

# The Monomachos Crown

Domestic Intrigue and Diplomatic Reality Prevalent  
at the Hungarian Court during the mid-Eleventh Century

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"Porro dux Andreas a perturbacionibus  
hostium securus est effectus in regia  
civitate Alba regalem coronam est  
adeptus"

*Chronicon pictum. c. 86.*

Historians are still unaware of the identity of the crown that may have been used at the coronations of both Andrew I (1046–60), and Andrew's son, Solomon (in 1058). The record has it that Byzantine Emperor Constantine IX Monomachos (1042–1054) did send a royal circlet, diadem, to the court of Andrew I, though the question remains, whether the enamel plates of the particular diadem unearthed at Nyitraivánka in the early 1860s really date back to the eleventh century, or were they merely clever mid-nineteenth century imitation of Byzantine craftsmanship?<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> On the background, cf. B. Hóman–Gy. Székfű, *Magyar történet*. [Hungarian history] 5 vols. Budapest 1939<sup>6</sup>, Vol. I, 245ff.; Gy. Székely–A. Bartha, *Magyarország története 1242-ig* [A history of Hungary to 1242] Budapest 1984. 835ff.; Gy. Kristó, *Die Arpaden-Dynastie*. Budapest 1993, 81ff.; on the Monomachos Crown, see J. Érdy, "Nyitra Ivánka területén 1860, 1861 évben kiszántott bizánci románcok a XI századból" [Byzantine romance enamels plowed from the earth in 1860 and 1861] *Archaeológiai közlemények* 2 (1861), 65ff.; Z. Kádár, "Quelques observations sur la reconstitution de la couronne de l'empereur Constantin Monomaque" *Folia archeologica* 16 (1964), 113ff.; on the circlet, see M. Obershall Bárány, *Konstantinos Monomachos császár koronája* [The crown of Emperor Constantine Monomachos] Budapest 1937, 86ff., 92ff.; The authenticity of the enamel plates has been questioned by N. Oikonomides, "La couronne dite de Constantin Monomaque" *Travaux et mémoires* 12 (1994), 241ff., whose views were challenged by E. Kiss, "The state of research on the Monomachos Crown and some further

The sending of the diadem, if real, whose central enamel plate depicted Emperor Monomachos, may have served a twofold purpose. First, by sending him a crown, the emperor wished to acknowledge the validity of Andrew's coronation in 1047, and simultaneously provide him with the means to have his son, Solomon, crowned king. Second, the emperor wanted to draw the fledgling Latin-Christian Hungarian kingdom into the sphere of Byzantine politics, and retain it there, and thus restore the link with Hungary that had been purposefully interrupted by King Stephen I who had aligned himself with the Latin west.<sup>2</sup> The emperor's objectives, however, were bound to fail, as mid-eleventh century diplomacy had changed drastically since the beginning of the century. The sending of the crown did not influence Hungarian domestic and foreign politics. Both Andrew I, and his brother Béla I, pursued their diplomacy according to their own judgement. The diadem sent and decorated with the picture of the emperor remained a mere expression of goodwill on part of another (though Byzantine-rite) Christian court toward the royal court of the Árpáds.<sup>3</sup>

In the 1030s, the cousin of King Stephen (d. 1038), Prince Vazul – the son of Michael, the younger brother of Géza, the father of King Stephen – prepared a plan to assassinate the elderly sick king.<sup>4</sup> The king's court ordered the blinding of the conspirator, Vazul, whose three sons were sent into exile abroad. In addition, a new article was added to the recently promulgated Laws of King Stephen, art. ii:17, concerning conspiracy *versus* king and country. He who organizes a conspiracy *versus* the realm, may find no refuge in a [the] church.<sup>5</sup> Although this de-

thoughts" *Perceptions of Byzantium and its neighbors (843–1261)* Metropolitan Museum, New York 2000, 60ff.

<sup>2</sup> J. Deér, *Die hl. Krone Ungarns*. Vienna 1966, 33ff.

<sup>3</sup> On events in Hungary in the mid-eleventh century, the mid-fourteenth century *Chronicon pictum* [Illuminated Chronicle], based on contemporary informative evidence of the 1040s through the 1060s, provides historical data; cf. "Chronici Hungarici compositio saeculi XIV" cc. 70 to 99, in E. Szentpétery, ed., *Scriptores rerum Hungaricarum*. 2 vols. Budapest 1937–38; rev. repr., K. Szovák and L. Veszprémy, eds., Budapest 1999, (henceforth: SRH) Vol. I. 321ff; for added comments, cf. *ibid.*, Vol. II. 750ff; D. Dercsényi, ed., *Chronicon pictum: Képes Krónika*. 2 vols. Budapest 1963, vol. I: facsimile, f. 23v to fol. 35r.; For an analysis of contemporary evidence, see J. Horváth, *Árpád-kori latinnyelvű irodalmunk stílusproblémái*. [Stylistic questions in the Latin-language literature of the Árpád age] Budapest 1954, 305ff; Simon de Keza, late thirteenth century, provided some observations in his "Gesta Hungarorum," cc. 45 to 60; cf. SRH I. 173ff., and so did the annalistic entries in the "Annales Posenienses," as, for example, *anno* 1041: "Petrus rex elicitur et Aba in regem elevatur," etc., see SRH I. 125. For additional remarks, the "Chronicon Zagrabiense," cc. 3–7, *ibid.*, I, 207ff. For a critical analytical summary, cf. C. A. Macartney, *The medieval Hungarian historians*. Cambridge 1953, 111ff; 133ff; 89ff; and 109f. respectively.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. King Stephen's *Vita minor*, c. 7, SRH II. 399; *Chronicle*, c. 69, *ibid.*, I, 318ff.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. King Stephen's Laws, ii:17, in St. L. Endlicher, ed., *Rerum Hungaricarum monumenta Arpadiana*. 2 vols. Sankt Gallen 1849, (henceforth: RHM) II, 310ff.; or H. Marczali, ed., *Enchiridion fontium historiae Hungarorum*. Budapest 1901, 69ff.; see also E. Bartonek, ed., *Szent István törvényeinek XII századi kézírata, az admonti kódex* [The Codex of Admont:

cree shows similarity in concept and wording with the brief entry five of the 847 Synod of Mainz, the wording of the Hungarian draft of the article is firmer; it not only outlaws the traitor from the community of believers, but from the Church itself.<sup>6</sup>

