

Tamás Fedeles

Hungarian Candidates ordained in the Roman Curia during the Late Medieval Period

Abstract

On the 19th of March 1496, the inhabitants of Rome could observe a group of foreign clerics in the neighbourhood of the Piazza Navona. Naturally, this proved to be a usual practice, as people of different status from every corner of the European continent arrived continuously to the *Urbs Aeterna*. Among those, who arrived in the city next to the River Tiber, from time to time we may observe those, who wanted to receive different grades of the holy orders either on their own or in groups. As one of these groups, we may mention this numerous group of clericals, whose members hurried to the Church San Panthaleone in the Parione district of the city, where the general ordination was performed by Joshua, the bishop of Ascoli. Among the 118 candidates, altogether 53 clericals arrived in Rome from the remote Carpathian Basin. Both the number of Hungarians and their ratio among the whole group (45%) should be highlighted, as such a populous group of clericals cannot be mentioned neither from the previous nor from the following decades. In my paper, I will survey the general characteristic features of the “turismo delle ordinazioni” of Hungarian clericals on the bases of the “Libri formatarum” series, which can be found in the Camera Apostolica fond of the Archivio Apostolico Vaticano. I will seek answers to the following questions: Who and why did undertake the long journey? From which regions and in which ratio of the Carpathian Basin arrived clericals to the Papal Court? Did the Hungarian and international political events influence these journeys?

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1 The Piazza Navona in the Parione quarter of Rome was the largest and busiest space of the contemporary Rome. Campo de' Fiori was also a determining centre of the city. Sixtus IV relocated

practice, as people of different status from every corner of the European continent arrived continuously to the *Urbs Aeterna*.² Among those, who arrived in the city next to the River Tiber, from time to time we may observe those, who wanted to receive different grades of the holy orders either on their own or in groups. As one of these groups, we may mention this numerous groups of clericals, whose members hurried to the Church San Panthaleone in the Parione district of the city,³ where the general ordination was performed by Joshua,⁴ the bishop of Ascoli.⁵ Among the 118 candidates, altogether 53 clericals arrived in Rome from the remote Carpathian Basin. Both the number of Hungarians and their ratio among the whole group (45%) should be highlighted, as such a populous group of clericals cannot be mentioned neither from the previous nor from the following decades. In my study, I will survey the general characteristic features of the “turismo delle ordinazioni”⁶ of Hungarian clericals on the bases of the “Libri for-

the market to this place and it also served as the place of the significant local celebration. It was called by Ferdinand Gregorovius the renaissance Circus Maximus. Ferdinand Gregorovius, *Geschichte der Stadt Rom im Mittelalter. Vom V. bis zum XVI. Jahrhundert*, Bd. VII, Stuttgart 1870, pp. 707–708. More recently, see “Piazza Navona, ou la Place Navone, la plus belle & la plus grande”. *Du stade de Domitien à la place moderne, histoire d’une évolution urbaine*, ed. by Jean-François Bernard, Rome 2014 (Collection de l’École française de Rome 493).

2 Medieval people started their journeys to Rome due to several reasons. Some of them wanted to pay their respects before the relics of Saint Peter and Paul apostles, and also participated in the usual programs for pilgrims. Among them we can find those, who went to the Roman Curia for administrative tasks, and those who were sent there as diplomats. Cfr. Mario Romani, *Pellegrini e viaggiatori nell’economia di Roma dal XIV al XVII secolo*, Milano 1948; Egmont Lee, *Foreigners in Quattrocento Rome*, in: *Renaissance and Reformation 19* (1983), pp. 135–146; Anna Esposito, *La città e i suoi abitanti*, in: Antonio Pinelli (Ed.), *Roma del Rinascimento*, Bari 2007, pp. 3–48.

3 Christian Hülsen, *Le Chiese di Roma nel Medio Evo*, Firenze 1927, p. 412; Nine Robijntje Miedema, *Die römischen Kirchen im Spätmittelalter nach den “Indulgentiae ecclesiarum urbis Romae”*, Tübingen 2001, p. 712.

4 Iosue de Gaetis doctor of roman law, bishop of Ascoli (1480–1509, 1513–1517). Cfr. *Hierarchia Catholica medii et recentioris aevi, sive Summorum Pontificum, S.R.E. Cardinalium, ecclesiarum Antistitum series I–VIII*, ed. by Guilelmus van Gulik/Conradus Eubel/Patricius Gauchat/Ludovicus Schmitz-Kallenberg/Remigius Ritzler/Priminus Sefrin, *Monasterii-Patavii 1913–1978*, vol. 2, p. 96; vol. 3, p. 120.

5 Città del Vaticano, Archivio Apostolico Vaticano (= AAV), Camera Apostolica (= Cam. Ap.), *Libri formatarum* (= Libr. format.), vol. 11, fol. 127r.

6 The definition was firstly used by Ludwig Schmugge in his study on the interconnections between *Sacra Poenitentiarum Apostolica* and the canon law. After that it was adapted by Andreas Rehberg, who studied the ordinations in Rome (“klerikaler Weihetourismus”). Its usage has become wide-spread to these days. Ludwig Schmugge, *Suppliche e diritto canonico. Il caso della Penitenzieria*, in: Hélène

matarum” series, which can be found in the Camera Apostolica fond of the Archivio Apostolico Vaticano.⁷ I will seek answers to the following questions: Who and why did undertake the long journey? From which regions and in which ratio of the Carpathian Basin arrived clericals to the Papal Court? Did the Hungarian and international political events influence these journeys?

