

AN INDETERMINATE SOJOURN: HUNGARIAN ARISTOCRATS IN THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE

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Amer savoir, celui qu'on tire du voyage!
(Charles Baudelaire, *Le Voyage*)

The Kingdom of Hungary occupied a particularly interesting position within medieval European diplomacy.¹ Medieval Hungary was, both culturally and politically, the intersection of the Byzantine, Central European, and steppe worlds. The kingdom was Catholic by religion, closely related to the seat of St. Peter, culturally closer to the steppe peoples, and had close ties with the Byzantine Empire. Until the late 12th century, it was the only well-established kingdom-tier political power in the north-western borders of the Byzantine Empire. The Great Hungarian Plain made up the core territory of Hungary, yet it was also a region of considerable importance for the Byzantines. In the collective memory of the Byzantine *literati*, this plain was the land of the Huns. In the subsequent centuries, the empire kept a close eye on the Avars who dominated it. Furthermore, the Magyar tribes who played a central role in the ethnogenesis of the Hungarian nation were familiar to them since they had lived in the steppes of Etelköz. The Byzantine diplomatic tradition was always meticulous and suspicious about the steppe populations in the north of the Empire. On the other hand, because of the Roman heritage and the Orthodox Church, the Byzantine Empire was a political and spiritual centre of attraction for all societies in its immediate vicinity. Due to this particular aspect, Constantinople was the focal point of the Hungarian élite, and several Hungarian aristocrats went to the Byzantine Empire.

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This paper provides an overview of the Hungarian nobles who lived in the Byzantine Empire for several reasons. These individuals left their native country and visited or settled in the Byzantine Empire to establish or strengthen diplomatic relations, to marry into the Byzantine aristocratic families, to seek refuge there, or to live there after being taken captive. Hence, in the first group, it can be noted that the earliest ones were to lay the diplomatic foundations of the relations between Hungary and the Byzantine Empire and to establish contact with the centre of Orthodox Christianity, which had a strong spiritual influence even to the borders of Central Europe at that time. As can be seen, the first Hungarian aristocrats who came to Constantinople were baptised in this city. Subsequently, Hungarian princes involved in struggles for the throne and Hungarian princesses married into the imperial dynasties resided in the Byzantine Empire. Finally, individuals whose reasons for coming to the Byzantine Empire were radically different from those listed above, namely the Hungarian nobles who were captured in war and brought to the Empire and deprived of their freedom, could be added to this list. In this article, the term aristocrats is used in a general sense to include both members of the royal family and individuals from various strata of the nobility.²

Who were the first Hungarian aristocrats to visit the Byzantine Empire? The Byzantine diplomatic manual *De Administrando Imperio* mentioned two names: Termatzous (Τερματζους) and Boultzous (Βουλτζους).³ Termatzous was the grandson of the Grand Prince Árpád and a non-ruling member of the dynasty. Boultzous bore the traditional Hungarian title of *karchas* and was apparently not a member of the House of Árpád. Moravcsik dated this voyage around the year 948.⁴ In the *Synopsis Historiarum* of Ioannes Skylitzes, there is a longer and different narrative. According to Skylitzes, Boulosoudes (Βουλοσουδής) and Gylas (Γυλάς), two Hungarian chieftains, travelled to Constantinople one after another, but not together, to

² For a general overview of Byzantine-Hungarian relations, see Gyula Moravcsik's *Byzantium and Magyars* and Ferenc Makk's *The Árpáds and the Comneni: Political Relations between Hungary and Byzantium in the Twelfth Century*. Moravcsik's *Byzantinoturcica* is an indispensable manual for every study on the Byzantine relationship with steppe nomads. It is also worth mentioning here *Mobility and Migration in Byzantium: A sourcebook*, a very useful volume about the question of mobility and migration in the Byzantine Empire.

³ Porphyrogenitus, 1967, 178–179.

⁴ Jenkins, 1967, 153.

receive baptism. Both received the Byzantine title of *patrikios* after baptism. According to the author, when Gylas returned to Hungary, he continued to live as a devout Christian and had a peaceful relationship with Byzantium.