Upon the death of King Stephen, his nephew, Peter Orseolo, the son of one of Stephen's sisters, and the favorite of Queen Gisela, Stephen's widow (and the sister of the German emperor, Henry II), ascended the Hungarian throne in 1038 [to 1041], and in 1044 [to 1046]. His tyrannical rule encountered strong opposition, however; Peter fled the realm, and the country's leaders elected Samuel Aba, King Stephen's brother-in-law, married to King Stephen's other sister, as their king, but the German court did not recognize this.<sup>7</sup>

Emperor Henry III now invaded Hungary, destroyed the border fort of Pozsony, advanced along the left bank of the Danube up to the Garam stream and took possession of nine fortifications. Aba, the elected Hungarian king now offered peace to the emperor, who refused it, and invaded Magyar land again, but his military advance was thwarted by the marshes of the River Rábca.<sup>8</sup> In the fall of 1043, he concluded peace with Aba, thereby recognizing his royal status.<sup>9</sup> However, opposition to Aba on the domestic front – consisting of Orseolo sympathizers – gained strength, the king feared another conspiracy, and, during Lent of 1043, he ordered the massacre of nobles who had dared to conspire against him.<sup>10</sup> Thereupon the nobles who survived the massacre requested German political intervention, in fact, military aid. Henry III once again entered Hungary, and, at Ménfő, defeated the forces of Aba, whom the Hungarians murdered during his flight east by the River Tisza.<sup>11</sup> During the summer of 1044, the German emperor entered Székesfehérvár, where he restored Peter the Orseolo to his throne.<sup>12</sup>

The throne of Peter rested on shaky foundations. In order to secure his reign, he called in the spring of 1045 upon Emperor Henry III to enter the realm, and accepted the government of Hungary from his hands, as if it were an imperial fief.

twelfth century manuscript of the King St. Stephen's laws], with a downsized facsimile of Admont MS 712, fol. 119–26 Budapest 1935, 41. listed it as *Leges*, cap. 51.; Z. J. Kosztolnyik, *Five eleventh century Hungarian kings*. New York 1981, 111.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. *Monumenta Germaniae historica, Leges, sectio II*, 2 vols. Hannover 1893–97, Vol. II. 177; or, J. D. Mansi, ed., *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*. 31 vols. Florence–Venice 1759–98; expanded repr. Osnabrück 1968, XIV. 904.

<sup>7</sup> *Chronicle*, c. 72, SRH I. 324ff; *Annales Altahenses maiores*, rev ed., L. B. ab Oefele, ed., *Scriptores rerum Germanicum in usum scholarum*. (henceforth: SSrG) Hannover 1891; (repr. 1979), anno 1041; *Annales Hildesheimenses*, G. Waitz, ed., SSrG. Hannover 1878. (repr. 1947), anno 1041.

<sup>8</sup> *Chronicle*, c. 75, SRH I. 328ff; *Annales Altahenses*, anno 1042.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 33, and notes 2–3, anno 1043.

<sup>10</sup> *Chronicle*, c. 75, SRH I. 329, 16–21; "Vita" c. 14, of Gerard of Csanád, *ibid.*, II, 500; entry in *Annales Altahenses*, under anno 1044.

<sup>11</sup> *Chronicle*, c. 76, SRH I. 332, 3–5; *Annales Altahenses*, anno 1044.

<sup>12</sup> *Chronicle*, c. 77; *Annales Altahenses*, anno 1044.

According to the mid-fourteenth century illuminator of the *Chronicon pictum*, the Orseolo received the crown, shown by the illuminator in the form of a golden lance, *standing* from an emperor *sitting* on the throne;<sup>13</sup> Peter, presumably, received *the* crown that had touched the forehead of King Stephen, and not a mere *ruler's crown* (house crown), that, having made him his vassal, the emperor could, after performing the coronation, send back to Rome.<sup>14</sup> The return of the crown to the Roman See is testified to by the letter, dated October 28, 1074, of Pope Gregory VII; however, in this letter, the pontiff claimed, as a papal fief, the Magyar realm (of King Solomon, 1063–1074, son of Andrew).<sup>15</sup>

And yet, the Orseolo did not feel secure in his kingdom, in spite – or, perhaps, because – of his feudal relationship with the imperial court; he had the district forts garrisoned by German and Italian troops – to the consternation of the Hungarian nobles who, led by Boja and Bonya, formed a conspiracy against him. The Orseolo had the conspirators executed.<sup>16</sup> Thereupon, in the spring of 1046, the nobles gathered at Csanád and sent envoys to Kiev to recall from their exile the Árpád princes, Andrew and Levente, to rule over the country.<sup>17</sup> In early fall of 1046, the two princes entered the realm with Kievan auxiliaries, and were greeted by a multitude of dissenters, led by a certain Vata from the region of Békés. They wanted to restore paganism in the land. In order to gain time, the two princes seemingly consented to their demand, thereby opening the floodgates of an anti-Christian pagan uprising all over the land.<sup>18</sup>

Simultaneously, an uprising broke out in the camp of the Orseolo at Zsitvatorok [estuary of the Zsitva stream]; the king wanted to move to and enter the city of Székesfehérvár, but the city gates remained shut before him. He was captured at Zámoly, and blinded.<sup>19</sup> It was Peter the Orseolo's tragedy that he, a ruler of non-Árpád blood, had been unable to comprehend that it was his sole responsibility to maintain the country's public institutions which his predecessor had

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<sup>13</sup> The text speaks of "Petrum regem regali corona plenarie restitutum;" *SRH I.* 333, 10–11. Most probably referring to the event in 1045 (*Chronicle*, c. 78, *SRH I.* 334, 4–7), the mid-fourteenth century illuminator of this portion of the text depicted what could be regarded as the *feudal* submission of the Orseolo to Emperor Henry III; see *Chronicon pictum: Képes Krónika*, ed., D. Dercsényi, 2 vols. Budapest 1963, I. [facsimile], fol. 27b, "S" initial.