1 Sources

The right of curial ordination of clerics solely belonged under the authority of the Apostolic Camera until the 15th century, consequently the whole process of Roman ordination was under the supervision of this central organ’s chamberlain. Parallel to the curial reforms of Pope Martin V, general information regarding the ordinations were documented in the volumes of “Libri formatarum”, an independent register series from the fond of the Archivio Apostolico Vaticano, Camera Apostolica, from 1425 to 1524.⁸ This series of fourteen volumes provide the topic’s main corpus of sources. From the 16th century onwards,

Millet (Ed.), *Suppliques et requêtes. Le gouvernement par la grâce en Occident (XII^e–XV^e siècle)*, Rome 2003 (Collection de l’École française de Rome 310), pp. 207–231, p. 215; id., *Kanonistik in der Pönitentiarie*, in: Martin Bertram (Hg.), *Stagnation oder Fortbildung? Aspekte des allgemeinen Kirchenrechts im 14. und 15. Jahrhundert*, Tübingen 2005 (Bibliothek des Deutschen Historischen Instituts in Rom 108), pp. 93–115, p. 102; Andreas Rehberg, *Deutsche Weihelikandidaten in Rom am Vorabend der Reformation*, in: Brigitte Flug/Michael Matheus/Andreas Rehberg (Hg.), *Kurie und Region. Festschrift Brigide Schwarz zum 65. Geburtstag*, Stuttgart 2005, pp. 277–305, p. 277; Ludwig Schmugge, *Zum römischen “Weihetourismus” unter Papst Alexander VI. (1492–1503)*, in: *Europa e Italia. Studi in onore di Giorgio Chittolini*, Firenze 2011 (Reti medievali e-book 15), pp. 417–436. In the Hungarian scientific literature see: Tamás Fedeles, *Magyar klerikusszentelések Rómában a hitújítás kezdetén [Hungarian clerical ordination in Rome at the beginning of the Reformation]*, in: Szabolcs Varga/Lázár Vértési (Eds.), *Egyházi társadalom a magyar királyságban a 16. században*, Pécs, 2017 (Seria Historiae Dioecesis Quinqueecclesiensis 17), pp. 51–104, p. 57; Bálint Lakatos (Ed.), *Regesta Supplicationum 1522–1523. A VI Adorján pápa uralkodása alatt elfogadott magyar vonatkozású kérvények [The Supplications Related to the Kingdom of Hungary Appoved under Pope Hadrian VI]*, Budapest-Roma 2018 (Collectanea Vaticana Hungariae I,16), p. 75.

7 For the entries which are related to Hungary see: Tamás Fedeles, *Ordinationum Documenta Pontificia de Regnis Sacrae Coronae Hungaricae (1426–1523) ex Libris formatarum Camerae Apostolicae collecta*. *Edendo operi praefuit Tamás Fedeles*, Budapest-Roma 2021 (Collectanea Vaticana Hungariae I,18).

8 AAV, Cam. Ap., *Libr. format.*, vol. 1–14; for the first fundamental description of the series see Ludwig Schmitz, *Die Libri Formatarum der Camera Apostolica*, in: *Römische Quartalschrift für christliche Altertumskunde und für Kirchengeschichte* 8 (1894), pp. 451–472.

the “vicarius in spiritualibus in Urbe” started to play an increasingly important role in the ordinations taking place in the Eternal City. Data regarding the promotions, which belonged to the jurisdiction of the Roman vicar, can be found in two further registers, the “Tribunale del Vicariato” 335 (1507–1521), located in the Central Archives of State in Rome, and in the first volume of the “Ordinazioni Sacerdotali” (1501–1524) belonging to the vicariate’s archive.⁹ Besides the above-mentioned founts, a few pieces of information can be spotted in the 52nd volume of the “Diversa Cameralia” of the Archivio Apostolico Vaticano,¹⁰ furthermore three *in partibus* promotional verification remained to us: “littera formata”.¹¹ In addition to the cited sources, the volumes of supplications from the Dataria Apostolica¹² and the registers of the Sacra Poenitentaria Apostolica¹³ both contain numerous relevant data which are all essential to the complex presentation of the topic.

While the phenomenon of massive curial promotions previously captivated the attention of international researches – several adaptations and sources were issued in this subject matter especially during the last decade –¹⁴ in the Hungarian historiography this approach has not yet been reflected until very recently.¹⁵

9 Rehberg, *Deutsche Weihekandidaten* (see note 6); id., *L'affluenza di ordinandi a Roma alla vigilia della riforma luterana*, in: Florence Alazard/Frank La Brasca (Eds.), *La papauté à la Renaissance*, Paris 2007, pp. 167–249.

10 AAV, Cam. Ap., *Diversa Cameralia*, vol. 52, fol. 63r.

11 Budapest, Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár [National Archives of Hungary] (= MNL), Országos Levéltára (= OL), *Diplomatikai Fényképgyűjtemény* (= DF), nn. 209059, 257534; and Österreichisches Staatsarchiv Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Familienarchiv Erdődy, Urkunden n. 10175.

12 Cf. Pál Lukacsics (Ed.), *XV. századi pápák oklevelei* [Chartres of Fifteenth-century Popes], 2 vols., Budapest 1931–1938 (*Monumenta Hungariae Italica* 1–2), passim; Péter Tóth, *Adatok az egeri püspökség késő középkori egyházi topográfiájához* [Data on the Late Medieval Church Topography of the Eger Diocese], in: Éva Gyulai/Gyula Viga (Eds.), *Történet – muzeológia. Tanulmányok a múzeumi tudományok köréből a 60 éves Veres László tiszteletére*, Miskolc 2010, pp. 315–327; more recently: Lakatos, *Regesta supplicationum* (see note 6), passim.