Furthermore, he brought Hierotheos, the Bishop of *Tourkia*,⁵ with him on his return to his country. However, Boulousoudes “violated his covenant with God” (returned to paganism) and continued to raid the Byzantine territory. Boulousoudes was killed by Otto I (r. 936–973) after the Battle of Lechfeld (955), in which the Hungarian forces were crushed by the imperial army.⁶

Both Boulzous and Boulousoudes are Greek renderings of the Hungarian name Bulcsú and refer to the same person. The *Gesta Hungarorum* detailed his military exploits and death alongside Lél.⁷ Termatzous, however, was mentioned only in *De Administrando Imperio*. Gylas, a Hungarian title (*gyula*) rather than a personal name, likely referred to a ruler of Transylvania and was distinct from Termatzous. Thus, Termatzous remained an obscure figure known only from *De Administrando Imperio*.

The brief visits of Hungarian aristocrats to Constantinople, including those with Bulcsú or soon after, reflected the fundamental concerns of Hungarian society during their settlement and Christianization in the mid-10th century. However, Hungary turned towards Catholicism under Géza and Vajk, who would later become King Saint Stephen (István I), and the Byzantine religious influence in the country would decrease. This situation would not prevent the Kingdom of Hungary and the Byzantine Empire from having complex political struggles and alliances.

Although religious influence declined, the political influence of the Byzantine Empire in Hungary continued, especially increasing from the 12th century onwards. Hungarian princes seeking the throne solidified this connection further by choosing the Byzantine Empire as their place of exile. Prince Álmos was the first of these pretenders. This pretender, who was blinded by King Kálmán (r. 1096–1116), along with his son Prince Béla (later King Béla II) went as a refugee to the court of Emperor Ioannes II with a group of followers. The example of Álmos was later followed by *ispán* Bors.

⁵ In 9th and 10th century Byzantine sources, the terms *Tourkoi* and *Tourkia* always refer to the Hungarians and their country.

⁶ Skylitzes, 1973, 239.

⁷ Kézai, 1999, 91–97.

Bors was proclaimed king along with *ispán* Ivan in 1128, because of the illness of King István II. However, when the king recovered, he beheaded Ivan, and under these circumstances, Bors managed to save his life by escaping to Byzantium.⁸

In the same period, the dynastic marriages between the Byzantine Empire and the Kingdom of Hungary began. Three Hungarian princesses were married to Byzantine emperors: Piroška-Eirene, the first Byzantine Empress of Hungarian ancestry, left more historical traces than the other two. The second was Princess Maria, originally called Margit, who was married to Isaacios Angelos. The last of these empresses was Anna of Hungary, wife of Andronikos II Palaiologos.

Piroška, who would later become an Eastern Orthodox Saint, was the daughter of King László I of Hungary (r. 1077–1095). In 1105 she was married to Ioannes Komnenos, who would later become the emperor Ioannes II Komnenos of Byzantium (r. 1118–1143). She took the name Eirene upon her marriage, a Greek name meaning peace, often given to foreign princesses.⁹ She was described as a modest and moderate woman by the historian Ioannes Kinnamos.¹⁰ She is mostly remembered for her patronage of Christ Pantokrator Monastery, and there are few references to her in contemporary Byzantine chronicles. However, she must have had a strong impact as the first bride to come to Constantinople from the Catholic world and as a principal figure of the zenith of Byzantine-Hungarian relations. Her son Manuel I (r. 1143–1180) was an admirer of European culture and fashion in the Byzantine Empire, contrary to the cultural traditions of the empire, and a statesman particularly interested in Hungarian politics. This interest likely stemmed not only from his geopolitical goals but also from an awareness passed down from his mother. In a poem written after the death of Empress Piroška-Eirene, Theodoros Prodromos praised her as the “lady of all the Western Peoples”.¹¹

⁸ *Illuminated Chronicle*, 2018, 294–295. See also Makk, 1989, 25. Bors seems to be sometimes confused with Boris Kalamanos; however, Makk convincingly explains that Boris and Bors are different individuals.

⁹ Ruth Macrides challenges this idea by stating that the popularity of the name Eirene among the foreign brides of the Komnenoi could be related to the memory of Eirene Doukaina, wife of Alexios I. See Macrides, 1992, 276–277.

¹⁰ Kinnamos, 1836, 9–10.

¹¹ Lau, 2019, 148.

