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**Hiding Patrons or Lords without Patronage? Additions to the Patronage
Activity of the Presidents of the Hungarian Chamber with an Outlook on
the Habsburg Monarchy**

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Abstract

In the early 16th century Ferdinand Habsburg I implemented a huge financial reform in his lands: the old treasury was turned to a modern chamber system. After 1526, Ferdinand became the king of the Czech lands and a year later the king of Hungary. After his coronation he organised the same financial system in both of these new lands. The new Chambers institutions created new career opportunities for the nobility in the Habsburg states under the rule of Ferdinand I.¹ The reforms of the emperor/king coincided with the beginning of the changing of the nobility in the early 16th century. During the 16-17th century many noble families, who later played an important role in the history of the Hungarian Kingdom, succeeded in ascending and clinging to the aristocracy. One of them was the Zichy family which, thanks to István Zichy (1616–1693), managed to incorporate themselves into the aristocracy by the 1650s. Although research on István Zichy is still in its infancy, it is slowly becoming clearer what role he played in the Hungarian political landscape during the 17th century.²

In my current brief review, I will proceed to detail the life and the correspondence of István Zichy, the president of the Hungarian Chamber (1655–1672), to demonstrate that as chamber president, what kind of patronage did he provide. My main source of information is his correspondence, but I also employ other sources to get a more complete picture. Where it is possible, I have tried to draw a parallel between the work of the protagonist of my article and the activities of the other secular chamber presidents of the 17th century.

Keywords: 17th century, Patronage, Hungarian Chamber, library, book printing, Catholic Church, Habsburg Monarchy

¹ Acsády, Ignác, *Magyarország pénzügyei I. Ferdinánd uralkodása alatt 1526–1564* [The finances of Hungary in the age of Ferdinand I].

² Zichy, István, “Adatok egy XVII. századi katolikus főúri család történetéhez” [Additions to a 17th Century Catholic Aristocrat Family], *Regnum egyháztörténeti évkönyv tomus 5.*, (Budapest, 1942–1943), 734–764.

Brief overview of the Patronage in Hungary during the 16th and 17th centuries

First of all, at the beginning I need to be clear about what I mean by patronage. I think Péter Kőszeghy and György F. Széphelyi successfully summarized the meaning of patronage of arts.³ Based on their work, this article cannot undertake to examine the entire patronage activity, namely due to its large scope. Therefore, I will only review the three major types. These are (1) educating, teaching, and recommending talented people to influential people for offices or other positions, (2) supporting churches, church institutions and individuals, especially artists, (3) and last but not least, publishing various books and publications and the patronage of their preparation.

After I define the limits of the concept of patronage in this work, it must be clarified to which social group István Zichy and the other chamber presidents belonged. Although István Werbőczy explained in his famous work *Tripartitum Regni Hungariae* that all Hungarian nobles are equal, that was not the truth. The nobility was already comprised of many levels.⁴ In my research I concentrated on the aristocracy. But I focus not only on the highest circle of the narrow aristocracy, which included only a dozen families. The chamber presidents in the first two thirds of the 17th century came from the second and third lines of the aristocracy. This group includes those families who, after becoming part of the aristocracy, were created to a baron or a count by the king of Hungary, but the families themselves did not participate in national politics, only were they represented on the political scene by the most prominent member of the family, resulting in a limited significance at the time in Hungary and in the Habsburg Monarchy.⁵ According to the previous research, the chamber presidents of the first two thirds of the 17th century in the Hungarian Kingdom, except for Pál Pálffy, all fall into this category.⁶ But from the last third of the 17th century everything changed, from that time the presidents were selected from the first line of the aristocracy.

³ Kőszeghy, Péter – Széphelyi F., György, *Művészetpártolás* [Patronage of Arts], in *Magyar Művészettörténeti lexikon. Közép és kora újkor* (Budapest, 2004). http://mamul.btk.mta.hu/MAMUL_SZERK/menu.php (accessed: February 11, 2021.)

⁴ Martyn Rady, *The Customary Law of the Renowned Kingdom of Hungary: A Work in Three Parts (the “Tripertitum”) Stephen Werbőczy (Laws of East Central Europe)* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2005).

⁵ Borbély, Zoltán, A nemesi társadalom struktúrája és a hétköznapi élet keretei Felső-Magyarországon a 17. század első felében [The Structure of the Nobility and the Weekdays in Upper-Hungary during the 17th Century], in *Oszmán-magyar viszony a 16–18. században*. 193.

⁶ We are using the „Chamber President” in general because Tamás Vizkelethy and György Rakoviczky were only directors of the Hungarian Chamber but with the same authority.

Members of this group had limited financial means, most likely sacrificing their wealth to support others in a limited fashion. At the same time, knowing the sad history of the Hungarian archives and the significant destruction of their contents, I do not think it can be ruled out that some families and lords could be revealed to have been unique patrons of their age.⁷ On the other hand, with the current state of research, when opportunities have not been fully exploited even regarding the most significant families, it is understandable that second- and third-line aristocrats have rarely been in the centre of current research.

Based on these, the question what is the situation with the lords arises, as their financial situation would have allowed them, even if they were not at level of a Nádasdy or Esterházy, to afford patronage activities. Could it be that there were lords who would not have taken the opportunity to patronize? Or is it just that they have not been at the forefront of the research? Or perhaps, due to a lack of resources, did we not get to know their actions in this direction?

First, however, I need to give a brief overview of who were the best-known patrons, as well as the fundamental differences between István Zichy, the other prefects of the Hungarian Chamber, and the other nobles of the Hungarian Kingdom. Finally, it is important to determine which branches of patronage in the context of the present work will be the ones we will cover in our work.

Over the years, several research studies have focused on the 16-17th century patronage of the Hungarian, Transylvanian, and Habsburg Monarchy's nobilities. Significant results were achieved in the case of such prominent families in western Hungary as the Nádasdys, the Esterházys, and the Batthyánys.