13 See: Gabriella Erdélyi, *Negotiating Violence. Papal Pardons and Everyday Life in East Central Europe (1450–1550)*, Leiden-Boston 2018 (*Studies in Medieval and Reformation Tradition* 213), pp. 106–111; Tamás Fedeles, *Mátyás seregéből az Úr szolgálatába. Esettanulmány az Apostoli Penitenciária klerikusszentelésekben játszott szerepéhez Mátyás király korában* [From the Army of King Matthias to the Service of God. A Case Study on the Role of the Apostolic Penitentiary in the Ordination of Clerics in the Time of King Matthias Corvinus], in: Pontes 1 (2018), pp. 95–114.

14 Rehberg, *Deutsche Weihekandidaten* (see note 6); id., *L'affluenza di ordinandi* (see note 9); Schmutge, *Zum römischen “Weihtourismus”* (see note 6); Zdeňka Hledíková, *Svěcení duchovenstva v Církví podjednou. Edice pramenů z let 1438–1521. Ordinationes clericorum in ecclesia “sub una specie”*. Editio fontium ad Bohemiam Moraviamque spectantium annis 1438–1521, Praha 2014; Vladimír Rábík (Ed.), *Camera apostolica 1 (Libri formatarum 1425–1524)*, Trnavae-Romae 2014 (*Mon-*

2 The number of clericals

According to the sources, from the Carpathian Basin altogether 793 persons turned to the Apostolic Camera and to the offices of the vicariate in promotional cases between 1426 and 1523. Among them, 787 availed the services of the Camera while the remaining six persons turned to the Roman Vicariate. Out of the Apostolic Camera's clients, the volumes of the "Libri formatarum" contains the name of 783 people. Since the 50 Hungarian clerics applied for nothing but ordination licenses ("littera dimissoria"), therefore, 743 people took actually part in curial promotions. As the matter of fact, probably more Hungarian clerics were ordained in the Roman Curia, but due to the decay of sources we can only presume this. (Tab. 1)

Tab. 1: Entries of Hungarian relevance in the volumes of "Libri formatarum" (Source: AAV, Cam. Ap., Libr. format., vol. 1–14).

Volume	First entry	Last entry	Person
1.	23. 3. 1426	16. 4. 1435	32
2.	7. 2. 1436	24. 9. 1446	57
3.	25. 3. 1447	5. 4. 1455	29
4.	22. 3. 1466	26. 3. 1470	14
5.	No Hungarian data		
6.	21. 12. 1471	11. 4. 1475	13
7.	24. 6. 1481	21. 4. 1482	3
8.	20. 5. 1486	13. 4. 1488	28
9.	5. 4. 1488	7. 4. 1490	111
10.	4. 4. 1490	21. 4. 1492	30
11.	25. 11. 1492	28. 12. 1496	242

umenta Vaticana Slovaciae 4); Kirsi Salonen / Jussi Hanska, *Entering a Clerical Career at the Roman Curia, 1458–1471*, London-New York, 2016 (Church, Faith and Culture in the Medieval West).

15 As an expression, we can mention the study of Pál Lukcsics, which is the only one that raises the problem. Pál Lukcsics, *Magyar papszentelő okmányok a XV. század első feléből a vatikáni levéltárban* [Documents related to the Hungarian Ordinations from the First Half of the 15th Century in the Vatican Archives], in: *Turul* 46 (1928), pp. 116–124. Similarly to Lukcsics, the reference books of the *Dataria Apostolica* were studied by: Tóth, *Adatok az egri püspökség* (see note 12); Lakatos, *Regesta supplicationum* (see note 6), pp. 74–78. To the data of the series of the "Libri formatarum", I firstly called the attention of the Hungarian historians five years ago: Fedeles, *Magyar klerikusszentelések* (see note 6).

12.	15. 1. 1497	30. 1. 1502	132
13.	22. 3. 1502	10. 11. 1520	24
14.	9. 3. 1521	31. 3. 1523	68
Σ	1426–1523		783

The majority obtained the three higher grades of church orders, the so called “sacri ordines”. 505 clerics were ordained to sub-deacons, 416 to deacons and 418 became presbyters. This implies that it was worthy to start the journey from the Carpathian Basin in order to acquire a higher grade. Altogether 332 people came for only the first tonsure while 304 arrived to take the “quatuor minores” up in the Curia Romana. Curial ordinations were less of a practice among Hungarian prelates. This statement is also supported by the fact that in the observed period it only happened five times.¹⁶ (Tab. 2)

Tab. 2: The division of church order grades obtained in the Curia.

Grade	Person	%
<i>prima tonsura</i>	332	44,6
<i>acolitatus et quatuor minores</i>	304	41
<i>subdiaconatus</i>	505	68
<i>diaconatus</i>	416	56
<i>presbiteratus</i>	418	56,2
<i>episcopatus</i>	5	0,7

Regarding the division of church benefices a very diverse picture unfolds. 220 persons did not possess one, which was self-evident in the case of the inferior orders. The majority (84%) of the afore-mentioned clerics without any benefices were promoted (“promovere”) only to the first tonsure or to other smaller orders. However, 35 people obtained the three higher grades without the notary chamber indicating a benefice of any kind next to their names, nor mentioning any other income that could provide a

16 It is on Tamás Döbrentei Himfi, bishop of Zagreb (1455), Péter Szegedi, bishop of Nándorfehérvár (Belgrade) (1475), Pál Váci, bishop of Argyas (Argeş) (1482), Tamás Szegedi Bacsa, bishop of Moldva (bánya) (Baia) (1497) as well as György, bishop of Bodony (Vidim) (1498). AAV, Cam. Ap., Libr. format., vol. 3, fol. 97r; vol. 6, fol. 212v; vol. 7, fol. 50r; MNL, OL, DF, n. 209059; AAV, Cam. Ap., Div. Cam., vol. 52, fol. 63r.

sufficient living. Among them, 29 were ordained to sub-deacons, eight to deacons and six to presbyters. Beside the names of the Hungarian churchmen we can find a wide repertoire of benefices. The three most numerous groups consist of altar beneficiaries, parish priests and rectors of parish churches. They are followed by rectors of chapels, monks, but prebendaries, canons, bishops, sacristans and schoolmasters are also to be found. (Tab. 3)

Tab. 3: Division of the benefices' levels.

