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Béla Vilmos Mihalik

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The Ever-Reviving Phoenix

Jesuits in Hungary

By

Béla Vilmos Mihalik

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The Ever-Reviving Phoenix

Jesuits in Hungary

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Abstract

For more than four and a half centuries, the Jesuits in Hungary were forced to repeatedly recommence their activities due to wars, uprisings, and political conflicts. The Society of Jesus first settled in Hungary in 1561 during the period of Ottoman conquest. Despite their difficulties in a war-torn country, a network of Jesuit colleges was established as part of the Austrian Province, and the eighteenth century was a period of cultural and scientific prosperity for the Jesuits in Hungary. The Suppression of 1773, however, abruptly suspended this tradition for eighty years. After they resettled in Hungary in 1853, the Jesuits searched for new ways of apostolic work. The independent Hungarian Jesuit Province was established in 1909. The totalitarian regimes of the twentieth century, however, posed fresh challenges. During the Communist period, the Hungarian Jesuit Province was forced to divide into two sections. The Jesuits in exile and those who remained in Hungary were reunited in 1990.

Keywords

Jesuits – Hungary – Society of Jesus – Habsburg – Hungarian Jesuit Province – mission – Austrian Jesuit Province – Ottoman Empire

1 Introduction

When in 1990, after having lived for some forty years as a scattered community, the Hungarian Jesuit province was finally reunited, Imre Morlin (1917–2003) described the coming together of fellow Jesuits in Hungary and those returning to their homeland as follows: when the two branches of the Danube River meet again at the tip of Margaret Island in Budapest, everything turns, whirls, swirls, and then the currents intertwine and the water is smooth again. This expressive metaphor eloquently captures not only the situation after the fall

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of the communist regime but also the earlier centuries of the Society's history in Hungary. Until 1909, the Jesuit institutions in Hungary had functioned as part of the Austrian province, and the fate of the Provincia Austriaca had been intertwined with the bumpy history of the multiethnic Habsburg monarchy. The independent Hungarian province, created on the eve of the First World War (1914–1918), suffered the collapses and totalitarian dictatorships of the twentieth century. In this history, which now stretches back more than 460 years, there have been several turbulent moments of conflict and upheaval, but the surface of the water has always smoothed over in the end. The history of the Jesuits in Hungary has been one of collapses and new beginnings, of moments of sudden standstills followed by renewed vigor and determination.

In what seems an almost fateful coincidence, each of the three episodes of Hungarian history that bore witness to the settlement or resettlement of Jesuits in the country took place against a backdrop of political upheaval. In the sixteenth century, the Ottoman conquest and the spread of Reformation ideas determined the political horizon of the Kingdom of Hungary. This kingdom, which had been a significant if not decisive power in the Middle Ages, was torn asunder with the disastrous defeat of the Hungarian army at the Battle of Mohács on August 29, 1526. The country was divided into three parts: the western and northern parts fell under Habsburg rule; the Transylvanian Principality in the east managed to maintain some degree of autonomy; and the central part came under Ottoman rule. This marked the beginning of a century and a half of division that lasted until 1699.[1] In the mid-sixteenth century, with the spread of Reformation ideas and Ottoman expansion, the Catholic Church in the Kingdom of Hungary was on the verge of collapse. It was at this time, in 1561, that the Jesuits were settled in the country. They remained active, with interruptions from time to time, for a good two centuries, until the suppression of the Society of Jesus in 1773.

The second of these episodes, which came in the wake of the Society's reestablishment in 1814, took place in the mid-nineteenth century amid new challenges. Until the middle of the century, the Habsburg monarchy had pursued a Josephinist ecclesiastical policy. The state aggressively intervened in the life of the Catholic Church and was cautious to keep relations with Rome under its oversight. The Hungarian estates, however, were adopting increasingly liberal stances, which contributed, ultimately, to the abolition of Catholicism as the state religion as part of the legislation adopted by the revolutionary government in 1848. The 1848–1849 Revolution and War of Independence against the Habsburgs failed, however, and Franz Joseph (1830–1916, r.1848–1916) established

1 Géza Pálffy, *Hungary between Two Empires, 1526–1711* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2021).

an authoritarian regime that was in power for nearly twenty years. This period bore witness to a revision of church policy, and in 1855, the Habsburg monarchy signed a concordat with the Holy See. As part of these shifts, in 1853, the Jesuits returned to the territory of the Kingdom of Hungary.[2]

The third rebirth of the Hungarian Jesuits occurred at the end of the twentieth century. An autonomous Hungarian province had been created in 1909 that was independent of the Austrian one, but after the Second World War (1939–1945) the communist dictatorship banned it. The province was split into two parts: one remained in Hungary and continued to pursue its work, though illegally and in the face of terrible persecution, while the other was forced into exile. In 1990, with the fall of the communist regime, these two parts were finally reunited. The circumstances of this reunification were influenced in no small part by the immense social challenges that came with the democratic transition. Significant resources were needed to address the problems that had been created by decades of communist rule and to establish a sovereign parliamentary democracy. The Jesuits who had been living in exile made important preparations for their return home, which was strongly influenced by the renewal that had begun after the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965). The reinvigoration of the Society's institutions, however, still demanded considerable effort and patience.[3]

In addition to the many shifts in the political backdrop, another important detail to keep in mind in any discussion of the history of the Jesuits in Hungary is that they did not have an independent province before 1909. They had been part of the Austrian province since the sixteenth century, as the Kingdom of Hungary (or at least the western and northern regions of what had been the Kingdom of Hungary) had become part of the Habsburg monarchy in 1526. Thus, the history of the Jesuits in Hungary cannot be separated from the history of the province as a whole and must be studied in this context.[4] This is not a new insight. Hungarian Jesuit historians working in exile (in particular László Lukács [1910–1998] and László Szilas [1927–2012]) pursued research that was very clearly done in this spirit.[5]

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2 Egyed Hermann, *A katolikus egyház története Magyarországon 1914-ig* (Munich: Aurora, 1973), 369–435.

3 Zoltán Koronkai, S.J., "Az újraegyesüléstől napjainkig," in *Jezsuiták Magyarországon a kezdetektől napjainkig*, ed. Szokol Réka and Szőnyi Szilárd (Budapest: Jezsuita Kiadó, 2021), 568–609.

4 Zsófia Kádár, *Jezsuiták Nyugat-Magyarországon a 17. században: A pozsonyi, győri és soproni kollégiumok* (Budapest: BTK TTI, 2020).

5 Antal Molnár, "Római magyar iskola (Magyar jezsuita történészek Rómában 1950 után)," in *Historicus Societatis Iesu: Szilas László emlékkönyv*, ed. Antal Molnár, Csaba Szilágyi, and István Zombori (Budapest: METEM, 2007), 45–68.

The existing scholarship provides a solid foundation on which the present volume can build. In the 1930s, Hungarian Jesuits began to seek the key elements of their distinctive Hungarian Jesuit identity, and this led to a wide-ranging search for and rigorous study of archival sources. The members of a Hungarian Jesuit scholarly circle living in exile in Rome were the heirs to these efforts, and, after 1990, new generations of secular historians began to follow in their footsteps.[6] Their contributions were vital in part simply because, given the many upheavals the community had endured, the archival sources of the Austrian province and the Hungarian Jesuits were essentially scattered. Only fragments of the central provincial archives, which dated to the first period of the Society of Jesus (before 1773), remained in Vienna, which is why the relevant material found in the central archives in Rome, the Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu, is of such immense importance. Lukács began to explore these materials in depth and managed to amass a vast collection. The materials of the Hungarian houses that date to the period before its dissolution in 1773 were preserved in two large collections. The written records were typically transferred to the Hungarian Chamber, which took over control of properties and estates. The Archives of the Hungarian Chamber, including Acta Jesuitica, are now part of the National Archives of Hungary.[7] Manuscripts, including most of the volumes of *Historia domus* (histories of Jesuit houses), were transferred, together with the libraries of the houses, to the library of the University of Trnava (Nagyszombat in Hungarian). They can currently be found in the manuscript collection in the library of Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest, the successor to the University of Trnava.

The more recent materials had a similarly tumultuous fate. Although more of the materials in the central archives in Vienna from before 1909 have survived than from the earlier period, with the disintegration of the historic Kingdom of Hungary in the wake of the First World War, the written records from after 1853 are now located in archives in various East-Central European countries. When the successor states of the kingdom (Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Romania) fell under communist rule in the years leading up to 1950, further damage was done. The central archives of the independent Hungarian province, which had been created after 1909, were completely destroyed, for instance. Fortunately, Antal Petruch (1901–1978) has provided a thorough overview of the

6 Béla Vilmos Mihalik, "Centuries of Resumptions: The Historiography of the Jesuits in Hungary," in *Jesuit Historiography Online*, ed. Robert A. Maryks, https://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/jesuit-historiography-online/centuries-of-resumptions-the-historiography-of-the-jesuits-in-hungary-COM_192543 (accessed August 29, 2023).

7 Ferenc Maksay, *A Magyar Kamara Archívuma* (Budapest: Magyar Országos Levéltár, 1992), 44–47.

period between 1853 and 1950 in his two-volume monograph *Száz év a magyar jezsuiták múltjából* (One hundred years from the past of the Hungarian Jesuits [1992–1994]).[8] A significant share of the materials from the twentieth century is now held in the Archives of the Hungarian Jesuit Province in Budapest.[9]

I have divided the present volume into six parts, the metaphorical bookends of which are the major turning points in the history of the Hungarian Jesuits. In the first part, I present the antecedents to the first attempts to settle Jesuits in Hungary in the sixteenth century. In the second part, I examine what could be called the heroic era for the Society in the seventeenth century, that is, the period of confessional struggles up until 1687. The third part deals with what could be called the golden era, which lasted until the suppression of the Society in 1773. In part 4, I present the efforts to restore the Society of Jesus in Hungary in the nineteenth century and the circumstances of the establishment of the independent Hungarian province. The fifth part focuses on the history of the Hungarian Jesuits in the interwar period, coming to a close with the rise to power of the communist regime. In the sixth part, I examine the unusual situation that arose in the second half of the twentieth century and consider how the Hungarian Jesuit province managed to survive, albeit as two separate parts, despite the persecution to which it was subjected.

2 A Difficult Beginning (1561–1607)

2.1 *The Founding Father: Archbishop Nicolaus Olahus and the First College of Trnava*

Defeat at the Battle of Mohács was a stake through the heart for the medieval Kingdom of Hungary. Civil war broke out, and the Ottoman Empire was able to take control of the central region of the fallen kingdom without having to face any substantial resistance. This was a devastating shock to diverse strata of society. Many of the Catholic prelates had perished on the battlefield, and this was a major blow to the church as an institution. The primate, Archbishop of Esztergom László Szalkai (1475–1526, in office 1524–1526), was among the dead. Reformation ideas, which had been spreading since the early 1520s, offered a promising response to the social crisis and, partly as a consequence of the new upheavals, began to gain even greater popularity. The new archbishop, Pál

8 Antal Petruch, *Száz év a magyar jezsuiták múltjából*, vols. 1–2 (Kecskemét: Korda, 1992–1994).

9 Béla Vilmos Mihalik, “A nyolcvanéves jezsuita levéltár,” *Levéltári szemle* 64, no. 4. (2014): 47–59.

Várday (1483–1549, in office 1526–1549), held several synods and tried to use legal measures to curb the influence of the Reformation, but with little success.[10]

In 1553, Nicolaus Olahus (1493–1568), who was the nephew of King Matthias I (1443–1490, r.1458–1490) and a prominent humanist of his time, was appointed archbishop (in office 1553–1568). In 1526, before the Battle of Mohács, he had served as secretary to King Louis II (1506–1526, r.1516–1526) and his wife, Queen Mary of Austria (1505–1558). After Louis II died on the battlefield in 1526, Olahus accompanied Mary to the Low Countries. Here, he came into contact with Western European humanist intellectuals, including Erasmus (1466–1536). He returned to Hungary in 1542, where he became a high priest and was increasingly engaged in political affairs. He also campaigned against the Reformation and pursued a comprehensive reform of church practices, in parallel with the Council of Trent (1545–1563), which was being held at the time.[11] His primary models were probably the reforms introduced by the diocese of Vienna and the archdiocese of Salzburg. He introduced his ideas first in the new seat of the archdiocese of Esztergom. After Esztergom came under Ottoman occupation in 1543, Trnava was made the new seat of the archdiocese. Archbishop Olahus united the local town and chapter schools in Trnava, and he introduced new statutes to raise the educational standards. These measures included the reform and strengthening of the chapter of the archbishopric, which had also been relocated to Trnava. In 1558, he held a diocesan synod, which adopted a constitution of forty-four points (this was one of the first important documents in the reform of the Hungarian Catholic Church). In order to put the synod's provisions into practice, the archdeacons carried out church visitations between 1559 and 1562. The surviving sources from the time clearly show the decline of the Catholic ecclesiastical structure. Instead of the 550 parishes that had existed in the Middle Ages, only three hundred parishes had Catholic priests, and the sources indicate 159 married priests among

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10 György Laczlavik, "Várday Pál esztergomi érsek egyházfői tevékenységének vázlata," in *Archivariorum historicumque magistra: Történeti tanulmányok Bak Borbála tanárnő 70. születésnapjára*, ed. Zsófia Kádár, Bálint Lakatos, and Áron Zarnóczki (Budapest: Magyar Levéltárosok Egyesülete, 2013), 479–500.

11 Péter Kulcsár, "Oláh Miklós," in *Magyar művelődéstörténeti lexikon: Középkor és kora újkor*, ed. Péter Kőszeghy (Budapest: Osiris, 2008), 8:301–3. His correspondence has recently been published, with two volumes of letters from 1523 to 1553 published so far: Emőke Rita Szilágyi, ed., *Nicolaus Olahus: Epistulae pars I. 1523–1533* (Budapest: Reciti, 2019); Szilágyi, ed., *Nicolaus Olahus: Epistulae pars II. 1533–1553* (Budapest: Reciti, 2022). New studies on his life: Szilágyi, ed., *Nicolaus Olahus 450: Proceedings of the International Conference on the 450th Anniversary of Nicolaus Olahus' Death* (Vienna: Institut für Ungarische Geschichtsforschung in Wien; Balassi Institut Collegium Hungaricum in Wien; Ungarische Archivdelegation beim Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, 2019).

the clergy, but only twenty-nine had been declared heretics. In the wake of the observations that were made during the visitations, Archbishop Olahus held four more diocesan synods and, in 1561, a provincial synod. In 1566, he founded a diocesan seminary for ten students to facilitate the training of priests.[12]

This reform process included the settlement of the Jesuits in Hungary. The archbishop, who had been serving at the time as Hungarian chancellor, had already met the Jesuit Claude Le Jay (1504–1552) at the imperial diet in Worms in 1545. He had been so impressed by Le Jay's sermon that he had asked him for a copy.[13] King Ferdinand I (1503–1564, r.1526–1564) was also devoting more and more serious consideration to the possibility of settling Jesuits in Vienna. In the autumn of 1550, he approached Le Jay and expressed his desire to found a college for the Society in Vienna.[14] The emperor held Le Jay in particularly high esteem, so when he founded the Jesuit house in Vienna, he specifically asked Ignatius of Loyola (*c.*1491–1556), co-founder of the Society of Jesus and its first superior general (in office 1541–1556), to appoint Le Jay to serve as its head. This was the first Jesuit settlement in the Holy Roman Empire. New houses for the Society were also founded in the emerging Habsburg monarchy in Central Europe, such as the one in Prague, Bohemia, which was established in 1556. These "northern" houses were under the direct control of Ignatius until 1556. It was at this time that the Jesuit province of Germania Superior was created, with Peter Canisius (1521–1597) as its first provincial superior. Six years later, however, the organization of the Society was changed again. The Habsburg territories (Austria, Bohemia, the Kingdom of Hungary) were separated from the Upper German province, and then, with the addition of Poland and Lithuania to these territories, the Austrian province was created in 1562.[15]

These were the organizational frameworks within which Archbishop Olahus was able to begin settling members of the Society of Jesus in Hungary. In 1552, Ferdinand I's envoy in Rome was already discussing the possible establishment of three houses in Hungary with Ignatius. The following year, after having become archbishop, Olahus immediately contacted Canisius and the Jesuit

12 István Fazekas, "Oláh Miklós reformtörekvései az esztergomi egyházmegyében 1553–1568 között," *Történelmi szemle* 45, nos. 1–2 (2003): 139–53.

13 János Péteri [Antal Petruch], *Az első jezsuiták Magyarországon* (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 1963), 35.

14 Bernhard Duhr, *Geschichte der Jesuiten in den Ländern deutscher Zunge*, Bd. 1 (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1907), 45.