The second princess from Hungary to marry a Byzantine Emperor was Maria. Her original name was Margit, and she was the daughter of Béla III (r. 1172–1196) and Agnes of Antioch. Maria married the emperor Isaakios II Angelos (r. 1185–1195 and 1203–1204) as a condition of the Hungarian-Byzantine peace of 1185, and she was subsequently brought to the regions of Niš and Braničevo, which were recently occupied by Hungarians. This territory was regarded as her dowry to the Byzantine Empire. It seems that their marriage was not approved by many. For example, the historian Nicetas Choniates implied that he disapproved of the marriage between Princess Margit and Emperor Isaakios II Angelos because the bride was less than ten years old when she was betrothed to the emperor. There were no details on the life of Maria as the Empress of Byzantium; however after the death of Isaakios II Angelos, she was married to Marquis Boniface of Montferrat (r. 1192–1207, King of Thessaloniki 1205–1207), from the Italian noble house of Aleramici, who was among the leaders of the Crusaders in the Fourth Crusade.¹² After the occupation of Constantinople, Boniface was proclaimed the King of Thessaloniki. Boniface pursued a careful propaganda policy to gain the support of the local Byzantine Greek population and declared Margit-Maria as queen and Manuel Angelos, son of Isaakios II and Margit-Maria, as heir apparent. In this way, he would gain an advantage over other Crusader commanders by presenting himself as a follower of Byzantine concepts of legitimacy. Choniates stated that he was warmly welcomed by the Thracians, Macedonians, and Thessalians. The author who described Boniface as a monster distinguished his wife from him and pointed out that after Boniface's death, the cities ruled by Margit-Maria as regent experienced some relief.¹³ Georgios Akropolites wittily noted that eyewitnesses considered Margit-Maria strikingly beautiful.¹⁴

The last Hungarian bride of the Byzantine Empire was Anna of Hungary who was married to Andronikos II Palaiologos (r. 1282–1328), who was not the sole emperor, but the co-emperor at the time of their marriage. Anna was the daughter of King István V (r. 1270–1272) and Queen Erzsébet (of Cuman origin). Pachymeres presents her as the first-born daughter of “*King of Hungary and a very beautiful Cuman captive woman whom the King se-*

¹² Choniates, 1975, 598.

¹³ Choniates, 1975, 636.

¹⁴ Akropolites, 1978, 13.

lected for her beauty”.¹⁵ Anna died in 1281, while she was accompanying her husband during his campaign in Asia Minor; her place of death was likely the town of Nymphaion (Nif, today Kemalpaşa) near İzmir.¹⁶ Hence, she did not survive to see her husband’s rule as the sole emperor.

The Byzantine sojourn of Álmos and his son Béla was already mentioned. Their flight to Byzantium triggered a war between the Byzantines and Hungarians in 1127. However, this war ended in 1129, and Prince Béla succeeded the childless King István II in 1131. In addition, in the 1050s, two brothers of King Géza II (r. 1141–1162) took refuge in the Byzantine Empire. These pretenders were Prince István (future István IV) and Prince László (future László II). István married Maria Komnene, the niece of the emperor Manuel I.¹⁷

In the Byzantine-Hungarian War, the Byzantine army decisively defeated the Hungarians at the battle of Chramon Castle (present-day Banatska Palanka, Serbia), capturing many prisoners. Among these people, Kinnamos mentions Akousis and Keladis, whom he described as very remarkable men among the Huns. The author did not provide any information about the personal histories of these two Hungarian aristocrats and their lives as captives in Byzantium. The name Akousis clearly reflects the Hungarian proper name Ákos, and behind the name Keladis one could find the name Keled. Perhaps it can be speculated that the second person belonged to the Hungarian clan Gutkeled.¹⁸ Kinnamos and Choniates mention other Hungarian nobles held captive in Byzantium, including Bagin (Βαγγίνος), who became a captive after losing a duel with the emperor.¹⁹ Kinnamos also records that Ioannes Kontostephanos and Andronikos Lampardas captured five Hungarian *župans* and 800 soldiers.²⁰

However, the most striking example of Hungarians in the Byzantine Empire was the young prince Béla-Alexios, who would be the future Béla III of Hungary. He was the son of King Géza II of Hungary. As narrated by Kinnamos, Emperor Manuel I Komnenos, who was the son of Ioannes II and Piroska-Eirene, sought to claim Hungary. For this purpose, the Hungarian

¹⁵ Pachymeres, 1984, II: 413.

¹⁶ Pachymeres, 1984, II: 628–629. See Footnote 5 in Pachymeres, 1984, II: 628.