Type of benefice	Person	Percentage %
None	220	30
Altar	194	26
Chapel	73	9,8
Prebendary	7	0,9
Sacristan	1	0,1
Schoolmaster	1	0,1
<i>cantor</i>	1	0,1
<i>perpetuus beneficiatus</i>	2	0,3
Parish	154	20,7
Rector of the parish	68	9,1
Canon	7	0,9
Monk	10	1,3
Bishop	5	0,7
Σ	743	100

3 Persons and groups

Clerics who turned up in the documents of curial promotions could take part in the liturgical services individually or in groups as well. The decisive majority of the Hungarians started off the long, exhausting and often dangerous Italian voyage in smaller or bigger groups. It was considered to be a general phenomenon that the members of the same nations were consecrated together. Based on this, we can assume that people coming from the same or neighbouring dioceses might tried to synchronise their journey, since

traveling together meant a greater deal of safety.¹⁷ The promotional supplications which were submitted in-group, suggest a pre-planned journey.¹⁸ The biggest Hungarian curial ordination took place on the 19th of May, 1496, when altogether 53 persons obtained smaller or bigger church orders.¹⁹ Further promotional days are also known when the number of clerics coming from the Carpathian Basin surpassed 30 or 40 people. A possible, but definitely not sufficient explanation of these group ordinations could be that except for 1523, on every occasion general ordination (“ordinationes generales”) was performed, therefore, the dates – since they were on ember days – were known all around Europe.²⁰ Subsequently, the candidates could prepare their Roman route appropriately. It is also not surprising that the dates between March and April were mostly preferred by the most, since on the one hand, Easter constitutes the centre of the church year, thus the travel to Rome resulted in an even bigger fascination among the believers. On the other hand, the spring weather was more favourable.²¹ (Tab. 4)

Tab. 4: The most frequented promotional days of the Hungarians.

Date	Person
5 April 1488	22

17 Tamás Fedeles, “Isten nevében utazunk”. *Zarándokok, búcsújárás, kegyhelyek a középkorban* [We are traveling in the name of God. Pilgrims, Pilgrimages, Shrines in the Middle Ages], Pécs 2015, pp. 110–112.

18 For example, on March 23rd, 28th, and 29th, 1523, respectively 16, 12, and 9 Hungarians applied for a curia promotion permit, and all of them were consecrated by Bishop Leonardus de Leucato of Belcastro. Lakatos, *Regesta supplicationum* (see note 6) nn. 23, 32–33; Fedeles, *Magyar klerikusszentelések* (see note 6), pp. 79–83, 96–104.

19 AAV, Cam. Ap., Libr. format., vol. 11, fol. 127r–131r.

20 Pope Callixtus I (217–222) introduced the “ieiunium quatuor temporum”, and Pope (Saint) Leo I (440–461) linked the ordinations of the presbyters and deacons in the Roman communities. Pope Gelasius I (492–496) ordered (494) that presbyters and deacons would have only been ordained during the Saturdays of the above-mentioned period as well as at the beginning and at the middle of Lent. However, dates of ember days were not integral in the territory of the Roman church until the end of the 11th century. Pope Urban II (1088–1099) ordered in 1095 on the determined dates of the fasts. According to his decree, these were held during the first week of the Lent and Pentecost, on the glorification of the Holy Cross (14th September) on that particular Wednesday, Friday and Saturday which followed the celebration of Saint Lucia (13th December). These four periods were supplemented with the Carling Sunday, i. e. Saturday before the fifth Sunday of Lent, as well as with the vigil of Easter. Cfr. Jacques Paul Migne, *Patrologiae Cursus Completus. Series Latina* (URL: <http://patristica.net/latina/>; 14. 3. 2022), vol. 59, p. 52; Bruno Kleinheyer, *Die Priesterweihe im römischen Ritus. Eine liturgiehistorische Studie*, Trier 1962 (*Trierer theologische Studien* 12), pp. 36–37.

21 Fedeles, “Isten nevében utazunk” (see note 17), p. 217.

18 April 1489	36
15 March 1494	23
18 April 1495	42
19 March 1496	53
11 March 1497	32
31 March 1498	46
26 March 1523	41
Σ	295

4 Geographical and chronological edifications

Since the consecrators' sees of origin and / or service was indicated in the register books, it is most opportune to observe the distribution of Hungarian clerics according to their dioceses. In the 15th century, two archbishoprics and 12 bishoprics functioned on the territory of the Kingdom of Hungary.²² Out of the 14 sees, altogether 12 names are present in the promotional documents which were further complemented with the four missionary bishoprics ("episcopatus in partibus infidelium").²³ (Fig. 1)

22 Establishment of the early Hungarian episcopal church was an important territory of the research work of László Koszta. Among his numerous studies, for the one on the establishment of the episcopates, see: László Koszta, *Dél-Magyarország egyházi topográfiája a középkorban* [Church Topography of Southern Hungary in the Middle Ages], in: Tibor Kollár (Ed.), *A középkori Dél-Alföld és Szer* [The Great Hungarian Plain and Szer], Szeged 2001, pp. 41–46; id., *A püspökség alapítása* [Foundation of the Bishopric], in: Tamás Fedeles / Gábor Sarbak / József Sümegi (Eds.), *A Pécsi Egyházmegye története I. A középkor évszázadai (1009–1543)* [History of the Diocese of Pécs I. The Centuries of the Middle Ages (1009–1543)], Pécs 2009, pp. 13–42; id., *A kalocsai érseki tartomány kialakulása* [The Development of the Archdiocese of Kalocsa], Pécs 2013 (*Thesaurus Historiae Ecclesiasticae in Universitatis Quinqueecclesiensis* 3); id., *A bihari püspökség alapítása* [Foundation of the Bishopric of Bihar], in: Artila Zsoldos (Ed.), *Nagyvárad és Bihar a korai középkorban* [Oradea and Bihar in the early Middle Ages], Nagyvárad 2014 (*Tanulmányok Biharország történetéről* 1), pp. 41–81.