As an example, the humanist circle formed around Boldizsár Batthyány during the 16th century is well known. The western Hungarian lord generously supported the representatives of various sciences and furthermore, he built a remarkable library.⁸ The Nádasdys, as one of the most important families in the western Hungarian region, also had well-known patronage activity. In the middle of the 16th century Tamás Nádasdy,

⁷ The Hungarian nobility was the second largest after the Polish. In the 16-17th century, the 5% of the population were noble.

⁸ Bobory, Dóra, "Batthyány Boldizsár és humanista köre" [Boldizsár Batthyány Humanist Circle], *Századok*, 139 no. 4. (2005): 923-944.; Koltai, András, *Batthány Ádám és könyvtára* [Adam Batthyány and His Library] (Szeged, 2002); Koltai, András, "Batthyányak udvari zenészei (1627-1664) Adattár" [The Court], 231-244.; Koltai, András, "A Batthyányiak és Carlo della Torre szerződése a rohonci templom építésére" [The Batthyánys and Carlo della Torre's Contract for the Building the Church of Rohonc], *Művészettörténeti értesítő*. 57 (2008): 387-393.

the Palatine of Hungary, appeared as a significant patron of architecture and printing.⁹ The patronage of his great-grandson Ferenc Nádasdy, who became the judge royal (1655–1671), far exceeded the activities of his predecessors, and thus he had a great influence on many of his contemporaries and posteriors.¹⁰ This is well exemplified by the patronage of his brother-in-law, palatine Pál Esterházy.¹¹ Besides these, generous patrons are also known, such as the Rákóczi¹² and the Mágócsy family,¹³ or István Thököly, one of the last Lutheran lords.¹⁴

If we are leaving the circle of the aristocracy, we also find families among the land-owner lesser nobility who were supporting young talents during their studies and travels abroad, or advocating for domestic educational institutions or artists. It is enough to mention István Vitnyédy, who was one of the most significant Lutheran patron of the 17th century.¹⁵ Although members of almost all levels of the society also took part in the patronage to a greater or lesser extent, the most important aspect of my work is the patronage of the aristocracy.

⁹ The Patronage of Tamás Nádasdy: Bartók, István, “A Nádasdy-mecenatúra hatása az irodalmi gondolkodásra” [The Impression of the Nádasdy Patronage on the Literature], in *Nádasdy Tamás (1498–1562)*, ed. Söptei, István, 117–130.; Bartók, István, “Karrier és mecenatúra. Nádasdy Tamás és sárvári udvartartása” [Carrier and Patronage. Thomas Nádasdy and the Court of Sárvár], in *Arisztokrácia, művészetek, mecenatúra*. ed. Czoma, László, 33–43.

¹⁰ Examples for the patronage of Ferenc Nádasdy: Viskolcz, Noémi, *A mecenatúra színterei a főúri udvarban. Nádasdy Ferenc könyvtára* [The stages of patronage in the court of an aristocrat]; Buzási, Enikő, “Gondolatok Nádasdy Ferenc mecenatúrájához, avagy mikor készült az árpási főoltárkép?” [Thoughts to the patronage of Ferenc Nádasdy, or in What Time Was the Altarpiece of Árpás Made?], in *Idővel paloták...* ed. G. Etényi, Nóra – Horn, Ildikó, 582–624.

¹¹ For example: Galavics, Géza, “A mecénás Esterházy Pál. (Vázlat egy pályaképhez)” [The Patron Paul Esterházy. A sketch to a Carrier], *Művészettörténeti értesítő*, 37. no. 3-4. (1988): 136–161.; *Esterházy Pál a műkedvelő mecénás* [Paul Esterházy the Amateur Patron], ed. Ács, Pál, (Budapest, 2015).

¹² Monok, István, *A Rákóczi-család könyvtárai 1588–1660* [The Libraries of the Rákóczi Family] (Budapest, 1996).

¹³ Szabó, András, “Mágócsy Gáspár és András udvara” [The Court of András and Gaspar Mágócsy], in *Magyar reneszánsz udvari kultúra*. ed. R. Várkonyi Ágnes (Budapest, 1987), 272–280.

¹⁴ Szabó, Péter, “A Thököly család és a görög-római kultúra” [The Thököly Family and the Greek-Roman Culture] *Credo*, 11 no 3-4. (2005): 203–210.

¹⁵ That is a well-known fact that István Vitnyédy supported many students on their abroad studies mostly in the German region. Recently two historian worked with his patronage in the field of education. comp. Sárközi, Gergely, “Vitnyédy István és az evangélikus oktatásügy” [István Vitnyédy and the Lutheran Education], *Credo*, 12, no 1-2. (2006), 3–16.; Kónya, Péter, Az arisztokrácia és a nemesség szerepe az eperjesi kollégium alapításában [The Role of the Aristocracy and the Nobility in the Founding of the College of Eperjes], in *Műveltség és társadalmi szerepek*. ed. Bárány, Attila – Orosz, István – Papp, Klára – Vinkler, Bálint (Debrecen, 2014): 361–372.

On the following pages I will work with a small group of aristocrats who represented the second and third line of the aristocracy. This work will show us the differences or similarities between the opportunities of the high nobility in the field of patronage.

Educating and recommending talented people

According to my current research, more than a half thousand letters from István Zichy, written between 1637 and 1693 have survived. The contents of these letters are very diverse. But knowing the career of the author, it can be assumed that the sections on patronage remain on the periphery in the examined documents.

Based on the outlined points, the first areas to be examined are, firstly, those cases when the wealthy patron finances the education and upbringing of talented young people and secondly, those cases of support, recommending persons from the clients of the family.