15 László Szilas, "Austria," in *Diccionario histórico de la Compañía de Jesús*, ed. Charles E. O'Neill and Joaquín María Domínguez (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 2001) 1:277.

rector in Vienna, Nicolas de Lanoy (1548–1581). The geographical location of Trnava (the archbishop's seat) and the archbishop's stable financial position made a good impression, but the increasingly ominous advances made by the Ottomans delayed the issue of establishing a presence in Hungary for a time. The Society opted instead for the city of Prague.[16]

The settlement of Jesuits in Hungary became particularly important for the archbishop after the school reform of 1554 in Trnava. During his frequent stays in Vienna, Olahus had ample opportunity to see the effective work of the Jesuits. Concrete negotiations, however, did not begin until 1558. The archbishop discussed the question with Father Juan de Vitoria (d.1578), rector of Vienna, who in 1553 became the first Jesuit to visit Hungary. The negotiations were long and complicated. Financial issues were the primary obstacle. Ferdinand I issued the founding charter on January 1, 1561, and by that summer, the Jesuits were able to move into the building that had been purchased for them.[17]

Johannes Seidel (1532–1570) became the first rector, and the school opened in the autumn, despite the lack of suitable buildings. Seidel soon came into conflict with the chapter, however. The students were unable to attend Masses at the chapter because of their schedules at the school, and the canons complained of this to the archbishop. Olahus confronted the Jesuits, and the dispute became more acrimonious. At one point, in one of his sermons, Seidel brashly insulted Canon Miklós Telegdy (1535–1586), the city's parish priest. The leadership of the Upper German province had no choice but hastily to recall the rector from Trnava. Also, an outbreak of plague decimated the college. Three priests perished, including Canisius's nephew Theodor (*c.*1542–1562). By the time the new rector, Hurtado Pérez (1526–1594), arrived, most of the staff at the college had been replaced.[18]

This fluctuation remained a problem in the following years. The college existed for seven years, and during this period, forty-six Jesuits were active in Trnava. Eleven of them were born in Hungary, but only four were of Hungarian nationality. The others did not know the languages that were used in the multiethnic region and thus, apart from their teaching, were only able to play a limited role as pastors.[19] Péter Hernáth (*c.*1539–1567), referred to as Petrus Hungarus by his colleagues, stood out among the first generation of Hungarian-born members of the Society. He was born near Pécs, the wealthy episcopal seat, but his

16 Péteri, *Az első jezsuiták Magyarországon*, 35, 43–44.

17 Antal Molnár, "A jezsuita rend a 16. századi Magyarországon," in Molnár, *Lehetetlen küldetés? Jezsuiták Erdélyben és Felső-Magyarországon a 16–17. században* (Budapest: L'Harmattan, 2009), 21–22.

18 Péteri, *Az első jezsuiták Magyarországon*, 133–36.

19 Molnár, "A jezsuita rend a 16. századi Magyarországon," 22.

family had had to flee because of the Ottoman advances. He had pursued studies in Vienna, where he had applied for admission to the Society, and he had been sent to Rome with the support of Canisius. He soon excelled among his peers because of his talents, and he was given the chance to teach logic and theology at the University of Dillingen. In 1566, hoping to resolve the conflict between the Jesuits of Trnava and the chapter of Esztergom, the leaders of the Society appointed him to serve as rector.[20] Hernáth's arrival on the scene came too late, however. In 1567, a fire broke out in the city, destroying the college. The rector died of the plague in the same year. In the end, the Society decided to close the college in Trnava and summon the Jesuits back from Hungary.[21]

The failure to found a stable institution in Trnava had valuable lessons for all involved. The Society's leaders saw confirmed their earlier fears that overly hasty attempts would undoubtedly flounder. Perhaps the most significant disadvantage was simply the lack of a secure financial basis. The archbishop and the king had donated various goods and estates to the college but in vain. The damage caused by Ottoman incursions and the misuse of various assets by the inspectors of the estates had seriously undermined the financial foundations of the endeavor. The Society, therefore, adopted a more cautious approach in its future dealings, insisting on adequate guarantees for any plans for a new foundation in Hungary. The archbishop also learned a valuable lesson from the events in Trnava. His primary goal, apart from the foundation of the school, had been to invigorate Catholic religious life in the city. This would have then provided a suitable basis for a more comprehensive process of re-Catholicization as a next step. This was hampered, however, by the Jesuits' lack of knowledge of the languages of the region and also by the fact that there were, quite simply, very few Hungarian priests among them.

Despite these obstacles, both the leadership of the Society and the Hungarian Catholic Church remained interested in the idea of establishing a Jesuit presence and pursuing missionary opportunities in Hungary. Trnava would have served as a kind of outpost for the Jesuits in Vienna and thus also as a springboard for further expansion to the south and east.[22] For the next three centuries, the city, which by the mid-sixteenth century had become the seat of the archbishopric, continued to play a central role in the Jesuits' institutional network within Hungary. The main goal continued to be to strengthen the Catholic Church and its organization, which had been eroded by the

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20 Dorottya Piroska B. Székely, "Petrus Hungarus, alias Hernáth Péter," in Réka and Szilárd, *Jezsuiták Magyarországon a kezdetektől napjainkig*, 68.

21 Molnár, "A jezsuita rend a 16. századi Magyarországon," 22.

22 Molnár, "A jezsuita rend a 16. századi Magyarországon," 22.

Reformation, with the help of the Jesuits. The establishment of the Society in Vienna had been an important step in this direction, since, as the center of the Habsburg monarchy, the imperial capital had a strong influence on the Hungarian regions close to it, including Trnava. Vienna thus also became a bastion of Jesuit expansion to the east.[23] The central role it would come to play was not necessarily immediately obvious in the mid-sixteenth century. Soon, another alternative for expansion of the Society of Jesus in Hungary arose in the north, through Transylvania, with Poland serving as an intermediary.

2.2 *A Polish Alternative? Foundations by King Stephan Báthory*

The civil war that broke out after 1526 between the two elected kings, Ferdinand I and John Zápolya (János Szapolyai [1487–1540, r.1526–1540]), drove another wedge into the territorial unity of the medieval Hungarian state. On August 29, 1541, roughly a year after Zápolya's death, Buda, the ancient capital, also fell into Ottoman hands. The widowed Queen Isabella (1519–1559) and her infant son, John II Sigismund (János Zsigmond [1540–1571]), were allowed to travel to the eastern region of the country by permission of Sultan Suleiman (*c.*1494–1566, r.1520–1566). Thus began three decades of dispute and rivalry between Zápolya's heir and the Habsburgs, a struggle that involved political, military, and diplomatic means. The dispute would have been brought to an end by the Treaty of Speyer in 1571, which essentially became the founding document of the Principality of Transylvania. However, John II had died when the treaty was being ratified, and the situation became uncertain again. In the end, Stephen Báthory (István Báthory [1533–1586]), the scion of an old noble family, emerged triumphant from the Transylvanian party struggles and, as the successor to John II, was elected voivode (in office 1571–1576). His political position was somewhat precarious at the outset, but he secured his claim to power by defeating his opponents at the Battle of Sânpaul (Kerelőszentpál in Hungarian) in 1575. He eliminated all internal opposition, and his position was further strengthened by his election as king of Poland (r.1576–1586) in the same year.[24]

The election of Báthory, a Catholic, was a serious turning point, since the situation of Catholicism in the emerging Principality of Transylvania was more precarious than in the Habsburg-ruled Kingdom of Hungary. In 1556,

23 Paul Shore, *Narratives of Adversity: Jesuits on the Eastern Peripheries of the Habsburg Realms (1640–1773)* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2012), 7–8.

24 Gábor Barta, "The Emergence of the Principality and Its First Crises (1526–1606)," in *History of Transylvania*, ed. Béla Köpeczi (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1989), 247–300, here 251–61; Teréz Oborni, *Erdély aranykora: Fejedelmek tündérkertje* (Budapest: Rubicon Intézet, 2021), 70–83.

the Transylvanian diet secularized the possessions of the Catholic Church, and Bishop Pál Bornemissza (1499–1579) was banished from the lands of the principality. The following year, another diet secularized the chapters and monasteries.[25] The notion that, in 1568, the Transylvanian diet of Turda (Torda in Hungarian) proclaimed equality among the various denominations has been repeated seemingly innumerable times in the secondary literature, but as has been all too often overlooked, the Catholics were in fact left out of this. Two years earlier, the Catholic clergy had already been banned from Transylvania by the diet. In the end, the right of Catholics to practice their religion freely was only put into law in 1595.[26]

By the 1570s, the spread of Reformation ideas had broken the Catholic hierarchy in Transylvania. The remnants of this hierarchy retreated to some areas of the Székely Land (first and foremost to Scaunul Ciuc [Csíkszék in Hungarian], an area lying in the northern valley of the Olt River and one of the historical Székely seats) and the estates of a few Catholic members of the nobility. The Catholic Stephen Báthory broke with the ecclesiastical policy of John Sigismund, who had been moving ever closer to Antitrinitarianism. Báthory's goal was to strengthen the Catholic Church, and he was counting on the help he might receive from the Jesuits. This only became a realistic possibility, however, after he had gained the Polish throne. During the first half of his reign (1571–1579), Báthory showed remarkable and, indeed, unusual patience when it came to religious issues, partly because he sought to consolidate his rule and partly because of the strength of the Protestant Transylvanian estates. Although he condemned Calvinist and Antitrinitarian tendencies, he considered religion fundamentally a question of the individual's freedom of conscience. Nonetheless, the laws passed by the Protestant estates in Transylvania affirmed Báthory's "limited tolerance."[27]

Negotiations between Báthory and the Jesuits began immediately after Báthory's election. The new ruler had met members of the Society in Vienna a few years earlier. The Hungarian Jesuit István Szántó (Arator) (1540–1612), who later came to play an important role, welcomed Báthory's election, and he himself pressed for the establishment of a Jesuit mission, at least on the

25 József Marton, "Választott püspökök és vikáriusok az Erdélyi Fejedelemség idején," in *Catholice reformare: A katolikus egyház a fejedelemség korában*, ed. Dávid Diósi and József Marton (Budapest: Szent István Társulat–Verbum, 2018), 107–26, here 111.

26 Mihály Balázs, "Tolerant Country—Misunderstood Laws: Interpreting Sixteenth-Century Transylvanian Legislation concerning Religion," *Hungarian Historical Review* 2, no. 1 (2013): 85–108.

27 Ildikó Horn, *Hit és hatalom: Az erdélyi unitárius nemesség 16. századi története* (Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, 2009), 103–6.

Báthory estates. In the following years, Szántó made no effort to avoid conflicts in his strivings to further the cause of bringing Jesuits to the principality and facilitating missionary work. Báthory wrote to the Austrian provincial superior Lorenzo Maggio (*c.*1531–1605, in office as provincial superior of Austria 1566–1578) to ask him to send missionaries. However, the relatively fresh memory of the failed attempt in Trnava prompted the Jesuits in Vienna to exercise caution.[28] There were also tensions between Báthory and the Habsburgs because of Báthory's election to the Polish throne. Under the circumstances, the Austrian Jesuit province understandably did not dare attempt to organize a mission in Transylvania, since the Viennese court would never have looked favorably on such an undertaking.[29] The settlement of Jesuits in Transylvania was also hindered by the Holy See's reluctance to recognize Báthory's rule in Poland out of consideration for Emperor Maximilian II (1527–76, r.1564–1576), whose candidature had been rejected by the Polish nobility. Recognition by the Holy See came only after the emperor's death on October 12, 1576.[30]

By that time, the prefects of the Society were also leaning toward establishing a Jesuit presence in Transylvania, not from the direction of the Austrian province but rather from the Polish one. The Jesuits had settled in Poland during the reign of Sigismund II Augustus (1520–1572, r.1548–1572), the last Jagiellonian monarch, at the invitation of Cardinal Stanisław Hozius, bishop of Warmia (1504–1579, in office 1551–1579). The first college was founded in Braniewo, followed by several others over the course of the following years. At the time, the Polish houses were part of the Austrian province, but they formed a separate Polish vice-province.[31] The rapid development of the network of colleges made it necessary to create an independent Polish province in 1574.[32]

When Báthory was elected Polish king, he knew he could rely on the support of an independent Polish province to implement his plans for Transylvania. Vilnius University, which was one of Báthory's most important Jesuit foundations in Poland, became the model for a later Transylvanian experiment. In 1568, the bishop of Vilnius Valerian Protasevičius (1504–1579, in office 1556–1579) created a burse for the establishment of a Jesuit college, which

28 Tamás Kruppa, "Kísérletek Erdély rekatolizációjára: Tervek az erdélyi püspökség visszaállítására Báthory István és Zsigmond idejében," *Magyar egyháztörténeti vázlatok: Regnum* 14, nos. 1–4 (2002): 39–74, here 42.

29 Molnár, "A jezsuita rend a 16. századi Magyarországon," 24.

30 Kruppa, "Kísérletek Erdély rekatolizációjára," 53.

31 Ludwik Piechnik, "Polonia," in *Diccionario histórico de la Compañía de Jesús*, ed. Charles E. O'Neill and Joaquín María Domínguez (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 2001), 4:3173–74.

32 Ludwik Grzebień, ed., *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach na ziemiach Polski i Litwy 1564–1995* (Kraków: Wydział Filozoficzny Towarzystwa Jezusowego, 1996), 540.

opened its doors two years later, in 1570. Instruction in philosophy (1571) was gradually complemented by mathematics (1574) and theology (1578). Báthory issued the royal charter in 1578, and this was soon followed by papal confirmation. On October 30, 1579, Pope Gregory XIII (1502–1585, r.1572–1585) issued his bull *Dum attenta*, which conferred papal privileges on the new university.[33]

In the meantime, Szántó, who was active as a confessor in Rome, continued to keep the issue of settling Jesuits in Transylvania on the agenda. After Báthory became king of Poland, he entrusted his brother Christopher Báthory (Kristóf Báthory [1530–1581]) with the task of governing Transylvania as voivode (in office 1576–1581). Szántó wrote a letter to the new Polish king and Christopher Báthory. Stephen Báthory supported his plan and asked his brother to facilitate the settlement of Jesuits in the cities of Alba Iulia (Gyulafehérvár in Hungarian) and Cluj-Mănăştur (Kolozsmonostor in Hungarian). The Báthory brothers, however, continued to dally. Szántó did achieve some modest successes in Rome. He managed to have two Hungarian Jesuits, János Leleszi (*c.*1548–1595) and György Tőrös (*c.*1544–1586), transferred to Vienna, from where they had the opportunity to pursue missions in Hungary and Transylvania. In the end, Leleszi broke the deadlock by taking a rather bold step. He traveled without the permission of his superiors from Upper Hungary to Alba Iulia, the seat of the Principality of Transylvania. By doing so, he furthered the settlement of Jesuits in Transylvania, because Stephen Báthory ordered his brother to have the Jesuits settled in Cluj-Mănăştur.[34]

Báthory had learned an important lesson from the uncertainties of the early 1570s, however. Given the reluctance his plans met with in the Austrian province, he sought the help of Polish provincial superior Francisco Sunyer (*c.*1532–1580, in office 1575–1580). The first Polish Jesuits arrived at the former Benedictine abbey of Cluj-Mănăştur in the autumn of 1579. This attempt by the Báthory brothers seems to have been more successful than the efforts to settle Jesuits in Trnava, the laws restricting the Catholic Church in Transylvania notwithstanding. Less than two years later, Jesuits were able to move into the city of Cluj (Kolozsvár in Hungarian), where they were given the renovated building of the former Franciscan friary.[35]

Though Cluj was not the seat of the principality, it was undoubtedly the most important city in Transylvania. It was an important center for trade and

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33 Antal Molnár and Dániel Siptár, "Egyetem volt-e a kolozsvári 'Báthory-egyetem'?," in Antal Molnár, *Lehetetlen küldetés? Jezsuiták Erdélyben és Felső-Magyarországon a 16–17. században* (Budapest: L'Harmattan, 2009), 29–48, here 39.

34 Csaba Szilágyi, "Szántó (Arator) István mint a Missio Transylvanica szervezője," in *A magyar jezsuiták küldetése a kezdetektől napjainkig*, ed. Csaba Szilágyi (Piliscsaba: PPKE BTK, 2006), 131–41, here 138–40.

35 Molnár, "A jezsuita rend a 16. századi Magyarországon," 24–25.

had a strong cultural influence. Once they were allowed to move into the city, the Jesuits immediately opened their school, which soon became a successful alternative to the city's Unitarian school. The number of students at the Jesuit school consistently ranged between 150 and two hundred. A seminary for priests was opened in 1583, and in 1585 higher education was launched with the creation of a faculty of philosophy.[36] Whether the institution in Cluj should actually be considered a university is the subject of an old debate in the secondary literature. As it so happens, Báthory did not request papal privileges for the school in Cluj, as had been done in the case of Vilnius. According to more recent research, the Cluj school was one of the so-called "academic grammar schools."[37]

Cluj was also important in the history of the Jesuits in Hungary because it is the first place where records are found concerning the creation of the Marian congregation, which had not been possible in Trnava. By 1582, the congregation definitely existed, alongside the Jesuit College of Cluj, to which the most talented students were admitted. Many of the city's denizens also attended the Masses and services held by the congregation. Considerably more important than this, however, was the fact that the generation of Jesuits who would later determine the development of the Society in Hungary in the first half of the seventeenth century grew out of the circle of Transylvanian students who belonged to the Marian congregation.[38] Thus, one could hardly call into question the cultural influence of the Jesuit College of Cluj. It continued to function, with short interruptions, until 1603, and it unquestionably contributed significantly to the strengthening and survival of Catholicism in Transylvania.