<sup>14</sup> See letter, dated October 28, 1074, of Pope Gregory VII addressed to King Solomon of Hungary, logged under ii:13 in the papal register – E. Caspar, ed., *Das Register Gregors VII*, MGH Epp., ser. II, 2 vols. Berlin 1920–23.; (repr. Munich 1990), I, 144ff., here I, 145, 5–10; also, Bonizo, "Ad amicum," in *MGH Libelli de lite*, 3 vols. Hannover 1891–97, I, 583f.

<sup>15</sup> Caspar, *Register*, I, 144f., n. ii:13; B. Hóman, *Geschichte des ungarischen Mittelalters*, 2 vols. Berlin 1940–43, I, 253f., and I, 260ff.

<sup>16</sup> *Chronicle*, c. 81.

<sup>17</sup> *SRH I.* 327, 4–13; *Annales Altahenses*, anno 1045.

<sup>18</sup> *Chronicle*, c. 82.

<sup>19</sup> "... transivit Danubium in Sytiaten, Albam cupiens introire;" *SRH I.* 339, 6–7, and note 3.

established. It was his personal tragedy that, in spite of the many years he had spent in the royal court, he was unable to understand the inner spiritual world of the Magyar people.<sup>20</sup> Meanwhile, at the Pest shore ferry on the Danube, the pagan insurgents murdered Gerard, the bishop of Csanád, and Szolnok, a royal reeve. At the end of September, the three bishops who escaped the bloodbath of the uprising crowned Andrew I king in Székesfehérvár.<sup>21</sup>

The invitation to Andrew proved to be in the game of diplomatic chess a move by both parties; the nobles who invited him, and by Andrew himself. During his prolonged stay in Kiev, he gained the hand in marriage of Anastasia, daughter of Jaroslav the Wise, grand-prince of Kiev, and through this marriage he assured himself of the political, and possibly military, support of Kiev for the realization of his own diplomatic-family interests in the future.<sup>22</sup> The other daughter of Jaroslav, Ann, was the queen of Henry I, king of the Franks, so the recently anointed and crowned Hungarian monarch could hope to obtain diplomatic and cultural aid from his Frankish royal brother-in-law. The founding by Andrew of the abbey of Tihany in 1055 in honor of the Frankish saint, Anian, may serve as proof that the establishment of Franco-Hungarian cultural-political ties had been realized.<sup>23</sup> One ought to note that, two years earlier, Andrew had a monastery erected for Basilian monks in Visegrád, in order to express his appreciation of the Byzantine religious-cultural influence he had come to know during his exile in Kiev, and, perhaps, as a symbolic friendly diplomatic gesture toward Emperor Constantine Monomachos of Byzantium.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>20</sup> *Chronicle*, c. 85; Hóman, *Ungarisches Mittelalter*, I, 254.

<sup>21</sup> *Chronicle*, cc. 83–84, and 86; Keza, “*Gesta*”, cc. 54 and 57. The chronicler’s statement that King Andrew soon after his coronation issued orders for the restoration of the Christian religion in the realm – *SRH I.* 344, 1–6 – may have served as data chore for Andrew’s “*Constitutio ecclesiastica*,” recorded in Mansi, *Concilia*, XIX, 631f.

<sup>22</sup> “*Duxit autem sibi uxorem filiam ducis Ruthenorum, de qua genuit Salomonem et David.*” Cf. *SRH I.* 345, 19–21; M. Wertner, *Az Árpádok családi története* [Family history of the Arpads] Nagybecskerek 1892, 117; on Andrew’s Kievan wife, daughter of Jaroslav the Wise of Kiev, cf. the Genealogy chart of the Rurikids – based on N. de Baumgarten, “*Généalogies et mariages occidentaux des Rurikides russes du Xe au XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*” *Orientalia Christiana* 9 (1927), – printed in S. Hazzard Cross–O. P. Sherbowitz-Wetzor, eds., *Russian Primary Chronicle*. Cambridge Mass. 1930, following p. 298; one of Jaroslav’s younger daughters, Anna, was married to King Henry I of the west Franks; E. M. Hallam, *Capetian France, 987–1328*. London–New York 1980, (3<sup>rd</sup> repr. 1986) 72ff; further, W. Scheck, *Geschichte Russlands*. Munich 1975, 37f., and 436; Gy. Kristó – I. H. Tóth, “Az orosz Évkönyvek néhány magyar vonatkozásáról” [Some remarks on Hungarian-related references in the Russian annals] *Acta historica Szegediensis* 103 (1996), 21ff.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. E. Szentpétery–I. Borsa, eds., *Regesta regum stirpis Arpadianae critico-diplomatica*, 2 vols. Budapest 1923–87, cited hereafter as *RA*, n. 12; text in Marczali, *Enchiridion*, 81ff., or, in E. Jakubovich–D. Pais, eds., *Ó-magyar olvasókönyv* [Old Hungarian reader] Pécs 1929, 19ff; on the background, cf. *SRH I.* 354, 17–19; Kosztolnyik, 178f., nn. 57–58.

<sup>24</sup> On Visegrád, cf. “*Vita s. Gerardi*,” c. 15, *SRH II.* 503, 26–28, and nn. 5–6; St. Katona, *Historia pragmatica Hungariae*, 3 vols. Budae 1782, etc., I, 333; Hóman–Szekfű, II, 242.