Unfortunately, only a little information can be found in István Zichy's correspondence on this topic. For the time being, neither I nor the other researchers revealed any talented young people from the circle around Zichy who he would have supported during his chamber presidency (1655–1672) or in a later period. Beside the direct patronage, another, perhaps more cost-effective form of supporting young talents was to employ them as a fellow student or preceptor to accompany the school-age children of a noble family. Sadly, we have no information about the teachers who worked alongside the children of István Zichy. On the other hand, thanks to more recent research, we know his correspondence with his daughter-in-law Kata Károlyi (–1694), which provided interesting additions about the education of his grandchildren. Kata Károlyi, who was the widow of Pál Zichy, was serious about educating her children. She and her brother-in-law István Zichy the younger and her father-in-law often had heated debates regarding the children. At the same time, we also know that the elderly Zichy István selected the preceptors for his grandchildren. Unfortunately, we do not know their names from any of the letters, perhaps because their careers in this role were short, because the children's mother soon got rid of them.¹⁶

Examining István Zichy's correspondence in more detail, so far only one letter is known in which he specifically deals with the recommendation of a person. Johann Baptist Podesta, the renowned Orientalist, who, according to Zichy, was working on a dictionary

¹⁶ Károlyi, Bálint, "Zichy II. Pál árváinak iskoláztatása" [The educating of the orphans of Paul Zichy II], *Aetas*, 34. no. 2. (2019): 60–61.

at the time.¹⁷ The chamber president recommended him to his friend Johann Freiherr von Rottal (1605? –1674) the Privy councilor of the Court in Vienna.¹⁸ Podesta already had a good reputation. He had Italian descents and studied in Rome. After he completed his studies, he travelled throughout the Ottoman Empire, while also reaching the Holy Land. From 1669 he served at the Vienna Military Council (Hofkriegsrat) as an interpreter. Later, he gained remarkable merits by the establishment of interpreter education in Vienna.¹⁹ Unfortunately, in the currently known Zichy-Rottal correspondence, I did not find the continuation of the case or a trace of similar supporting letters.²⁰ This is also true of letters, already revealed which were written to other people. Although the support of relatives, such as of his son-in-law Miklós Andrassy and his efforts to obtain the position of captain of Jász-kun,²¹ or the intervention in the selection of the new abbot of St. Martin (Pannonhalma) cannot be considered as patronizing, but rather as an imprint of his personal political goals.²²

From the period before 1655, when Zichy was the vice-general of the Győr border region, we have some letters in which he patronises certain persons before the lords of the region. For example at the beginning of 1652, György Darabos was recommended to László Esterházy (1626–1652), the captain of Pápa.²³ At the end of the year, the vice-general recommended the son of a local noble widow, to Ádám Batthyány for servant service.²⁴ However, in my opinion, these do not belong to the category of patronage,

¹⁷ Johannes Baptista Podesta, *Dissertatio academica, continens specimen triennialis profectus in linguis orientalibus etc.* (Viennae, Austriae, 1677.) 113–114. Here, I want to say thank you to Prof. István Monok the director of the MTA Library because he recommended to me this important resource.

¹⁸ Johann Rottal's carrier: Henry Frederick Schwarz, *The imperial privy council in the seventeenth century* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1943). 328–329.

¹⁹ Vásáry, István, "A török nyelv tanulmányozása a kora újkori európai egyetemeken" [The investigation of the ottoman language on the universities of the early modern period], *Gerundium* 11. (2020): 68–71.

²⁰ István Zichy's letters to Johann Rottal Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár Országos Levéltára [Hungarian National Archives National Archives] P 507 P 507-1.-A-438, és MNL OL P 707. fasc 84 NB Nr. 8500-8505.

²¹ After the death of palatine Ferenc Wesselényi (1667) temporally the Chamber managed the duties of the Jász-kun circle. But later in the same year the Chamber recommended Miklós Andrassy for jász-kun captaincy. comp.: Gyárfás, István, *A jász-kúnok története* [The History of the Jász-kuns,] Tomus 4, 1542–1686(Budapest, 1885.) 298–299.

²² István Zichy's letter to chancellor Ferenc Szegedy 04.05.1667. Pozsony. Egri Főegyházmegyei Levéltár (EFL) [Archdiocese Archives Eger] Arch. Secr. Num. 45. Letters to Ferenc Szegedy. Nr. 1., About Egyed Gencsy: Molnár, Szulpics, *A pannonhalmi főapátság története. Negyedik korszak* [The history of the Abbey of Pannonhalma. Fourth age], (h.n. 1906.)

²³ István Zichy's letter to László Esterházy 08.03.1652. Győr, MNL OL P 124. nr. 1375.;

²⁴ István Zichy's letter to Ádám Batthyány 28.11.1652. Megyer MNL OL P 1314 nr. 53143.;

as they are not famous people, only those who may have served well in the aristocratic courtyards of the area.

Although I do not find any other sign of patronage in István Zichy's correspondence, his best-known patronage is found in a thesis paper which was published in 1665. On the front page of Péter Potormani's thesis paper, – he was studying at the Jesuits in Kassa (Kosice) –, an engraving, shows the chamber president Zichy among the councilors of the Hungarian Chamber with several allegorical depictions.²⁵ The existence of the work was already pointed out in 1943,²⁶ but for its analysis, we had to wait until more recent years.²⁷ The draftsman of the thesis sheet is still unknown, but the master who made the copper engraving was Philipp Kilian.²⁸ Peter Potormani's patron choice was not coincidence. Potormani's supervisor and the initiator of the thesis was István Tarnóczy, a professor of the Jesuit Academy of Kosice. According to the recent research we know that the Tarnóczy moved to Győr in 1650 and worked in the Jesuit grammar school of the city.²⁹ As the vice-general of the frontier between 1646 and 1655 István Zichy was based in Győr, spending most of his time in the fortress city. Based on these, it cannot be ruled out that the then vice-general, later chamber president and Tarnóczy may have known each other well.³⁰

Unfortunately, to the best of our knowledge, we know only barely two dozen thesis papers published by Géza Galavics. Based on these, among the chosen patrons, the authors clearly preferred the current ruler Leopold I. However, there are quite a few of them which chose one of the influential Hungarian lords as their patron. On the other hand, we do not know any of those works on which István Zichy's predecessors were pictured on thesis papers. Nevertheless, it cannot be ruled out that the former chamber presidents of the 17th century were not among the supporters. This can also be assumed because, looking

²⁵ In the middle of the engraving sits István Zichy. Either side of him sits the councilors of the Chamber. They were at the time: Michael Partinger, Georg Horváth-Kissevith, Matthias Senkviczzy and Mark Szentbenedeky.