In addition to Cluj, there were two other places in the Transylvanian Principality where Jesuits were active. A smaller community with ten members was established next to the princely court in Alba Iulia. This was an important step, since the seat of the principality had had a strong Protestant character under the reign of John Sigismund. Voivode Christopher Báthory broke with this when he wanted to ensure that his son Sigismund Báthory (1572–1613) would get a Jesuit education. It is worth keeping in mind, just as an illustration of the complexity of the confessional situation at the time, that the voivode's wife was a Calvinist who was very much opposed to the idea of her son getting a Catholic education. In the afternoons, she would have a Calvinist pastor

36 Molnár, "A jezsuita rend a 16. századi Magyarországon," 25.

37 Molnár and Siptár, "Egyetem volt-e a kolozsvári 'Báthory-egyetem'?," 42–48.

38 Mihály Balázs, "Kolozsvár és Vágsellye: Adalék a Mária kongregációk korai történetéhez," in *Emlékkönyv Kiss András születésének nyolcvanadik évfordulójára*, ed. Sándor Pál-Antal et al. (Cluj: EME, 2003), 7–17, here 8–11.

meet with Sigismund to explain to him why the Jesuit teachings were false. The Jesuits were given the buildings of the former Dominican monastery and church in Alba Iulia. They opened a public school in the city that in 1585 had almost one hundred students.[39] All this suggested that there would soon be dramatic changes in the confessional relations in the seat of the principality.

In 1571, the Treaty of Speyer gave several Hungarian border counties to Transylvania. This was the region known as Partium. One of the most important cities in this region was Oradea (Várad in Hungarian), the old episcopal see and burial place of Saint Ladislaus I of Hungary (1040–1095), the medieval Hungarian king (r.1077–1095) known from legends as the knight-king. Although the Catholic Church was compelled, in accordance with Transylvanian law, to withdraw from the city, with the exception of a few years, the local Catholic community had always had a parish priest. Given its geographical location in the border region between the Kingdom of Hungary, Transylvania, and the Ottoman Empire, Oradea enjoyed considerable influence, so in the first half of the 1580s the Society supported the establishment of a mission in the city, which was led by Szántó for four years. In 1584, the Catholics of Oradea wrote to Superior General Claudio Acquaviva (1543–1615, in office 1581–1615) and asked him to secure a Jesuit mission in the city for them. Thanks to its geographical position, the city met the hopes that had been pinned on it. Szántó conducted missions not only in the surrounding region but even in the distant cities of Caransebeş (Karánsebes in Hungarian) and Lugoj (Lugos in Hungarian), which were under Ottoman rule at the time.[40]

In 1586, however, the Jesuits suffered several heavy blows. An outbreak of plague in the principality that summer killed twenty-four of the forty-five Transylvanian Jesuits. Although the Polish province quickly replaced the members who had perished, the previously intensive work began to flag. The most devastating blow, however, came at the end of the year. On December 13, Stephen Báthory died in Grodno (today in western Belarus). This loss of a patron who had been a pillar for the Society was soon felt. The background to the settlement of Jesuits in Transylvania revealed that, as had been the case in Trnava, the conditions were simply not adequate for long-term operations. In addition to the necessary financial foundations, the essential political backing was also lacking, as the turn of events after the death of Báthory made all

39 András Szabó, "Antitrinitáriusok, reformátusok és jezsuiták Gyulafehérvárott, 1557–1588," *Erdélyi Múzeum* 77 (2015): 42–50, here 48–49.

40 Antal Meszlényi, *A magyar jezsuiták a XVI. században* (Budapest: Szent István Társulat, 1931), 167–75.

too plain.[41] The Hungarian Jesuits in Transylvania also found it increasingly difficult to cooperate with the Polish province. Szántó, for instance, who had been one of the most active promoters of the Jesuit presence in Transylvania, came into serious conflict with Jakub Wujek (*c.*1541–1597), the Polish rector of the college in Cluj. Wujek complained repeatedly about Szántó's allegedly unmanageable character and the way he conducted himself in his dealings with the Polish superiors. Szántó had similar complaints about Wujek. In 1581, he sent a letter directly to Superior General Acquaviva in which he wrote of his bitter experiences with the Polish province. He asked Acquaviva to remove Wujek and, more generally, to take Transylvania out from under the Polish Jesuit administration. He also asked Acquaviva and, through him, the Austrian provincial superior Maggio to send members of the Austrian province to Transylvania instead.[42] In the end, the fate of the Transylvanian Jesuit mission (*Missio Transylvanica*) was sealed when Báthory's heirs, having taken the political constellation into consideration, felt compelled at least temporarily to withdraw their support for the Jesuits.

2.3 *Modest Hopes: Kláštor pod Znievom and Šaľa*

The failed undertaking in Trnava and the Transylvanian–Polish alternative definitely kept the question of settling the Jesuits afloat in the Habsburg-ruled part of the country too. This was due in no small part to Szántó's assiduous efforts to keep the Hungarian cause on the agenda in Rome. In 1575, Szántó became a Hungarian confessor in Rome, where, thanks to the initiatives of Pope Gregory XIII, national colleges were being established one after the other. In 1578, in the hope of winning the support of the Holy See for the establishment of a Hungarian college, Szántó put together a memorandum titled *De Collegio Hungarico in urbe excitando libellus* (A booklet on the foundation of the Hungarian College in Rome). Szántó saw the college as an important tool in the revival of Catholicism in Hungary and the continued struggle against the spread of Reformation ideas. Szántó was already cautioning at the time against sending newly arrived Hungarian students to the Collegium Germanicum. The origins of his opposition to the Habsburgs and the German nation (*natio Germanica*) may have lain simply in the fact that, at that time, he was Stephen Báthory's protégé. In the end, having succeeded in winning the support of some of the cardinals, Pope Gregory XIII issued the founding bull of the Collegium Hungaricum on March 1, 1579. However, unsettled questions concerning the properties involved and the small number of students caused problems from the outset. The pope decided that year to merge the Collegium

41 Molnár, "A jezsuita rend a 16. századi Magyarországon," 25.

42 Kruppa, "Kísérletek Erdély rekatolizációjára," 61.

Germanicum and the Collegium Hungaricum.[43] Báthory later attempted to exert his influence in Rome through his nephew, András Báthory (1563–1599), and persuade the Holy See to make the Hungarian institution separate again, but his efforts were in vain.[44]

From the 1570s on, parallel with the attempts in Rome and Transylvania, plans were constantly being hatched to ask the Jesuits to return to Hungary. In 1575, Superior General Everard Mercurian (1514–1580, in office 1573–1580) was informed by Vienna that a canon of Esztergom (not mentioned by name) had invited the Jesuits to return to Trnava, presumably to hold a mission.[45] The Jesuit Antonio Possevino (1533–1611), who had been entrusted by the pope to work in Central Europe, made a six-week tour of Transylvania and Upper Hungary. Possevino met with the Hungarian prelates in Bratislava (Pozsony in Hungarian, Preßburg in German) and suggested that the Jesuits be invited to return. He felt that the territory and estates of the medieval Premonstratensian priory of Turiec (Turóc in Hungarian), which at the time were in the possession of bishops, would provide suitable land for a Jesuit settlement, as well as the necessary foundation for financial stability. These lands were also an ideal place for a Jesuit settlement, in Possevino's assessment, because they were equidistant from Kraków, Vienna, and the Ottomans.[46]

Possevino's proposal eventually found a supporter in Cardinal György Draskovich, archbishop of Kalocsa (1515–1587). Draskovich had one of the most successful careers of his time as a prominent figure of the church. He was the scion of an old noble family in Slavonia and the nephew of Cardinal George Martinuzzi (or György Fráter [1482–1551]), and therefore enjoyed a thorough education abroad. He became bishop of Pécs in 1557 and, from 1561, took part in the Council of Trent as an envoy of Ferdinand I, where he played an active role in several debates and supported proposals for reforms. Upon returning home, he was appointed bishop of Zagreb, then archbishop of Kalocsa (1573) and bishop of Győr (1578), and eventually cardinal (1585). Both as bishop of Zagreb and Győr, Draskovich played a major role in implementing the reforms of the Council of Trent in Hungary.[47]

43 István Dávid Lázár, "Kísérlet a Római Collegium Hungaricum megalapítására 1578–1579," *Acta historiae litterarum hungaricarum* 25 (1988): 135–43.

44 Kruppa, "Kísérletek Erdély rekatolizációjára," 62.

45 László Lukács, *Monumenta antiquae Hungariae* (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 1969), 1:535, no. 247, Vienna, November 13, 1575.

46 Emil Krapka and Vojtech Mikula, eds., *Dejiny Spoločnosti Ježišovej na Slovensku 1561–1988* (Cambridge: Dobrá kniha, 1990), 38.

47 András Koltai, "A győri egyházmegye 1579. évi szombathelyi zsinata," *Magyar egyháztörténeti vázlatok: Regnum* 7, nos. 3–4 (1995): 41–60, here 44–45.

The recall of the Jesuits to the Kingdom of Hungary was an important element in Draskovich's reform activities. In 1586, the cardinal managed to convince Rudolf I (1552–1612, r.1576–1608) to give the priory of Turiec to the Jesuits. Superior General Acquaviva, however, delayed the establishment of the college for several reasons. He viewed the future of the foundation as uncertain due to the peripheral location of its estates and the problems that could potentially arise with regard to their administration. Furthermore, he was concerned by the lack of spry Hungarian Jesuits who would be able to adapt to the distinctive conditions of the country and work effectively. The Jesuits in Vienna, who were temporarily overseeing the royal endowment, feared that, given the obvious uncertainties troubling the center in Rome, the estates would eventually end up in the hands of other figures of the church. The priory had two centers: Kláštor pod Znievom (Znióváralja in Hungarian) and Šaľa (Vágsellye in Hungarian).[48] Initially, temporary missions were led here, but in 1588 a permanent mission was created that was subordinate to the College of Vienna. Joannes Nicolaus Donius (*c.*1538–1594), the former rector in Vienna who had experience with Hungarian affairs, was appointed prefect in Kláštor pod Znievom. By 1591, the institution had been given the status of a college, and two years later, it was functioning as a full-fledged grammar school. The Jesuits grappled with numerous obstacles, however. First and foremost, Gábor Révay (d.1598), the Lutheran lord lieutenant of Turóc County, strove to hinder them in their work. The Society made considerable efforts to establish good relations with Révay, even going so far as to perform a play in his honor, but in vain. In 1592, the college was attacked and its library destroyed. The county's assembly forbade noble youths from studying at the Jesuit grammar school, and they also forbade the serfs from attending Catholic Masses and sermons. At the diet held in 1599, the Protestant estates even pushed through a law that would have taken the Turiec priory away from the Jesuits, but Rudolf I refused to sign it.[49]

Though the Jesuits were not overly unsettled or discouraged by these attacks, in 1598, they still moved the college to Šaľa, as it had a more favorable location. When the Society had taken possession of Šaľa in 1586, Donius noted that the modest town had no city walls and the houses were comparatively simple. Šaľa did enjoy broad judicial privileges, however, which were enforced by a local court consisting of a few members of the nobility with some knowledge of the law. After the Jesuits had been installed, they found themselves embroiled in lengthy legal battles with the local nobility and freemen (so-called "libertinus"). The fathers accused the local smallholders of having illegally acquired land

48 Molnár, "A jezsuita rend a 16. századi Magyarországon," 23.

49 Krapka and Mikula, *Dejiny Spoločnosti Ježišovej*, 40–41.

that had belonged to the estates of the priory. By 1599, the Jesuits had won the lawsuits and had also purchased other estates.[50]

There were no more than some eight to twelve Jesuit priests working in the two houses at any given time, and most of them still did not know and did not bother to learn Hungarian, and they presumably also did not know much if any Slovak, another important language in the region. Kláštor pod Znievom and Šaľa were only of peripheral significance and had, at most, a small, local influence.[51] A school was opened beside the college in Šaľa, which had more positive long-term effects, however. When Spanish priest Emmanuel Vega (*c.*1550–1640), who had served as the prefect of the Marian congregation in Cluj, left Transylvania in 1587, many of his fellow young priests did the same and entered the Society of Jesus. One of them was Sándor Dobokay (1565–1621), who, as a rector of the church in Šaľa, founded the local Marian congregation. Although there are very few sources concerning this local congregation, some prominent members of the church were definitely honorary members, including Ferenc Forgách, bishop of Nitra (Nyitra in Hungarian [1560–1615, in office 1596–1607]) at the time. The future cardinal-archbishop Forgách may even have served as the honorary president (*praesul*) of the congregation, as suggested by the fact that, in 1604, he arranged for the Šaľa congregation to join the Prima Primaria, the main congregation in Rome, which oversaw the entire network.[52]

Very few sources have survived concerning the functioning of the school in the subsequent years, but we do know that many noblemen who later came to play influential roles studied there. The most prominent among them was Miklós Esterházy (1583–1645), who served as palatine of Hungary between 1625 and 1645. As palatine, Esterházy was the highest dignitary of the kingdom and one of the most important advocates of the Society of Jesus in the early seventeenth century. Many members of families who belonged to the lesser nobility were also able to pursue studies at the school in Šaľa, and they later invited Jesuits to hold missions on their estates, which was an important step in the strengthening of Catholicism in the region.[53]

2.4 *On the Brink of Exile*

In 1581, after the death of his brother Christopher, the childless Stephen Báthory made Christopher's underage son Sigismund his heir in Transylvania. When

50 Veronika Novák, ed., *Vágsellye 1002–2002* (Šaľa: Vágsellye és Vidéke Polgári Társulás, 2002), 31–32.

51 Molnár, "A jezsuita rend a 16. századi Magyarországon," 23.

52 Balázs, "Kolozsvár és Vágsellye," 12–13.

53 Molnár, "A jezsuita rend a 16. századi Magyarországon," 23.

Báthory died at the end of 1586, Sigismund Báthory, who was still a minor, became the new prince. This led to political volatility, as various parties competed for influence over the young prince. In this increasingly tense situation, the Jesuits in Transylvania became easy targets and scapegoats.[54] They were the focus of attention in no small part because, since the late 1570s, they had been Sigismund's tutors at the princely court in Alba Iulia.

The Protestant estates in Transylvania made every effort to undo the results of Báthory's Catholic restoration. The nobility, in exchange for recognition of Sigismund as an adult, forced the exile of the Jesuits. Similarly problematic for the Society was the fact that, between 1586 and 1588, the other members of the Báthory dynasty were not unequivocal in their support for the Jesuits. Sigismund's cousin, Cardinal Andrew Báthory (1563–1599), bishop of Warmia (1589–1599), played a particularly important role in this respect. His relationship with the Jesuits had significantly cooled. Understandably, it was more important for the family to maintain power than to risk civil war, and the Society's expulsion seemed an acceptable sacrifice.[55] Cardinal Báthory, of course, also blamed the Jesuits. Many of the young students who had left Cluj with Vega in 1587 had joined the novitiate in Kraków without the permission of their families. The cardinal claimed that this had been a fatal mistake, which turned public sentiment in Transylvania even more against the Society.[56]

In 1588, the diet of Mediaş (Medgyes in Hungarian) banished the Jesuits from Transylvania, a decision that the young Sigismund Báthory had no choice but to approve. Pope Sixtus V (1521–1590, r.1585–1590) responded by putting the principality under interdict, though he later gave the prince permission to have confessors at his court in Alba Iulia to whom members of the Catholic fold could turn for confession and Communion. His cousin, Cardinal Andrew Báthory, acted as a mediator between Sigismund and the Holy See in an attempt to convince the latter that the young prince was acting under political duress. Sigismund did all he could to get the Society of Jesus back as soon as possible, but neither the Austrian nor the Polish province showed much enthusiasm. The Austrians were wary because of the anti-German sentiments among the Transylvanian Jesuits, and the Poles had not forgotten the tensions that had arisen in the 1580s between the Hungarian and Polish Jesuits in Transylvania. In the end, the Austrian Jesuits accepted the task. Leleszi was appointed head of

54 Barta, "Emergence of the Principality," 263, 293–94.

55 Tamás Kruppa, "A katolikus megújulás ügye Erdélyben a Báthory-korszakban (1580–1605)," in *Catholice reformare: A katolikus egyház a fejedelemség korában*, ed. Dávid Diósi and József Marton (Budapest: Szent István Társulat, 2018), 175–237, here 190–91.