¹⁷ Choniates, 1975, 126; Kinnamos, 1836, 203. See also Efthymiadis, 2008, 21–28.

¹⁸ Kinnamos, 1836, 11.

¹⁹ Kinnamos, 1836, 110–112; Choniates, 1975, 92.

²⁰ Kinnamos, 1836, 274.

prince was brought to Constantinople and given the title of *despotes*. Manuel I renamed Béla as Alexios and betrothed him to his daughter Maria Komnene. Lacking a son, Manuel planned to designate his daughter Maria and son-in-law Béla-Alexios as his heirs, hoping their marriage would unite Byzantium and Hungary. To this end, Béla-Alexios ceded his patrimonial territory of Sirmium to the Byzantine Empire.²¹ However, in 1169 Manuel I had a son (Alexios II) from his second marriage with Maria of Antioch and proclaimed him his co-emperor and successor. This led to the cancellation of the betrothal of Béla-Alexios and Maria Komnene. Subsequently, the Hungarian prince was married to Anna of Antioch, the sister-in-law of the emperor, and after the death of István III, he returned to his country as the king. Kinnamos stated that Béla-Alexios promised that he would be useful to the Emperor and the Romans for his lifetime.²² Indeed, during the lifetime of Emperor Manuel I, Béla-Alexios (now Béla III of Hungary) continued to be a loyal ally of the Byzantine Empire. However, after the death of Manuel I, the child emperor Alexios II was enthroned under the regency of his mother Maria of Antioch. This short-lived regency ended with the coup d'état of Andronikos Komnenos (r. 1183–1185), the cousin of the late emperor Manuel I. Andronikos, who proclaimed himself as the regent of Alexios II (r. 1180–1183), imprisoned Empress Maria by accusing her of provoking King Béla III, her sister's husband by sending him letters which incited him to ravage the lands around Belgrade and Braničevo.²³ Independent of their veracity, these accusations showed that the Empress, her sister, and her sister's husband, were all seen as part of the same political network, regardless of their ethnic background. In this context, it is important to note that all three of these individuals were, at least in origin, foreigners and Catholics, and that one of the main events of the reign of Andronikos Komnenos, the Latin Massacre, took place during the same period. It was a period in which xenophobic and anti-Western ethos intensified in the Byzantine Empire, both among a section of the ruling elite and among the people. Finally, Prince Géza, the brother of Béla-Alexios and a pretender to the Hungarian throne, settled in

²¹ Simpson, 2019, 192.

²² Kinnamos, 1836, 287.

²³ Choniates, 1975, 267–268.

the Byzantine Empire in the 1190s, as a member of the Crusader Army of Emperor Friedrich I Barbarossa.²⁴

Among the Hungarian aristocracy of the Byzantine Empire, the Kalamanoi family merits special attention. The founder of this family, Boris Kalamanos, claimed to be the son of King Kálmán of Hungary, but Kálmán, who divorced his mother Eufemia of Kyiv, never recognised Boris as his son because of her alleged adultery. Boris, who probably spent his childhood and youth in Kyiv, after an unsuccessful attempt to take over the Hungarian throne, came to Constantinople and became a member of the entourage of Ioannes II Komnenos.²⁵ During his stay in Constantinople, he was married to Arété Doukaina, a relative of the Komnenoi. He seemed to be respected as the legitimate king of Hungary in exile. Even after he died in 1156, his wife Arété continued to use the title *kralaina*, demonstrating this claim.²⁶ This family later served in the Byzantine bureaucracy for generations. His son, Konstantinos Doukas Kalamanos, known as Kalamanos the Younger, was described by Kinnamos as a handsome man who had an active role in military conflicts (τὴν τε ὄψιν ἀγαθὴ καὶ δραστηρίῳ τὰ ἐς μάχας).²⁷ Konstantinos Doukas Kalamanos served as the Byzantine *doux* of Cilicia in the late 12th century. There is no information about his immediate descendants. Nonetheless, a certain Laskaris Kalamanos was mentioned in the History of Ioannes Kantakouzenos, active around 1330.²⁸

Ioannes Kinnamos mentioned auxiliary Hungarian troops in the Byzantine armies. They were sent by Béla III for Emperor Manuel I's ambitious campaign in Western Asia Minor, which ended with the disastrous defeat at Myriokephalon (1176) against the Seljuk Turks.²⁹ Given the social structure of 12th-century Hungary, where elements of tribal aristocracy and feudalism still existed, these commanders were most likely Hungarian nobles. However, there was no reference to the identity of the commander of these Hungarian troops. Finally, Kinnamos mentioned a Hungarian aristocrat who had defected to the Byzantines; a certain Vasas or Vasak who reported the location of the Hungarian King during the siege of Zeugminon (1165),

²⁴ Makk, 1989, 122.