²⁶ Zichy, "Adatok" 762.

²⁷ Galavics, Géza: "Magyar diákok 17. századi *tézislapjai Közép-Európában.*" [*The 17th century thesis boards of Hungarian students*], *Művészettörténeti értesítő* 53. no 1–4 (2004): 58–60; The analysis of the thesis board: Tüskés, Anna, Magyarországi klerikusok felsőfokú tanulmányai a 17. században [The higher education of the clerical people during the 17th century], in *Katolikus egyházi társadalom*, 121–139.

²⁸ Galavics, "Magyar diákok," 76.

²⁹ Kónya, Franciska, *Tarnóczy István és a kora újkori meditációs irodalom*, (István Tarnóczy and the early modern meditation literature (Kolozsvár/Cluj, Bolyai Társaság, 2015), 32.

³⁰ István Zichy in 1644 already had a house in Győr. In this year he had another house as pawn from the widow of Paul Révay. István Zichy's letter to the widow of Paul Révay 05.03.1644. Tata. MNL OL P 507 Nádaslady Archives of the Nádasdy family 1-A-388 Nr. 4.

at the list, in 1689 Michael Frank appointed Kristóf Erdődy, the current president of the Hungarian Chamber, as patron.³¹ It seems that for their later careers, both made a good decision. Potormani and Frank also became the officials of the chamber in Pozsony, although Frank was not without precedent.³² From this we can also see that it was purposely that the students chose the heads of the most important offices in the country as patrons. After all, they could count on the support of the presidents, and as we have seen, they could even be rewarded by a serious office. With the exception of Potormani and Frank, István Nagovith is also a good example. Although he was not educated specifically by Pál Pálffy, he was educated by Pálffy's parents in such a way that he was taken as a pupil with the Pálffy children. He probably already studied with the young Pálffy counts in Vienna. Later, during the Pálffy's higher education years, Nagovith's presence in Ingolstadt and then in Olomouc is showable.³³ Due to his lesser nobility origins, it is hardly plausible that his parents or himself, would have financed his expensive studies abroad. After that, he ran a classical career at the Hungarian Chamber, which he finished as an honorary councilor.³⁴

It is worth mentioning that during the confiscations after the Magnate conspiracy (1670-1671) many noble people turned to István Zichy for support. It is a well-known fact that although some of those who approached the Chamber President, such as István Barkóczy and his brother Ferenc Barkóczy, successfully avoided prosecution or received minor punishments, but it is questionable how much role did Zichy actually play in this. Deciding this will require further research. However, what is certain, the confidential letters to the chamber president repeatedly indicate that there was a patron-client relationship between the two parties, but they cannot be considered as a part of the patronage, because it was the rather the common style and form of letter writing of the age.³⁵

³¹ Galavics, "Magyar diákok," 77.

³² Fallenbüchl, Zoltán, "A Magyar Kamara tisztviselői a XVII. században" [The clerks of the Hungarian Chamber in the 17th century], *Levéltári Közlemények*, 39. no. (1968): 261–262.

³³ Bitskey, István, A német nyelvterület jezsuita egyetemei és Magyarország a kora újkorban [The Jesuit universities of the German territories and Hungary in the early modern period], in *A magyar jezsuiták küldetése* 494.

³⁴ Fallenbüchl, Zoltán, *Allami (királyi és császári) tisztségviselők a 17. századi Magyarországon* [States (Royal and Imperial) Salariats in the 17th Century Hungary] (Budapest: Osiris, 2002) 208–209.

³⁵ Two examples for this: István Zichy's letter to István Fáy 03.08. 1671. Pozsony MNL OL P 1729. Zichy tries to free Ladislaus Fáy from his prison if his brother István Fáy send Zichy some gifts. Here, I want to say thank you to Mónika Horváth, PhD student of the Eszterházy Károly Catholic University, because she gave me this important document. Almost the same situation when Mihail Szentiványi, a customs official, called Zichy to his "fautor." Michael Szentiványi's letter to István Zichy 28.11.1670. Eperjes/Presov MNL OL P 507 The familial archive of the Nádasdy family. 1-A-443 Nr. 3.

Supporting churches, church institutions, and individuals especially artists

In addition to patronizing talented young people, it is worth mentioning the support and embrace of artists who are already active as an artist. Unfortunately, we do not know from the correspondence of István Zichy any famous artists, poets, painters etc. of the era, whom he supported at any stage of his life. Nevertheless, there are two authentic depictions of István Zichy from the period. The first one was recorded in 1649 by Elias Wiedemann or one of the assistants who accompanied the master.³⁶ Appearing in a series marked by the name of Elias Wiedemann, reveals that Zichy was already a significant person in 1649 as a vice general of the Győr border region, and he was also aware of the importance of patronizing art. In the other work, a hitherto unknown artist painted a portrait of the chamber president on canvas in the 1660s.³⁷ We do not have any other information from the 17th century that István Zichy carried out any art patronage. He was not alone with this. From his office predecessors, only Gáspár Lippay's, Mihály Majthényi's and Pál Pálffy's portraits are known also from the Wiedemann series.³⁸

As I mentioned above, Pálffy stood out significantly from this line. In his case, we know that he certainly supported artists, including architects, who rebuilt and redesigned his castles in Vöröskő and Detrekő in Baroque style.³⁹ This can be similarly assumed in the case of the Erdődy family, who served as presidents of the Hungarian Chamber – Christoph Erdődy (1684–1704) and Alexander Erdődy (1706–1718) – from the last third of the 17th century to the first half of 18th century.⁴⁰ It is true that proofs of this patronage are only known from the 18th century. We can be sure that István Zichy did not carry out constructions of a similar size even in the Divény estate which he acquired at the end of the century.⁴¹ In his correspondence, we cannot find any sign of employing artists or major craftsmen. Probably there were financial limits in the background. For the other presidents of the chamber, with the exception of the members of the two families mentioned, we can come to similar conclusions.