56 Balázs, "Kolozsvár és Vágsellye," 11–12.

the Transylvanian mission, but this was little more than a formality, as Leleszi was by then an elderly bedridden man residing in Vienna. The return of the Society was, in fact, prepared by the Spanish Alfonso Carrillo (1553–1618), who traveled to the principality in 1591 for this purpose.[57] With the help of Superior General Acquaviva, Carrillo was granted broad prerogatives by the Holy See. He was able to consecrate churches, hold Mass several times a day, grant the children of heretical parents who hoped to enter the priesthood exemptions and bless mixed marriages.[58]

It would have been possible, soon after Carrillo's arrival, to have resettled the Jesuits in Transylvania. The Báthory family, which had again managed to consolidate its hold on power, presumably would have been able to assert its will at the Transylvanian diet. It was precisely Prince Sigismund's cousins, however, who thwarted the Jesuits' aims. Having failed to realize his aspirations at the diet, Carrillo bitterly remarked of Cardinal Andrew Báthory that he "wished he had never come here from Poland." To avoid further tensions, Carrillo ordered the Jesuits in Transylvania to stop wearing the garb of the Society and to dress as secular priests.[59]

In the 1590s, Transylvania found itself in an increasingly tumultuous domestic political crisis, aggravated by the decision of Prince Sigismund to join the war against the Ottoman Empire as an ally of the Habsburgs. This led to internal party struggles in the prince's court between those who supported the Habsburg war effort and those who would have preferred to maintain peaceful ties with the Porte. Ultimately, the pro-Habsburg side prevailed, and Sigismund Báthory settled scores with pro-Ottoman politicians, even going so far as to have one of his own cousins executed in 1594. To seal the alliance between Transylvania and the Habsburgs, Sigismund married Rudolf I's niece, Archduchess Maria Christina (1574–1621). He thus managed at least temporarily to consolidate his hold on power, which he used to strengthen the position of Catholicism. In 1595, the diet of Alba Iulia put into law the free practice of the Catholic religion.[60] The diet also agreed to allow the Jesuits to pursue their work in the principality in Cluj-Mănăştur, Cluj, and Alba Iulia. The last years of the sixteenth century, however, were nothing like the comparably peaceful 1580s. After 1598, the principality was gradually falling into anarchy, and the Society withdrew for the most part to the cities, which offered more promise

57 Kruppa, "Kísérletek Erdély rekatolizációjára," 63–64, 67–68.
58 László Szilas, *Alfonso Carrillo jezsuita Erdélyben (1591–1599)* (Budapest: METEM, 2001), 29–30.
59 Szilas, *Alfonso Carrillo*, 34–37.
60 Kruppa, "A katolikus megújulás," 204–5.

of stability. Under the circumstances, it was virtually impossible to pursue missionary work.[61]

In 1599, when Prince Sigismund abdicated due to the deteriorating political situation, Cardinal Andrew Báthory took over the country for a short time. Michael II the Brave (Mihai Viteazul [1558–1601]), the voivode of Wallachia (in office 1593–1601), soon invaded the country and defeated the cardinal, who was killed while attempting to flee. Transylvania then fell under Habsburg rule for a few years, governed by General Giorgio Basta (1550–1607, in office 1601–1604) on behalf of Rudolf I. Though he was only in power for three years, Basta's name remains a synonym for despotic rule in Transylvanian history.[62]

Under the tumultuous circumstances, Basta also counted on the Jesuits as a means with which to pacify the principality, which was on the verge of anarchy. In 1601, with the help of Michael II the Brave, Basta defeated Prince Sigismund, who had returned to attempt to reclaim the throne, at the Battle of Guruslău (Goroszló in Hungarian). After the battle, the invading armies seized Alba Iulia, where the Jesuit house stood defenseless. The fathers were only able to leave the city thanks to Basta's intervention, but the college was pillaged. Basta was inclined to support the Jesuits, and in 1602 he confirmed the colleges of Alba Iulia and Cluj by a letter of donation. The situation in Cluj, however, was increasingly tense because of the refugees streaming in from all parts of the principality. The city was struggling with a shortage of supplies, and the Jesuit rector was not willing to share the college's grain reserves, even after repeated requests. An enraged mob broke into the college and murdered Father Emmanuel Neri (*c.*1575–1603). The other priests were spared by local burghers. The Austrian province appointed Giovanni Argenti (1560–1629) as the new rector of the Cluj college and also as deputy provincial superior. A surviving report issued by Argenti reveals that, after 1603, the Jesuits of Cluj strove to strike a sustainable balance in the grave political situation. They stood up for the city against the excesses of the military government, and they began teaching again. Soon, they had some 260 students in three classes.[63]

The prolonged war, the policies adopted by the Habsburg court toward Transylvania and Hungary, and the aggressive efforts by the Catholic Church to push Counter-Reformation ideas and practices soon generated serious tensions in the broad strata of society. The anti-Habsburg movement was led by Stephen Bocskai (1557–1606), a Calvinist and Sigismund Báthory's maternal

61 Kruppa, "A katolikus megújulás," 231; Molnár, "A jezsuita rend a 16. századi Magyarországon," 23.

62 Barta, "Emergence of the Principality," 295–97.

63 Kruppa, "A katolikus megújulás," 231–35.

uncle. In 1604–1606, Bocskai secured his hold on power in Upper Hungary with a series of military successes, even capturing the city of Košice (Kassa in Hungarian), which was the administrative and ecclesiastical seat of the region. He was elected prince of Transylvania in 1605 (in office 1605–1606), and in 1606 he managed to press Rudolf I into making considerable concessions in the Peace of Vienna. And in the meantime, the Peace of Zsitvatorok brought the Fifteen Years War, or the Long Turkish War (1591–1606), to an end.[64]

The Bocskai uprising also had serious implications for the Jesuits, both in Transylvania and in Habsburg Hungary. At the Transylvanian diet, Bocskai tried twice to have the Jesuits expelled from Transylvania, but this time, the Transylvanian estates refused. Their hesitancy may seem surprising, given the precedents, but it was also understandable. They were hardly fond of the Society of Jesus, but the twists and turns in the war against the Ottomans and the years of anarchy in Transylvania had convinced them to show some degree of caution. They did not yet dare to make an open display of their dislike for the Society, which, after all, enjoyed the support of the Habsburgs. The town council of Cluj also did not demand the expulsion of the fathers. It only insisted on the return of the properties they had been given. This accorded with the article of the Peace of Vienna regarding the Jesuits, which did not explicitly proclaim the expulsion of the Jesuits but merely declared that the order was not entitled to possess properties. Thus, the Society was not allowed to own any properties in the cities, any estates, or any other assets or form of property that would have been necessary for it to function. In the end, the political consolidation that came in the wake of the Peace of Vienna and the Peace of Zsitvatorok brought an end to the legal presence of the Jesuits as an active religious order in Transylvania. In 1607, having accurately discerned the shifting constellation of power, the Transylvanian diet proclaimed the expulsion—again—of the Jesuits from the principality.[65]

The two Jesuit communities in Hungary, however, had met their fate in 1605. Bocskai's Hajduks pushed as far as Lower Hungary, forcing the Jesuits to flee both Kláštor pod Znievom and Šaľa. The destruction of their house in Kláštor pod Znievom was of symbolic importance. Szántó, who had been the defining figure, as a Jesuit priest in the period between 1570 and 1600, was active in Kláštor pod Znievom as a homilist at that time. Of his impressive literary work, he was able to save only the manuscripts of his translations of the Quran when he was forced to flee. Most of his writings—the result of some four decades of

64 Pálffy, *Between Two Empires*, 119–21.

65 Kruppa, "A katolikus megújulás," 236–37.

work—fell victim to fire. The broken old Jesuit escaped to Moravia, and in 1612, he died in Olomouc.[66]

3 The Age of Heroes (1607–1683)

3.1 *The Jesuit Archbishop: Cardinal Péter Pázmány and the Strengthening of the Society*

The expulsion of the Transylvanian and Hungarian Jesuits did not constitute a complete rupture in the history of the Society in Hungary. It was precisely in these years (1602–1607) that the Society settled in the Croatian city of Zagreb. The Kingdom of Croatia had been in a personal union with the Kingdom of Hungary since the Middle Ages, and this union survived within the new framework provided by the Habsburg monarchy. Each of the two kingdoms exerted a strong cultural and political influence on the other, and this mutual interaction was also important in the field of religious life. Croatia had remained a faithful member of the Catholic fold throughout the tumultuous sixteenth century, and the Reformation had had little lasting effect in the kingdom. The success story of the creation of a Jesuit settlement in Zagreb has nonetheless remained a little-known chapter in the history of the Jesuits in Hungary. One reason for this is the manner in which the two nations later came to drift apart and even came to face each other on the battlefield by the mid-nineteenth century, as well as the successful foundation of Jesuit communities and institutions in Hungary. And yet the first foundation of a Jesuit college that was a lasting success took place in the Croatian capital, which was also an important administrative and ecclesiastical seat at the time. In the story of the settlement of Jesuits in Zagreb, a familiar family name appears. János Draskovich (*c.*1550–1613), the Croatian ban (a kind of viceroy, in office 1595–1606) who invited the Society to the Croatian capital, was the nephew of Cardinal György Draskovich, who had supported the settlement of Jesuits in Kláštor pod Znievom. The founding of the college in Zagreb has been largely neglected in the later Hungarian secondary literature, though it was unquestionably a significant event for the Jesuits of Hungary at the time, and it formed an integral part of their identity.[67]

The founding of the Jesuit college in Zagreb was a close continuation of the sixteenth-century antecedents. There was internal ecclesiastical and legal discord and strife in the city at the turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth

66 Csaba Szilágyi, "Szántó (Arator) István erdélyi és partiumi működése (1580–1588)," *Történelmi szemle* 44, nos. 3–4 (2002): 291.

67 Kádár, *Jezsuiták Nyugat-Magyarországon*, 35.

centuries, and the city council feared that these conflicts posed a threat to the pastoral care for the burghers of the Croatian capital. When the Zagreb envoys attended the diet in Bratislava in 1601, they met Ivan Zanič (*c.*1561–1607), the Croatian-born superior of the Jesuit house in Kláštor pod Znievom. The envoys turned to him for help and requested that two Jesuits be sent to Zagreb. It was Zanič who interceded and passed on the request from Zagreb to Carrillo. Carrillo, who had played an important role in Transylvania, was serving as an Austrian provincial superior at the time. Over the course of the next few years, negotiations of varying intensity were held, and on October 28, 1606, Zanič and another young Jesuit began working actively in Zagreb, where they soon opened a school. The Jesuit residence in Zagreb gradually grew stronger, and in 1612 it was elevated to the status of a college.[68] Zanič was a kind of symbolic link between the two centuries: he was the last prefect in Kláštor pod Znievom before its destruction and the first prefect in Zagreb.

The active role played by the Croatian ban, János Draskovich, in the foundation of Zagreb also made very clear that the question of the settlement of Jesuits was no longer an "internal" matter for the Catholic Church. Rather, it was an issue that was increasingly being taken up by lay aristocrats. This was a sign that ever more nobles were returning to the Catholic faith, a shift in which the Jesuits had considerable influence. Thus, from the early seventeenth century onward, the two processes increasingly reinforced each other. This was also important because the provisions of the Peace of Vienna, which had brought the Bocskai uprising to a formal end, had seemingly pushed the Catholic Church in Hungary, including the Jesuits, to the brink of collapse. In principle, the peace treaty in 1606 and the subsequent legislation in 1608 made it almost impossible to establish new Jesuit colleges from a legal point of view, as they prevented the Society from receiving donations of land in Hungary. Once peace had been reached, however, the political framework was more stable, and this made it possible for the Catholic Church to develop new strategies and dexterously adapt to the circumstances.[69] This all fitted well against the backdrop of the Catholic revival, a process that was taking place throughout the century. One of the most prominent figures of this period was the Jesuit Péter Pázmány (1570–1637), who rose to the highest position in the Hungarian Catholic Church, the archbishop of Esztergom, in 1616.

Pázmány, a scion of a Calvinist noble family, began his studies at the Jesuit grammar school in Cluj in the early 1580s. He was still but a teenager when

68 Miroslav Vanino, "Osnutak i prve godine zagrebačkoga kolegija (1601–1617)," *Život* 25 (1944): 21–48.

69 Molnár, "A jezsuita rend a 16. századi Magyarországon," 27–28.

he converted to Catholicism. He was one of the young students who followed Vega to Hungary in 1587, and he began his novitiate in Kraków the following year. He continued his philosophical studies in Vienna, where he became friends with Wilhelm Lamormaini (1570–1648), the future confessor to Emperor Ferdinand II (1578–1637, r.1619–1637). He then pursued theological studies in Rome, and in 1597 he became professor of philosophy in Graz. The University of Graz became one of the centers from which the Jesuits expanded their influence into Hungary. Between 1586 and 1640, some four hundred young Hungarian Jesuits studied there.[70]

In the early seventeenth century, Pázmány worked for a few years in the Jesuit house in Šaľa and the associated mission in Košice. Košice was the seat of government in Upper Hungary: it was home to the Chamber of Szepes and a military command headquarters. The town also became the seat of the diocese of Eger in these years, after Eger had been captured by the Ottomans. Košice, however, was one of the Lutheran strongholds in Hungary, and Pázmány's mission thus fit well into the larger efforts of the Catholic Church to reestablish itself in the city. István Szuhay (1551–1608, in office 1598–1608), the bishop of Eger, briefly occupied the main church in the city in 1604, but this only strengthened local opposition to the Catholic Church.[71]

In 1607, Pázmány became the confessor, advisor, and confidant of Cardinal Forgách, archbishop of Esztergom (1607–1615). Cardinal Forgách very deliberately invited Jesuits to his courts in Trnava and Bratislava as preachers and confessors. From the outset, he was planning on building on this mission and reestablishing a Jesuit college in the Kingdom of Hungary. Half a century after the first failed attempt, Trnava, the seat of the archbishops, was again chosen as the most suitable site to establish a Jesuit community. In 1613, as a prerequisite for the foundation of the college, Matthias II (1557–1619, r.1608–1619) donated the priory of Turiec and its estates to the archbishop of Esztergom. This step was a shrewd means of sidestepping the 1608 laws, according to which the Jesuits were not entitled to own property. Cardinal Forgách subsequently appointed Pázmány to oversee the priory of Turiec.[72] In October 1615, the new college in Trnava was finally opened. As it so happens, however, Archbishop Forgách died only a few days later.

70 Paul Shore and Péter Tusor, "Péter Pázmány: Cardinal, Archbishop of Esztergom, Primate of Hungary," *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 7, no. 4 (2020): 526–44, here 527–28.

71 Béla Vilmos Mihalik, *Papok, polgárok, konvertiták: Katolikus megújulás az egri egyházmegyében (1670–1699)* (Budapest: MTA BTK TTI, 2017), 23.

72 Krapka and Mikula, *Dejiny Spoločnosti Ježišovej*, 70–71.

Although the vow he had taken as a Jesuit and the Hungarian anti-Jesuit laws did not make Pázmány's situation any easier, with the verbal consent of Pope Paul V (1550–1621, r.1605–1621) and the support of Superior General Muzio Vitelleschi (1563–1645, in office 1615–1645), he became archbishop of Esztergom in 1616, and later cardinal in 1629. Over the course of the period of two decades during which he served as archbishop (1616–1637), he mobilized enormous energies for the Catholic revival in Hungary in the spirit of the Council of Trent.[73] The founding of the University of Trnava in 1635 was one of the highlights of the renewal process. The University of Graz, where Pázmány was previously a professor, served as a model. He may well have hoped to have founded the university considerably earlier, but the material and personal resources were only available toward the end of his life. Pázmány had several important supporters in this effort. The Hungarian György Forró (1571–1641, in office 1630–1634) was the provincial superior of the Austrian province at the time. Forró had been a classmate of Pázmány's in Cluj, and they had entered the novitiate in Kraków together. György Dobronoki (1588–1649), one of the key figures in the early seventeenth-century boom of founding colleges in Hungary, served as rector in Trnava.[74] Pázmány also had an important ally at the Viennese court in Lamormaini, the Jesuit confessor to Ferdinand II. The foundation of the university was confirmed by Ferdinand II on October 18, 1635. Although Pázmány hoped to have it confirmed by the pope, Urban VIII (1568–1644, r.1623–1644) refused to give his consent, as the institution had neither a faculty of law nor a faculty of medicine and was therefore only an incomplete university. In the background, however, lay the conflict between the pope and Pázmány, the origins of which most probably stretched back to his diplomatic mission to Rome in 1632.[75] Pázmány died within a mere two years of the foundation of the university.

In addition to the colleges in Zagreb and Trnava, a third important Jesuit college was founded in the early seventeenth century. The founding of the college in Humenné (Homonna in Hungarian) also enjoyed the support of the local landlord, György Drugeth (1583–1620). He was also a convert, having become a Catholic at the Jesuit college in Prague in 1600 or 1601. He had begun welcoming Jesuit missionaries to his court as early as 1601, and he often provided refuge for Jesuits during the Bocskai Uprising. According to later sources, it was

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73 Shore and Tusor, "Péter Pázmány," 531–34.

74 Zsófia Kádár, "A hőskor," in Szokol and Szőnyi, *Jezsuiták Magyarországon a kezdetektől napjainkig*, 90–197, here 111, 114.