²⁵ Laurent, 1972, 35.

²⁶ Laurent, 1972, 36–37.

²⁷ Kinnamos, 1836, 216.

²⁸ Kantakouzenos, 1828, I: 399.

²⁹ Kinnamos, 1836, 299.

and his “Scythian and Tauroscythian” (i.e. Cuman and Russian) soldiers. The fate of this individual is unknown.³⁰

As described in this study, a significant number of Hungarian nobles who came to the Byzantine Empire belonged to the Árpád dynasty, and the most common reason for their arrival was to receive support from the Byzantine Empire for their struggle for the throne of Hungary or to live as an exile in the Byzantine Empire if they were at risk in their country as a member of the dynasty. Apart from this, female members of the dynasty often came to Constantinople through dynastic marriages. The reason for the arrival of lesser nobles is defection or captivity in war. However, we know a lot more about the royal family's high-ranking nobles than we do about the regular aristocrats. We have almost no information about the life of lower-ranking Hungarian nobles in Byzantium.

Byzantine writings often portrayed the Hungarians as a semi-barbarian people. Even after the Hungarians converted to Christianity in the 11th century and the ruling families of Byzantium (under the Komnenos dynasty) and Hungary (under the Árpád Dynasty) formed marriage alliances, Byzantines still sometimes used derogatory language to describe the Hungarians. The Byzantine approach to Hungarians was similar to their approach to the Bulgars and Vlachs. In the Byzantine culture, the indicators of being civilised were Romanness and Christianity, and these aspects were inseparable.³¹ So, the Hungarians became part of the Christian world via baptism, but they did not share the Roman style of life, which was the only way of becoming completely civilised according to the Byzantines; hence, they did not belong to the civilised world. Their history and alleged racial character put them into an intermediate position. Consequently, the cultural and confessional differences constructed a barrier between the Byzantine Empire and the Kingdom of Hungary. To understand this issue, it is important to consider the ongoing territorial conflict between Byzantium and Hungary in areas like Banat and Dalmatia. Border conflicts arose as both Byzantium and Hungary tried to control Serbia. Moreover, the uneasiness felt towards the Crusaders in the Byzantine Empire also triggered a negative view towards all Catholic peo-

³⁰ Choniates, 1975, 242.

³¹ For a broader discussion of the issue see Malamut, 1999, 119–132.

ples.³² Nonetheless, in the last decades of the Byzantine Empire, this approach was softened because Hungary was perceived as a strong ally against the Ottoman Turks.

In this sense, a comparison between the Hungarian and Seljuk élite may be significant. Until the 13th century, Byzantium functioned as a centre of attraction for both countries. Particularly, the Hungarian and Turkish pretenders perceived the Byzantine Empire as a power that might help their struggle for the throne. Furthermore, a noteworthy trait of Seljuk aristocracy in the Byzantine Empire is a concept developed by Rustam Shukurov, the “dual identity.” The author explained that:

*“Within a Christian environment, such individuals would self-identify as Christian, thereby deferring their Muslim identity. (...) Of course, such a paradigm is completely different from religious or cultural syncretism, which means the combination of the elements of differing worlds. Differing beliefs, languages, and modes of life seemingly were present unmixed in the mentality of such persons. Depending on the circumstances, one of the two parts of their dual self was activated while the other receded into deferred status.”*³³

The Seljuk sultans of Rūm, such as Kaykhusraw I (r. 1237–1246), Kayka’us II (r. 1246–1262), and Mas’ūd II (r. 1284–1297 and 1303–1308) were baptised as Orthodox Christians and, in a certain period of their lives in exile, actively professed this confession. The Constantinopolitan period of Prince Béla-Alexios can be interpreted as a “dual identity”, an experience similar to the experience of the Seljuks. The Hungarian prince, while apparently maintaining his Catholic faith, adopted a Greek name and embraced the Byzantine culture and identity. However, Béla-Alexios was the heirapparent of the Byzantine throne, and it is essential for a person in such a position to be an Orthodox Christian. Lukács, the archbishop of Esztergom of the period, was against Béla-Alexios’ assuming the throne of St. Stephen as the successor of István III. His attitude was partly related to his suspicion of simony by Béla-Alexios and partly linked with his supposition that Béla-

³² An episode in Choniates’ narrative that illustrates the symbolic dimensions of anti-Hungarian sentiment in Byzantium has been discussed by Paolo Odorico. See Choniates, 1975, 151 and Odorico, 2011, 46.

