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Alfonso V, el Magnánimo and the Hungarian Throne

Hungarian historiography has a fairly detailed picture of certain Spanish-Hungarian, or more precisely, Aragonese-Hungarian relations of the 15th century. Antal Áldásy's inaugural dissertation about the affairs of *Zsigmond király és Spanyolország* (*King Sigismund and Spain*) gives a detailed survey up to 1416 mainly in connection with the schism and the Council of Constance, but after that he only mentions sporadic data until 1447.¹ He finishes his book with a reference to Lajos Thallóczy's research, who (Thallóczy) revealed the relations between János Hunyadi and Alfonso V of Aragon (1447 – 48) as well as Hunyadi's offer to Alfonso about establishing an anti-Turkish alliance and about accepting the Hungarian throne.²

It was Lajos Thallóczy who, after Schwandtner, found the documents of the János Hunyadi – Alfonso relations in the *Archivo de la Corona de Aragón* in Barcelona and published them in the first volume of the Frangepán collection of documents and in the *Bosnyák és Szerb élet- és nemzedékrajzi tanulmányok* (*Bosnian and Serb biographical and genealogical studies*) drawing a good, data-rich portrait about Alfonso.³ Compared to them, the work of Vilmos Fraknói in 1910 served more the purpose of popularisation.⁴ As a matter of fact, since then the Hungarian historical works have been written on the question based on these antecedents – without publishing any considerably new data.

The principal constituents of this theme are the following: Hunyadi's plan for a detailed military alliance between Hungary and the Aragonese Crown against the Turks and its financial conditions: in addition to this Hunyadi offered the Hungarian crown to Alfonso: according to this plan Ladislas Hunyadi would come to Alfonso's court (the alternatives being: to be educated, to be a hostage, or for a marriage with a granddaughter of Alfonso): and Hunyadi would be guaranteed that he could keep his leading role in Hungary.

Hóman-Szekfű's *Magyarország története* (*The History of Hungary*), the works of Lajos Elekes, Zsuzsa Teke and Péter Kovács discuss this story of 1447–48 in detail, but

1 Áldásy, Antal, *Zsigmond király és Spanyolország*. Budapest, 1927.

2 op. cit., pp. 117 – 118.

3 Thallóczy – Barabás: *Frangepán okmánytár*, Vol. I. pp. 350 – 365; *Thallóczy, Lajos*, *Bosnyák és Szerb élet- és nemzedékrajzi tanulmányok*. Budapest, 1909, biography on pp. 260 – 296.

4 Fraknói, Vilmos, *Hunyadi János és Aragóniai Alfonz*. *Katholikus Szemle*, 1910, Vol. III, pp. 229 – 242.



their data did not have new sources⁵ even though their emphases and interpretations are different. The most severe of them is Péter Kovács who describes Hunyadi's plan for crowning Alfonso a Hungarian king as "an idea lacking reality."⁶ The other writers do not regard Alfonso's promises as serious either, and Elekes writes about Alfonso with outspoken antipathy.⁷

In his historical works written in Spanish on Hungarian themes, Olivér Brachfeld, the Hungarian Hispanist who lives in Barcelona also touches upon the common Aragonese (Catalan) – Hungarian relations.

In the book he wrote in 1936 about the justice of the Hungary of Trianon⁸ he only mentions the fact of the invitation. Then he devotes more attention to the question in his Spanish *History of Hungary*, written in 1957, bitterly saying: Alfonso forgot about his promises concerning the Hungarians.⁹ A new element – regarding Hungarian historiography – is his concrete remark (unfortunately, without providing the source) that according to the common plan László Hunyadi would have married Alfonso's granddaughter, Eleanor. It is striking that Brachfeld only used Hungarian historical works and he did not investigate the materials in the for him near-by archives in Barcelona.

Anyhow, it can be established that the Hungarian historiography unanimously dates the rapprochement of Hunyadi and Alfonso, the plan for the anti-Turkish alliance and for the Hungarian throne, and the negotiations for them from 1447. The almost century old balance of the Spanish (mainly Catalan-Aragonese) and the European historiography does not only complement this picture, but at certain points it can also give encouraging impetus to new research.