King Andrew's first concern was to restore peace in the land, to put the pagan insurgents in their place, and to fill unoccupied ecclesiastical positions in the country with the twenty-four canons who came to Hungary after their canonry at Verdun had burned down.<sup>25</sup> In the late 1040s, he provided military aid for the Croats against Venice and the Dalmatian cities, and in the early spring of 1050, he staged a counter-offensive against Bishop Gebhard of Regensburg who had invaded the country's border region. When the Hungarian scouts noted that on the German side they were rebuilding the fort of Hainburg, Andrew's border guards harassed the builders and brought construction to a near standstill.<sup>26</sup> To reach a peace agreement with the empire, Andrew sent envoys to Emperor Henry III, and dispatched Archbishop George of Kalocsa to Pope Leo IX, who was at that time visiting Lorraine, with the request that his Holiness intervene at the German court on behalf of the peace.<sup>27</sup>

In 1050, Prince Béla also returned to Hungarian soil with his Polish wife. His elder brother rewarded him with a princely share of the realm's territory that meant, among other things, that Béla had the right to mint money and to have autonomy in his region [duchy], within the borders of the kingdom. Béla was already known as a military strategist. In Poland, in a duel he defeated the Prussian duke, an opponent of the Polish ruler, who had refused to pay feudal dues to the Polish court, and as a reward, had gained the whole amount of feudal fees the Prussian owed to the Polish royal court.<sup>28</sup> King Andrew needed the military know-how of Béla: in the summer of 1051, when the German imperial forces gathered at Passau and, led by the emperor in person, invaded the Hungarian border region and moved against Székesfehérvár. Gebhard, bishop of Regens-

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<sup>25</sup> Cf. Laurentius de Leodio, "Gesta episcoporum Viridunensium," *Monumenta Germaniae historica, Scriptores*, ed., G. H. Pertz, 30 vols. Hannover 1854, etc., cited hereafter as *MGHSS*, X, 486.

<sup>26</sup> Under 1047, the entry records that Henry III would not enter Hungary because of the revolt in Flanders; under 1050; another entry mentions the attempt made by armed Magyar troops to prevent, or to delay, the re-fortification of Hainburg. In 1051, Gebhardt and Bretislav invaded Magyar land north of the Danube, while the emperor entered Hungarian territory from Carinthia. In 1053, the Germans concluded peace with Andrew at Tribur – cf. *Annales Hildesheimenses*, ed., G. Waitz, *SSrG*. Hannover, 1878. (repr. 1947); H. Contractus, "Chronicon," *MGHSS*, V, 126, 127; *Annales Altahenses*, aa. 1047, 1050, etc.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. "Vita s. Leonis IX papae," in J. P. Migne, ed., *Patrologiae cursus completus, series Latina*, 221 vols. Paris 1844–55, (henceforth *MPL*) 143, 496bc; also, Hildebert, "Vita Hugonis," ii:7, *MPL* 159, 864cd; Bonito, "Liber ad amicum," *MPL* 150, 816, and compare with *MGHSS* XVII, 627.; *Acta sanctorum Bollandiana*, 60 vols. Paris–Rome 1864–76, April, II, 661, on the diplomacy of Pope Leo IX; King Andrew did not comply with the agreement – Contractus, *MGHSS*, V, 131,36–43; on the relationship between the pontiff and Archbishop Gregory, Ph. Jaffé, ed., *Regesta pontificum Romanorum*. 2 vols. Leipzig 1885, n. 3222; Z. J. Kosztolnyik, "Hungaro–German contacts in the mid-eleventh century vs. the background of the Rome–Byzantine schism" *Proceedings of the XV annual Congress of the Cleveland Hungarian Association 1975*, Cleveland OH. 1976, 229ff.

<sup>28</sup> *Chronicle*, c. 88; and, on the Polish adventure, see c. 79.

burg, was in charge of the supply ships on the Danube carrying food for the imperial armed forces. The imperial high command had learned a lesson from past mistakes; now, it had organized supplies of food for the troops before actually starting the campaign. But Andrew's men – or Béla's scouts – in a cleverly written mischievous letter had caused the ships to return home prematurely, thereby leaving the German troops heading toward Székesfehérvár without food supplies.<sup>29</sup> The armies of Andrew and Béla encountered and easily defeated the confused German troops at Bodajk near the Vértes Hill (in Hungarian, Hill of [the lost] Shields).<sup>30</sup>

The imperial court now planned a counter-offensive. In the following year it had besieged the fort of Pozsony for eight weeks – to no avail. The imperial naval vessels on the Danube – it is not clear from the text whether the boats were armed ships, or food supply vessels – were sunk by a clever Hungarian frogman named Zotmund, whereupon the emperor withdrew his troops.<sup>31</sup> Pozsony was located on the German border, and the imperial high command could easily have provided for the needs of its armed forces by means of land transportation. However, the emperor was forced to withdraw his armed forces because he had to face domestic troubles; Duke Conrad of Bavaria revolted against him. The insurgent duke fled to the court of Andrew, and, probably encouraged by Andrew and Béla, the duke's armed men harassed the Bavarian border lands from a base in Hungary.<sup>32</sup>

Unfortunately, this was the last occasion when the two brothers, Andrew and Béla, peacefully cooperated with each other. In 1053, a son, and heir: Solomon, was born to Andrew, and the king had the Basilian monastery erected at Visegrad to please his Kievan-born Queen Anastasia of the Greek Orthodox faith.<sup>33</sup> In view of the fact that in 1054 schism had occurred between the Latin Roman Catholic Church and the eastern Greek Orthodox Church, and, mainly from the Hungarian prospective, on grounds that Ann, Queen of the west-Frankish monarch, was the sister of Anastasia, King Andrew in 1055 decided to establish the Latin-rite monastery in Tihany. The monarch sought to have peace and balance between the religious and political interests of the two churches and, simultaneously, he wanted the Frankish court to know that his realm formed a part of western, Latin Christendom.<sup>34</sup>

Peace prevailed in the land. Archbishop Benedict of Esztergom and Zach[eus] the Palatine (*comes palatini*) were the leading officials of the country. In the 1050s, Sarchas, Judge of the King's Court, prepared a census of the personnel serving on

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<sup>29</sup> *Chronicle*, c. 90.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, SRH I. 350f.

<sup>31</sup> *Chronicle*, c. 89; the chronicler followed a reverse order of events.

<sup>32</sup> *Annales Altahenses*, a. 1053; Hampe, *Kaisergeschichte*, 33f.

