*, which is also unpublished.

I believe that the significance of this dissertation also lies in the fact that it examines one of Lazius's surviving manuscripts, a text that has escaped the attention of both Hungarian and international scholars precisely because of its manuscript nature. At the end of the chapter, the structure of the first decade of Lazius' *Decades* is outlined. The *Descriptio Daciae* would have comprised the first book, since Lazius himself named the description of Transylvania as the first book of his *Commentarii Rerum Austriacarum*, followed by *Descriptio Austriae Ultradanubianae*, which Lazius intended as the second book of his *Commentarii Rerum Austriacarum*. It can be assumed that Lazius would also have intended the third book to be devoted to the Austrian territories, and that its content would have been similar to that of his chorographic writings on the fragmentary Noricum and Rhaetia. Then, in the fourth book, we would have read a description of Hungary.

The last subchapter of the chapter on humanistic geography is devoted to the descriptive description of the *Archaeologia*, where, in addition to a description of the content of the text, I have also examined the question of its date of origin, since Lazius' description of Hungary is not dated, and we must therefore rely on the context for its date of origin.

Chapter three is the main part of the dissertation, as I have devoted this section to a detailed analysis of the *Archaeologia*, with each sub-chapter examining a different problem. Peter Kulcsár wrote the following in relation to the description of land in medieval historiography: "geography is used as a side-context, usually in the direct service of the political aim that guides the chronicler's hand anyway".¹ Although geography is no longer a side issue for the humanists, their writing is also strongly permeated by politics. It is for this reason that the very first sub-chapter (*Geography in the service of politics*) explores the theme of political propaganda in chorography. In examining Lazius's description of Transylvania, I found that his geographical work, particularly the sixth chapter of the *Descriptio Daciae*, was intended to support official court propaganda, so I thought it worthwhile to see whether other similar works, such as the *Archaeologia*, might have served similar purposes.

The next sub-chapter dealt with Lazius' historiographical method. In the course of gathering material, I came across Lazius' *Reipublicae Romanae in exteris provinciis bello constitutae commentariorum libri XII* which also touched on Hungarian topics (e.g. the cities of Pannonia, the legions stationed there), so I read the relevant passages. It was then that I decided that Michael Mayr's view might be worth thinking about further. The Austrian historian concluded that Lazius had actually used or intended to use some of his historical works when writing the *Decades*, so that his printed works could function as a pre-study of the *Decades*. I have also compared the passages of Lazius' *Commentarii Reipublicae Romanae* on the Pannonian cities with the relevant passages of the *Archaeologia* and the Transylvanian description. I wanted to show that Lazius had used his earlier works not only for the *Dacades* but also for his other works. I also wanted to show the main feature of Lazius' method of historiography, namely that the Austrian humanist inserted in his work in progress extracts or even entire chapters from his earlier writings which fitted in well with the content of his newer work in progress.

When examining the descriptions of Hungary, it became clear how much the informative value of a chorography about the Kingdom of Hungary at that time is determined by the kind of map (reflecting ancient conditions or "ready for the day") used by the author. In

¹ KULCSÁR, Péter (2010): *Eszmék, legendák, történelem és történetírás (Tanulmányok)*. [Ideas, legends, history and historiography (Studies).] Budapest: Lucidus Kiadó, 24–25.

the subsection on *Maps and geography*, I examined the descriptions of Hungary to see whether their author used any map and, if so, which map, that of Ptolemy's Pannonia or perhaps one depicting the Kingdom of Hungary in the period. In addition to this, I have also placed particular emphasis on exploring the relationship between Lazius' map of Hungary and the *Archaeologia*, and the relationship between *Des Khünigreichs Hungern* (the German description of the map) and the *Archaeologia*.

