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ABSTRACTS

Andrea Kiss – József Laszlovszky: Successive Floods on the Danube? Late Medieval and Early Modern Danubian Floods and the Franciscan Monastery in Visegrád

One of the major late medieval peaks of flooding occurred at the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth century, repeatedly causing severe flooding in the Carpathian Basin, especially on the Danube. Throughout several decades, even centuries, the changes of the riverbank and water levels of the most important waterway of Hungary had a profound influence on the construction of riverside settlements and the location of settlements and buildings themselves. Modern archaeological excavations have revealed and traced alterations that became necessary due to flood damage in this region.

Visegrád was one of the major cities of the kingdom from as early as the Árpáadian dynasty, and gained further importance during the Angevins in the fourteenth century, when it became the main royal residence. Although during the time of Emperor Sigismund Buda's importance surpassed Visegrád's, the city and its surroundings still remained significant throughout the Jagiellonian era. This is attested to by the extensive construction works that began under King Matthias and continued well into the early Jagiellonian period. In the Middle Ages, the royal palace and surrounding buildings, as well as parts of Visegrád itself, were located on a flood-prone narrow plain bordered by the Danube and the Visegrád hill. Due to this location, Danubian floods had a great impact on the town, the royal palace and the Franciscan monastery, which is the main focus of this study.

Although surviving late medieval sources do not directly mention flooding in Visegrád, archaeological excavations of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century layers suggest that the periodically high levels of the Danube had an effect on reconstruction works and probably caused discernible damages to the buildings. Based on this observation, the study examines the subject at the crossroads of social history, environmental history, historical architecture and archaeology. The short and long-term impact of flooding on the Franciscan monastery complex of Visegrád are examined through the analysis Danubian floods and the peak of flooding occurring between the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century.

Erzsébet Magyar: Budapest Parks, 1870–1918. The Emergence of a Consistent Urban Green Area Policy

The first major Budapest park development projects (*Városliget*, *Margitsziget*) commenced in the 1860s and 1870s. These coincided with the second wave of urban development in the history of Pest-Buda, which took place between the Compromise of 1867 and the First World War, an age of belated but speedy industrialisation, urban expansion and catching up with the West.

Although following the unification of Pest and Buda in 1873, the Municipal Council of Public Works and the city itself took the lead to develop the city in an institutionalised form, the efficiency of the works was questionable. In general, maintaining green areas in Budapest was a source of constant problems.

The study details the condition of green areas in this period and examines the plans and actions taken to expand and develop them from 1870 to the end of the First World War. It also offers a brief summary of the previous history of the subject, as well as examples from the rest of Europe and other cities in the Monarchy, such as Vienna, Prague, and Zagreb. The study then goes on to explore Budapest projects, including the grounds of the Ludovika Military Academy (formerly Orczy Gardens), *Margitsziget* (Margaret Island), *Városliget* (City Park) in Pest, the Danube bank, the *Gellérthegy* and *Várkert* areas of Buda, as well as downtown walkways and parks, such as *Erzsébet tér* (Elisabeth Square), *József tér* (later *József nádor tér*, Palatine Joseph Square), *Ferenc József tér* (Franz Joseph Square), the Danube Promenade, *Széchenyi sétatér* (later *Szabadság tér*, Liberty Square), the Museum Gardens and *Népliget* (People's Park).

Lajos Rácz: Does Modern Global Warming Exist? Late Reflections to a Scientific Polemic

The reality of modern global warming was an open question for scientists around the last millennium. Hungarian meteorologists were engaged in a scholarly debate about climate change, which was not possible to conclude with the research tools available at the time. The problem was further complicated by the fact that the climate of the Danubian Basin is in many respects different than either the global or continental European climate. The exact time or duration of the transition between the mini Ice Age (14th to 19th century) and recent global warming is difficult to determine in this particular region. On one hand, with regard to the beginning of global warming, using temperature increase statistics as the sole indicator would suggest that it had started as early as the the last decades of the nineteenth century. At the same time, using the decreasing volume of precipitation as indicator, global warming will be seen to have started in the

1940s, even if a marked drought tendency was not perceptible until the 1970s. On the other hand, with regard to the end of the mini Ice Age, considering a predominantly cool and wet climate as the main characteristic, its purest form dominated the climate in the Danubian Basin until the 1910s and in a looser interpretation it lasted down to the 1940s.

Péter Haraszti Szabó: The Trade Controlling Roles of Counties and the *Honor* System in Early Fourteenth-Century Hungary

Out of all the medieval kings of Hungary, Charles I of Anjou was the most committed to developing the economy. As the present study suggests, the system of awarding *honors* was directly linked to his economic policy and *honors* were not bestowed upon people on an *ad hoc* basis, merely in order to generate revenues.

While the author does not question the importance of the *honor* system as far as power is concerned, the study refines our understanding of it. It suggests that the recipients of county seats or castle positions were people who had retrieved those from oligarchs for the crown. Pál Engel's archontology points out that a limited group of counties came to be held by magnates, and that there was only a partial link between the *honor* system and the king's international and military conflicts or lands formerly held by magnates. However, further research reveals that over half of all royal castles were located in such lands, and nearly 77% of city charters and 90% of all charters granting special protection in this period originated there as well.

Collecting royal customs was the privilege of the *honor* holders, but this also carried the added responsibility of maintaining roads, bridges and river crossings and protecting itinerant merchants and travellers. This fact was recorded in the Hungarian-Bohemian trade pact, as well as several surviving letters of safe conduct. Counties had the legal capacity to perform these duties, which is attested to by a 1338 charter by the *comes* of Hont as well as some Árpáadian laws. We have surviving sources about the practical implementation of the duty of protection for nearly all the main roads of the country. These sources illustrate the king's personal endeavours to improve the situation of his long-suffering royal coffers. Internal customs that were still extant at this time, and especially the foreign trade custom called *tricesima*, were also both linked to the *honor* system and generated significant revenues for the crown. However, the system also helped to recover the royal *fiscus* indirectly by the growth of cities and their increasing tax payments to the king. The question remains, however, whether this economic volume was Charles I's own initiative or a pattern across the entirety of the system. To answer this, further research into the origins of the *honor* system and its history after the reign of Charles I would be necessary.

András Vadas: Disaster (history)? The 1880 Earthquake in Zagreb

The study comprise two main parts, the first being the summary of the most important recent developments in Disaster Studies, an academic field, which has attracted little or no attention in Hungarian historical research. In the past few years, historiographers have pointed out that the perception of natural events as disasters is a human construct shaped by cultural reflexes, such as religion, media and so on. The study then goes on to discuss the political, media and scientific reception of the 1880 Zagreb earthquake, an event that has not received much scholarly attention so far.

Even though this particular earthquake brought on significant material damage and claimed human lives, it was not altogether exceptional in the life of the city. Contemporaries recorded several other instances of smaller-scale seismic activity causing minor damages in the decades preceding 1880. Nevertheless, the 1880 earthquake became the focus of increased attention partly due to political reasons. While emphasising a close Hungarian-Croatian relation was important for certain political figures at the time, some used the event to stress Croatian autonomy. In addition, even though the earthquake was not exceptional in the scientific sense, it had a great impact on sciences in general, as it was the direct reason behind setting up the first regular earthquake monitoring in Hungary. The system was launched on the first anniversary of the earthquake in 1881, which is very early even by international standards.