<sup>33</sup> "Istius diploma non amplius superest;" cf. Katona, *Historia pragmatica*, I, 333; on Visegrád, see also the "Vita" of Gerard of Csanád, c. 15, SRH II. 503, 26–28, and II, 503, note 6.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, and *Chronicle*, c. 88, SRH I. 345, 17–19; also, RA, n. 12.

the royal estates. It may have been at this time, to quote from the D and E manuscripts of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, that Edward, son of King Edward's brother, Edmund called Ironside, who had been expelled to Hungary by King Cnut the Great, had married, the chronicler reports, Agatha, a daughter of the Hungarian king; and thus to quote from the Chronicle, "won a kinswoman of the emperor for his wife," that is, a daughter of Gisela (and of King Stephen), the sister of the German emperor Henry II – but returned to England where he died shortly thereafter; "he so speedily ended his life after he came to England."<sup>35</sup> The backdrop of Edward's sudden death may be provided by a remark in the less known *Florence* manuscript of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: "for the king – that is, Edward the Confessor – had determined to make him heir to the kingdom after him." Perhaps certain individuals at the English court distrusted the idea that a prince who had been living abroad for years and had married into a "foreign" royal family, thereby establishing a dynastic blood tie with the imperial court, be allowed to become heir of the English throne.<sup>36</sup> The innocent entry in the *Florence* manuscript of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle may, however, reveal another dynastic diplomatic aspect, that is, Andrew I of Hungary (may have) had plans with the heir of the English throne, the future king of England, who had spent years in exile at the Hungarian court, married a daughter of a monarch of the House of Árpád, a daughter who in the near future could have become the Queen of England – to thereby expand his diplomatic range beyond the confines of the German empire.<sup>37</sup> In such a manner, through family blood ties with the Frankish and English royal houses, to which he could add his family ties with the ruling house in Kiev (and the religious-political ties with Emperor Monomachos of Byzantium), King Andrew I wanted to bring about a far reaching diplomatic plan by arranging for a solid dynastic alliance between Judith, sister of the new German monarch, Henry IV, and Solomon, son of Andrew and Anastasia of Kiev.<sup>38</sup>

The dynastic marriage relationship in formation between the Árpáds and the Franconian German dynasty against the background of Árpáadian diplomatic blood ties with the west-Frankish and English, and family religious ties with the eastern, Kievan and Byzantine, courts provided a firm foundation for the policies of Andrew I, and his son Solomon, in a central Europe strongly oriented toward the Latin west during the 1050s.

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<sup>35</sup> *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, ed., D. Whitelock, et al., New Brunswick 1961, 133, anno 1057.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 133, n. 6. On the other hand, F. M. Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Oxford 1947, 563, and n.1, expressed doubts about this family tie, and about S. Fest's thesis, *The Hungarian origins of St. Margaret of Scotland*. Budapest 1940.

<sup>37</sup> "... for the king had determined to make him heir to the kingdom after him;" quote from the *Florence* MS cited by Whitelock, who added: "The atheling's death is one of the unsolved mysteries of the period." Cf. *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, 133, note 6.

<sup>38</sup> According to the Hungarian source, the emperor promised that "filiam suam Sophiam [*sic*; her name was Judith!] Salomoni filio regis Andree daret in uxorem;" *SRH* I. 349, 20–23; Hóman, *Ungarisches Mittelalter*, I, 267f.

The Hungarian chronicler – according to János Horváth, the chronicler was Bishop Nicholas, chancellor of King Andrew I, “qui tunc temporis vicem procurabat notarii,” whose name appeared twice on the Tihany founding charter (he had witnessed and signed the document), who already from his high official position, must have had a clear picture of the dynastic goals of the court’s foreign policy – examined the case from an entirely different point of view.<sup>39</sup> Family blood ties often hinder the truth, he pointed out. Also fatherly concern in the heart of Andrew, he wrote, defeated justice, in that Andrew, old and invalid, and yet, in a manner unworthy of a king, broke the promise he had made to his younger brother Béla that, upon his death, it would be Béla who would inherit the Hungarian throne. Instead, Andrew had Solomon, his five year old, anointed and crowned king, “in regem fecit iniungi et coronari.” The chronicler excused the behavior of the king by saying that he had acted in the national interest: the German court would not have consented to the marriage of Solomon without the coronation, and yet, the chronicler pointed out, the king had made a mistake.<sup>40</sup> When Béla did find out what had really happened, he grew justly indignant, “graviter est indignatus,” and, what was worse, became suspicious.<sup>41</sup> Andrew now met his younger brother at the royal hunting lodge at Várkony, where, unknown to Béla, he put his brother to a test. Did the prince accept political reality? Would he be satisfied with his princely title and landholding, and continue as the realm’s military defender during the minority of the child king, Solomon; or, would he reach out for the crown, thereby voiding Andrew’s diplomatic efforts with the German court? Béla, following the advice of Nicholas, reeve of the royal court: “Si vitam optas, accipe gladium,” chose, out of fear, the sword, that is, the princely title.<sup>42</sup> After he had made his choice, Béla immediately left the kingdom with his family. Regardless of the fact that he had acted out of fear, the prince in deciding to flee to Poland, simply refused to identify himself with, and may have decided to undermine, his brother’s pro-German game of dynastic chess.<sup>43</sup>

In the fall of 1060, Prince Béla took up position east of the River Tisza in Hungary with three division of Polish auxiliaries. King Andrew grew concerned, sent his family to safety in Austria, and asked for German military aid.<sup>44</sup> Through this twofold act, the already very sick monarch committed a fatal mistake. He had

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<sup>39</sup> J. Horváth, *Árpád-kori latinnyelvű irodalmunk stílusproblémái*. Budapest 1954, 305ff; for Bishop Nicholas’s signature on the Tihany charter, cf. Marczali, *Enchiridion*, 85, or Jakubovich-Pais, 25.

<sup>40</sup> Andrew had his five year old son, Solomon, anointed and crowned king. “Simulabat enim, quod pro perditione [sic] regni hoc faceret, qui imperator filiam suam filio suo Salomoni non dedisset, si non eum coronaret” – *SRH I*, 352, 13–24

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 355f.

<sup>42</sup> *Chronicle*, c. 92, *ibid.*, I, 353f.