Finally, the last topic I tried to cover was the sources of the *Archaeologia*. When reading the *Archaeologia*, one's attention may be caught by the many titles and authors mentioned by Lazius as sources. There are 41 names in all, and for five works the Austrian humanist refers not to the author but to the title. These are works in which the author is unknown because he refers to an annal (for example *annales Urspergensis*) or a guidebook (for example *itinerarium Antonini*). The question of the sources used can be approached from several angles. Since Lazius' description of Hungary is a geographical work, it is logical to assume that most of the sources used are of the same nature. Furthermore, since the *Archaeologia* was essentially intended to place the Kingdom of Hungary on the map of antiquity, it is reasonable to assume a preponderance of ancient authors. But besides these obvious aspects, it is also worth exploring the other approach, for example by examining the information content of each source.

In this sub-chapter, I have therefore tried to show which ancient and medieval authors Lazius relied on for his knowledge and which genres of literature he used as sources, in addition to geographical works. Furthermore, I have made a special reference to the source of Hungarian history, because if we look at Lazius' insights into Hungarian prehistory and the medieval Kingdom of Hungary, we may wonder about the nature of the source, since in these passages he indicated the annals of the Hungarians (*annales Hungarorum/annales Hungarici*) as the source. I tried to find out which of the Latin Hungarian historical works (Képes chronika, Hess chronika, Thuróczy's chronicle, Bonfini's Hungarian history) could be hidden in the *annales Hungarorum* or *annales Hungarici*.

Chapter four summarises the main findings of the thesis, followed by a list of the literature used. Finally, chapter six contains a transcript of the first book of the *Archaeologia*. Where abbreviations in *Archaeologia* are used, they are given without notation and unabridged. I have standardised the orthography of the text according to the academic spelling used today. Proper names (e.g. Chianadiensis comitatus, Bekhesiensiscomitatus, Iordnandes) have been transcribed according to Lazius' spelling without any alterations. Lastly, I would

like to point out to the reader that the typographical separation of the quotations used by Lazius is my own; in the manuscript, the quotations are not separated from the main text.

II. Results of the research

The new findings of the thesis can be summarised in the following points:

1) As the *Archaeologia* is not dated, it was important to establish when the work was written before starting deeper analyses. The existence of a draft dedication to Miklós Oláh, in which Lazius called the archpriest "episcopus Sagrabiensis", the reference to Bonfini's *Decades*, and the historical events mentioned in the *Archaeologia* (the fall of Nádorfehérvár, the defeat at the battle of Mohács, the defeat of Katzian's army near Osijek, and the fall of the castle of Siklós to the Turks) helped me to solve the dating issue. On the basis of these, I have concluded that the *Archaeologia* was written sometime in the mid-1540s, but certainly after 1543 and before 1548.

2) I was able to show that humanist geographies were very well suited to serve the needs of political propaganda. While Lazius, in his description of Transylvania, in addition to justifying the territorial claim, tried to glorify Ferdinand I and emphasise his ability as a Hungarian king to govern the country in contrast to the Hungarian king János Szapolyai, in the *Archaeologia* we do not find the same justification of the territorial claim as in the description of Transylvania.

I believe that the Hungarian description had less of a hidden purpose of consolidating a territorial claim - i.e. that Ferdinand Habsburg not only had a right to rule the Kingdom of Hungary by virtue of the marriage treaties between the Jagellos and the Habsburgs, but that the fact that Germanic tribes ruled in some areas of the Carpathian Basin in antiquity may also have provided a claim. Rather, we should think that Lazius wanted to prove that the history of the Hungarians and the Kingdom of Hungary (i.e. Pannonia) was closely linked to the history of the Germanic peoples, the 'neighbours'. What is also striking about the *Archaeologia* and the *Descriptio Daciae* is that in the case of the chorography of Hungary, there is no marked 'Germanisation'. This is probably because the chapters of his *Archaeologia* (especially the ethnographic parts of the third book) have not survived (or have not been completed), where Lazius could really develop his emphasis on Germanic origins and presence. At the same time, the text is very well suited to conveying another kind of hidden message, in addition to justifying the territorial claim. In addition to highlighting the permanent presence of peoples

of Germanic origin in the Carpathian Basin, the passages, which are intended to serve political ends, also draw attention to the fact that the history of peoples of Germanic and Scythian origin has been closely intertwined in the region since antiquity.