³⁶ Elias Wiedemann, *Icones Illustrium Heroum Hungariae*, (Wien 1652.) 100.

³⁷ The portrait of István Zichy István from the Castle Muzeum of Vöröskő. Unknown master's work from the 1660s. <http://www.npg.hu/component/jcollection/item/574> (accessed: 2021.12.04.)

³⁸ Wiedemann, *Icones Illustrium*, 49., 57., 67.,

³⁹ Fundarek, Anna, "Pálffy Pál építkezései" [The constructions of Pál Pálffy] *Sic itur ad astra* 13. no. 1 (2003): 15–34.

⁴⁰ Bubryák, Orsolya: Az ősök tisztelete az Erdődy grófok mecénási programjában [The ancestor-worship in the patronage program of the Erdődy counts], in *Idővel paloták...*, 549–581.

⁴¹ Szirácsik, Éva, *A divényi uradalom gazdálkodása a Zichy hitbizomány első száz évében (1687–1787)* [The economy of the Divény possession in the age of the first hundred years of the Zichy fidei-commissum], 19.

However, even if István Zichy built his mansion in Oroszvár (Rusovce, Slovakia), which served as his home, according to the artistic trends and style of the time, not much could be survived of it. In 1683, when Zichy served as a Crown Guard – he took the Holy Crown to the Emperor⁴² – he and his whole family escaped from the armies of Imre Thököly (1657–1705), and their mansion in Oroszvár was plundered by the soldiers of the “kuruc king.” This resulted in Zichy’s staying loyal to the emperor unlike the other aristocrats.⁴³ From the earlier research we know that István Zichy carried out constructions on several mansions and castles on his possession, such as in Darufalva (Draßburg, Austria) and in Jánosháza, but there are no signs of these constructions in his correspondence. Due to subsequent reconstructions during the 18th and 19th centuries there are only a few or no signs of these remained to these days.⁴⁴

Supporting institutions, such as the major schools of the age, had a key role for the nobility. This is well illustrated by the efforts of the Lutheran estates to establish and expand the College of Eperjes (Presov SK).⁴⁵ But the support of the Reformed School of Seps⁴⁶ and later the Reformed College of Sárospatak played a similar role in the eyes of the Reformed estates.⁴⁷ The primary representation for the Catholic orders was the University of Nagyszombat (Trnava SK), – founded by Péter Pázmány – and the various Jesuit grammar schools in parallel.

Basically, the Zichy family’s relationship with the Catholic Church in the early 17th century was not necessarily the best. The most significant problem in this case was the controversy between the bishop of Veszprém and Paul Zichy (1570?–1638) – he was the father of István Zichy – over the bonded possessions of the bishopric.⁴⁸ However, after they resolved this hostility, the relationship visibly improved. At the time of his death Paul

⁴² Pálffy Géza: “A magyar korona először német földön (1683–1687)” [The first time of the Hungarian crown in Germany (1683-1687)] in. *A Szent Korona hazatér*; 325–339.

⁴³ Varga J., János, *Válaszúton. Thököly Imre és Magyarország 1682-1684.* (Budapest: MTA Történelemtudományi Intézet 2007.) 80. [Cross-roads.] Thököly Imre Zichy Istvánhoz, 12.07. 1683. Jánossy, OSZK [National Széchényi Library] fol lat. 2265. 96/189–190.

⁴⁴ Koppány, Tibor, *Kastélyok a végyárok mögött. Késő reneszánsz és kora barokk kastély építészet a 16–17. századi Dunántúlon* [Castles behind the fortresses], 151–152, 174–176, 216.

⁴⁵ Kónya, “Arisztokrácia és a nemesség,” 364–366.

⁴⁶ Szabadi, István, Adalékok Báthory István (1555–1605) mecénatúrájához. [Improvers to the patronage of István Báthory (1555-1605)] in. *Műveltség és társadalmi szerepek.* 297.

⁴⁷ Tamás, Edit, “Tűrelem és türelmetlenség a vallásgyakorlatban és az intézmények működésében Sárospatakon a 17–19. században” [Tolerance and intolerance], *Történeti Tanulmányok* 15. no. 1. (2007): 162–166.

⁴⁸ Jakab, Réka, “A veszprémi székeskáptalan a 17. században” [The Cathedral Chapter of Veszprém during the 17th century] in. *Erdőgyűjtés és újrakezdetés. A veszprémi egyházmegye története a 17. században.* 73–76.

Zichy was already mentioned as one of the greatest enemies of the reformed communities.⁴⁹

The contacts of chamber president Zichy with the University of Nagyszombat are little known. None of his sons studied there, but some of his grandsons visited the university at the end of the 17th century. Even so we do not know that he patronized the institution. Although it is not clear from his letters, he was probably one of the most important patrons of the grammar school of the Jesuits in Győr. The reason for this is that he and his family had a very close relationship with the town and the Jesuits whom serviced there. István Zichy completed his secondary education in Győr and was also a member of the local Congregation of Virgin Mary.⁵⁰ His sons and grandsons also became students at the grammar school in Győr.⁵¹

Beside the school in Győr, the church of the Jesuit had an important role which was build up through serious struggles and financed by the local and western Hungarian Catholic community. Unfortunately, we do not find István Zichy among the supporters. On the other hand, another chamber president, Gáspár Lippay (1646-1652) contributed significant amounts of money to the construction of the building. This was partly due to that fact that Lippay's older brother János Lippay (–1666), a Jesuit monk was the rector of the institute at the time.⁵² Apart from Gáspár Lippay, we know only in the case of Gáspár Horváth de Vegla (1560?-1624) that even before the founding of the University of Nagyszombat, he donated a garden to the school operating in the town.⁵³ Furthermore, Gáspár Horváth de Vegla played a major role in supporting the Jesuits both in the Kingdom of Hungary and in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. In 1604 he took the church of Tepla in Lower Hungary from the Lutheran community, decorated it richly and gave to the Jesuits.⁵⁴ In 1609 he founded a church near the town of Pren in the *starostwo*

⁴⁹ Gáspár Illésházy's notes about the death of Pál Zichy comp.: Szilágyi, Sándor, „Illésházy Gáspár feljegyzései” [Gaspar Illésházy's memoir], *Történelmi Társ.* 14. no. 4. (1891): 584.

