



University “Babeş–Bolyai”, Cluj-Napoca

Abstract of the Ph.D. Thesis

***Relationship between the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and
the Principality of Transylvania (1540–1699)***

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Abstract

In the sixteenth century Italy, it grows more and more attention to the events in Eastern Europe, and in particular in the valley of the Danube, where the progressive Turkish advance seems to overcome every obstacle. This interest around the "Eastern Question" results in a series of reports, treaties, and various writings. At the beginning of the century, in conjunction with the great flowering of culture in Italy, they are mainly cultivated the studies of History and Geography. In the second half of the century, the problems of the East Europe seem to interest the Italian humanists in particular with regard to the political-military issues. In the early years of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, the news about the events of the Principality of Transylvania were learned by the first Grand Dukes in an indirect manner, by means of notices from other cities, or through diplomatic personnel residing at the imperial court.

Among the individual characters that played a vital role in keeping alive the cultural ties between Tuscany and Transylvania, we note eclectic interests that add various competences to military, political and diplomatic functions, in the disciplines which, at that time, were receiving the approval of the courtiers. Thus we have military and diplomats who, besides taking care of the business interests and of the political strategy of their masters, correspond with the protagonists of the then incipient scientific revolution, or participate in the renewal of musical and artistic taste in general. But these interests, that, in a broad sense, we can consider as cultural, often accompany confessionals disputes that animate the religious life of the time. Among these characters we find Giovanni Andrea Gromo, whose experience in Transylvania is condensed in a work which he dedicated to Cosimo I, then the doctors Massimo Milanese, a Jesuit priest who was also a diplomat and architect, and Marcello Squarzialupi, who had relations with Biandrata, but also with the Jesuits of Alba Iulia.

In 1593, the Grand Duke Ferdinando I sent an embassy in Transylvania led by Matteo Botti, a man who, at that time, maintained relations with eminent personalities of culture and politics in Italy and who, then, will play a role notch between the diplomats of the Grand Duchy. Botti was accompanied by Cosimo Bottegari, a musician near the so-called Roman school, the doctor Ippolito Guarinoni, who had studied with the Jesuits in Prague, Ottavio Strada, who was painter, architect, inventor, goldsmith, numismatist and antiquarian, and finally the carver Ottavio Miseroni.

In 1593, Rudolf II and Murad III broke the truce enshrined in Adrianople. It was fulfilled, as well, the project of Clement VIII, that consisted in a crusade against the Turks in the Balkans and in the establishment of a League not only led by the Emperor, but also by the King of Poland. The war, fought in Hungary and in the Romanian principalities, involved primarily the principles of Transylvania and Wallachia, Sigismund Bathory and Michael the Brave, but also some Italian princes did their part; as well as from the Pope, they came money and soldiers also from the Grand Duke of Tuscany and from the Dukes of Ferrara and Mantua. The contingent sent by Ferdinand I in Transylvania, in 1595, was under the command of Silvio Piccolomini, flanked by Imperiale Cinuzzi and the Secretary Filippo Pigafetta, belonging to the family of the famous navigator Antonio.

It is of great interest, towards the end of the century, the case of the family Genga, which had a remarkable influence on the history of three European countries: Italy, Poland and Transylvania, thanks to the architect Simone Genga, descendant of Girolamo and Bartolomeo (mentioned by Vasari). Simone, who was at the service of the Dukes of Urbino, the Grand Dukes of Tuscany, the King of Poland and the Prince of Transylvania, presented himself in these courts with his brother Fabio, but the names and activities of other brothers have emerged from new documents. The figure of Simon and the chronology of his life are better known now, but also the role of Fabio, ambassador to the Pope, and that of John the Baptist, Privy Counselor of the Pope. Now we know the names of Livio, Flaminio, Girolamo and Francesco, as well. It is very interesting also the figure of Fulvio, man of letters who sought his fortune in Spain and the Americas. In addition to the agreements between the Grand Duke of Tuscany and the Transylvanian court for marriage between Sigismund and a granddaughter of Ferdinand, it is analyzed the whole question of the role played by Simone, Fabio, Flaminio and Giovanni Battista in the creation of a network of relationships

between the European courts that were supposed to support the fight against the Ottomans in Transylvania.

After the death of the Genga brothers and after what we might call the golden era in the history of relations between Tuscany and Transylvania, the Grand Duchy lost a valuable source of information in that part of Europe. There are, in the archives of Tuscany, documents that bear witness of the interest, in the Grand Duchy, to the events of those distant territories, but there is lack of documents testifying a direct relationship between the rulers of the two countries, or rather it becomes scarce the documentation produced by witnesses who dwell *in loco*.

Throughout the seventeenth century, in fact, being changed international equilibrium because of the wars of religion, they had a decisive influence, in relations between Tuscany and Transylvania, the different positions taken by the two states in the European context. And while Transylvania, to maintain his independence, had to juggle between the Habsburgs and the Ottoman Empire, placing itself in the wars of religion alongside the Protestant powers, the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, with the last Grand Dukes, met a growing decline, which gradually has favored the abandonment of a vigorous foreign policy.

And yet, at the turn of the seventeenth and eighteenth century, the two states, despite the distance between them, have shared a similar fate, losing almost at the same time their autonomy. It is not only the temporal coincidence to characterize this loss, since both of the States, albeit in different ways, came under Habsburg control. In this manner, it came to an end a history of intense relationships that, after a long break, seemed to lead the two countries to destinations absolutely divergent, but instead at the end they found themselves governed by members of the same dynasty, at the two peripheries of the same Empire.

Keywords

Grand Duchy of Tuscany, Principality of Transylvania, Genga Family, Duchy of Urbino, Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth (or Union)

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