<sup>43</sup> *Chronicle*, c. 93, *ibid.*, 355f., as it may be evident from the chronicler’s next sentence “Quod audiens rex Andreas, timens illius machinamenta. Filium suum Salomonem transmisit ad imperatorem Theutonicorum socerum suum;” *ibid.*, I, 356, 6–11.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 356, 12–16. In 1060, King Andrew, a very sick man, sought safety for his family at Melk, in Austria – *MGHSS*, V, 127.

now weakened his position on the home front and demolished any success he could have claimed for his foreign diplomacy. The king was no match for Béla's military know-how, not to mention the fact that the majority of the Magyars sided with the prince. Béla displayed his forces in the Tisza region – a region that formed part of his princely territory, whose terrain he knew well, where he could easily provide logistical support for his men, and encircled the German troops that had reached the river. King Andrew fled to Fort Moson on the realm's western border, and, severely wounded in an accident, was captured by Béla's men; on account of poor medical treatment, the captured king soon died in the royal hunting lodge at Zirc.<sup>45</sup>

A word of explanation is in order here. In this writer's opinion, King Andrew I must have felt overconfident because of the success of his marriage-bound diplomacy: through his wife, he had family ties with both the Kievan ruling house and the Frankish royal family. Edward, son of Edmund Ironside, who, at least according to one of the MSS of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, was considered the heir of the English throne, was married to Agatha, one of the daughters of King Stephen I; there seem to have emerged a plan for a Hungaro-English diplomatic understanding between the two kingdoms. Undoubtedly, there is no record of Edward's stay in Hungary – which lasted well into King Andrew's reign – by the Hungarian chroniclers. If, however, Edward Aetheling did *not* marry one of King Stephen's daughters, but (only) a Hungarian noblewoman (a case more than unlikely), knowing King Stephen's warm hospitality extended to all "foreigners," the Anglo-Saxon prince, who had lived and raised a family in Hungary, still must have had active contacts with the Hungarian royal court.<sup>46</sup>

King Andrew wanted to affect this somewhat complicated and (perhaps) unrealistic policy through the marriage of *his* son to the sister of the ruling German monarch, who was still a minor (later king and emperor, Henry IV). It was Andrew's personal tragedy that his overheated ambition lacked political reality: the imperial court advisors of the dowager empress, Agnes, wanted to use the marriage between Solomon (anointed and crowned Hungarian king) and Judith (sister of the German monarch, Henry IV), to draw the Magyar kingdom into the sphere of imperial political influence, from which it had only recently pulled away.<sup>47</sup> The German-Hungarian marriage alliance would sooner or later have led to a feudal dependency of the Magyar court upon the empire. Equally, Andrew's

<sup>45</sup> *SRH I.* 356, 24 – 357, 11. Incidentally, the remark by Cosmas of Prague, "Chronicon Boemorum," that Peter the Orseolo – some ten years after he had been captured, blinded, and buried at the cathedral in Pécs, see "Chronicon pictum," c. 85, *SRH I.* 342f. – had married the widow of the Czech Brestislav, cf. *MGHSS*, IX, 78, rests on shaky ground, indeed; cf. J. Loserth, "Kritische Studien zur ältere Geschichte Böhmens" *Mitteilungen des Institutes für österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 5 (1884), 366ff.; or, St. Kationa, *Historia critica regum Hungariae stirpis Arpadianae*, 7 vols. Pest-Buda 1779–81, I, 991 and 992.

<sup>46</sup> On King Stephen's hospitality toward strangers – see his *Admonitiones*, art. vi, *SRH II.* 619ff., and comments, *ibid.*, II, 792ff.

<sup>47</sup> *Chronicle*, c. 86; Hampe, *Kaisergeschichte*, 33.

diplomacy lacked domestic reality: it ignored the *pagan* opposition – based on the ancient Magyar social habits and way of life – whose adherents were searching for a cause to revolt, with armed force, if needed, against the “foreign” politics of their monarch.<sup>48</sup>

In early December, 1060, Béla I became king. The Hungarian chronicler referred to Béla as *Benin*, the warrior, who entered Székesfehérvár in triumph, where the bishops anointed and crowned him; “regali dyademata ... est coronatus,” the chronicler reported, though this writer, for one, argues that the circlet used at the coronation was not the crown that touched King Stephen’s forehead, but a [the] *ruler’s diadem* with which the bishops, after anointing him, had crowned him. If this *ruler’s diadem* happened to be the circlet sent by the Byzantine emperor Monomachos, a diadem that the Latin-rite bishops had placed on Béla’s head, the new king through his coronation may have wished to assert his determination that during his reign he would maintain good relations with the eastern *Greek* court, but also continue, and in fact realize, the Árpáds’ *western-oriented* diplomacy.<sup>49</sup>

The new king, first, had to deflate once and for all the still lively “pagan” revolution in the land, and Béla made some progress by acting circumspectly, but in the end, he had to rely upon military force to restore law and order.<sup>50</sup> The chronicler’s statement that the king had summoned, countrywide, two *well spoken men* from every village to his Royal Council to aid him in decision making – “misit etiam rex ... per totam Hungariam precones, ut de singulis villis vocarentur duo seniores *facundiam habentes* [italics mine] ad regis concilium” – may refer to this resolution of the monarch. The chronicler’s choice of Latin terms meant that two well spoken elders invited from every village were, “*facundiam habentes*,” actually *representatives* of the villages in, or before, the King’s Council, whose framework King Béla now expanded from the size and structure of the council as had earlier been determined by King Stephen.<sup>51</sup>

In other words, King Béla I in the early 1060s had – together with members of the high clergy, nobility, and elected representatives of the people – enacted legislation, placed the dismal financial problems of the country in order, and realized his clearly set domestic and foreign political aims.<sup>52</sup> In England, it was Henry II who, according to the resolutions of his Assize of Clarendon, 1166, through statements taken from the local *legales* (who knew of a certain crime, at

<sup>48</sup> As it is evident from the *Chronicle*, c. 95, report, see *SRH I.* 359, 22–33.

<sup>49</sup> The term: *regali dyademate* implied a, or any, royal diadem. *Chronicle*, c. 94, *ibid.*, I, 358f.; *Annales Altahenses*, anno 1060.; the same event was recorded by the *Lamperti Hersfeldensis Opera*, with the “Weissenburg Annals,” ed., O. Holder-Egger, *SSrG.* Hannover 1894. anno 1061, and mentioned that William of Thuringia and Bishop Eppo. William was engaged to Béla’s daughter, but had died; it was Udalrich of Carinthia who married her.