23 László Koszta, *Missziós püspökség* [Missionary bishopric], in: Gyula Kristó / Pál Engel / Ferenc Makk (Eds.), *Korai magyar történelmi lexikon (9–14. század)* [Early Hungarian Historical Lexicon (9th–14th Century)], Budapest 1994, pp. 458–460. For the most recent study on the titular bishoprics see Michael F. Feldkamp, *Warum entstanden aus dem in konfessionellen Zeitalter säkularisierten deutschen Bistümern keine Titularbistümer? Beobachtungen zur Entwicklung des Rechtsinstituts des Titularbischofs*, in: Andreas Gottsmann / Pierantonio Piatti / Andreas Rehberg (Eds.), *Incorrupta monumenta ecclesiam defendunt. Studi offerti a mons. Sergio Pagano, Città del Vaticano 2018* (*Collectanea Archivi Vaticani* 106), vol. 1: *La Chiesa nella storia. Religione, cultura, costume*, tomo 1, pp. 589–606.

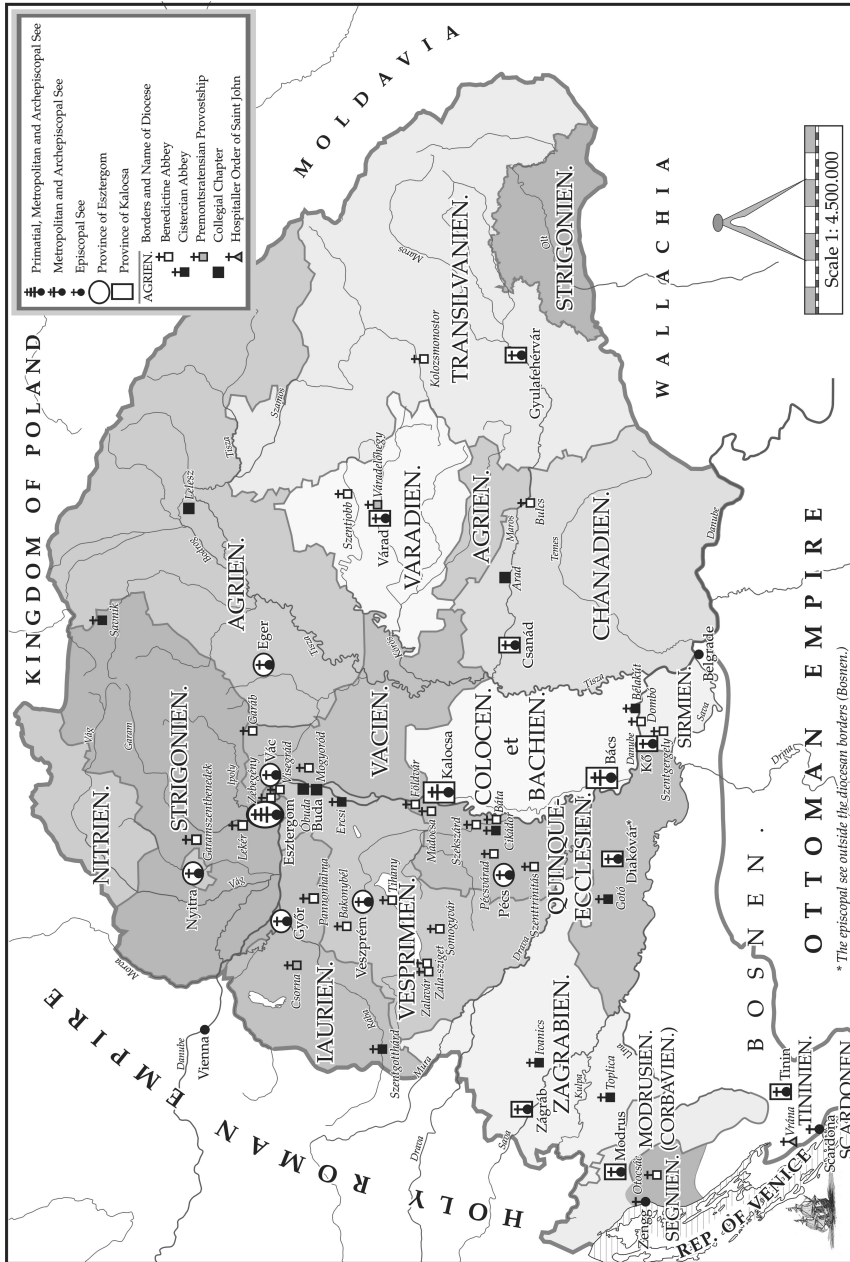


Fig. 1: The Hungarian church organization in the 15th century (Elaboration made by Tamás Fedeles on the basis of a map available at https://institutumfiraknoi.hu/kiadvany/%09cvh/ordinationum_documenta_pontificia_klerikusszenteslesek_romai_kuriaban_magyar_szent; 14. 3. 2022).

It is conspicuous however, that no consecrators went to the *Curia Romana* from the two southern and at the same time, the poorest dioceses of Bosnia and Syrmia. In the background of this anomaly, we can suppose the settlement destruction and the consequent major depopulation caused by the Ottoman incursions which permanently afflicted the region.