⁵⁰ Acsay, Ferenc, *A győri kath. főgimnázium története. 1626–1900* [The history of the catholic gymnasium in Győr], (Győr, 1901), 153–156.

⁵¹ Kőkényesi Zsolt, “A győri jezsuita gimnázium diáksága a kezdetektől a feloszlásig (1630–1773), különös tekintettel a főnemesi tanulókra” [The students of the Jesuit gymnasium in Győr], in: *Jezsuita jelenlét Győrben a 17-18. században*, 162–163.; Károlyi, “Zichy II. Pál árváinak iskoláztatása,” 56–57.

⁵² Fazekas, István – Kádár, Zsófia, “A győri jezsuita templom 17. századi jötevői. a támogatók körének rekonstrukciója” [The benefactors of the Győr Jesuit Church in the 17th century], in: *Jezsuita jelenlét Győrben a 17-18. században*. 23.

⁵³ Károlyi, Bálint, “Egy rendhagyó karrier. Veglai Horváth Gáspár, a Magyar Kamara elnökének életútja” [An irregular carrier.], *Levéltári Közlemények* 90. no. 1 (2019): 154.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 132–133.

under his control.⁵⁵ Sad to say we do not know of any similar foundation or support from the other chamber presidents.

Libraries, books and patronage of book printing

If we turn to another form of patronage, like the support for publishing a book or possibly writing one's own book, we may get mixed results. In the case of the presidents, directors and senior councilors of the Hungarian and Spis (Szepesi) Chambers we know only two library catalogs. György Hoffmann (–1628)⁵⁶ and Zsigmond Holló (–1684)⁵⁷ were the director and senior councilor of the Spis Chamber during the 17th century. Although the Chamber in Pozsony was a major institution and the presidents played a more prominent role in the life of the country than those who were leading the Spis Chamber, we have almost no data about their libraries. In the case of lower-ranking officials' libraries, we have a little bit more information.⁵⁸ Sad to say the new research has not given us information about their libraries.⁵⁹ We do know a couple of book lists which show us the reading preferences of these people.⁶⁰

⁵⁵ Ibid.: 129. *Starostwo* is an administrative unit established in the fourteenth century in Poland.

⁵⁶ György Hoffman's book catalogue: *Magyarországi magánkönyvtárak I. 1533–1657* [Hungarian private libraries I. 1533–1657], (Adattár a XVI–XVII. századi szellemi mozgalmaink történetéhez 13.) Sajtó alá rend.: Varga András, (Budapest-Szeged, 1986), 124–126.

⁵⁷ Zsigmond Holló's book catalogue: Kassa város olvasmányai 1562–1731 [The readings of the city Kosice]. Sajtó alá rend.: Gácsi Hedvig – Farkas Gábor – Keveházi Katalin – Lázár István Dávid – Monok István – Németh Noémi, 71–72.

⁵⁸ Monok, István, *A művelt arisztokrata. A magyarországi főnemesség olvasmányai a XVI–XVII. században* (Budapest–Eger: Líceum–Kossuth Press 2012) [The cultured aristocrat.], 174–179.

⁵⁹ There are some novelties like the Library of the Czobor family. comp.: István Monok, *The Cultural Horizon of Aristocrats in the Hungarian Kingdom. Their Libraries and Erudition in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (Wien, 2019), 149–152.

⁶⁰ Some good examples: The catalogue of János Kecskés's library: *Magyarországi magánkönyvtárak I.* 124–126. 132–143.; For the formation of a library: Zvara, Edina, "Ismert könyvgyűjtők tulajdonosainak bejegyzései az Esterházy-könyvtárban." [Famous book collectors notifications] *Magyar Könyvszemle*, 127 no. 1. (2011): 1, 55–57, 61–63.; Information about Gáspár Tassy: Holl, Béla, "Tasi Gáspár. Adalékok XVII. századi fordítás-irodalmunk történetéhez" [Gaspar Tasi.], *Acta Universitatis Szegediensis: Acta Historiae Litterarum Hungaricarum*, Tomus 10–11, 1971. 99–106.; Károlyi, Bálint, "Tassy Gáspár ismertlen levele Melith Péterhez." [Gaspar Tassy's unknown letter], *Magyar Könyvszemle*, 137 no. 1. (2021): 80–85.

Unfortunately, I do not have any details about István Zichy's library.⁶¹ We can only assume that even if he had a collection of books, then he probably made a place for them in the mansions of his two beloved places of residence, in Oroszvár or Moson-szentmiklós. He does not mention any relevant information in his correspondence. Anyway, we have some notes about the reading preferences in István Zichy's family. The old lord constantly sent Italian language newspapers to his son István Zichy Jr., who served on the front during the Great Turkish War (1683-1699).⁶² It is certain that when István Zichy Jr. was accompanied by István Nádasdy during the young lords Grand Tour in western Europe,⁶³ he obtained a small number of books and atlases. At least this is evidenced by a letter of his brother Paul Zichy, who, perhaps for a separate library or a unified library for the family, rendered thanks to his brother for the atlases which he sent from The Hague.⁶⁴

There is a separate category for books which have been included in a library based on the dedication of the author. We know only the work of István Jaros,⁶⁵ published in Bratislava in 1671, the *Tabella Axiomatum*, which was dedicated to István Zichy and the councilors of the Hungarian Chamber, as well as some other officials.⁶⁶ Probably István Zichy had a copy of this work in his library. Beside this book we can conjecture that Zichy had another book at least for a short time, because István Vitnyédy, the famous lawyer and the secretary of the Croatian Ban, Miklós Zrínyi, advised Zichy to get from someone Hugo Grotius's *De Iure Belli Pacis* and read at least some part of it.⁶⁷

As we have seen, from the correspondence of István Zichy, the surviving letters tell us almost nothing about their writer's literacy, nor about the supporting of book printing. The most interesting pieces of his correspondence were written in the middle of the 1650s. Ádám Batthyány, one of the greatest aristocrats in the western Hungarian region,

⁶¹ I found a small book collection of the Zichy family, but these books not belonged to the main branch of the family. MNL SML Kötetek Nr. 1–15.