The most comprehensive works of the beginning of this century about Alfonso's Eastern policy are linked with the names of J. Miret y Sanz and Francesco Cerone who make Hunyadi's activity lifelike relying on an enormous source-material, too.¹⁰ Yet, it is the work of *Gimenez Soler*, who wrote and published Alfonso's *itinerary* in 1908, that contains a radically new element.¹¹ Although Gimenez Soler does not know the plans of Hunyadi and Alfonso that appeared in their correspondence in 1447 – 48, talking about 1438 he surprises us with an astonishingly new reference: he quotes a Catalan source according to which Alfonso was approached in secret by representatives

5 *Hóman – Szekfü*, Magyarország története, 6th edition, Budapest, 1939, pp. 438 – 439; *Elekes, Lajos*, Hunyadi János. Budapest, 1952; *Téke, Szusza*, Hunyadi János és kora. Budapest, 1980, pp. 166 – 169; *Kovács, Péter* A Hunyadiak kora. Budapest, 1992, pp. 12 – 24.

6 Kovács, op. cit., p. 24.

7 Elekes, op. cit., pp. 360 – 361.

8 *Brachfeld, Olivér*, La Justicia de Hungría. Barcelona, 1936, pp. 19 – 20.

9 *Brachfeld, Olivér*, Historia de Hungría. Barcelona, 1957, p. 138.

10 *Francesco Cerone*, La política orientale di Alfonso di Aragona. Napoli, 1903. See also *Joaquín Miret y Sanz*, La política oriental de Alfonso de Aragón. Barcelona, 1904.

11 *Gimenez Soler*, Itinerario del Rey Don Alfonso de Aragón el que ganó Napoles, Zaragoza, 1908.

of the Hungarian barons in January 1438 with a request that he should accept the Hungarian throne.¹² The Catalan Soldevilla, however, writes in his "History of Catalonia" – without a source reference – that in 1444, after the misfortune at Várna the Aragonese king sent a secret delegation (1444) to gain the support of Hungarian barons for himself and to seize Saint Stephen's crown that became subject to rivalry and conflict after the catastrophe at Várna.¹³

From his further lines it appears that Soldevilla knows about Hunyadi's offer in 1447–48, but in his short summary the events of the different years rather "slide" into one another. In any case, from this point on the existence of the contact from 1444 and the plan regarding the throne are stable – and believable – elements of the Spanish and the European historiography. It was probably the Roumanian *Constantin Marinescu* who emphasized it the most strongly. He did research on the Catalan version of the "White Knight". According to Marinescu's thesis¹⁴ that created great stir János Hunyadi was the inspirer of *Joaot Martorell's* gigantic work, the "Tirant lo Blanch", written between 1460 – 1465. Marinescu explains his hypothesis with linguistic ingenuity starting the argumentation with Hunyadi's Roumanian origin (Valachus – balachus = Blaqueie = Blac = Blancus, etc.), which brought about agreement as well as criticism in Spanish literary history.¹⁵ The root of the matter is, however, that apparently János Hunyadi was really the main inspirer of the Catalan writer of the "white knight".

The Catalan literary history reinforces this. In *M. de Riquer's* literary, for example, the title of one independent chapter is: "Joan Hunyadi". Analyzing the Martorell-text Riquer argues in favour of Hunyadi whose – i.e. the white knight's – flag we can find the raven on ("e fén-hi pintar un corb") just like in the case of Mathias Corbi – Mathias Corvinus.¹⁶ It is also a fact that the contemporary Aragonese and Catalan politicians wrote a considerable amount about Hunyadi. The Catalan, Valencian, and Aragonese envoys who worked in Naples, for example, often wrote about Hunyadi's victories in the accounts they sent home calling him "lo Blanch", "la comte Blanch".¹⁷ Alfonso's

12 Op. cit., p. 152.

13 *Ferran Soldevilla*, *Historia de Catalunya*. Barcelona, 1935, vol. II, pp. 675 – 676.

14 *Constantin Marinescu*, *Du nouveau sur "Tirant lo Blanch"*. *Estudis Romanics*, Barcelona, 1953 – 1954, pp. 137 – 205.

15 *J. Martorell*, *Tirante el Blanco* (publication in Spanish), Madrid, 1974, Vol. I–V. The introductory study relies on Marinescu's thesis, though it adds that Hunyadi is the principal, but not the only model: the heroic figures of Geoffroy de Thoisy, Pedro Vázquez de Saavedra, and Jaume de Vilaragut also make themselves felt through the work. Op. cit., p. LXVII.