75 Vendelín Jankovič, "Trnava University 1635–1777," in *The History of Trnava University 1635–1777, 1992–2012*, ed. Jozef Šimončič and Alžbeta Hološová (Trnava: Typis Universitatis Tyrnaviensis, 2014), 11–54, here 15–19.

then that the idea of founding a college occurred to him. In 1608, two Jesuits arrived in Humenné to set up a permanent missionary station. With Drugeth's support, a proposal was also made to establish a residence. The number of Jesuits in the Drugeth court increased, although until 1614, their presence was referred to only as a mission in the annual catalogs. By then, the Jesuits had opened their school, the church had been taken from the Calvinists, the Calvinist preacher had been expelled, and the town had been re-Catholicized. The missionaries from Humenné also began to become active in Košice again, where, with the support of Zsigmond Forgách (*c.*1565–1621), chief justice of the kingdom (1610–1618) and the chief captain of Upper Hungary (in office 1611–1618; he was also the brother of Cardinal-Archbishop Ferenc Forgách), they restored the abandoned chapel in the so-called "royal house."

Negotiations concerning the establishment of the college in Humenné were already well underway. The residence and school building were built at Drugeth's expense, and he provided additional land and income. The negotiations were led by Dobokay, who had been one of Pázmány's classmates in Cluj and was serving as rector of Zagreb at that time. The charter was finally issued on July 2, 1615. Since, according to the 1608 laws, Drugeth was also not allowed to donate property directly to the Jesuits, he created a foundation, the income from which he gave to the college. The quick development of the college in Humenné was also facilitated by the many Catholic noblemen who followed Drugeth's example and made generous donations in support of the new institution.[76]

Thus, by 1616, three major Jesuit colleges were active: in Zagreb in the Kingdom of Croatia, in Trnava in Lower Hungary, and in Humenné in Upper Hungary. These were the three centers from which dozens of missions and new colleges later grew. The period between 1610 and 1630, which bore witness to the foundation of a wave of colleges, was followed by quieter decades, but in the 1670s, there was another flurry of new institutions as a consequence of the violent Counter-Reformation. Although there was no single recipe according to which Jesuit communities were successfully founded, the endeavors undertaken in the first half of the seventeenth century had numerous important affinities. While aristocrats were among the founders, the prelates remained the main driving force behind the creation of Jesuit communities. It was thanks to their preparatory measures that the first properties were acquired

76 László Lukács and Antal Molnár, "A homonnai jezsuita kollégium (1615–1619)," in Antal Molnár, *Lehetetlen küldetés? Jezsuiták Erdélyben és Felső-Magyarországon a 16–17. században* (Budapest: L'Harmattan, 2009), 101–8.

and the foundations necessary for vibrant institutional life organized. They also played an important role in dismantling the opposition. This opposition came in part from the Protestant town leaders, who were definitely hostile to the Jesuit presence, but it also came from the local diocesan chapters, who were fearful of any threat to their rights and prerogatives. The bishops also gained the support of the monarch and the superior general for the creation of new institutions. By the 1620s, however, there were already many Hungarian Jesuits who were perfectly able to conduct the necessary local negotiations on behalf of the Society. This sometimes took several years, of course, since, given their earlier experiences, the leaders of the Society did not want to make any hasty decisions.[77]

In the 1670s, Jesuit expansion gained new momentum thanks to an aggressive Counter-Reformation campaign that had the full support of the Habsburg government. Feeling more clearly the looming threat of the Ottoman Empire at its doorstep and having grappled with an anti-Habsburg conspiracy, the Viennese court introduced harsh measures against Protestants: the expulsion of preachers, the seizure of churches, and the replacement of Lutheran city councils by Catholic ones.[78] In 1674, for example, a Jesuit mission was launched in Baia Mare (Nagybánya in Hungarian) even though there were virtually no Catholics living in the city. In these situations, the Jesuits could only count on the support of the diocese, the imperial military, and the organs of regional government. This was true for practically all the Jesuit communities that were established in the 1670s.[79]

In the seventeenth century, temporary missions were set up in many places, which in some cases evolved into permanent missions or even developed further within the Jesuit institutional structure. However, because of the Transylvanian–Habsburg or the Ottoman wars and the anti-Habsburg uprisings that flared up from time to time, they were often unable to function without disruptions and interruptions, so it is difficult to offer any kind of coherent narrative or summary of their individual development. By the last third of the century, however, the network of Jesuit communities had spread throughout the country, reaching into Transylvania and the Ottoman Empire.

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77 Kádár, *Jezsuiták Nyugat-Magyarországon*, 80–81.

78 Georg B. Michels, *The Habsburg Empire under Siege: Ottoman Expansion and Hungarian Revolt in the Age of Grand Vizier Ahmed Köprülü (1661–1676)* (Montreal: McGill–Queen's University Press, 2021), 138–209.

79 Mihalik, *Papok, polgárok, konvertiták*, 266–81.

TABLE 1 The most important Jesuit communities between 1561 and 1680[a]

Name of settlement	Date of a permanent Jesuit presence
Alba Iulia	1579
Banská Bystrica (Besztercebánya, Neusohl)	1648
Banská Stiavnica (Selmecbánya, Schemnitz)	1649
Bratislava	1622
Cluj	1581 (1664)
Gyöngyös	1634
Győr	1626
Kláštor pod Znievom	1589 (1637)
Komárno (Komárom)	1624
Košice	1614
Kőszeg (Güns)	1675
Levoča (Lőcse, Leutschau)	1671/73
Leopoldov (Lipótvár)	1666
Cluj-Mănăştur	1579 (1623)
Baia Mare	1674
Odorheiu Secuiesc (Székelyudvarhely)	1592 (1651)
Oradea	1581 (1692)
Pécs	1612
Prešov (Eperjes)	1673
Rožňava (Rozsnyó)	1656
Šaľa	1589–1605
Satu Mare (Szatmárnémeti)	1638
Sárospatak	1663
Skalica (Szakolca)	1661
Sopron	1636
Spisské Podhradie (Szepesváralja) – Spišská Kapitula (Szepeshely)	1622 (1638)[b]
Trenčín (Trencsén)	1647
Trnava (Trnava)	1561 (1615)
Humenné – Uzhhorod (Ungvár)	1608 (1646)
Varaždin (Varasd)	1632
Zagreb	1606
Žilina (Zsolna)	1673

a András Gyenis, *Régi magyar rendházak: Központi rendi kormányzat* (Rákospalota: Szalézi Művek, 1941).

b Monika Bizoňová, *Omnia ad maiorem Dei gloriam: Pôsobenie Spoločnosti Ježisovej na Spiši v 17.–18. storočí* (Kraków: Towarzystwo Słowaków w Polsce, 2018), 45–48.

The country was jarred by three major anti-Habsburg campaigns and uprisings, causing moments of upheaval that deeply touched the Jesuit institutional network. Gabriel Bethlen (1580–1629), prince of Transylvania (1613–1629), led a successful campaign against Ferdinand II between 1619 and 1621. The Humenné college was destroyed, and even the Jesuits of Trnava fled to Vienna. From the perspective of Jesuit identity and memory culture, however, the events that took place in Košice were to prove the most decisive. In 1619, there were two Jesuit missionaries serving in the city, Melchior Grodziecki (*c.*1584–1619), who was of Silesian origin, and István Pongrácz (*c.*1582–1619) from Transylvania. At the news of the approach of the Transylvanian troops, a canon from the chapter of Esztergom, Márk Kőrösi (*c.*1589–1619), who was in the area at the time, also fled to Košice. In early September 1619, Košice was surrounded by the Transylvanian armies, and under pressure from the Lutheran burghers, the imperial captain surrendered the city within a few days. The three Catholic priests were immediately arrested and imprisoned. They were not allowed to have any contact with their parishioners and were not even given food and water. Immediately after their arrest, they were ordered to convert to Calvinism, but they refused. On the evening of September 6, in the presence of some representatives of the city council, the Hajduks attacked the priests. After the priests had been brutally beaten, they were again called on to convert. According to testimony given later, Pongrácz was mutilated, and his body was burned with a torch. Kőrös was beheaded, and Grodziecki was beaten in the head with swords until he died; his corpse was later beheaded. Pongrácz's tormentors continued to torture him. They sought to obtain details concerning an alleged Catholic conspiracy against the prince. After having tortured him to the point that they believed he had died, they threw the three bodies into a sewage pit and covered them with debris. Pongrácz, however, had not died, and he suffered for several more hours. Witnesses testified to having heard his moans of agony. The bodies were buried the next day in a cellar with the help of the town executioner. One year later, at the request of Countess Katalin Pálffy (1590–1639), widow of Palatine Zsigmond Forgách, Prince Bethlen handed over the bodies because, according to an anecdote, the countess had agreed to dance with him at a celebration in Košice. The martyrs of Košice were beatified in 1905, and in 1995, Pope John Paul II (1920–2005, r.1978–2005) elevated them to the rank of saints. The three martyrs have become patron saints of both the Hungarian and Slovak Jesuit provinces.[80]

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80 Béla Vilmos Mihalik, "Kassai vértanúk: A magyar jezsuita rendtartomány védőszentjei," in Szokol and Szőnyi, *Jezsuiták Magyarországon a kezdetektől napjainkig*, 128–31.

In 1644–1645, Prince George I Rákóczi (1593–1648, r.1630–1648), Bethlen's successor, launched a campaign against the Habsburgs. The war and the plague epidemic that came with it caused further disruptions in the Jesuit college network. The college of Győr, for instance, was decimated by the plague outbreak, with thirteen Jesuits dying in the space of two years. In contrast with Győr, the entire college in Bratislava fled.[81] The Jesuit residence that had returned to Humenné was forced to flee again. Count János Drugeth (1609–1645), the founder György Drugeth's son, learned from experience and had the Jesuits resettled in 1646, not to Humenné, but to the more protected city of Uzhhorod (Ungvár in Hungarian).[82]

The Humenné/Uzhhorod college was intended to serve as the headquarters of the Catholic Church in Upper Hungary, but because of its precarious situation, it was ultimately unsuitable for this role. In the mid-seventeenth century, however, large-scale building work began in Košice, which was the seat of the diocese of Eger. In 1650, with the support of the bishop and the king, the Jesuits succeeded in opening a school, which soon grew into an academy. It was granted the same privileges as the university in Trnava, with a faculty of philosophy and a faculty of theology, and opened its gates in 1660. In 1665, a new diocesan seminary also came under Jesuit management. The Jesuits of Košice played a leading role in the theological debates in Upper Hungary in the 1660s, which also gave rise to considerable literary activity. The efforts undertaken in the 1670s to establish missions and residences in Upper Hungary (which became important bastions of the Counter-Reformation) were also launched out of Košice.

But this momentum was shattered by the third major Protestant uprising. The Counter-Reformation and the attempts by the Habsburgs to establish absolutist rule drove many Protestants to flee to Transylvania or to territories under Ottoman occupation. These refugees, led by the Lutheran count Imre Thököly (1657–1705), launched a successful attack against the Habsburgs in the late 1670s. By 1682, Thököly had managed to establish an Ottoman vassal principality in Upper Hungary. The Jesuits were a prime target for Thököly and his Protestant supporters, so almost all the communities that had been established in the 1670s were forced to flee. The Jesuits also fled Košice, and the academy was unable to resume normal operations for a good decade. Only

81 Kádár, *Jezsuiták Nyugat-Magyarországon*, 171–72.

82 Lukács and Molnár, "A homonnai jezsuita kollégium," 115–16.

after Thököly's fall in 1685 were the Jesuits able to resume their activities in Upper Hungary.[83]

The appearance of new institutions responsible for ensuring that the next generation of Jesuits would be trained marked the strengthening of the Jesuit network in Hungary. In 1655, the first Hungarian Jesuit novitiate was opened in Trenčín (Trencsén in Hungarian). It was founded by György Lippay (1600–1666), archbishop of Esztergom (1642–1666), who had already created a foundation for this purpose in 1651. In the period leading up to the dissolution of the Society in 1773, 1,723 scholastics and 707 coadjutor novitiates had begun their studies there.[84] The third probation within the Austrian province took place from 1633 onward in Judenburg in Carinthia. In 1668, however, an attempt was made to establish a house of probation in Győr, in the Hungarian half of the province's vast territory. However, it was only in operation for two years.[85]

The strengthening of the institutional structure was clear evidence of the successful and enduring establishment of the Society of Jesus in the territory of the Kingdom of Hungary. This institutional network had survived the upheavals of the seventeenth century. Thanks to its stable background, it was able to recover quickly from the temporary disruptions caused by the wars.

3.2 *In the Pull of the Unknown: Ottoman-Hungary and Transylvania*

The idea of sending missions to territories of the Ottoman Empire (the so-called "Missio Turcica") had been raised by the first Jesuits, but for a long time the implementation of any such plan remained questionable. Jesuits had already arrived in Ottoman territories from Transylvania and Dalmatia in the sixteenth century and had been treated with openness and goodwill by the Ottoman authorities. Three main conditions were lacking for the continuation of any mission, however: (1) an adequate number of Jesuit priests with the necessary language skills, (2) a stable base that could serve as a point of departure, and (3) at least some support from the remaining local church structures. By the beginning of the seventeenth century, these preconditions were beginning to be met.[86] In the regions under Ottoman occupation, a parallel mission—church structure had been established. A gradual movement toward organization from the south, mainly Dalmatia, was under the control of Rome. As far as

83 Mihalik, *Papok, polgárok, konvertiták*, 26–27, 261–65.

84 Antal Petruch, *A trencséni jezsuita noviciátus anyakönyve* (Budapest: Pray Munkaközösség, 1942), 5–6.

85 Kádár, *Jezsuiták Nyugat-Magyarországon*, 166–68.

86 Antal Molnár, *Katolikus egyház a hódolt Dunántúlon* (Budapest: METEM, 2003), 37.

it concerned the Jesuit missionaries, this southern branch was under the control of the Jesuit province of Rome. In the north, the church hierarchy in the Kingdom of Hungary had also built up its own organization in the territories under Ottoman occupation. The Jesuit missionaries coming from this direction belonged to the Austrian province.

Both structures rested heavily on religious orders, and the Society of Jesus played an important role in this. The Jesuits settled in Belgrade in 1612 within the framework of the southern branch, under the direct control of the superior general. The Jesuits, however, almost immediately came into conflict with the Bosnian Franciscans, who feared that the Jesuits might pose a threat to their positions and influence. A conflict broke out over who had jurisdiction over the chapel in Belgrade; however, there was a much more serious economic fight in the background about the control of trade between Bosnian merchants and Dalmatian merchants from Ragusa. By 1632, Jesuit activities in Belgrade had come to an end.[87]

Out of the Belgrade mission grew a Jesuit mission in Timişoara (Temesvár in Hungarian). The mission here was established in 1613, providing pastoral care to the Catholics who lived in the city and its surroundings. When the Belgrade mission ceased operations, the Jesuits moved their missionary headquarters there, with the superior general sending additional fathers from the Roman province. According to one report, most of the denizens of the city were Muslims or Orthodox, with fewer than five hundred Catholics living among them. Several villages in the surrounding area were Catholic, however, and accommodations were provided for the Jesuits in these settlements. The Jesuit missionaries, who depended on the modest support provided by the merchants of Ragusa, lived under well-nigh squalid conditions. To save the Timişoara mission, in 1643 Superior General Vitelleschi had it annexed to the Austrian province. He assumed that it would be easier to provide both additional Jesuit fathers and necessary financial support from Vienna. The step, however, did not prove adequate to save the mission. The Jesuits were only able to work effectively in the city and its immediate surroundings, and only in a rather limited way. The Catholics in the region did not want to hear anything about the reforms in Trent, the observance of the rules of marriage, or the new

87 Antal Molnár, *Confessionalization on the Frontier: The Balkan Catholics between Roman Reform and Ottoman Reality* (Roma: Viella, 2019), 76–114.

calendar. Finally, in 1653, both the Austrian province and the superior general decided to shut down the mission in Timişoara.[88]

At the same time as the efforts were underway to establish an enduring Jesuit presence in Belgrade, missions were also being launched from the Austrian province. The mission to Pécs, established in 1612, was of particular importance. The Jesuit residence in Zagreb provided the institutional support for this undertaking. Gergely Vásárhelyi (*c.*1560–1623), the superior of the Zagreb residence, began to inform himself about the potential for establishing Jesuit missions in the territories under Ottoman occupation. At the local level, Don Simone Matković (*c.*1575–1638/1639), a parish priest of Bosnian origin, tried to get help from Rome. Eventually, the Austrian provincial superior was instructed by Superior General Acquaviva to send Vásárhelyi and another Croatian-speaking Jesuit priest to Pécs. The Jesuits maintained an active presence in Pécs, if with brief interruptions, from then on until the suppression of the Society.[89]

New mission stations were established in Gyöngyös in the north in 1633 and in Andocs on the southern shore of Lake Balaton in 1642. Andocs and Pécs were put under the jurisdiction of the Győr college in 1647. These undertakings were successful in part because the local Jesuit leadership in Vienna and the Roman center also steered the Hungarian Jesuits toward the mission in the territories under Ottoman occupation. They strove to cool the fervor of Jesuit fathers who were eager to embark on missions overseas by assuring them that undertaking missionary work in the Ottoman Empire was every bit as challenging as preaching to pagan peoples in places like Japan, Brazil, or the English colonies in Virginia.[90]

The Jesuits of Pécs were involved in education from the outset, but they achieved only modest results, with only thirty or forty pupils. The principal reason for this was presumably because, in Pécs, the Jesuits did not take adequate precautions to avoid attracting the attention of the authorities. The city, after all, was an Ottoman administrative and military sub-center. The history of the school building itself offers a telling illustration of this. In 1622, the Jesuit superior in Pécs had an ostentatious, Italian-style building constructed next to the Jesuit church that was to serve as the school. The Ottomans occupied the building the very night the Jesuits moved in. The next day, the superior lodged

88 Antal Molnár, *Katolikus missziók a hódolt Magyarországon I. (1572–1647)* (Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, 2002), 326–38.