³³ Shukurov, 2016, 134.

Alexios was Orthodox and he would increase the power of the Orthodox Church in Hungary.³⁴ His mother, Euphrosyne of Kyiv, was also Orthodox. Upon Manuel I's designation of Alexios as heir and the death of his brother, King István III, Béla-Alexios returned to Hungary as Béla III, reassuming his Hungarian identity.³⁵ He returned not only to Hungary but also to his Hungarian identity. The same Béla would not hesitate to raid Byzantine territory after Andronikos Komnenos' ascension to the throne. Nevertheless, he would proceed to arrange the marriage of his daughter Margit to another member of the Byzantine imperial family.

In the beginning of the 13th century, which began with the disaster of the Fourth Crusade (1204) for the Byzantines, the Byzantine Empire started to lose its distinct position in the perceptions of neighbouring populations. In this turbulent period, when the ruling élite of the Byzantine Empire lost Constantinople to the Crusaders and took refuge in Nicaea, a Hungarian King visited this court. King András II of Hungary, participating in the Fifth Crusade, travelled overland through former Byzantine territory on his way home from the Holy Land in 1218. He arranged a marriage between Maria Laskarina, daughter of Emperor Theodoros Laskaris of Nicaea, and his son, the future King Béla IV. The Byzantine princess travelled to Hungary with her father-in-law.³⁶ The re-establishment of Bulgaria as an independent kingdom in 1185 and the rise of Serbia under Stefan Nemanja (r. 1166–1196) severed the critical Byzantine-Hungarian borderland connection, causing a significant divergence in the priorities and interests of both empires. The Mongol invasion of Hungary had a similar destructive effect on the power and welfare of the Kingdom of Hungary, and especially after the Angevin dynasty came to power, and Central European and Italian politics became much more important for this country.

The Byzantines nevertheless continued to observe Hungary, even from a distance. In the 15th century, the Byzantine authors expected Hungarian assistance against the Ottoman Turks and perceived Hungarian rulers such as Zsigmond, János Hunyadi, and Mátyás Corvinus as possible liberators from the Ottoman yoke.³⁷

³⁴ Makk, 1989, 108.

³⁵ Makk, 1989, 107–108.

³⁶ Akropolites, 1978, 26.

³⁷ Mitsiou, 2011, 221.

We know little, if anything, about the networks of Hungarian aristocrats in the Byzantine Empire. More broadly, Hungarians in the Byzantine Empire, regardless of social status, likely did not maintain a cohesive community with shared memories and ethnic identity. Ultimately, the Hungarian aristocracy in the Byzantine Empire had two main characteristics: They were generally related to the Hungarian royal family (Árpád Dynasty) and the imperial dynasties in Byzantium (Komnenos, Angelos, Palaiologos). Their political network relied on Byzantine dynasties, not on the independent networks of Hungarian aristocrats. Even Béla-Alexios' politics of war and peace demonstrated that their understanding of alliances was shaped around individuals and families, not as institutions. There are no visible traces of other Hungarian nobles who immigrated to the Byzantine Empire. For example, there is no information about the followers of Álmos and Béla who came after their leaders to Constantinople. The Kalamanoi family seems to be an exception in the history of the Hungarians in Byzantium since they obtained power as a bureaucrat-aristocratic family, and they served as administrators in various parts of the empire, regardless of the region and without taking on a duty related to Hungary. However, it is possible to speculate whether there were also local aristocrats of Hungarian origin in the provinces of the Danube basin of the empire, for example. This issue will be better illuminated by new research in sigillography by identifying patronymics and names of Hungarian origin.