16 *M. de Riquer*, *Historia de la literatura catalana*. Vol. II. Barcelona, 1980, pp. 698 – 699.

17 *J. Martorell*, op. cit., pp. LXVI. c.f. *José María Madurell Marimón*, *Mensajeros barceloneses en la corte de Nápoles de Alfonso y de Aragón*. 1435 – 1458. Barcelona, 1963. The linguist, Kálmán Faluba, in his Catalan study published in 1984 throws Marinescu's blanc = valac formula overboard and accepting some earlier argumentations (Florio Banfi, Olivér Brachfeld) he believes the Hunyadi = white knight identity to be of Italian origin deriving the relationship from the (Jankó) Jancus = Blancus, bianco/ianco phonetic similarity. *Faluba*.

chaplain devoted a whole chapter in his diary to Hunyadi's victories with the title "Del comte Blanch."¹⁸ In any case, Marinescu's study strongly influenced the Spanish Scholarship – for that matter by presenting Hunyadi as a Roumanian politician, too – and it had something to say about Aragonese–Hungarian relations as well.

As we mentioned before, Marinescu joins Soldevilla's sequence of thought who also dates the beginnings of the negotiations back to 1444. He even published the Aragonese–Italian envoy's name: *Francesco Danio*. He dates the spurt of the negotiations back to 1446 without referring to a concrete source, however.

His argumentation is certainly interesting even in this way! Marinescu thinks namely that Martorell "should have known" about certain things and events being the son of one of Alfonso's secretary, *Francesco Martorell*.¹⁹

Then though, talking about the Alfonso – Hunyadi negotiations in 1447 – 48, Marinescu refers to the *registros* of the archives in Barcelona, he probably relies on Thallóczy's documentation.

Alfonso's foreign policy, and within it his Eastern policy, is especially rich in data in the studies published after 1945.²⁰ The main point of the argumentation, however, is the same again and again: after Várna "the only logic is Alfonso." He is the one who understands the Turkish danger and wants to do something about it.²¹ This is why Scander bey and Hunyadi appear to him as principle allies.²² Only the Castilian–Spanish interpretation differs from this argumentation – quite considerably, however. The enormous "History of Spain" series marked by Ramón Menéndez Pidal's name and initiated by him would want to know little about this anti-Turkish commitment of Alfonso. Alfonso did not like Aragon – the book says – so he did not even return from

Kálmán, Tirant "El Valac" or Tirant "Joanet." In: *Miscelánea Sanchis Guarnier I. Univ. de Valencia*, 1984. pp. 107 – 108. This study was published again in 1992.

18 *Dietari del Capella d'Alfos el Magnanim*. Transcription, notas: Josep Sanchis i Sivera. Valencia, 1932, pp. 198. About the question see also *Juan Luis Alborg*, *Historia de la literatura española*. Vol. I. Madrid, 1979, pp. 471 – 473; and *Csernus, Sándor*, A „Fehér Lovag”. A Hunyadi-mítosz kérdéséhez a XV. századi francia történeti irodalomban. In: „Tanulmányok Karácsony Béla hetvenedik születésnapjára,” Szeged, 1989, pp. 81 – 97.

19 *J. Martorell*, op. cit., p. IX.

20 e.g. *Ernesto Pontieri*, Alfonso V en la política italiana del suo tempo. In *Estudios sobre Alfonso el Magnánimo con motivo del quinto centenario de su muerte*. Barcelona, 1959, pp. 277 – 296.

21 *Juan Beneyto Perez*, La política exterior de Alfonso V. In: *Homenaje a Alfonso el Magnánimo*. Valencia, 1947, p. 15.

Eugenio Dupré-Thesedier, La política italiana de Alfonso el Magnánimo. Palma de Mallorca, 1955.

Antonio Ubieta and others, *Introducción a la Historia de España*. Barcelona, 1963, p. 259.

22 *Bishop Fan Stylian Noli*, *George Castrioti Scanderbeg (1505 – 1468)*. New York, International Universities Press: *Juan Raglá Campistol*, *Historia de la Edad Media*. Vol. II. Barcelona, 1960, p. 345.