⁶² István Zichy's letter to his youngest son Adam Zichy 30.04. 1692. Trnava/Nagyszombat, MNL OL Zichy family archives P 707 fasc 84 NB Nr. 14235.

⁶³ Toma, Katalin, Nádasdy István európai tanulmány útja [István Nádasdy's European Grand Tour] in: *Idővel paloták...* 192–214.

⁶⁴ Pál Zichy's letter to István Zichy Jr. 07.05.1670. In.: Károlyi, Bálint. "Adalékok Nádasdy István nyugat-európai utazásához Levelek ifjabb Zichy István levelestárcájából" *Lymbus*, 2, no. 1 (2021): 521–522.

⁶⁵ István Jaros was the student of the Jesuit gymnasium in Pozsony. He wrote his two works during his rhetoric studies comp.: Szinnyi, József, *Magyar írók élete és munkái* [The life and works of hungarian writers], vol. 5. (Budapest, 1897), 418.

⁶⁶ RMK II. 1285.

⁶⁷ István Vitnyédy's letter to István Zichy [The letters of István Vitnyédy] April 18, 1662. Sopron published in: Fabó András: *Vitnyédy István levelei 1652–1662*, 199–200.

after the death of his first wife, wanted to remarry. Because of this, he travelled to Graz several times to find a wife for himself. Due to this, István Zichy shared his opinions about the good relationship with Batthyány. In his first letter Zichy wrote just how to play games together as a couple and that it would be a good idea if the Batthyánys teach the chosen lady to learn Turkish. István Zichy believed that the importance of this is in the familiarity, because ordinary people in the court do not understand Turkish, but they could easily communicate with each other.⁶⁸ It is interesting because if we read Antonio Guevara's book, the *Horologii Principum*, carefully, we find examples of both statements. Almost at the beginning of his book, master Guevara stated that marriage between a man and a woman is the best company, even a friendship.⁶⁹ Reading Zichy's letter, the mention of common play grabs attention. According to the book it was a natural thing for a man and a woman to play together. A good example for this László Rákóczi (–1664), the catholic nephew of the Transylvanian prince György Rákóczi I, who mentions several times in his diary that he played with his wife.⁷⁰

In the first chapter of Guevara's book, among the criteria of a good wife, we find reliability and the fact that a couple must be always faithful to each other. According to the Spanish author, it is the wife's duty to stand by her husband when his enemies multiply and his situation turns so bad that he cannot trust anyone.⁷¹ It is important that Antonio Guevara's book has become readable in Hungarian since 1610, thanks to János Draskovits (1550-1613) who translated it from Latin. The work was fairly popular in the period, and even after in the 18th century.⁷² Presumably István Zichy read it, or perhaps he had Guevara's book or the Hungarian translation in his own (?) library.⁷³

If we consider the work dedicated to the chamber presidents before István Zichy, we can see that Zichy's case is not unique. Sad to say our task is a not easy, because there have been no works found that are dedicated to Tamás Vizkelethy, Gáspár Horváth de Vegla, György Rakoviczky and Mihály Majthényi. On the other hand, in 1616, Márton Kopcsányi recommended his work *Gospels and Epistles* to László Pethe and other officials

⁶⁸ István Zichy's letter to Adam Batthyány 02.03.1654. Győr, MNL OL P 1314 Nr. 53162.

⁶⁹ Guevara, Antonio: *Horologii principum, Az Fejedelmek órájának második könyve fordította Draskovits János, Graz, 1610*, published by Komlowszky Tibor, Budapest, 1989, 1.

⁷⁰ Várkonyi, Gábor, Ünnepek és hétköznapiok Művelődés és mentalitás a török kori Magyarországon [Holidays and weekdays], 195.

⁷¹ Guevara, "Az Fejedelmek órája," 9.

⁷² Ibid. 25.

⁷³ Later an accurate philological analysis on the correspondence of István Zichy will help us to get more information about his readings.

of the chamber.⁷⁴ Much better known is Péter Pázmány's work the „*Keresztény imádságos könyv*”, published in Graz in 1606, which was recommended to Anna Kapy, the second wife of László Pethe.⁷⁵

Thirty years later, only a Krakow calendar, printed in Vienna in 1648, was recommended to Gáspár Lippay. The Viennese printer Gergely Gelbhaar recommended the complete work not only for the chamber president, but also to his eldest brother, György Lippay (1600-1666) the archbishop of Esztergom.⁷⁶ It is worth noting that we do not know any dedication to Pál Pálffy from the time of his chamber presidency, but from later years when he became the palatine of Hungary there were a few books and printings which were dedicated to him.

The patronage of the Habsburg Monarchy's chamber presidents (outlook)

If we take a brief outlook, beyond the borders of the Kingdom of Hungary to the patronage of the chamber leaders of the Austrian and Czech territories, we will see significant differences. Fortunately, owing to new research and publications, we are already familiar with the lists of the leaders of all chambers operating in the Habsburg Monarchy.⁷⁷ Unfortunately we have only a few biographical works about them, which do not deal with their patronage.⁷⁸ In this article we have no place to do new research in this field, but we can light on a few facts that act on the differences of the patronage of the chamber presidents of the Hungarian and Habsburg Monarchy.

The first and most important thing that can be stated from the completed archontological list is that, unlike the Kingdom of Hungary, the third and second line of the aristocracy do not dominate, but the peak of the aristocracy of the region is represented. There is no significant separation here like in Hungary where in the 16th century it was dominated by the ecclesiastical elite, in fact there were relatively few ecclesiastical leaders in this office. Because of this these aristocrats, with their serious economic and material

⁷⁴ RMK I. 481.