Regarding the division among the sees, the dominance of Esztergom (22%), Eger (19%), furthermore Transylvania and Zagreb (15% each one) is inevitable. They are followed by Veszprém (6%) and Pécs (5%). Clerics from Győr²⁴ and Oradea (Várad; Grosswardein) appeared almost in equivalent proportion (4% each one), a bit lesser number came from the dioceses of Kalocsa-Bács and Vác (3% each one), while the proportion of Cenad (Csanád; Tschanad) and Nitra (Nyitra; Neutra) is the smallest (1% each one). (Fig. 2)

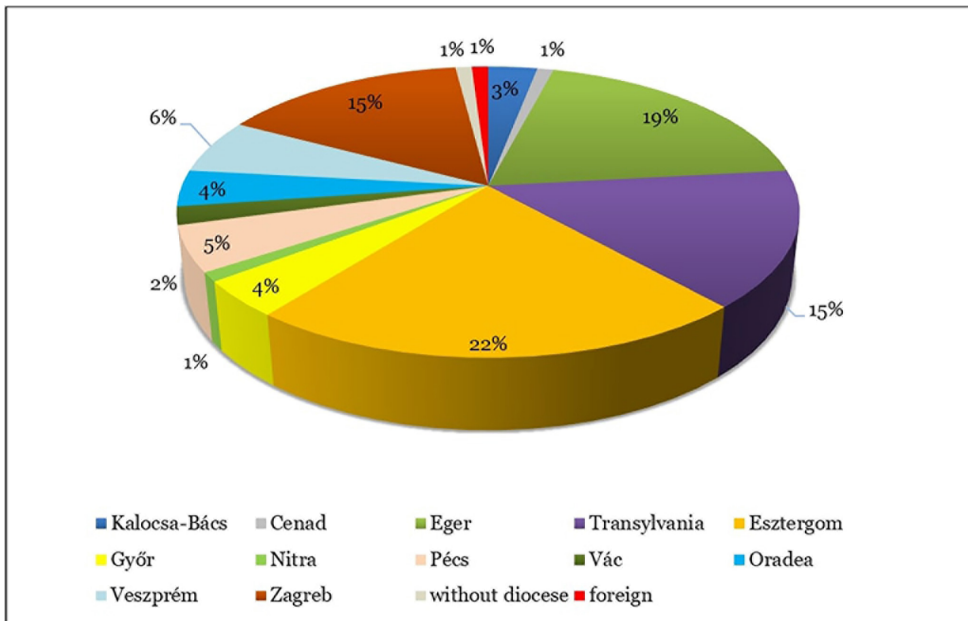


Fig. 2: The division of curial promotional cases of Hungarian clerics and possessors per diocese (1426–1523) (Diagram by Tamás Fedeles).

24 Tamás Fedeles, "Ad omnes sacros ordines promoveri". Győri egyházmegyék római szentelési ügyei a késő középkorban [The Ordainment Matters of the Győr Diocese in Rome in the late Middle Ages], in: Arrabona 53–56 (2015–2018), pp. 77–144.

What can be drawn as a conclusion based on this? Is it an eventuality or maybe is it rather a tendency that could be fitted into bigger correlations? The previous international and national researches both proved that the Roman representation of clerics from the particular churches is a result of multiple impacts. The demographic and economic circumstances and the consequent social and urban correspondences all played a role in this, as much as the network's density between the papal court and the given region.²⁵ It is obvious that other components could have been determining as well regarding the regional division of the Hungarian clerics, who went to be ordained in the Curia. However, the certain diocese's distance from Rome was not among the contributing factors. In the case of Zagreb, we could even explain the 15% share, but the ratio of clerics from Transylvania and Esztergom, which collectively came out at 50%, points just into the opposite direction. Furthermore, in the case of Esztergom, the Saxon Lands which belonged under the authority of it also complicate the picture. Meanwhile, in spite of the fact that the Transdanubian dioceses, such as Pécs, Veszprém and Győr were much closer to Rome they only represented themselves with 15%.

Nevertheless, the major internal and foreign affairs, especially wars and smaller or bigger epidemics could influence the willingness to travel to Italy. As an example, the internal crisis of 1440 (the double coronation, civil war, etc.) and the escalating Ottoman threat did not favour the travels of the Hungarian clerics.²⁶ In the decade between 1440 and 1449, only 16 Hungarian persons took the different grades of church order up in the centre of Christianity.²⁷ Besides the internal affairs the rage of plague in Rome between 1448 and 1450 certainly had a deterrent effect.²⁸ (Fig. 3)

25 Salonen/Hanska, *Entering a Clerical Career* (see note 14), pp. 62–63, 101; Schmugge, *Zum römischen "Weihetourismus"* (see note 6), p. 431; Gábor Nemes, *Győri egyházmegyeiek a késő középkori Rómában* [Members of the Diocese of Győr in Rome of the Late Middle Ages], in: Péter Tusor/Kornél Szovák/Tamás Fedeles (Eds.), *Magyarország és a római Szentszék II. Vatikáni magyar történelmi kutatások a 21. században* [Hungary and the Holy See of Rome II. Hungarian Historical Researches of the 21st Century in the Vatican], Budapest-Roma 2017 (Collectanea Vaticana Hungariae I,15), pp. 107–136, 131; Lakatos, *Regesta Supplicationum* (see note 6), p. 67.

26 For the period see Pál Engel, *The Realm of St Stephen. A History of Medieval Hungary, 895–1526*, London-New York 2001, pp. 278–297.