Italy after 1432, and he did not see his – hated – wife. Alfonso became Italianized, says the book, his imperialist policy was nothing, but "Italian lust for fame".²³

Recently Alan Ryder's studies have summarized the research and document publications done on Alfonso so far.²⁴ He is the one who raises the starting point: in 1435, with the death of Giovanna II, queen of Naples, Alfonso inherited not only this throne, but also the title of "the king of Hungary and Jerusalem",²⁵ and from that time on he used it among his titles. Without referring to the source – having read Soler probably a little bit inattentively – Ryder remarks that "three years later, right after emperor Sigismund's death – who usurped the title of the Hungarian king – a delegation of magnates appeared in Italy to offer him (i.e. Alfonso, A. A.) Saint Stephen's crown.

At the time – Ryder continues – even though Alfonso had his hands tied by the quarrel for Naples, he did not recognize the Polish Wladislas Jagiello who occupied the Hungarian throne in 1440.²⁶

"After – Ryder's reasoning goes on – Wladislas' fall at Varna against the Turks in 1444, Janco Hunyadi, the Regent of Hungary, set out again to find a strong king. Considering that the number of possible candidates was rather limited, it is not surprising that Hunyadi and his supporters chose Alfonso who had permanently been in Italy by then and who inherited this title by right of the Anjou Dynasty."²⁷ After this – Referring now to the sources of the Archivo de la Corona de Aragón (ACA) Ryder tells about the events of 1447–48.

This version, in fact – compared to the Hungarian historiography – is considerably new, yet it needs to be proven by primary sources. The point is that the Hungarian barons' interest taken in Alfonso did not originate in 1447, but in 1437–38, and showed considerable continuity. And if the interest in 1437–38 is proven, the "interest" in 1444–45 that immediately followed the defeat at Varna in 1444 might look more probable. In any case our doubts still remain about Alfonso's reaction in 1444 – and the

23 Historia de España. (dir. Ramón Menéndez Pidal). Vol. XV. Madrid, 1982, pp. 425 – 432.

24 Alan Ryder, El Reino de Nápoles en la época de Alfonso el Magnánimo. Valencia, 1987: Ryder, Alfonso el Magnánimo Rey de Aragón, Nápoles y Sicilia, 1396 – 1458. Valencia, 1992.: Ryder, The easter Policy of Alfonso el Magnanimous. Napoli, 1979: Ryder, The evolution of imperial government in Naples under Alfonso V. of Aragon. In: Europe in the Late Middle Age. London, 1965, pp. 332 – 357.

25 Ryder derives Giovanna (Johanna, Joana, Juana) II's right to the Hungarian throne from Anjou-origin, from the marriage of Charles II. of Naples and Elizabeth, Béla IV's granddaughter. Ryder, (1992), p. 370.

c.f. Ryder (1987), pp. 34 – 36. About Juana (Joana, Giovanna) II's life see *Gran Enciclopedia Catalana*. Barcelona, 1987, Vol. 13, p. 249.

26 op. cit., p. 370. As we will see in 1438 it is not a "delegation" yet that goes to Alfonso.

27 Victor Balaguer, Historia de Cataluña y de la Corona de Aragón. Tom. III: Barcelona, 1862, pp. 527 – 531.

ill in 1444, his life was in danger, and a search for a successor was already started in the Kingdom of Naples.

The Hungarian "proposal" in 1444, however, found Alfonso – compared to the 1437–38 case – in a new, different, and difficult situation: his attention was held by the fierce Italian wars of 1446–48. We need to see this situation behind the Hungarian historians' criticism of Alfonso's uncertain behaviour.

Nevertheless, the documents of the Archives of the Aragonese Crown in Barcelona do prove this early proposal of 1438. In connection with this we would like to present two unknown and confirm the events that followed emperor Sigismund's death with a few related data.

The first document was dated March 24, 1436 in Gaeta. In this King Alfonso instructs his envoy to explain to Sigismund why Alfonso had taken the title of "the king of Hungary" among his titles. The instruction stresses that the envoy has to emphasize Alfonso's benevolence and his readiness for close co-operation, which have characterized his relations with Sigismund so far. Alfonso argues that he took the title of "the king of Hungary and Jerusalem" in the situation that followed Juana II's death on the advice and pressure of the Italian magnates, barons, and their supporters, but he does not really aspire to this title which the emperor holds at present.²⁸

The royal instruction is all caution: and the task of the Aragonese is to do his best so that Sigismund would not feel that Alfonso stands as a rival for the Hungarian throne.