3) By comparing the relevant passages in *Commentarii Reipublicae* and *Archaeologia*, I have also managed to nuance Lazius' working method. Following Michael Mayr's research, the literature has so far only reported that Lazius' historical works, which also appeared in print, were merely preliminary studies for the *Decades*. Along this line of thought, I have succeeded in showing that Lazius' method of historiography is characterised by a preference for incorporating extracts from his completed/printed or in-manuscript/manuscript writings into other works.

This observation is important not only because it provides us with information on Lazius's working method, but also because it can provide valuable insights for reconstructing the content of the *Archaeologia*. The only known copy of the work is the complete third book, and the second is partly lost. The *Commentarii Reipublicae Romanae* not only reveal the continuation of a sentence abruptly interrupted in the middle of the description of Hungary, but also make it possible to reconstruct the content of the chapters missing from the second book of the *Archeologia*. On the one hand, we can imagine that, continuing along the Danube from Anquincum to Carnuntum, the cities of the western part of the Danube (and sometimes Burgenland) would have followed, then the north-eastern part of present-day Slovenia, and finally the Croatian territories (the former counties of Zagreb and Posen) would have concluded the description of the settlements of Pannonia. Furthermore, the content of the third book can be partially reconstructed, since in the second book of the *Archaeologia* Lazius had hinted that he would deal with the Roman legions stationed in Pannonia in a separate book. In the fourth book of the *Commentarii Reipublicae Romanae*, Lazius wrote about the Roman army, military administration, the legions' stations and the wars in the Illyrian Empire. Furthermore, it has become clear that the chapters on the Pannonian cities in the *Archeologia* and the *Commentarii Reipublicae Romanae* are not only identical in content but also very similar in wording. Where there are differences, they are also partly due to the historical perspective. In *Commentarii Reipublicae Romanae*, Lazius did not fail to inform his readers of the settlements that fell into Turkish hands. The reason for the differences is, on the other hand, the correction of errors, i.e. the settlements wrongly identified in the *Archeologia* were already correctly given by Lazius in the *Commentarii Reipublicae Romanae*.

4) In the section on the knowledge of the map, I will add to Ransanus' *Epithoma*. I have compared the Italian humanist's description of Pannonia with the 15th century maps of

Ptolemy's Pannonia in Tibor Szathmáry's book, concluding that the *Geographia Pannonia* map of 1478 by Arnold Bucknick and published in Rome by Calderinus Domitius may have been the source for Ransanus in the drafting of the Pannonia sections of the *Epithoma*.

Also in the chapter on maps, I have discussed the relationship between Des Khünigreichs Hungern, the *Archeologia* and Lazius's map of Hungary, and have come to the following conclusions. Although the German-language description of Hungary is quantitatively much more numerous in terms of geographical and administrative units (e.g. mountains, lakes, counties, etc.), it is not more extensive in content than the Latin description. For the most part, Lazius provided the same or even less information than in the *Archeologia*, citing the same ancient quotations in *Des Khünigreichs Hungern* as in the Latin text. The reason why *Des Khünigreichs Hungern* could only surpass the *Archeologia* in terms of the names is that the German-language chorography was accompanied by a map as an aid. At the same time, Lazius either did not want or did not intend to make use of his map of Hungary for *Des Khünigreichs Hungern* to the extent that Oláh did with the Lázár map. Since Lazius' map had not yet been completed when the *Archeologia* was written, it can be ruled out with absolute certainty that he would have used it to write the Latin text. However, the effect was the other way round: Lazius tried to use the knowledge of the ancient conditions recorded in the *Archeologia* to illustrate the map.