27 AAV, Cam. Ap., Libr. format., vol. 2, fol. 99v, 100r, 101r, 102v.

28 Salonen/Hanska, *Entering a Clerical Career* (see note 14), p. 212.

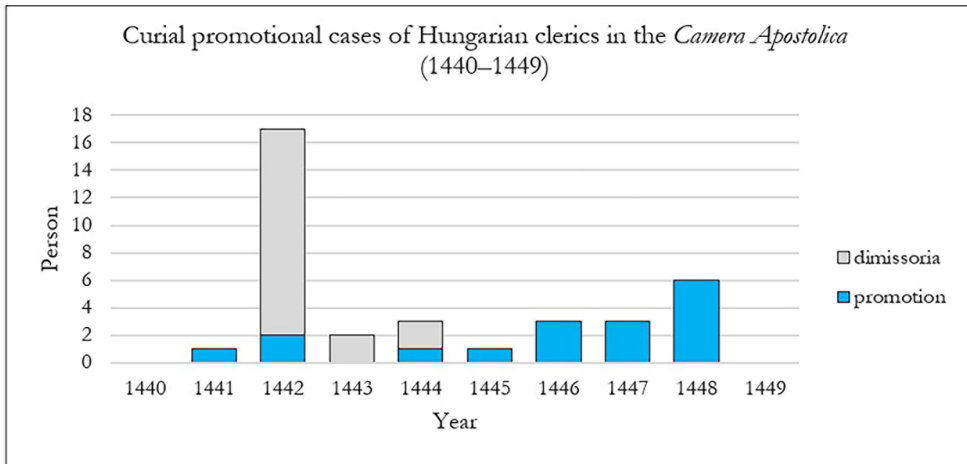


Fig. 3: Curial promotional cases of Hungarian clerics in the *Camera Apostolica* (1440–1449) (Graphic by Tamás Fedeles).

The struggle for the throne following the death of King Mathias (1490)²⁹ and the military campaigns on Italy led by the French monarchs, Charles VIII and Louis XII,³⁰ had a similarly negative impact on the people who headed to Rome. In the last years of the reign of Matthias Corvinus, we can witness a significant growth in curial promotions. Based on the data it can be pointed out that the growth in number from 1487 onwards reached its peak in the following two years, which meant 50 people (6.7% growth) in 1488 and 51 people (6.9% growth) in the next year.³¹ In the background of this positive tendency, two

29 Hermann Wiesflecker, *Das erste Ungarnunternehmen Maximilians I. und der Preßburger Vertrag 1490/91*, in: *Südost-Forschungen* 18 (1959), pp. 26–75; Tibor Neumann, *Békekötés Pozsonyban – országgyűlés Budán [Peace Treaty in Bratislava – Parliament in Buda. A Chapter of the Jagello-Habsburg Relations, 1490–1492]*, I, in: *Századok* 144 (2010), pp. 335–372; II, in: *Századok* 145 (2011), pp. 293–347; Tamás Fedeles, *A király és a lázadó herceg: az Újlaki Lőrinc és szövetségesei elleni királyi hadjárat, 1494–1495 [The King and the Rebellious Prince. Royal Military Expedition Againsts Lőrinc Újlaki and his Allied Forces, 1494–1495]*, Szeged 2012 (Szegedi Középkortörténeti Könyvtár 27).

30 David S. Chambers, *Popes, Cardinals and War. The Military Church in Renaissance and Early Modern Europe*, London 2006, pp. 94–96; Michael Mallett/Christine Shaw, *The Italian Wars: 1494–1559. War, State and Society in Early Modern Europe*, Harlow 2012, pp. 6–37.

31 Series of the “*Libri formatarum*” do not contain data related to Hungary between 1483 and 1485.

major things can be supposed: one was the closure of the Austrian military campaign (the occupation of Vienna and Wiener Neustadt) led by King Matthias, and other is the relatively peaceful period on the southern frontier after the Hungarian-Turkish peace treaty in 1483.³² During the Hungarian “ordination tourism”, which was unprecedented both in earlier and later times, in 1495, 77 (10,4%), in 1496, 86 (11.6%), while in 1497, 78 (10,5%) and in 1498, 47 (6,3%) Hungarian possessors’ name can be found in the volumes of “*Libri formatarum*”. During the span of these four years, the 288 people – who were ordained in the Curia – constituted nearly 40% of the total sum of Hungarian clerics.

But what could be the reason of this outstandingly high rate? In my opinion, this phenomenon could be explained by the fact that Vladislaus II managed to consolidate his power by the middle of 1490, thus creating peaceful circumstances in internal and foreign affairs as well.

By this time, after the burdensome years of war and crisis every inner and external obstacle was out of the Roman journeys’ way, and this condition certainly proved to be a great motivational factor. It is interesting however, that the emergence of Lutheran reformation did not have an impact on the willingness to travel, since in 1523, the promotion of 57 Hungarian clerics took place in the Eternal City.³³ This evidence further strengthens the previous research results of Andreas Rehberg, according to which the role of Rome in the ordinations of priests did not decline in the first half of 1520.³⁴

5 Why Rome?

At last, the motivational factors behind the curial promotions should be examined. In February 1429, 18 Hungarian clerics submitted a supplication to be ordained in the Curia, in which they named pilgrimage as the cause and purpose (“*causa devotionis et peregrinationis*”) of their journey to Rome.³⁵ Therefore, it is certainly considered to be

32 For details on the foreign policy background see András Kubinyi, *Matthias Rex*, Budapest 2008, pp. 107–120.

33 Cfr. Fedeles, *Magyar klerikusszentelések* (see note 6), pp. 96–104.

34 Rehberg, *Deutsche Weihakandidaten* (see note 6), p. 301; id., *L'affluenza di ordinandi* (see note 9), pp. 240–241.

35 Distribution of the dioceses are the following: Esztergom, Nyitra, Veszprém and Zagreb with one, Eger and Transylvania with two and Pécs with ten people. On the appeals we may read the followings: “*hanc almam urbem causa devotionis et peregrinationis non sine modicis fatigiis et laboribus personaliter accesserunt*”. Lukcsics (Ed.), *XV. századi pápák* (see note 12), vol. 1, nn. 1129–1130, 1133.

an important motive, and meant a higher prestige for clerics to be consecrated close to the relics of Saint Peter and Paul.