The question, of course was more complicated than that, just like Alfonso's ambitions. Analyzing Alfonso's documents Maria Desamparados Cabanes Pecourt was the last to direct attention to how illustriously Hungary and Jerusalem stand at the head of the list of kingdoms and possessions:

"The most characteristic is where this latter (i.e. the title of "rey de Hungria y Jerusalén", Á. A.) can be found in the list of territories: it is after Valencia and before Mallorca, which no doubt refers to its importance among the dominions..."²⁹

At the time, at the end of the 1430s, although he has not conquered Naples yet, Alfonso is the ruler of a prestigious confederacy, his star is rising. His anti-Turkish

²⁸ Archivo de la Corona de Aragón (hereinafter ACA) Cancillería, registro 2694 (Secretorum 4, Alfonsi IV), fol. 18.r.-21.r. See the original text in Appendix 1. (Transcripció: Alberto Torra).

²⁹ *Maria Desamparados Cabanes Pecourt*, Particularidades diplomáticas de la cancillería de Alfonso el Magnánimo. In: *La Corona de Aragón y el Mediterráneo*. Vol. IV. Zaragoza, 1984, pp. 89–99. One example: before 1435 Alfonso's documents started as follows: "Nos Alfonsus, Dei Gracia rex Aragonum, Siciliae, Valenciae, Maioricarum, Sardinie et Corsice, comes Berchinone, dux Athenarum et Neopatrie ac comes Rossilionis et Ceritenie."

As a matter of fact, in Juana (Giovanna) II's documents the list started with Hungary: "Juana II. por la gracia de Dios, reina de Hungria, Jeruzsalén, Sicilia, Dalmacia, Croacia, Servia, etc. ..." c.f. Zurita, *Anales de Aragón*, XIV., XII. p. 44.

commitment is becoming more obvious, so it is understandable why a group of Hungarian barons would like to see him on the throne after Sigismund.

Following Soler's above mentioned references we had the opportunity to study the original Catalan document which makes it clear that after Sigismund's death a group of Hungarian magnates turned to Alfonso promptly and hurriedly.³⁰ The document is interesting in itself.³¹ On February 8, 1438 Alfonso informs his wife from Gayeta about the current events. According to the note of the *registro* this information was sent in a coded letter.³² The part which interests us is the following:

"... and in order to inform you about other local good news as well, I bring to your knowledge that a man has arrived lately who was sent here by a bishop and some other barons from the Kingdom of Hungary whose throne became vacant due to the emperor's death and which kingdom we are a legitimate heir to by our right to this kingdom: so that they would bring to our knowledge their desire that would be their king and ruler: and because of this dignified mission we wish to send a serious delegation, so we now send them the letters they ask from us, and also a man in secret to that he would get information about how matters are going. Let us trust in Our Lord, God, from whom all things originate, that he would arrange these matters at his will and to our use. I will continuously inform You about the further developments, and You should let me know about the occurrences there. We are very surprised that we have not heard anything about those parts for more than four months, and this impairs our affairs. Let the provident guard of our dear queen and beloved wife be the Holy Trinity."³³

The questions that have not been answered yet, of course, follow from this document: who are those Hungarian barons who supported this undertaking? Who is the said bishop? And: is Hunyadi already part of or the inventor of this version or does he join the plan later?

One thing is sure: at the moment of writing the letter to his wife (February 8) Alfonso did not know yet that Albert was already king. It is obvious though that by then there was not only a group of the Albert-party and of the Polish-party,³⁴ but there was also an Alfonso-party: the quick decision for Albert and his quick coronation were necessary for this reason as well. The speed of the Alfonso-party proved to be inadequate.

30 ACA reg. 2651, fol. 24.v.

31 It is important to know that Alfonso's court recorded in *register-books* (*registro*) not only the text of the incoming and the outgoing letters, but it also summarized the oral instructions in detail in these books that were written by the king's secretaries (Joan Olzina, Arnau Fenolleda, Francesco Martorell, and Jordi Catalá). These register-book are arranged thematically. That is why Thallóczy's and Fraknoi's classification of these *registros* as "notarial documents" is misleading.

32 "Fuit expedita in parva forma et in cifra Probata." – ends the note in the *registro*.