<sup>50</sup> *Chronicle*, c. 95, *SRH I.* 359, 24–33.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 359, 20–22.; on King Stephen’s Royal Council, cf. his “Admonitiones, art. vii, *ibid.*, II, 619ff.; Hóman, *Ungarisches Mittelalter*, I, 268ff.

<sup>52</sup> *SRH I.* 358, 6–11.

the certain time, at a certain place) before courts of law, would conduct legal proceedings by the "Justices in the eyre."<sup>53</sup> In Aragon of the 1080s, it was *rex et regina* who shall call upon the representatives of the towns to participate in the discussion of public matters, and enact legislation.<sup>54</sup>

Therefore, it was through his expanded Council that Béla I successfully handled financial matters, minted money, determined prices and wages, punished black marketing, supported *laissez faire*, introduced Byzantine gold coins into circulation; his forty silver denars were worth one Byzantine gold coin.<sup>55</sup> Although some historians argue that this segment of the Chronicle could be a later addition to the text that summarized fiscal reforms in the realm in the second half of the eleventh century, this writer agrees with Bálint Hóman who said that the economic-financial improvements in the realm did reach back to the days of King Béla I. The fiscal improvements "introduced" by King Solomon, for instance, would not have been possible without the fiscal initiatives undertaken by King Béla.<sup>56</sup> One cannot leave out of consideration the fact that Béla I grew up in the Polish court, where fiscal reforms had been carried out already in the first half of the century.<sup>57</sup> Béla was aware that no matter how important his domestic and diplomatic efforts were, he could not realize them without at first placing his country's economic and monetary state on a solid foundation. In the spirit of King Stephen, he did this at the beginning of his reign acting with the full cooperation of the high clergy, the nobility, and the people's *representative* spokesmen in the Royal Council.<sup>58</sup> It was also with the consent of his spiritual and temporal lords that Béla had, at the beginning of his reign, forcefully oppressed the *pagan* upheaval countrywide. This is evident from the remark of the Chronicle that it took Bela three days to take action; as soon as he had obtained the consent of his lords, and re-grouped his available army units, he mastered the situation. (The monarch was aware that it was dangerous to use troops to quell domestic unrest; the experience could have backfired: "Hungaria ad Christum convertita bis ad paganismum versa est.")<sup>59</sup>

During the summer of 1063, the imperial diet meeting at Mainz decided on a military campaign against Béla I in order to restore King Solomon to the Hungarian throne. The king, because he wanted to gain time to delay the invasion, or

<sup>53</sup> Cf. W. Stubbs, ed., *Select charters of English constitutional history*. 8th ed. Oxford 1895, 143ff.; B. Lyon, *A constitutional and legal history of medieval England*. New York-London 1960, 288ff., 294ff.

<sup>54</sup> H. Mitteis, *Der Staat des hohen Mittelalters*. 8th ed. Weimar 1968, 414ff.; C. E. Chapman, *A history of Spain*. New York 1918, 90ff; R. B. Merriman, "The cortes of the Spanish kingdoms" *American Historical Review* 16 (1911), 484ff.

<sup>55</sup> SRH I. 358, 11-25.

<sup>56</sup> B. Hóman, *Magyar pénztörténet, 1000-1325*. [Hungarian monetary history] Budapest 1916, 193ff; P. Spufford, *Money and its use in medieval Europe*. Cambridge 1988, 80f., and 95.

<sup>57</sup> Spufford, 69ff.

<sup>58</sup> Keza, c. 59, SRH I. 180; Katona, *Historia pragmatica*, I, 366ff.

<sup>59</sup> SRH I. 360, 7-13.

to avoid it by diplomatic means, sent envoys to the German court, but Empress Agnes was unwilling (rather, her advisors were unwilling) to negotiate.<sup>60</sup> Béla I spent the early fall of 1063 at his hunting lodge at Dömös to prepare for the German attack, when his throne collapsed under him – it depends how one reads the sentence in the Chronicle: when the house roof fell upon him. Was the accident a coincidence, or a direct sabotage organized from abroad, an attempt made upon the life of the king? He never recovered from his wounds. They had to carry him on a stretcher to the fort at Moson so that he could direct military operations on the border against the approaching imperial forces, but his health did not hold out. He had to be carried semi-conscious to the Kanizsa [Kynisua] Creek, where he died, “et ibi migravit e seculo.”<sup>61</sup>

His sons fled to Poland to return with Polish troops by the end of the year.<sup>62</sup> In early 1064, at Győr, the leading men of the realm negotiated a peace between Solomon and Béla's sons, Géza, László [Ladislav], and Lampert. On Easter Sunday, Prince Géza crowned Solomon anew in the cathedral at Pécs.<sup>63</sup> Thereafter, Solomon and his wife Judith had revived – one ought to say: completed – the financial reforms of Béla by establishing a system of monetary exchange of new coins (only) every two years.<sup>64</sup>

King Béla I had followed a very successful domestic and foreign policy based on common sense; unexpectedly, and, perhaps, too rapidly, he achieved success with his military, administrative, fiscal, and judicial policies. His triumphs came far too soon for some of his – mostly non-Magyar – adversaries who wished nothing more than Béla's failure while King Solomon was still alive. Although

<sup>60</sup> B. Gebhardt, *Handbuch der deutschen Geschichte*. 8<sup>th</sup> rev. ed., H. Grundmann, ed., 4 vols. Stuttgart 1954, 7<sup>th</sup> (rev. repr., 1967), I, 243f.; Hampe, *Kaisergeschichte*, 40ff.; L. F. J. Meulenbergh, *Der Primat der römischen Kirche im Denken und Handeln Gregors VII.* Rome 1966, 91ff.

<sup>61</sup> *Chronicle*, c. 96. A similar accident befell the East-Frankish king Arnulf in 897 – cf. E. Dümmler, *Geschichte des oströmischen Reiches*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 3 vols. Leipzig 1887–88, III, 437.