Thus, it is understandable that for those who spent a longer time in Rome, curial ordination was a plausible opportunity. To this group belonged the employees of the Papal Curia, cardinals, members of the bishops' families, diplomats delegated to the Holy See, members who belonged to a royal entourage coming to Rome, and students attending the city's university. Emerick, provost of Bosnia arrived to Sixtus IV as the envoy of King Mathias in August, 1471, and in the following month submitted a supplication in person to the Dataria, in which he asked for and was granted license to take up the holy orders.³⁶ The clerics Philip (1432) from the diocese of Esztergom and the Transylvanian András Kis of Brassó (today Braşov) (1441) and János Aranyos (1476) wanted to be ordained in Rome relying on the fact that they had been living in the city for quite a while.³⁷

In February 1436, 11 diocesan clerics from Zagreb were granted permissions by the leader of the Apostolic Camera to be consecrated by any catholic prelate if they were found suitable. This could only happen because the episcopal seat of Zagreb was vacant at the time ("in ipsis partibus ad presens sedes episcopalis vacat").³⁸ In 1438, altogether 22 Hungarians and two foreign clerics submitted supplications to the office of the Apostolic Penitentiary, in which, similarly to the previous case, asked for a license; they explained this act by arguing that their own ordinary celebrated consecrations very rarely ("raro ordines celebrant"). Therefore, in cases alike the possibility of curial promotion was open to candidates.³⁹

Certain problems, defects ("defectus") and delinquencies ("delictus") committed against canon law could emerge at the applicants' side, causing an irregular state ("irregularitas") and ultimately being impediments to ordination. In case of the above-mentioned problems, candidates could gain dispensation primarily from the Curia.⁴⁰ Wolfgang Alt-

36 AAV, Registra Supplicationum (= Reg. Suppl.), vol. 670, fol. 234r; vol. 672, fol. 283v–284r.

37 "Iam novem menses Romae commorantur": Lukcsics (Ed.), XV. századi pápák (see note 12), vol. 2, nn. 71 and 104; "qui ad presens in Urbe Romana trahit moram": Città del Vaticano, Archivio della Penitenzieria Apostolica, Registra Matrimonialium et Diversarum (= APA), vol. 2 bis, fol. 227r; "qui in Romana Curia iam longa tempora se ... sustentavit": AAV, Reg. Suppl., vol. 738, fol. 116r–v.

38 AAV, Cam. Ap., Libr. format., vol. 2, fol. 15r. The episcopacy proved to be vacant between 22 December, 1433, and 18 May, 1438. Cfr. Pál Engel, Magyarország világi archontológiája 1301–1437 [Secular Archontology of Hungary 1301–1437], 2 vol., Budapest 1996, vol. 1, p. 80.

39 APA, vol. 2, fol. 27v–28r.

40 Ludwig Schmugge/Patrik Hersperger/Béatrice Wiggenhauser, Die Supplikenregister der päpstlichen Pönitentiare aus der Zeit Pius II. (1458–1464), Tübingen 1996 (Bibliothek des Deutsches

mon, diocesan of Győr, is an example for the latter. He submitted a supplication personally to the office of the Penitentiary, because of the defect of his right eye – which was considered to be an impediment to consecration – he asked for and was granted a dispensation and finally took the smaller grades of church orders up in the Santa Maria Regina Coeli church.⁴¹

Many people tried to take the different grades of church order up apart of those dates that were determined by canon law (“tribus diebus dominicis vel festivis extra tempora a iure statuta”) and hence travelled to the Curia.⁴²

Various incidents of misuse occurred during curial ordinations. A prevalent form of this was to be promoted based on a non-existent, fictive benefice (“ad fictum titulum”). Since in order to obtain higher orders, candidates should be in the possession of a church benefice which could provide a sufficient living. However, many of the applicants did not have such a possession, nor any other secured income, and for this reason they perpetrated a fraud.⁴³ Among the supplications which were proposed to the Penitentiary’s office, many cases like this can be found. Among them, there is the appeal of Osvát Layter, diocesan of Győr, whom in the default of appropriate holdings, had himself consecrated based on a fictive benefice (“sufficientem titulum non haberet”).⁴⁴

As a conclusion, it can be stated that during the late medieval era Hungarians led by many different reasons, but were constantly present in ordinations occurring in the Roman Curia. It is self-evident that their number was significantly less than that of their contemporaries coming from German, French, Iberian and Italian regions. Nevertheless, the Hungarian ordination tourism certainly embodied an integral part of the relations between Hungary and the Holy See.

Historisches Institut in Rom 84), pp. 196–197; Salonen/Hanska, *Entering a Clerical Career* (see note 14), pp. 28–30; Gabriella Erdélyi, *A Sacra Poenitentia Apostolica hivatala és magyar kérvényei a 15–16. században* [Hungarian Petitions to the Sacra Poenitentia Apostolica in the 15–16 Centuries], in: *Levéltári Közlemények* 74 (2003), pp. 33–57, 44–45.

41 In his appeal of 20 March, he referred to have lost “visus oculi dextri quem non sui culpa, sed ex infirmitate”: APA vol. 37, fol. 278 r–v; AAV, Cam. Ap., Libr. format., vol. 9, fol. 18 r, 22 v, 23 r.

42 Fedeles, “Ad omnes sacros ordines promovendi” (see note 24), pp. 82–83.

43 Erdélyi, *Negotiating Violence* (see note 13), pp. 106–111.

44 APA, vol. 48, fol. 792 r. However, the type of the title (as usual in these cases) does not turn out from his request.