33 Translated from Catalan by Tibor Berta. See Appendix II.

34 Kovács, Péter, op. cit., pp. 12 – 14.

The question can be raised, of course: what kind of information did the "Hispanophile" group of the Hungarian magnates have at the time? What was in his favour – apart from his generally and rising European reputation?

At this point it is worth taking into consideration an until now rather obscure occurrence of the events between 1415–1430/35.

Francisca Vendrell Gallostra raises in her study on "The Central-European knights in the Aragonese court"³⁵ that in the first half of the 15th century the noble knights and their attendants who went on pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela did not only go to the Granada border or to North-Africa to "do Ritterschaft" against the Moors, but serious political negotiations also took place in the Aragonese and Castilian courts behind the scenery of spectacular fiestas and tournaments.

We know from Áldásy how many noblemen went to Hispania in 1415–16: and we know from Fr. Vendrell that many – for example Péter Cseh and others – went on pilgrimage to Santiago, too.³⁶ In one of our earlier studies we also published parts of the chronicle about the pilgrimage of Ulrik Cillei in 1430 and Rupert, Sigismund's cousin in 1435.³⁷ The above mentioned names and data can only be illustrations to the hypothetical, but established statement that the groups of Hungarian barons could have personal knowledge about Alfonso.

In this respect János Hunyadi deserves special attention. We do not wish to reopen the old debate as to whether Hunyadi met Alfonso during his years in Milan when the Aragonese king was captured by *F. M. Visconti* (1435). Alfonso, however, was in Italy from 1432 on: there was a time when he mediated between emperor Sigismund and Visconti, the ruler of Milan. The relations between Visconti and Alfonso were continuously good, even during the captivity when Alfonso and his two royal brothers – the king of Navarra, Juan, and Prince Enrique – stayed in Milan. In any case, János Hunyadi could have a clear and accurate picture of Alfonso, his personality and aspirations, and not only through Visconti, but also through Francesco Sforza whom king Alfonso also respected. This is why it would not be surprising if János Hunyadi had stood behind the first proposal in 1437.

Looking over the historical literature and source in the Archives of the Aragonese Crown in Barcelona we have not been able to find any source in the "register-book" for

35 *Francisca Vendrell Gallostra*, Caballeros centroeuropeos en la corte Aragonesa. In: *Miscellanea Barcinonensia*. Año X, Núm. XXVIII. Barcelona, 1971, pp. 18 – 43. See also *J. Schatz*, Oswald von Wolkenstein Geistliche und Weltliche Lider Ein- und Mehrstimmung. Wien, 1902. (Wolkenstein was probably Sigismund's interpreter in Perpignan in 1415)

36 *op. cit.*, pp. 34 – 43.

37 *Anderle, Adám*, Kalandozók és zarándokok, Szeged, 1992, pp. 30 – 34, 57 – 62.

the months immediately following the defeat at Várna in 1444 that would verify the findings of Soldevila, Marinescu, and Ryder. The possibility, however, cannot and must not be excluded. Especially not because presumably it was not only Hungary where there could be a strong Alfonso-party, but the existence of strong Hungarian interests and possibly even a Hungarian (-friendly) group can also be suspected in Alfonso's court in Naples between 1444–46. Ryder, in fact, presents some documents which may suggest this: in 1444–45 in Alfonso's court the head of the international postal service was Hungarian ("Gregorio Ungaro"),³⁸ and the commander of the royal troops in Naples was a Frangepán.³⁹

In any case, after Várna Hungary would have needed an Alfonso-type ruler. Hunyadi's logic and orientation worked well in this respect, and it is clear that the documents of 1447–48 on the co-operation can be seen as *common plans* formulated throughout many years of negotiations. Even the apparently so innocent formulas which Fraknói refers to in his study suggest this.

Hunyadi, quotes Fraknói, requires: Alfonso "will not suppress him, but will keep him in his present status, what is more, *he will raise him even higher...*" (my italics, A. A.).⁴⁰ What is this "even higher"? Hunyadi was well-informed, so he knew that in Alfonso's developing empire there were "locumtenents generalis" at the head of each state. Ryder translated it as "viceroys",⁴¹ but this is a rather inaccurate formula. In Aragon, Valencia, Catalonia, and Mallorca Alfonso's wife, Mary, and his younger brother, the king of Navarra, Juan, were the locumtenents generalis. This office appears in Sardinia and Sicily: and in 1452 when Alfonso enters into an agreement with George Castrioti, the king sends a locumtenents generalis there as well in the person of Ramón d'Ortaff.⁴² They, however, are not regents, they are not viceroys, but deputies of the king with royal rights: Hunyadi probably claimed this office for himself, too.