89 Molnár, *Katolikus egyház*, 38–41.

90 Molnár, *Katolikus egyház*, 64–65.

a complaint with the Ottoman judge (the *kadi*), but perhaps not surprisingly, the judge sided with the Turkish soldiers and did not return the building.[91]

In part because of the challenges faced by the Jesuits in Pécs (and their missteps), the city of Gyöngyös, found in the northeast, in the Ottoman–Hungarian border zone, ultimately became a center of Jesuit schooling in the regions under Ottoman occupation. Gyöngyös was also the only such center to develop into a residence during the Ottoman period, which offers another sign of its importance. The Jesuits opened the school there in 1634, and within roughly a decade, it had evolved into a complete grammar school, including a rhetoric class. The school was immensely popular, with an average of two hundred to three hundred students. It was thus only barely smaller than the school in Győr, which had some three hundred to four hundred students and was one of the largest grammar schools in the Kingdom of Hungary. From the perspective of its operations, the Gyöngyös school did not differ in any meaningful way from the schools in regions under Christian rule. Sources from the period between 1644 and 1679 offer evidence of numerous school plays, most of which were dramatizations of stories from the Old and New Testaments. In 1679, for example, students even performed a play based on the story of Saint Ladislaus I of Hungary. A Marian congregation was also established for the students in 1644, becoming the first baroque religious society in the territories under Ottoman occupation. From the outset, it extended beyond the walls of the school and included members of the city's intelligentsia. Compared to other Jesuit schools, the only difference was perhaps the rigid austerity with which discipline was enforced. This was understandable, however, since the slightest instances of misconduct by the students would give the local Lutheran minority a pretext to complain to the Ottomans about the Jesuits.[92]

The Belgrade mission also played a major role in the return of the Jesuits to Transylvania. This was thanks in part to a fruitful personal relationship. István Szini (*c.*1580–1645), a Jesuit of Transylvanian origins, was one of the first members of the Belgrade mission. As a child, he had been one of the future Calvinist prince Gábor Bethlen's classmates. In 1619, Bethlen's soldiers had brutally murdered the Jesuit missionaries in Košice, and yet this same prince, himself a fervent Protestant, had a member of the Society recalled to Alba Iulia. Szini remained one of the main pillars of the Transylvanian mission until his death in 1645. Soon, the Jesuit missionaries were not only able to work actively

91 Molnár, *Katolikus egyház*, 89.

92 Antal Molnár, *Mezőváros és katolicizmus: Katolikus egyház az egri püspökség hódoltsági területein a 17. században* (Budapest: METEM, 2005), 173–81.

alongside the prince's court but had also reestablished themselves in the settlement of Cluj-Mănăştur, and a new mission station was created in Caransebeş. The Jesuits opened a school there too, the success of which is indicated perhaps most clearly by the simple fact that, in addition to people from the surrounding settlements, even merchants from Wallachia and Bulgaria sent their children to study at it. Members of the large Romanian Orthodox population living in the area around Caransebeş made concerted efforts to prepare for union with the Catholic Church. One important step in this direction and one of the clear signs of the importance of the mission in Caransebeş from the perspective of literary history was the translation of Canisius's *Catechismus minor* into Romanian by György Bujtul (1591–1635), a member of the mission. Bujtul's translation became such an influential text that in the early eighteenth century, when the issue of the possible unification of the Romanian Orthodox Church with the Catholic Church was again being discussed, the catechism he translated was reprinted. Bujtul's translation of the catechism became one of the most important pieces of seventeenth-century Romanian literature.[93]

In the eastern borderlands of Transylvania, in the so-called Székely Land (which enjoyed a special legal status), a more significant Catholic community survived even after the waves of the Reformation. In the 1590s, Jesuit missionaries from the Principality of Moldavia and the more central areas of Transylvania came to the Székely Land, but no permanent Jesuit presence was established. In 1648, István Milley (1610–1677), the leader of the Transylvanian mission, drew attention to the importance of settling Jesuits in the Székely Land. Two years later, the influential Jesuit Mátyás Sámbár (1618–1685) arrived as part of the mission to the Székely Land (Missio Siculica), which was based in Odorheiu Secuiesc (Székelyudvarhely in Hungarian). It was important, however, to keep the fact that he was a Jesuit a secret, though given his agile personality, this cannot have been easy. The Catholic communities in the Székely Land were run mainly by laypeople (so-called *licentiates*, who were licensed to perform certain ecclesiastical activities), and there was a Franciscan cloister in Șumuleu Ciuc (Csíksomlyó in Hungarian). The reforms that had been adopted by the Council of Trent were of little interest to the few remaining Catholic priests, most of whom had wives. The notion of church discipline was a tattered veil at best, and fornication, inebriation on feast days, dancing, markets during Mass, breaking the fast, and violations of marriage rules were common. Sámbár began instructing children in the teachings of the faith with great fervor and established a schedule for feast days and the taking of

93 Molnár, *Lehetetlen küldetés?*, 152–80.

the sacraments. He also preached regularly and organized the annual Corpus Christi processions. Sámbár even opened a grammar school where small plays were performed, although the leadership of the Society felt that the time had not yet come for such a bold step. The Austrian province maintained the Missio Siculica in later years, even under the most difficult circumstances. In 1702, the mission in Odorheiu Secuiesc became a residence, and together with its grammar school, it remained an important center of Catholic life in the Székely Land until the Society's dissolution.[94]

The efforts and successes of the Society of Jesus in Transylvania were greatly influenced by the Society's relationships with the Protestant Transylvanian princes, however. Prince Gabriel Bethlen adopted a comparatively tolerant policy, but his successors were less receptive. During the reign of György I Rákóczi, it became increasingly difficult for members of the Society to pursue their work because of the unsettled legal framework and growing antipathy. New missionaries were not allowed to settle in the principality, and the mission in Caransebeş was shut down. His son, György II Rákóczi (1621–1660 r.1648–1660), was even more hostile to the Jesuits, and in 1652–53 he again banned them from the principality by law. The missionaries, however, found ways to circumvent the law. Only the most prominent members of the Society, such as the aforementioned Sámbár, actually left. The others continued to pursue their activities as secular priests, working in disguise and using aliases.[95]

The Transylvanian mission was connected in several complex ways to the Moldovan mission. The fathers who had been expelled from Transylvania in 1588 came to Iași, the capital of Moldavia, for a few years at the invitation of Moldavian prince Petru VI Şchiopul (1537–1594, r.1582–1591). They were not successful in their work, however, and they were soon recalled. In the 1640s, an attempt was again made to consolidate a Moldavian mission from the direction of the Austrian province.[96]

The Jesuit missions in Transylvania and the territories under Ottoman occupation played an important role in strengthening local Catholic communities in the region. Although these missionary structures collapsed during the Great Turkish War (1683–1699), the knowledge gained of circumstances on the ground later proved crucial. After the Ottomans had been expelled

94 Molnár, *Lehetetlen küldetés?*, 195–211.

95 Antal Molnár, "Jezsuiták a Hódoltságban és Erdélyben," in Szokol and Szőnyi, *Jezsuiták Magyarországon a kezdetektől napjainkig*, 157–62, here 161.

96 Kálmán Benda, ed., *Moldvai csángó-magyar okmánytár 1467–1706* (Budapest: Teleki László Alapítvány, 2003), 45.

from the region and the Principality of Transylvania had been brought under Habsburg rule, the Jesuit institutional network gradually developed there, too, building on the earlier missionary stations.

3.3 *The Struggle for an Independent Hungarian Province*

With the gradual expansion of the institutional structure, the Jesuit houses in Hungary became increasingly important within the Austrian province. This was due in part to the formation of an independent Bohemian province in 1623, which meant that the houses there separated from the Austrian province. This was also the first period during which several of the Austrian provincial superiors were from the Hungarian crown lands: Gregorius Rumer (1570–1627, in office 1618–1623) was born in Báhoň (Báhony in Hungarian) near Trnava, Christophorus Dombrinus (*c.*1572–1631, in office 1627–1629) was from Zagreb, and György Forró (in office 1630–1634) was from Transylvania.

The situation of the Society of Jesus in Hungary was determined for a good century, however, by article 8 of the pre-coronation act of 1608. This article essentially put into law one of the points of the Peace of Vienna, which was concluded after the uprising led by István Bocskai. According to this article, Jesuits "shall have no permanent property or right to own land in Hungary." This law thus made it impossible for the Society as a whole and for individual members to acquire property. The legal consequence of this was that the Society of Jesus was excluded from the estates of the country and thus had no representative in the Hungarian diet. The Jesuits got around this law by creating foundations for some of the houses, and these foundations were placed under the administration of a lord or a bishop. The Jesuits were given honorary titles such as provost or abbot, which, in principle, gave them the possibility for political participation.[97] Several attempts were made over the course of the seventeenth century to break down these legal barriers, which were the major obstacle to the establishment of an independent Hungarian province.

The idea of an independent Hungarian province was first mentioned at the provincial congregation of 1649. The request, which was submitted to Rome, did not arrive at the most fortuitous moment. That very year, the general congregation had already decided, in response to a large number of similar requests, that action should be taken against those who campaigned with external support for or against the creation of an independent province. The Austrian provincial assembly attempted to justify its request with the claim that the province was too large, stretching from Passau in the west to Alba Iulia in Transylvania. There

97 Kádár, *Jezsuiták Nyugat-Magyarországon*, 38–39.

were over one thousand Jesuits in the Austrian province, but half of the houses were in the Kingdom of Hungary. The provincial superior was unable to travel to all the houses every year, and communication with the local superiors was difficult. The Austrian province, therefore, asked Rome to create a Hungarian vice-province, which, once it had gathered some strength, would then become independent. They repeated this request several times over the course of the following decades, and in 1655, they even drew up a map to show the geographical distances. At the same time, the creation of the novitiate of Trenčín was already a foregone conclusion. Superior General Goswin Nickel (1582–1664, in office 1652–1664) offered a reassuring response, acknowledging the difficulties and promising to keep the matter on the agenda. In 1659, Nickel did in fact ask the provincial superior Johann Berthold (1606–1673, in office 1658–1661) to consult with his advisors and other eminent Jesuits and arrive at a decision.[98]

The head of the Hungarian Catholic Church, Archbishop Lippay of Esztergom, was in favor of the establishment of an independent Hungarian province and made significant efforts to remove the various legal obstacles in the Hungarian diet. Much to his chagrin, in 1659, the Catholic aristocrats did not support the Jesuit cause. The reason for this was simple. The sons of noble families had begun to join the Society, and thus it was perfectly possible that their inheritances would fall into the hands of the Jesuits. This posed a threat to the noble estates, and so the 1608 law proclaiming the Jesuits ineligible to hold estates remained in force.[99]

This was not the only obstacle to the establishment of an independent Hungarian province, however. In addition to the legal prohibitions, ethnic conflicts also aggravated the situation. In 1659, Márton Palkovics (1607–1662), the rector of the college in Košice, openly accused Berthold, the provincial superior, in front of Superior General Nickel of discriminating against Hungarians. Berthold did indeed refuse to separate the province, but he did suggest someone who could serve as vice-provincial superior. The Austrian provincial superior proposed the Croatian-born Michael Sikuten (1608–1687), who was the rector in Graz, for this post. He noted that the Hungarians would definitely not like Sikuten, but he contended that they would not support anyone apart from Palkovics as vice-provincial superior. Under the leadership of Zakariás Trinckel (1602–1665), rector in Trnava, the Hungarians put together a memorandum. Trinckel provided a link between the effort to establish an independent Hungarian province and the political recognition of the Jesuits in Hungary, as he had served as confessor and advisor to Archbishop Lippay.

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98 László Lukács, *A független magyar jezsuita rendtartomány kérdése és az osztrák abszolutizmus (1648–1773)* (Szeged: JATE, 1989), 10–13.

99 Kádár, *Jezsuiták Nyugat-Magyarországon*, 39–40.

In his petition, Trinckel stressed that, elsewhere, a province the size of the Austrian one would have been divided into smaller administrative units long ago. Referring to his earlier experience as provincial superior (1652–1654), he argued that the problem was not merely one of geographical size. The Austrian province was inhabited by peoples who spoke so many different languages that the linguistic and cultural barriers among the Jesuits from these lands made it difficult to manage the Society's affairs. He acknowledged the difficulties an independent Hungarian province would face, including the legal uncertainties, but he felt that the foundations attached to the Jesuit houses by aristocrats and prelates would provide an adequately stable, reliable framework. He rejected the idea that there were not enough Hungarian Jesuits, and indeed he emphasized that, considering the training they had been given, they were perfectly qualified to govern. He considered the idea of a vice-province that was dependent on Vienna a bad, inadequate solution.

The conflict between Palkovics and Berthold was not without precedent. There were also national tensions behind the linguistic and cultural barriers mentioned by Trinckel, and this was not unique to Hungarian–Austrian relations. Complaints had also been made by the college in Ljubljana (Laibach in German). The situation was only made worse when an anti-Habsburg uprising broke out in the Kingdom of Hungary in 1670,[100] in which Hungarian Jesuits also voiced their opposition to Vienna's politics. Superior General Giovanni Paolo Oliva (1600–1681, in office 1661–1681) repeatedly cautioned the Jesuits not to put themselves at risk by getting involved in public affairs. Pál Balassa (1644–1705), professor of rhetoric at the university in Trnava, was even dismissed from the Society after he gave his students an assignment that offered them an opportunity to express excessive patriotism. The students wrote essays in which they defended the rebels and made disparaging statements about the Habsburg monarch and the imperial military.

These tensions and contradictions strengthened the position of those within the Austrian province who opposed the creation of an independent Hungarian province. In 1678, the fathers who were at the head of the opposition, including Provincial Superior Nicolaus Avancinus (1612–1686, in office 1676–1680), wrote a detailed memorandum to the superior general. They criticized first and foremost the nationalistic, separatist, rebellious Hungarian ethos, which was, they contended, very much alive among the Hungarian Jesuits. They considered them "inferior" priests who found it difficult to live the disciplined life of a member of the Society of Jesus. They preferred to work in the courts of Hungarian aristocrats, where they could enjoy a life of worldly pleasures. According to Avancinus and his colleagues, this meant that an independent Hungarian province would

100 Michels, *Habsburg Empire*, 122–37.

be governed not by the Jesuits but by the Hungarian aristocrats. They also insisted that Emperor Leopold I (1640–1705, r.1657–1705) would never agree to divide the province in half. In the end, however, Superior General Oliva again rejected the request but with the stipulation that it should be considered again when the political situation was more promising.[101]

The question of an independent Hungarian province and, in connection with this, the legal recognition of the Society of Jesus in Hungary, was raised several times over the course of the eighteenth century. After 1683, however, with the expulsion of the Ottomans, this took place in a changed political context, as the lands of the Hungarian Holy Crown had again been united under one rule, the rule of the Habsburg House.

3.4 *Jesuit Everyday Life in Seventeenth-Century Hungary*

The work of the Jesuits in Hungary as elsewhere was focused primarily on pastoral work and education. Their efforts in these two fields, however, had numerous influences and impacts on other areas of culture. Education took place within the system of the Society's regulations. In Hungary, however, the five-grade grammar school prescribed by the *Ratio studiorum* (Plan of studies) was complemented with the addition of an introductory grade, the so-called "parvista" grade. This was intended to provide compensation for a lack of knowledge among pupils due to the inadequacies of the elementary schools. It thus formed a bridge between the lower schools and the standards set by the Jesuit institutions.[102]

The Catholic Church gave the schools a prominent role in the Catholicization of Protestant students, as the Jesuit school system offered a competitive alternative to the admittedly excellent education offered in Protestant schools. The Jesuits usually began pursuing work as teachers in cities in which there had already been municipal or chapter schools in the Middle Ages. In these milieus, the Jesuit institutions clearly represented a qualitative change. Jesuit grammar schools also managed to achieve rapid and lasting successes in areas in which the political circumstances would not have seemed favorable. One could mention the Jesuit schools in Gyöngyös during the period of Ottoman occupation, for instance, or the schools in Cluj in the heart of (largely Protestant) Transylvania. New research suggests that one should be cautious about drawing any far-reaching conclusions. The Jesuit grammar schools did not

101 Lukács, *A független magyar jezsuita rendtartomány*, 13–23.
102 Kádár, *Jezsuiták Nyugat-Magyarországon*, 188–89.

discriminate against their Protestant students, and thus, their conversion to Catholicism was not as widespread as has been assumed.[103]

The stable expansion of the Jesuit school network went hand in hand with the spread of congregations. Antecedents from the sixteenth century illustrated very clearly the importance of the congregations, that is, the young students who entered the Marian congregation in Cluj then became the leading Jesuit figures in the first half of the seventeenth century. Congregations were founded in several waves over the course of the seventeenth century. In the first of these waves, in addition to Zagreb, Trnava unsurprisingly played a decisive role. Here, as the school expanded, four student confraternities were created. Later, three more confraternities were founded for the burghers of the city as part of pastoral work. The latter were formed according to the three nationalities living in the town (for Hungarians: Holy Cross, 1622; for Germans: Annunciation of Our Lady, 1649; for Slovaks: Agonia Christi, 1660). The confraternities also typically became comparatively diverse, depending on the size of the city and the configuration of the local Jesuit institution. The formation of certain specific congregations was also linked to the urban backdrop. In Bratislava, for instance, which was the center of the country and home to the most important government offices, a special congregation was created for the "lords," that is, members of the nobility who also held offices. Bratislava was also a distinctive case because, at the initiative of Archbishop Lippay of Esztergom, an Agonia Christi congregation was formed there as early as 1647. This was one year before Superior General Vincenzo Caraffa (1586–1649, in office 1646–1649) institutionalized this form of confraternity in the Society of Jesus. Lippay also managed to persuade the Jesuits to accept the leadership of the confraternity despite the fact that it was also open to women. Caraffa gave his consent with the provision that women could only be present for sermons in the church.[104]

The Jesuits' literary program was also closely linked to their pastoral work. In this respect, too, the writings of Archbishop Pázmány, who is considered the father of Hungarian prose, were outstanding. Pázmány was particularly active as a writer in the wake of the religious debates with Protestants. His main work was the *Igazságra vezérlő Kalauz* (Guide to divine truth [1613]), into

103 Zsófia Kádár, "The Difficulties of Conversion of Non-Catholic Students in Jesuit Colleges in Western Hungary in the First Half of the Seventeenth Century," *Hungarian Historical Review* 3, no. 4 (2014): 729–48.