5) As regards the sources of the *Archeologia*, the predominance of ancient sources suggests that Lazius intended the *Archeologia* to place Hungary on the map of antiquity rather than to provide accurate information about the conditions of the time. It is also clear that he tried to make up for the lack of geographical work by using the works of various historians. After a detailed examination of the problem of the *annales Hungarorum*'s source designation, and after a thorough examination of the marginalia in the book, I can state with absolute certainty that the source thus described was the *Chronicle of Buda* printed by András Hess. It was the copy of the *Buda Chronicle* that was in the hands of the 16th century Austrian humanist Wolfgang Lazius, who used it to write his forthcoming work, the *Archeologia*, which is now preserved in the ÖNB under the reference Ink 5.F.35.

III. Further options for research on the topic

Finally, I plan to publish two books of *Archeologia* in digital format with critical apparatus. In my opinion, such a publication has great potential due to the data richness; one only has to think of the fact that in digital space it is much easier to visualise and display the relationship between written text and map. In addition, I would like to continue to examine the

relationship between Lazius and Hess's *Chronicle of Buda*, and to look more closely at what Lazius considered important to highlight in the history of the Hungarians, and perhaps to see what events Lazius disputed with the chronicle when recording them. In addition to a more thorough study of the marginal notes and textual highlights of the *Chronicle of Buda*, I also intend to include the *Descriptio Transylvania* and the passages of the *Rerum Pannonicarum libri* dealing with ancestral history. In order to get a complete picture of Lazius's view of the Kingdom of Hungary, it is worthwhile to examine the *Descriptio Transilvaniae* further, in addition to the *Archaeologia*, because if we look at Lazius's concept of Dacia, we can see that he not only describes Transylvania in a narrow sense, but also writes about all the areas that are not the former Pannonia, i.e. the areas of Upper Hungary, the Danube-Tisza area, and the Tiszántúli. This also shows that the research of Lazius' description of Hungary and Transylvania offers many exciting directions and possibilities for further research.

IV. Publications on the subject of the thesis

- CSAPÓ, Fanni (2022): Koppány, a szerémi vezér? Egy Wolfgang Lazius-szöveg könyvtörténeti tanulságairól. [Koppányi, the leader of Szerémség? On the book-historical lessons of a Wolfgang Lazius text.] *Magyar Könyvszemle* 138. évf., 3. sz., 318–338.
- CSAPÓ, Fanni (2021): A Nagy Chorográfia: a korabeli földrajzi tudás közvetítői, vagy térképek „szövegeknyvei”? [The Great Chorographs: mediators of contemporary geographical knowledge or 'scripts' for maps?] in: Dávid Benjámin – Kiss Gábor Ferenc – Lengyel Ádám (szerk.): „*Sapere aude*” *A Szegedi Történelemhallgatók Egyesületének Második Konferenciája tanulmánykötete*. Szeged: Belvedere Meridionale, 51–66.
- CSAPÓ, Fanni (2020): On the manuscript(s) of Lazius' description of Transylvania. *Acta Classica Universitatis Scientiarum Debreceniensis* LVI. 35–50.
- CSAPÓ, Fanni (2020): Erdély népei egy osztrák humanista szemével. [The peoples of Transylvania through the eyes of an Austrian humanist.] in: Takács László – Tóth Orsolya (szerk.): *Hereditas Graeco-latinitas VIII. Biográfia és Identitás*. Debrecen: Debreceni Egyetem Klasszika-filológia és Ókortörténeti Tanszék, 255–268.
- CSAPÓ, Fanni (2020): Hogyan írjunk okosan több száz oldalas monográfiákat? Avagy Wolfgang Lazius (történet)írói módszere. [How to Write Hundreds of Pages Long Monographs? Wolfgang Lazius' (historiographical) method] In: Bene Ildikó Mária – Molnár Annamária – Szűcs Kata Ágnes – Virág Csilla – Vrabéy Márk (szerk.): *Fenntartható tudomány. Hagyomány és újrahasznosítás a felvilágosodás előtt. Fiatalok Konferenciája 2019*. Budapest: Reciti Kiadó, 83–97.