The whole history of the 300 years of the Hungarian-Aragonese relations and their inferences are rather obscure for Hungarian historiography. The systematic research of this question – especially in the Archives of the Aragonese Crown in Barcelona – however, can prove very profitable. Beyond the actual historical discoveries it can help understand why these two European powers that rose and declined at similar times and lost their independence at the beginning of the 16th century turned towards each other between 1196 and of the 15th century.

38 A. Ryder, *The Kingdom of Naples under Alfonso, the Magnanimous. The Making of a Modern State*, Oxford, 1976, p. 257.

39 Op. cit., p. 337.

40 Fraknói, op. cit., p. 236.

41 Ryder, *The evolution of imperial government...*, pp. 332–357.

42 Op. cit.

Appendix

I.

Gaeta, on 24th March, 1436

Archivo de la Corona de Aragón, Cancillería, registro 2694 (= *Secretorum 4. Alfonsi II*), fol. 18v – 21r.

(fol. 18v)

Memoriale eorum que dominus frater Bernardus Serra / regius eleemosinarius facer et procurare debet apud / sacrosanctum Basiliensem consilium et alia de mandato / e pro parte regie maiestatis Aragonum, Sicilie / circa et ultra farum, etc.

(fol. 20r)

[12] Item dictus frater Bernardus Serra casu quo dominus Iohannes de Palomar qui iam pridem / ad dominum imperatorem destinatus fuerat reversus ad concilium non no [sic] sit, mittet / sibi credenciam literam dicto domino imperatori directam in personam eiusdem Iohannis / in visu cuius explicare debet quod dominus Rex more solito vult semper nedum con- / servare sed etiam adaugere cum dicta imperatori Maiestati illam amicitiam et / bonam voluntatem atque necessitudinem quibus hactenus coniuncti fuerunt et quod / dicta imperialis Maiestas nullam sibi admiracionem assumat de titulo Hunga- / rie quod dicta Regia maiestas sibi noviter attribuit hoc namque fecit ex causa / necessaria ac cum et de consilio omnium fere baronum Regni sibi fidelium et parcialium scilicet ut videatur prout est heres legitimus in Regno / Ampulie et successor domine Iohanne secunde dicte Hungarie, Hierusalem etc re / gine et non ut intendat [törölve: intendebat] aut velit sibi Regnum predictum Hungarie / vindicare et ut agnoscat imperialis maiestas quod dominus Rex vult [törölve: aut] cum / aedem tamquam bonus filius convenire contentabitur quod ipse dominus imperator ad conveniendum et tractandum super hiis et aliis que sue maiestati videbuntur / suis oratoribus Basilee exeuntibus tribuit facultatem cum hoc et dum dicta / maiestas regia dictis suis oratoribus concedat et ita tradiditur in man- / dato ubi antedictus dominus Iohannes de Palomario ad dictum concilium redierit / placet domino Regi quod de hac materia comicetur [?] cum oratoribus imperialibus / procurando quod ipsi per literas dictum dominum imperatorem de omnibus informet a quo / insuper facultatem habeant et obtinere procurent specialem ad praticandum de et super ista materia ac si oportuerit ad concondandum et etiam concludendum. Axalo secretari.

(fol. 21r)

Datum in civitate Gayete die XXIII^o / mensis marcii Anno a nativitate Domini M^o CCCC^o XXXVI. Rex Alfonsus.

Dominus Rex mandavit / mihi Francisco Axalo. / Probata.

II.

Archivo de la Corona de Aragón, Cancillería, registro 2651, fol. 24.