104 Zsófia Kádár, "Der Geist des Konzils von Trient und die jesuitischen Kongregationen in Ungarn von 1582 bis 1671," in *Das Trienter Konzil und seine Rezeption im Ungarn des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Márta Fata et al. (Münster: Aschendorff Verlag, 2019), 184–97.

which he incorporated his earlier polemical writings. Pázmány's criticisms of the ideas of Cambridge Puritan William Whitaker (1548–1595) offer ample testimony of his extensive knowledge of the religious debate literature of his time. In addition to his critiques of Protestant ideas, he also authored a refutation of the teachings of Islam in a work published in Graz in 1605.[105] The Ottoman conquest naturally aroused interest in Islam. In addition to Pázmány, a late work by Szántó (who was discussed in some detail in chapter 2), which has survived in manuscript form, also merits mention. Though his *Confutatio Alcorani* (Refutation of the Qur'an), written around 1610–1611, builds in many respects on medieval literary antecedents, Szántó nonetheless adopted a new approach in many respects. Many of the factual errors in his text, however, cast doubt on his actual knowledge of the Qur'an.[106]

In the middle of the seventeenth century, polemical religious writing began to burgeon again among the Jesuits, especially with regard to the debates taking place in Upper Hungary and the city of Košice. These writings were at times crude, derisive, or even personal in tone. On the Jesuit side, Sámbár, mentioned earlier in connection with the Transylvanian missions, was one of the leading figures. The Jesuits also produced a remarkable quantity of sermon literature. Pázmány was again one of the most outstanding authors in this genre. A collection of his writings was published in 1636, containing all his sermons from the past three decades. György Káldi (1573–1634) was another prominent preacher at the time. Káldi's Sunday and feast day sermons were published in a separate work, as were his sermons on the Ten Commandments.[107] The first translation of the Catholic Bible into Hungarian, which was published in 1626 in two thousand copies, is attributed to Káldi. The suggestion has often been made, however, that Káldi was merely working from the manuscript of a translation by Szántó that has not survived.[108] The Jesuit school theater moved on the borderline between literary work and education. Most of the Jesuit dramas were basically connected with church festivities, but they also featured figures from Hungarian history: Hungarian kings Saint Stephen (*c.*970–1038; r.997–1038) and Saint Ladislaus. Jesuit grammar school students were even invited to perform at purely secular events, for instance, at the wedding of

105 Shore and Tusor, "Peter Pázmány," 534–36.

106 Paul Shore, "Two Hungarian Jesuits and the Qur'an: Understanding, Misunderstanding, and Polemic," *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 20, no. 3 (2018): 81–93, here 82–83.

107 Ibolya Maczák, "Jezsuita hitviták és prédikációk," in Szokol and Szőnyi, *Jezsuiták Magyarországon a kezdetektől napjainkig*, 145–46.

108 Ibolya Maczák, "Káldi György bibliafordítása," in Szokol and Szőnyi, *Jezsuiták Magyarországon a kezdetektől napjainkig*, 150.

Prince Francis I Rákóczi (1645–1676) and Ilona Zrínyi (1649–1703) in Sárospatak in 1666.[109]

The Jesuits placed immense emphasis on the regular and proper performance of the sacraments by the members of the fold. They, therefore, recommended weekly Holy Communion and regular confession. They also tried to make confession a personal matter and give it a pedagogical dimension. They endeavored to persuade those who confessed their sins irregularly and only selectively to make proper confession. The large number of the faithful who gave confession indicates that their approach to this sacrament was popular. According to the annual reports and the records kept in the *Historia domus* chronicles, the Jesuits welcomed an ever-greater number of worshippers (in the thousands) who took Holy Communion.

Jesuits often had close personal relationships with individual members of their fold, providing pastoral care for them over long periods of time, though this was true mainly for members of the social elite, since high priests and aristocrats were able to have confessors in their courts. This all took place within the framework of the spiritual exercises of Ignatius of Loyola. Acquaviva's manual for fathers conducting spiritual exercises, which was completed in 1599, was an indispensable aid in this. The people who took part in the early modern spiritual exercises were also primarily members of the ecclesiastical elite.[110]

The creation of apothecaries also merits mention as part of the Jesuits' social undertakings. Over the course of the seventeenth century, pharmacies were established in the most important Jesuit institutions. Through medicine, the Jesuits sought to cast doubt on superstitions widespread among the faithful and break their attachment to various objects thought to have magical powers (such as cards and amulets). There were substitutes that were acceptable to the church, such as so-called Foy stones[111] and Saint Ignatius water, believed to have healing properties.[112]

Thus, through education and pastoral care, the Jesuits found ways to deepen Catholic religious practice and to make the reforms and the mentality of the Council of Trent part of everyday religious rituals and practice. This, of course, had innumerable other consequences from the perspectives of cultural life, literature, drama, education, and early forms of social care.

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109 Ibolya Maczák, "Jezsuita iskolai színjátszás," in Szokol and Szőnyi, *Jezsuiták Magyarországon a kezdetektől napjainkig*, 187–88.

110 Kádár, "A hőskor," 147–49, 151.

111 The Jesuits primarily used the Foy stone (*lapillus Foyensis*) to treat fevers. The stones from the Marian shrine of Foy-lez-Dinant in the Low Countries were believed to have miraculous healing powers and were used to replace pagan amulets.

112 Kádár, "A hőskor," 155–56.

4 A Century of Growth (1683–1773)

4.1 *Expansion and Its Limits*

By the early 1680s, tensions among the various denominations in Hungary were threatening to break out into religious civil war. In 1681, Leopold I tried unsuccessfully to reach a compromise with the Protestants at the diet of Sopron. The religious laws were considered too great a concession by the Catholics and too modest by the Protestants. In the years that followed, the Habsburg court in Vienna repeatedly narrowed its interpretation of the laws, but this legislation essentially determined the religious policy of the Kingdom of Hungary for a century, until the 1781 Edict of Tolerance of Joseph II (1741–1790, r.1765–1790). The Sopron Articles of Religion hardly achieved their aim in the short term. Anti-Habsburg rebels launched a successful campaign, with Transylvanian and Ottoman support, against the Kingdom of Hungary under the leadership of Count Thököly. In 1682, Thököly established an Ottoman vassal principality in Upper Hungary with Košice as its center. This vassal principality was to survive for a good three years. The Ottoman campaign against Vienna in 1683 only exacerbated the situation. King John Sobieski III of Poland (1629–1696, r.1674–1696), who arrived at the last minute at the head of the auxiliary forces, saved the imperial capital. Thanks in part to the diplomatic efforts of Pope Innocent XI (1611–1689, r.1676–1689), Vienna, in alliance with the Holy League (the Holy Roman Empire, Venice, and Poland) and with the support of other European states, launched the Great Turkish War. After a decade and a half of fighting, the Ottoman Empire was essentially driven out of the territory of the historic Kingdom of Hungary. In 1690, following the death of Michael I Apafi (1632–1690, r.1661–1690), the Principality of Transylvania finally fell under permanent Habsburg rule. The tribulations of the war years and Vienna's policies, however, created new social tensions, and a new uprising broke out, the War of Independence (1703–1711) led by Francis II Rákóczi (1676–1735, r.1704–1711). Once Rákóczi had been defeated, however, the country enjoyed a century and a half of peace.

Nearly three decades of continuous warfare obviously had significant consequences for the Austrian Jesuit province. The last two decades of the seventeenth century bore witness to two contradictory processes with regard to the Jesuit presence. On the one hand, with the outbreak of the Great Turkish War, the missionary structure of the Jesuit institutions in the territories under Ottoman occupation collapsed, and during the reign of Thököly, the colleges in Upper Hungary were forced to flee. However, after the fall of Thököly in 1685, the Jesuits were able to return to their houses, and after the expulsion of the Ottomans, they began to establish their presence in many new places.

TABLE 2 New permanent settlements established between 1683 and 1703

Name of the municipality	Date of the first lasting Jesuit presence
Brasov (Brassó, Kronstadt)	1694
Buda	1686
Eger	1687
Osijek (Eszék)	1688
Esztergom	1685
Târgu Mureș (Marosvásárhely)	1702
Sibiu (Nagyszeben, Hermannstadt)	1691
Petrovaradin (Pétervárad)	1694
Požega (Pozsega)	1698
Székesfehérvár	1688

In Transylvania, serious political struggles began in connection with the return of the Jesuits. At the Transylvanian diet of 1692, Catholics demanded the return of the "old religious orders," which included the Jesuits. After lengthy negotiations, decrees issued in 1693, which were admittedly broad in their phrasing, permitted the settlement of church figures in Transylvania who would be entrusted with the task of educating members of the next generation. No specific mention was made of the Jesuits, however. As a result of the decrees, the Society was given the Protestant church in Cluj and the building of the adjacent Unitarian college. They were also given a church in Brasov (Brassó in Hungarian, Kronstadt in German) and fifteen thousand forints as compensation for the confiscated estates in Cluj-Mănăştur. Finally, in 1702, Leopold I issued a decree repealing the laws banning the Jesuits from Transylvania.[113]

In the wake of the successes of war, new Jesuit houses were created, which further increased the weight of the Hungarian Jesuits within the Austrian province. In 1688, Superior General Tirso González (1624–1705, in office 1687–1705) had suggested that at the end of the war, it would be worth pondering the merits of dividing the vast Austrian province in half and creating an independent Hungarian province. He wanted to take into account both the vast geographical expanse of the province and the aspirations of the Hungarian ecclesiastical

113 Béla Vilmos Mihalik, "Az erdélyi katolikus újjászerveződés ügye az 1690-es évek elején," in *Reformer vagy lázadó? Bethlen Miklós és kora*, ed. Ildikó Horn and Gyula Laczházi (Budapest: L'Harmattan, 2020), 123–35.

and secular elites. Two possibilities emerged on the basis of González's idea. The first was the notion of *divisio mixta*, according to which, while the province would indeed be separated into two distinct provinces, a Hungarian one and an Austrian one, mixed Austrian–Hungarian houses would remain in both. This idea would probably have received a more favorable reception from the imperial court. In contrast, the Hungarian notion, *divisio simplex*, envisaged a province made up exclusively of Hungarian Jesuit houses. González, in the meantime, ordered the temporary appointment of a vice-provincial superior dependent on Vienna, and in 1693, plans for an independent province began to be drawn up. The majority argued in favor of a *divisio simplex* and the creation of a Hungarian province. The influential Austrian opposition, however, took the *divisio mixta* plan a step further and proposed that the border should be the Danube River. In 1695, at the provincial assembly, the supporters of the *divisio simplex* won a majority. González postponed the decision, however, claiming that in his assessment, the circumstances still did not offer any clear guarantee for the creation of a Hungarian province. A memorandum sent to Rome by Provincial Superior Franz Voglmayer (1637–1713, in office 1691–1695, 1701–1705) played a significant role in this, as it so happens. Voglmayer had argued against the *divisio simplex*. The Hungarians, however, were not informed of this. In his petition, Voglmayer made several emphatically discriminatory statements against Hungarians: young Hungarians, he contended, were not worth much; they came from the lower classes and were contentious by nature. They were also allegedly unreliable and absent-minded, hardly capable of the discipline required of a Jesuit, and utterly unfit to manage finances.

The opinion of the monarch was also an important factor, of course, and, naturally, both sides claimed that Leopold I was in favor of their plan. In one of his letters, Father Friedrich Wolff (1643–1708), advisor to the emperor, wrote that Leopold was more supportive of *divisio simplex*. Wolff claimed that the emperor knew well that the Hungarian Jesuits had shown their loyalty to him several times under the most difficult circumstances (for instance, the uprising led by Thököly). Wolff urged the superior general not to listen to Franz Menegatti (1631–1710), Leopold's Jesuit confessor, because Menegatti, he insisted, was a determined enemy of the Hungarians and thus could hardly be considered unbiased. Wolff, however, was either incorrect in his assessment of the emperor's position, or Menegatti managed to convince Leopold to change his mind. At the end of 1700, Cardinal Leopold Karl von Kollonitsch (1631–1707), then archbishop of Esztergom (1695–1707), informed the then Austrian provincial superior Albert Mechtl (1636–1718, in office

1697–1701) that the court would support a *divisio mixta* along the Danube River at most.[114]

The outbreak of the Rákóczi War of Independence in 1703 thus exerted a strong influence on the situation of the Hungarian Jesuits. Rákóczi himself, who led the war, was the descendant of a Transylvanian princely family. He was also related to the Báthory dynasty through his paternal grandmother, Zsófia Báthory (1629–1680). His grandmother and father had become Catholics in the early 1660s, and they had been important supporters of the Jesuits, even managing to establish a strong Jesuit presence in Sárospatak, which had been considered a Calvinist stronghold. Ferenc Rákóczi II had been educated by Jesuits and had studied at the Jesuit grammar school in Prague. In 1704, following the outbreak of the War of Independence, he issued a special decree protecting the Jesuits. Most of Rákóczi's supporters were Protestant, however, and anti-Jesuit legislation was passed at the diet of Szécsény in 1705. The Protestant estates sought to restrict the activities of the Society of Jesus in Hungary to educational tasks and simply confiscated the church revenues that had been allocated to the Jesuits. Furthermore, German or allegedly "pro-German" Jesuits who had not been born in Hungary or who had shown loyalty to the emperor were banished. Others were allowed to remain under two conditions. First, they had to join the confederation led by Rákóczi, and second, they had to break from the Austrian province and create an independent Hungarian province. If these conditions were not met, the Jesuits would be expelled from the country after four months.[115] It was only due to the firm intercession of Archbishop Pál Széchényi of Kalocsa (1645–1710, in office 1696–1710) that the Jesuits were granted a reprieve from legal sanctions in early 1706. Széchényi also informed the superior general of the situation, who informed the new emperor Joseph I (1678–1711, r.1705–1711) that nothing would be done without Vienna's approval. The confederation, however, refused to budge, so Superior General Michelangelo Tamburini (1648–1730, in office 1706–1730) tried to persuade Joseph I to agree to the creation of an independent Hungarian province. He instructed the Austrian province to obtain the emperor's approval without delay and to decide on the question of the division of the Austrian province and the creation of a Hungarian province. Tamburini's efforts came too late, however. The Protestant estates of the confederation had run out of patience.

114 Lukács, *A független magyar jezsuita rendtartomány*, 23–32.

115 Dániel Siptár, "A virágkor," in Szokol and Szőnyi, *Jezsuiták Magyarországon a kezdetektől napjainkig*, 200–305, here 222.

In 1707, they began to dissolve the Jesuit houses in Hungary. In total, thirty houses were closed, and 268 Jesuits were sent into exile.

In 1708, Joseph I convened the Hungarian diet, a step that he hoped would lead to political compromise and the end of the War of Independence. At the advice of Christian August of Saxe-Zeitz (1666–1725), the archbishop of Esztergom (1707–1725), the Jesuits were also invited to the diet, as there were plans afoot to repeal the 1608 anti-Jesuit laws and constitutionally recognize the Society of Jesus in Hungary. Archbishop Christian August sought to link this to the creation of an independent Hungarian province. The Hungarian estates presented the two matters to the emperor. In Vienna, however, this was met with general indignation, because it was believed that the Society was seeking to decide on the creation of an independent Hungarian province without first obtaining royal permission. Joseph I opposed the division of the Austrian province into two provinces, and so the efforts to create a Hungarian province were again in vain.[116] The Society did, however, win legal acceptance in the Kingdom of Hungary according to Act 73 of 1715. Admittedly, this was something of a makeshift solution. As there was no independent Hungarian province, in recognition of the abbeys and priories attached to the Jesuit houses, the Society was allowed to be represented by two Jesuit fathers in the Lower House at the future diets.[117]

After the defeat of the Rákóczi War of Independence in 1711, the network of Jesuit institutions did not grow significantly, and by 1773, they had established a new presence in only four other places.