⁷⁵ RMK I. 403.

⁷⁶ RMK I. 801.

⁷⁷ Michael Hochedlinger, Petr Mat' a und Thomas Winkelbauer (Hg.), *Verwaltungsgeschichte der Habsburgermonarchie in der Frühen Neuzeit, Band 1/1 und 1/2*, 833, 846, 854, 880, 901.

⁷⁸ Brigitte Holl, „Hofkammerpräsident Gundaker Thomas Graf Starhemberg und die österreichische Finanzpolitik der Barockzeit (1703–1715).”, Hansdieter Körbl, *Die Hofkammer und ihr ungetreuer Präsident.*; Thea Lindquist, “Clement von Radolt (1593–1670) A Multifarious Career in the seventeenth-century Imperial Service.” *Mitteilungen des Österreichischen Staatsarchivs* 52, 2007, 9–29. Some short biographies of the chamber presidents: Henry Frederick Schwarz, *The Imperial Privy Council in the Seventeenth Century*, *passim*.

background in relation to the Habsburg Monarchy, may have pursued more significant patronage.⁷⁹ But there are some good works which are focusing on patronage, even if they were written in another context.⁸⁰

In addition to the material and social background, the geographical features also significantly widen the gap between the two parts of the Habsburg Monarchy. First of all, the Kingdom of Hungary became a relatively peripheral region during this period, although the center of the Monarchy was close, in Vienna. But it was a completely different world. Vienna, as the center of the Monarchy temporarily, Prague under the rule of Rudolf II, meant that significant crowds were concentrated here, as the court offered them a good opportunity. The aristocrats, including the presidents of the chambers who were at home in these cities, had a better chance of employing artists and other creators and competing with each other. The reason for this was that the chamber presidents built huge palaces in Vienna, many of which can still be seen today.⁸¹ Let us refer to the buildings of the Liechtenstein, Kolowrat, Lobkowitz or Sinzendorf families. In constructing them, the most significant masters available to them were employed to represent themselves before the court and the emperor. On the other hand, in only two and a half cases can we be sure when the presidents of the Hungarian Chamber had some real estate in the capital. Pál Pálffy and his family already had good relations in Vienna in the 16th century,⁸² while at the turn of the 16-17th centuries László Pethe probably had a house in the imperial city. In the case of István Zichy we know from a letter that he had a small house in the city, but it is the least suitable for representation, as it burned down in 1654.⁸³

It seems like a huge difference. But if we think about the members of the Hungarian aristocracy who generally were away from Vienna, and only a few of them had their own estates in the city, it is normal. The outcome of this was that most of the aristocrats were out of opportunities to get in contact with the artists and other creators.⁸⁴

⁷⁹ James Van Horn Melton, “The Nobility in the Bohemian and Austrian Lands, 1620–1780.” in *The European Nobilities of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, Volume II, 110–143.

⁸⁰ Gundaker von Liechtenstein was the Court Chamber president between 1620 and 1622. He and his family became one of the greatest patrons of the Habsburg Monarchy. Gustav Wilhelm, “Die Fürsten von Liechtenstein und ihre Beziehungen zu Kunst und Wissenschaft,” in: *Liechtensteinische Kunstgesellschaft*, (Vaduz 1977), 9–181.

⁸¹ About building palaces in Vienna: Wolfgang Pircher, “*Verwüstung und Verschwendung. Adeliges Bauen nach der Zweiten Türkenbelagerung.*”

⁸² Pálffy, Géza, A Pálffy család felemelkedése a 16. században. [The rising of the Pálffy family] in: *Pálffyok a novoveku* ed.: Anna Fundarkova – Géza, Pálffy (Bratislava – Budapest, 2003), 17–36.

⁸³ István Zichy’s letter to Ádám Batthyány 10.07.1654. Győr, MNL OL P 1314 Missiles, Nr. 53168.

⁸⁴ Pálffy, Géza, “A magyar nemesség I. Ferdinánd bécsi udvarában.” [The Hungarian nobility in Ferdinand Habsburg’s court] *Történelmi Szemle* 45. no 1–2. (2003): 45–59.

Conclusion

As we can see, István Zichy and the presidents of the Hungarian Chamber were not hiding patrons at all. Given their talent and even more so their financial means, they sought to stand out as patrons like their wealthier contemporaries. Based on the little information we know, we can safely say that both Zichy and his office predecessors and successors were active patrons. We can only consider them „hiding” because they have not been at the forefront of the research. I believe that this may be due to the small number of, or lack of, resources. But as we see we could use other sources than are generally used for analyzing the patronage.

From my work it is clear that the second and third line of the aristocracy also had patronage, but there were some differences. The first thing is that their opportunities were much more limited, because their fortune was not as significant as the high aristocracy's. The second thing is that their most important duty was the integration in the aristocracy which needed the most of their money and, significantly, their attention. Beside these duties the patronage was secondary.

As a result of my work, we can see that this field offers more opportunities for the future. One is to expand the direction of research. After a more thorough understanding of the patronage of the chamber presidents, we would have the opportunity to compare the activities of second and third-line aristocratic families, not just in the Kingdom of Hungary but in the Habsburg Monarchy. Through such work, we could get an even more complete picture of the patronage activities of the official elite of Hungary and the Habsburg Monarchy.

Finally, as we saw, the best opportunity may be to compare the patronage activities of the chamber presidents of the Habsburg Monarchy. That work will not be easy due to the social, financial and even geographical differences. But after we have enough knowledge about the nobility of the Habsburg Monarchy, we will be able to understand better the place of the chamber presidents on the stage of the patronage.

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P 124 Documents of Ladislaus Esterházy

P 507 Family Archive of the Nádasdy family from Nádasladány

P 707. Family Archive of the Zichy family

P 1314 Family Archive of the Batthyány family (missiles)

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