Gaeta, on 8th February, 1438

... e perque siats avisada de altres bones noves deça occorents vos notificam com de present es açi arribat un hom a nos trames secretament per un bisbe e altres alguns barons de Regne de Hungria lo qual vacca per mort del emperador e en lo qual Regne nos succehim legittimament per consablant titol del que havem en aquest Royalme notificants nos lur affecio que han en que nos scam lur Rey e senyor e com nos entenem trametre una solemne embaxada nos de present los trametem les letres quens demanen e un hom secretament per part nostra per informarse plenament de totes aquestes coses procehexen que aquestes affers endreçara a tot servei sue e beneffici nostre de les prosperitats que daci avant succehiran continuament vos avisarem e vos avisau nos sovint de totes coses aqui occorrents car marevellats som que pus de quatre mesos ha que no sabem nova alguna de aqueixes parts e es gran dan de nostres affers creem pero que los corrues sien empachats en la via e sia Reyna nostra molt cara e molt amada muller vostra curosa guarda la sancta Trinitat. Dada en Gayeta a VIII de Febrer del any mil quatre cents trenta huit. Rex Alfonsus.

Fuit expedita in parva
forma et in cifra. Probata.

III.

Archivo de la Corona de Aragón, Cancillería, registro 2388, fols. 119v –20v.

Valencia, on 16th May, 1415

Petri Cheh Maiori (Marescalco regni Hungarie).
Rex Aragonum et Sicilie.

Reverendo in Christo Patri dilecto et devoto nostro: Cum nobilis nobisque devotus *Petrus Cheh Maior Marescalcus Regni Hungarie* ad strenuos milicie actus exercendos, ut vir bonus et intrepidus telluris ambiens ad ipsam climata declinare proponat. Vos rogamus quatenus eundem nobilem, comites et clientes suos ab inde transeundos nostro intuitu benignis affatibus et agendis admictere, eidemque promotivam velitis ostendere voluntatem, de quo tanto nobis complacebitis singularium quanto ipsi Marescalco proderunt opera meritorum. Date Valencie sub nostro sigillo secreto, XVI die Madii anno a Nativitate Domini Millesimo CCCC^o quintodecimo. Rex Ferdinandus.

Dominus Rex mandavit mihi Paulo Nicholai. Provisum.

Reverendo in Christo Patri, divina providencia, Archiepiscopo Sancti Jacobi, dilecto et devoto nostro.

(fol. 120v)

Sub eisdem forma, date, signo atque mandato similis littera fuit expedita pro eodem Marescallo, directa Episcopo Palentino; que incipiebat: Venerabilis. etc.

Item similis littera fuit expedita pro *Henrico de Gravor*. Milite. directa predicto Archiepiscopo Sancti Jacobi incipiens: Reverendo, etc.

Cum nobilis vir, nobisque devotus, *Henricus de Gravor Miles, dominus de Plomlau*, etc.

In: Vendrell op. cit. p. 37

IV.

Archivo de la Corona de Aragón, Cancillería, registro 2388, fol. 119r.-v.

Valencia, on 16th May, 1415

Rey muy caro e muy amado nieto: Nos el Rey d'Aragón e de Sicilia vos embiamos muyto a saludar assin como a Rey para quien querriamos diesse Dios tanta honor e buena ventura quanta por nos querriamos: Rey muy caro, etcétera, como el noble e devoto nuestro en Pedro Cheh Mayor Marescal del Reyno d'Ungria (sic) por exercer actos de Cavalleria e de notable renombre, honor e fama entienda de correr diversas partes del mundo, singularment vuestros regnos e tierras. Rogamos vos affectiosament que quando acaescera que el dito noble a los ditos vuestros regnos e tierras declinara andar, aquel con todos quantos traera en su companyia, assin de cavallo como de pied, querrades por honor e esquad nuestro recibir e acullir con buena e alegre cara; e facerles aquella buena fiesta e companyia que de vos se pertenesce e muyt bien e notablemente havedes acostumbrado; preservandoles de todo sinistro e scandalo. Certificando vos, Rey muyt caro, que de aquesto nos faredes muy singular e assenyalado plazer. Et si algunas cosas Rey, etc., de nuestros regnos e tierras vos son plazientes con fiança nos ne scrivedes, car nos las compliremos de buen grado. Dada en Valencia dius nuestro siello secreto, a XVI dias de Mayo del anyo de la Natividad de Nuestro Señor Mil CCCC quinze. Rex Ferdinandus.

A nuestro muy caro e muy amado nieto el Rey de Castilla.

Dominus Rex mandavit mihi Paulo Nicholai, provisum.

In: Vendrell op. cit. pp. 37 - 38