<sup>62</sup> SRH I. 361, 11–15.; for the Polish sources *Monumenta Poloniae historica*, ed. A. Bielowski, 6 vols. Lvov–Cracow 1864–93, (repr. Warsaw 1960–61), (henceforth: *MPH*) I, 495ff.; cf. *Chronica-Polonica, pars I*, ed., with an introduction by B. Karácsonyi, Szeged 1969; idem, “Tanulmányok a magyar–lengyel krónikáról” [Studien über Polnisch–Ungarische Chronik] *Acta historica Szegediensis* 16 (1964); for the Byzantine sources, (Anna Comnena) mainly in reference to the 1040s see *Alexiade*, ed. B. Leib, 3 vols. Paris 1937–45, I, 127, 17–128, 1, partly based on a remark made in Johannes Scylitzes *Continuatus, Historiarum compendium*, ed. I. Bekker, CB, vol. II Bonn 1839, 645, 17–22, and on Psellus, *Chronographia*, ed., E. Renaud, 2 vols. Paris 1926, 1928, II, 125.; for background, cf. G. Ostrogorsky, *Geschichte des byzantinischen Staates*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Munich 1952, 260ff; R. Jenkins, *Byzantium: the imperial centuries AD 610 – 1071*. 1966; repr. Toronto–London 1987, 333ff.; J. M. Hussey, “The Byzantine empire in the eleventh century: some interpretations” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 22 (1950), 71ff.; R. Browning, *The Byzantine Empire*. New York 1980, 92ff. It also carries a picture of the crown of Constantine IX, “believed to have been a gift to the Hungarian court” (p. 93).

<sup>63</sup> *Chronicle*, c. 97.

<sup>64</sup> *Spufford*, 95, and n. 2.

a collapsing building, or royal throne, had buried ruling monarchs before, judged by the overly brief report of the Hungarian Chronicle on the reign of Béla I, the dying monarch had been aware that the Franconian court would not refrain from using any Byzantine political method – including assassination – to remove him from the throne of the Árpáds.<sup>65</sup>

It may be said in conclusion that the politics of both Andrew I and Béla I must be characterized by a historian as cautious. Both monarchs took decisions, issued directives but undertook no action without the consent of the Council of spiritual and temporal lords, as well as the well-spoken elders *representing* the people's interests. Their foreign diplomacy relied upon marriages, forming blood ties with various ruling families, in order to counterbalance any threat from the imperial, Franconian, and one may add, the Byzantine courts. Domestically, both had achievements to their credit. Because of their accidental or premeditated personal tragedies, however, their family policies remained mere unsuccessful attempts at dynastic diplomacy.<sup>66</sup>

This writer, for one, is unable to hide his opinion – partly based on a statement made by Anna Comnena who did not depict in the most favorable colors the rather clumsy *military* interference by the already dishonored Solomon in the affairs of the Byzantine empire<sup>67</sup> (she, perhaps, followed the footsteps of Michael Psellus<sup>68</sup>); partly, upon a brief remark of the German emperor, Henry IV, addressed to Solomon who, out of season, praised the military aptness of the Hungarian knights to the emperor, to which the German monarch correctly answered, "Si ita est, talibus militibus repugnantibus non recuperabis regnum," the Chronicle, c. 127, reported<sup>69</sup> – that the game of dynastic diplomatic chess played by both kings, Andrew I and Béla I, on a wide geographical scale, though without any deeper political foresight (as, for instance, was it really necessary for Salomon to marry Judith, Henry IV's sister?<sup>70</sup>), essentially remained unsuccessful. It may be,

<sup>65</sup> As a reaction of the imperial court, rather, the advisors of dowager Empress Agnes at the court to Solomon's public humiliation, as recorded in the *Chronicle*, c. 93.

<sup>66</sup> Margaret, Edward Aetheling's daughter and sister to Christina and Edgar – born to King Stephen's daughter; or, if not (which is unlikely), to a Hungarian noblewoman – married a widower, King Malcolm III of Scotland. Cf. her "Vita," in *Acta sanctorum*, Iunii II, 328; and, W. Forbes-Leith, *Life of St. Margaret of Scotland by Turgot of St. Andrews*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Edinburgh 1896, 19ff.; see further, F. Makk, "Megjegyzések I. András történetéhez" [Some remarks on the reign of Andrew I] *Acta historica Szegediensis* 90 (1990), 23ff.; Z. Kordé, "A magyarországi besenyők az Árpád-korban" [The Pechenegs in Hungary during the Árpád age] *ibid.*, 90 (1999), 3ff.; Gy. Kristó, *Megjegyzések az ún. 'pogánylázadások' kora történetéhez*. [Background of the age of the so called 'pagan' uprisings in Hungary] Szeged 1965, 36ff., and 49ff.; Hóman, *Ungarisches Mittelalter*, I, 256ff.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. Anna Comnène, *Alexiade*, II, 87f.

<sup>68</sup> See Michael Psellus, *Chronographia*, ed. C. Sathas. Paris, 1874. vi:87etc.; Ostrogorsky, 267ff.; Browning, 99, 102.

<sup>69</sup> *Chronicle*, c. 127, SRH, I, 399,8-16.

<sup>70</sup> *Chronicle*, c. 91, *ibid.*, I, 351ff.

of course, that the royal brothers raised to manhood in Slavic princely courts, were unable to comprehend, or unwilling to apply the Carolingian concept that had been accepted for quite some length of time in the Latin west, that the king of the *regnum* through his promulgated guidelines (*capitularia*) might exercise personal diplomacy, as if to bind his kingship to his own person, without, however, embodying the concept of the *state*.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> See some of the Carolingian *capitularia*, as, for example, the ones concerning royal domains, and royal estates, in *MGH Legum sectio II: Capitularia regum Francorum*, 2 vols. Hannover, 1883-97, I, 82ff., and I, 178f. A. Nietschke's 29 page study, "Karolinger und Ottonen: von der karolingischer Staatlichkeit zur Königsherrschaft", *Historische Zeitschrift*, 273 (2001), 1ff.; F. Heer, *Europäische Geistesgeschichte*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Stuttgart, 1965, 49ff.