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Süresi Meçhul Bir İkamet: Bizans İmparatorluğu’nda Macar Aristokratlar Genişletilmiş özet

Bu çalışmanın konusu 10. yüzyıldan 13. yüzyıla kadar Bizans İmparatorluğu’na çeşitli sebeplerle gelen Macar aristokratlardır. Bu kişiler, dönemin Macar–Bizans diplomatik ve kültürel ilişkileri de göz önünde bulundurularak incelenmiştir. Ağırlıklı olarak Bizans kaynakları (Kinnamos, Honiatis, Akropolitis, Pahimeris vs.) kullanılarak yapılan bu incelemede, imparatorluk topraklarına göç eden, çoğu Árpád Hanedanlığı’na mensup Macar soyluların geliş sebepleri çözümlenerek, söz konusu kesimin tarihsel ve toplumsal panoraması verilmiştir.

Orta Çağ Macaristan hem kültürel hem de politik olarak Bizans, Orta Avrupa ve bozkır dünyalarının kesiştiği noktadaydı. Bu krallık Latin Hristiyanlığı üzerinden Batı Avrupa dünyası ile temastaydı, kültürel olarak bozkır halklarına yakındı ve Bizans İmparatorluğu ile önemli bağlara sahipti. 12. yüzyılın sonlarına kadar, Bizans İmparatorluğu’nun kuzeybatı sınırlarındaki en hatırı sayılır siyasi güçtü. Bizans diplomatik geleneği, imparatorluğun kuzeyindeki bozkır halkları konusunda her zaman şüphecidir. Öte yandan, Roma mirası ve Ortodoks Kilisesi nedeniyle Bizans

İmparatorluğu, yakın çevresindeki tüm toplumlar için politik ve manevi bir çekim merkeziydi ve Macarlar da tarihsel serüvenlerinin bu noktasında söz konusu çekimin etki alanına girdiler.

Bizans İmparatorluğu'na gelen, eldeki kayıtlara göre ilk Macar soylular, Konstantinos Porphyrogenitos'un *De Administrando Imperio* eserinde geçen Boul-tzous (Bulcsú) ve Termatzous'tur. Fakat erken dönem Macaristan Krallığı'nda Ortodoksluğun dini etkisi uzun sürmeyecektir. 11. yüzyıl başında Kral I. (Aziz) István Latin Hristiyanlığı kabul ederek Macaristan'ın dini yönünü de tayin etmiştir. 11. yüzyıl boyunca nispeten hareketsiz olan Bizans-Macar ilişkileri 12. yüzyıldan itibaren iyice ivme kazanır.

1105'te ise ilk kez Bizans İmparatorluğu'na bir Macar prenses gelin olarak gelmiş, Kral I. (Aziz) László'nun kızı Piroska, (daha sonra tahta çıkacak) Ioannis Komnenos ile evlenmiştir ve İrini adını almıştır. İmparatoriçe İrini özellikle Pantokrator Manastırı'nın inşaatındaki destek ve himayesiyle hatırlanır. Bu evliliği daha sonraki dönemlerde, iki Macar prensesi, Margit ve Anna takip etmiştir.

Öte yandan Prens Álmos'tan başlayarak Árpád Hanedanlığı'nın prensleri Konstantinopolis'e çeşitli dönemlerde sürgün olarak gelmişlerdir. Bu prensler kendi taht iddialarının arkasına Bizans İmparatorluğu'nun askeri ve siyasi desteğini almak istemişlerdir. Böylece 12. yüzyılın ortasında Macaristan'daki hanedan mücadelelerinde Bizans etkisi de önemli ölçüde artmıştır. Söz konusu dönemde Bizans İmparatorluğu'nda ikamet eden Macar prenslerin en önemlilerinden biri Kral II. Géza'nın oğlu Prens Béla-Aleksios olup, I. Manuel'in kızı Maria ile evlenip Bizans tahtına geçmesi dahi gündeme gelmiştir. Böyle bir durumda Macar Krallığı'nın Bizans İmparatorluğu'na iltihak etmesi beklenmekteydi. Ancak bu plan, I. Manuel'in bir oğlu doğunca (II. Aleksios Komnenos) akim kalmıştır ve Béla-Aleksios Macaristan'a dönüp, III. Béla olarak tahta çıkmıştır.

III. Béla'nın kızı Margit ise Bizans İmparatoru II. İsaakios Komnenos ile evlenip Konstantinopolis'e gelmiştir. Margit'in ikinci eşi ise 4. Haçlı Seferindeki muzaffer Latin kuvvetlerinin kurduğu Selanik Krallığı'nın tahtına geçen İtalyan aristokrat Bonifacio del Monferrato'ydu. Kendisi Bonifacio'nun ölümünden sonra bu Krallığın taht naipliğini yapmıştır, Honiatis Margit'in taht naipliği döneminde Bonifacio'nun idaresinden bunalan halkın rahatlığa kavuştuğunu söyler.

Bizans İmparatorluğu'na gelin olarak gelen son Macar prensesi ise II. Andronikos Palaiologos ile evlenen V. István'ın kızı Anna'dır. Yine Árpád Hanedanlığı kökenli olup Bizans bürokrasisinde görev alan Kalamanoi sülalesi dönemin bir başka dikkat çekici Bizans-Macar ailesidir. Bu aileden Konstantinos Doukas Kalamamos 12. yüzyılda Kilikya *doux*'u olmuştur. Bu ailenin tarihine dair kimi referansları Kinnamos ve Honiatis'in tarihlerinde bulmak mümkündür. 14. yüzyıl gibi geç bir tarihte dahi, Kantakouzenos'un eserinde bu ailenin bir mensubuna dair referansa rastlamak mümkündür.

Bizans İmparatorluğu'na değişik sebeplerle gelmiş çok sayıda daha alt seviye Macar soylu olmakla beraber, bu şahısların hayatları üzerine çok kısıtlı bilgiler vardır. Bunların önemli bir kısmı savaş esiri olarak Bizans İmparatorluğu'na gelmiş gibi görünüyor. 12. yüzyıl ortalarında en yoğun dönemlerini yaşayan Bizans-Macar ilişkileri yüzyılın sonunda, Bizans İmparatorluğu'nun Orta Avrupa'ya dek uzanan etkisini yitirmesiyle eski önemini kaybeder. Fakat 14. ve 15. yüzyıllarda Bizans İmparatorluğu'nun elde kalan son topraklarına yönelik Türk tehdidinin artmasıyla Bizanslıların Macaristan'a yönelik ilgisinde yeni bir canlanma olur.

Genel olarak Bizans edebiyatında Macarların temsili çok olumlu değildir. Macarlar, Hristiyan olduktan sonra bile yarı-barbar bir halk olarak anılmışlardır. Bu temsilin temelinde Bizans dünya görüşü yatmaktadır. Bizans kültüründe medeni olmak için temel kriterler Hristiyan ve kültürel olarak Romalı olmaktır. Buradaki kültürel kriterin dışında kalan Bulgarlar, Ulahlar gibi halklara benzer şekilde, Macarlar da Hristiyanlığı benimstedikleri halde Bizanslılar nezdinde olumlu bir imaja sahip olmamışlardır. Bilhassa 12. yüzyıldan itibaren Ortodoks-Katolik ilişkilerinde artan gerilim ve Haçlı seferlerinin Bizanslılarda oluşturduğu tedirginliğin de bu yaklaşımı kuvvetlendirdiğini söylemek gerekir.

Bizans İmparatorluğu'ndaki Macar soyluların, söz gelimi Béla-Aleksios gibi Konstantinopolis'te, Bizans İmparatorluk eliti içinde yaşayıp, Ortodoksluğu da kabul edenlerin, Rustam Shukurov'un, Selçuklu elitinin kimi mensuplarını tanımlarken kullandığı "çifte kimlik" (dual identity) olgusunu da benimsemiş oldukları ifade edilebilir. Bu şahıslar hem Macar kimliğini hem de Bizanslı kimliğini ikili benliklerinin bir parçası olarak kabul etmişlerdir. Macar elitlerin Bizans'taki kişisel ağlarına dair bilgiler ise çok zayıftır. Bizans İmparatorluğu'ndaki Macar aristokratlar genellikle Macar kraliyet ailesiyle (Árpád Hanedanlığı) ve Bizans'taki imparatorluk hanedanıyla (Komnenos, Angelos, Palaiologos) ilişkiliydiler. Bizans İmparatorluğu'na gelen Macar soylularının önemli bir kısmı Árpád Hanedanlığı'na mensup olup, bunların gelişlerinin en yaygın nedeni ülkelerindeki taht mücadelelerinde Bizans İmparatorluğu'ndan destek almak veya hanedan üyesi olarak ülkelerinde tehlike altındaysalar Bizans İmparatorluğu'nda sürgün olarak yaşamaktı. Bunun dışında Árpád soyuna mensup kadınların da hanedanlararası evlilikler sonucu Konstantinopolis'e geldikleri görülmektedir.