TABLE 3 The Jesuit houses created between 1711 and 1773

Name of the municipality	Date of the first lasting Jesuit presence
Timişoara	1718
Baia Sprie (Felsőbánya)	1735
Štiavnické Bane (Szélakna)	1744
Motyčky (Moticska)	1755

116 Lukács, *A független magyar jezsuita rendtartomány*, 33–36.

117 Zsófia Kádár, "Soprontól Pozsonyig: A jezsuiták 17. századi országrendiségének kérdéséhez," in *Amikor Sopronra figyelt Európa: Az 1625. évi soproni koronázó országgyűlés*, ed. Péter Dominkovits, Csaba Katona, and Géza Pálffy (Budapest: MNL GyMSL–BTK TTI, 2020), 518–19.

The period of calm and peaceful development, however, strengthened the financial positions of many settlements that had been founded earlier, and this in turn allowed the local emergence of a higher type of institution. A number of notable changes took place in Transylvania in the 1710s. In 1712, for instance, the residence in Cluj became a college and the mission in Sibiu became a residence. One year later, the mission in Sibiu (Nagyszeben in Hungarian, Hermannstadt in German) was elevated to a residence. These changes were all preceded by major construction efforts, which made it possible for the Jesuits to perform more complex functions. In the eighteenth century, alongside their traditional educational and pastoral work, the Hungarian Jesuits also took over several parishes.[118] This was unusual because, in principle, the Constitutions of the Society did not allow it. In the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, however, the Jesuits provided services for a total of thirty-six parishes in Hungary, twenty-four of which were added to their institutional network in the eighteenth century. In the last third of the seventeenth century, the leaders of the Society tacitly turned a blind eye to the Jesuits' parish activities, but from time to time they repeated that as soon as a given diocese could send a priest, the parish would immediately be handed over. Nonetheless, the number of Jesuit-run parishes increased. One major factor in this was the fact that the Jesuits had often settled in areas that had been recaptured from the Ottomans, and thus, the bishops were counting on the help they would get from the Jesuits in providing pastoral care. In the 1710s, Superior General Tamburini tried to investigate the spread of the parish ministry of the Jesuits and force the Austrian province to give it up.[119]

Another important detail of the Jesuits' activity in Hungary in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was their work on a union between the Roman Catholic and the Eastern churches. Since the Middle Ages, the Kingdom of Hungary had been situated on the border between Western (Latin) and Eastern (Byzantine or Orthodox) Christianity, and it had a significant Eastern Orthodox population. The Ruthenians of Transcarpathia formed one of the largest groups of faithful belonging to the Orthodox fold. The Catholic Church in Hungary unquestionably exerted a strong influence on them, but they were also influenced by events in Poland, where a union had already been formed in 1596 (the so-called Union of Brest). In Hungary, the first attempt at union was made in 1614 in Krásny Brod (Krasznibród in Hungarian), but it was unsuccessful. The Ruthenian priests signed a declaration, but it had

118 Siptár, "A virágkor," 227–30.

119 László Szilas, "Jezsuiták plébániai munkában Magyarországon a XVI–XVIII. században," in Szilágyi, *A magyar jezsuiták küldetése a kezdetektől napjainkig*, 190–99, here 193–96.

little actual meaning. They were still not subject in any way to the authority of the Roman Catholic Church. Another three decades passed before the germ of a Greek Catholic bishopric began to take form in the city of Mukachevo (Munkács in Hungarian) after the more successful Union of Uzhhorod in 1646. But the long process of union that eventually led to the establishment of the Greek Catholic (Uniate) Church in Hungary was under way. The Greek Catholic Church structures also had to suffer the upheavals of the Great Turkish War, however. It was only thanks to the intervention of the aforementioned archbishop of Esztergom, Cardinal Kollonitsch, that the internal conflicts were brought to an end, and in 1690, Joseph De Camillis (1641–1706) was appointed Greek Catholic bishop of Mukachevo (1689–1706). The relationship between the Greek Catholic and the Roman Catholic clergy and dioceses remained troubled, however. Ferenc Ravasz (1649–1725), Jesuit superior of Baia Mare, therefore submitted a more ambitious plan to Cardinal Kollonitsch. It primarily sought to regulate the administration of the sacraments, and Ravasz noted in particular that the Greek Catholic clergy should be forbidden from baptizing the children of Roman Catholic parents. By the end of the seventeenth century, the possibility of Latinizing the Greek Catholic rite was being taken more and more seriously. However, this would have made irrelevant one of the most important points of the union, which allowed for the maintenance of the Eastern rite.[120]

The other large group of people who followed the Eastern rites was the Transylvanian Romanians. As noted earlier, the Jesuits undertook pastoral work among them. Canisius's *Catechismus minor*, for instance, was translated into Romanian in the Jesuit mission in Caransebeş (see chapter 3.2). In 1692, in order to promote the idea of union, Leopold I granted Orthodox priests who entered the union equal rights with the Roman Catholic clergy. The committee responsible for preparing the union of the Romanian Orthodox was headed by Jesuits Gábor Kapi (1658–1728) and Gábor Hevenesi (1656–1715). In 1697, Metropolitan Teophilus Seremi (d.1697), the ecclesiastical leader of the Transylvanian Romanians, signed the declaration of union in Alba Iulia, together with a dozen of his priests. Teophilus, however, died later that year. He was allegedly poisoned by Calvinists, who sought to prevent the union, which would have made Protestants a political minority in Transylvania. His successor, Metropolitan Athanasie Angel (*c.*1660–1713), tried to keep the union process underway, but many regarded him as little more than an "agent" of the Jesuits. In 1702, Athanasie, who in the meantime had become a Greek Catholic bishop, held a synod. He argued that the Romanian Uniate

120 Mihalik, *Papok, polgárok, konvertiták*, 25, 216.

clergy should be given an opportunity to study at a Jesuit university or college in order to improve their education. In the end, the Hungarian–Romanian language barrier proved to be an enduring obstacle in the eighteenth century. The Jesuits, however, continued to support the development of the Romanian Greek Catholic Church. One finds evidence of this in extraordinary cases, such as when Adam Fitter (1679–1741), a Jesuit, governed the Romanian-Greek Catholics as director when the bishop's seat was vacant in 1728–1729. Fitter sought to take advantage of the opportunity by introducing new reforms. Like Bishop Athanasie, Fitter believed that the key lay in reforming and reinvigorating the training provided for priests.[121]

Around 1670, Armenians fled to Transylvania in large numbers. As had been the case among the Ruthenians, the Armenian union was also initiated by Poland in the Transcarpathian regions. An Armenian Uniate priest named Oxendio Virzirescu (1654–1715) arrived in Transylvania from Transcarpathia, and by around 1690, he had gained considerable influence among the Transylvanian Armenians. He was soon appointed bishop of the Armenian Uniate community in Transylvania. When the rapid reforms introduced by Bishop Oxendio led to tensions within the Armenian community in the late 1690s, the Jesuits came to his aid. A commission of inquiry set up by the Viennese nuncio included Transylvanian Jesuits who supported Oxendio, and they endorsed his reforms. This ensured the success of the Armenian Union.[122] Armenian Catholics in Transylvania continued to maintain close links with the Jesuits in later decades too. In 1720, during a time of plague, the Armenian community of Gherla (Szamosújvár in Hungarian) offered silver pledge tablets to the Jesuit church in Cluj, and in 1738 an Armenian priest from Gherla donated one thousand forints to the Jesuit college in Cluj.[123]

The areas recaptured from the Ottomans had significant numbers of Serbs, who also belonged to the Eastern church, and the Jesuits strove to launch a movement for church unity among them as well. In 1690, the Serbian church leaders of southern Transdanubia entered into a union in the city of Pécs, and the declaration was proclaimed in the local Jesuit church. When it came to the Serbs, however, the Viennese court put military considerations first. The military force guarding the southern border areas was made up of Serbs, and in exchange for their loyalty, Vienna granted them ecclesiastical autonomy. The

121 Paul Shore, *Jesuits and the Politics of Religious Pluralism in Eighteenth-Century Transylvania: Culture, Politics, and Religion, 1693–1773* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 55–75.

122 Kornél Nagy, *The Church-Union of the Armenians in Transylvania (1685–1715)* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2021), 176–77.

123 Shore, *Jesuits and the Politics of Religious Pluralism*, 77.

rights offered by a possible union could hardly compete with these privileges, and thus, the efforts taken among the Serbs to establish a union failed. That increased tensions between the Orthodox and Catholic populations in Pécs and the surrounding settlements. During the Rákóczi War of Independence, Serbs loyal to Vienna had launched major attacks against the confederation under Rákóczi. In 1704, the Serbs also attacked Pécs, and four Jesuits fell victim to the assault.[124]

With the expulsion of the Ottomans, by the early eighteenth century, the Jesuit institutional network had expanded considerably. In the decades following the War of Independence, however, emphasis was placed more on the internal development of the previously established Jesuit houses. The Hungarian Jesuits gained considerable influence within the Austrian province, but the political constellation did not allow for the creation of an independent Hungarian province. This led to serious tensions between the Austrian and Hungarian members of the Society, and there were also political consequences. The Society of Jesus managed, at the very least, to win legal recognition in Hungary from the diet. In addition to their traditional pastoral activities, at the end of the seventeenth century, the Hungarian Jesuits began to play an increasingly significant role in the creation of a union between the Orthodox and Catholic Church. They did not achieve the same results among members of every individual ethnic group, however. They were most successful among the Ruthenians, although in this case, the process had begun much earlier, in the mid-seventeenth century.

4.2 *Jesuits in the Service of Science*

In addition to their efforts in education and pastoral care, Jesuits all over the world also excelled in the sciences. This was closely linked, of course, to the high standards set in their educational institutions. The Hungarian Jesuits were no exception. In the following discussion, I describe the scholarly undertakings of the Hungarian Jesuits in the eighteenth century, drawing on examples from two major fields of science, astronomy, and historiography.

In the field of astronomy, Hungarian Jesuits made lasting contributions up until the twentieth century. Studies in astronomy were done from the outset at the University of Trnava, and in 1661, Jesuit professor of mathematics János Misch (1613–1677) observed a comet with a telescope of his own making. Márton Szentiványi (1633–1705), who emerged as a prominent polymath at the end of the seventeenth century, set up the first small observatory in Trnava. From this observatory, he observed the Kirch comet in 1680–1681. In the eighteenth century, the Trnava observatory was further developed, and in 1751 the

124 Siptár, "A virágkor," 224.

university observatory was established. The scientific observations made from this observatory provided the foundation for the launch of a regular astronomical journal. The *Observationes astronomicae* (Astronomical observations), published every two years, made the scientific work underway at the University of Trnava known throughout Europe. Ferenc Borgia Kéri (1702–1768), who founded the observatory, won considerable recognition for his self-made telescopes, which were among the largest telescopes of the time (fifteen centimeters in diameter with a focal length of 256 centimeters). Kéri cast and polished the metal reflecting mirrors used in these telescopes himself.[125]

Kéri probably also exerted a strong influence on Maximilian Hell (1720–1792), the most famous Jesuit astronomer from Hungary. Hell had already shown a keen interest in astronomy during his studies in Vienna, and he had helped design several observatories. In 1755, he was appointed imperial and royal astronomer by Maria Theresa (1717–1780, r.1740–1780). As one of his responsibilities in this office, he supervised the construction of the new observatory tower at the University of Vienna. He won recognition all over Europe as the editor of the *Ephemerides astronomicae ad meridianum Vindobonensem* (Astronomical journal of the Viennese meridian) yearbooks, in which, in 1762, he published an essay on the astronomical phenomenon of the transit of Venus (when Venus passes between the sun and the earth and is thus visible as a small black dot moving across the sun). The transit of Venus was observed twice in the eighteenth century, in 1761 and 1769. On the second occasion, Hell made astronomical observations in Vardø in northern Norway at the invitation of King Christian VII of Denmark (1749–1808, r.1766–1808). Though the Society of Jesus was dissolved in 1773, this had little effect on his career as an imperial astronomer, a position he held until his death. In the last two decades of his life, he devoted almost all his energies to science and astronomy. He played a major role in the establishment of several observatories in Hungary. In 1776, a new observatory was opened in Eger, followed by another in 1792 in Alba Iulia. The University of Trnava, in the meantime, was moved to the royal palace in Buda. A new observatory was built in the palace tower and opened in 1780. Hell designed rotating domes, which proved to be one of the most important innovations of the observatories he created. At three meters in height, they constituted a major technical innovation for astronomical studies at the time.[126] The influence of Hell's disciples continued to be felt even after the dissolution of the Society. The Mártonffy brothers, Antal (1747–1799) and József (1746–1815),

125 Ágoston Teres, "Magyar jezsuita csillagászok," in Szilágyi, *A magyar jezsuiták küldetése a kezdetektől napjainkig*, 312–18, here 312.

126 László Kontler and Per Pippin Aspaas, *Maximilian Hell (1720–1792) and the Ends of Jesuit Science in Enlightenment Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2019), *passim*.

who had themselves been Jesuits, worked on the development of the Alba Iulia observatory, the former as director, the latter as bishop of Transylvania (1799–1815). As the provost of Eger, János Madarassy (1741–1814), also a former Jesuit, worked on the development of the observatory of the local lyceum in the 1780s.[127]

It could even be claimed that the Jesuits should be seen as the founders of modern Hungarian historical research. Menyhért Inchofer's (*c.*1585–1648) *Annales ecclesiastici Regni Hungariae* (Ecclesiastical annals of the Kingdom of Hungary), published in Rome in 1644, was the first groundbreaking work. Inchofer examined the history of Christianity in the Carpathian Basin from the ancient Roman province of Pannonia up to 1059. Although he planned to continue the work, he never actually did, thus both leaving a task for his fellow members of the Society and inspiring them to pursue similar historical research. The need to continue Inchofer's work prompted Hevenesi and his circle to formulate a historiographical program. They drew up a draft known as *Modus materiae conquirendae pro annalibus ecclesiasticis Regni Hungariae* (Guide for collecting materials for the ecclesiastical annals of the Kingdom of Hungary). As the title makes clear, this was intended as a continuation of Inchofer's research. At the initiative of Hevenesi and his colleagues, a major effort was launched to assemble a collection of archival sources.[128]

While Hevenesi was working on his plans, Márton Cseles (1641–1708), another Hungarian Jesuit, was sent to Rome. Cseles became the Hungarian confessor at Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome, and he enjoyed the support of the archbishop of Esztergom, Cardinal Kollonitsch. After the expulsion of the Ottomans, Kollonitsch wanted to strengthen the idea of the apostolic Hungarian kingdom. This would in part have supported the royal patronage right of the Habsburg rulers over the prerogatives of the Holy See, meaning that the Habsburg ruler was free to appoint his own candidates for bishops to head the Hungarian dioceses and then present these appointments to the pope, who then had to confirm the new prelates. In order to further this endeavor, with Kollonitsch's support, Cseles began research in the Vatican Secret Archives, where he found important archival sources.[129]

127 Paul Shore, "Enduring the Deluge: Hungarian Jesuit Astronomers from Suppression to Restoration," in *Jesuit Survival and Restoration: A Global History, 1773–1900*, ed. Robert A. Maryks and Jonathan Wright (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 148–61, here 151–53.

128 György Szabados, "Jezsuita 'sikertörténet' (1644–1811): A magyar történettudomány konzervatív megteremtőiről," in *Clio inter arma: Tanulmányok a 16–18. századi magyarországi történetírásról*, ed. Gergely Tóth (Budapest: MTA BTK TTI, 2014), 206–26, here 207–9.

129 László Szelestei Nagy, "A jezsuiták történeti forrásgyűjtésének kezdetei Magyarországon," *Magyar könyvszemle* 103 (1987): 161–72, here 161–64.

Hevenesi and his circle may also have been motivated to pursue in-depth historical research by an inner, identity-affirming calling. This was tied to the fact that it was precisely in these years that the Hungarian Jesuits were coming closer to establishing an independent Hungarian province. The efforts that were underway in the 1690s to find archival sources and study Hungarian history could thus be interpreted as evidence of the Hungarian Jesuits' desire to strengthen their own identity within the Austrian province.[130] Hevenesi was an interesting figure in this respect, too, since as a Hungarian, he served as the head of the Austrian province between 1711 and 1714. In the wake of the Rákóczi War of Independence, however, the political climate was hardly favorable to any serious reconsideration of the idea of creating an independent Hungarian province.

Interpretations of the Rákóczi War of Independence also created a serious fault line among Hungarian Jesuit historians. Although they were not able to write about the events of the war, which was still part of the recent past, their approach to Hungarian history in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries clearly shows how loyal some Jesuit authors were to the Habsburg dynasty. The Kazy brothers, János (1686–1759) and Ferenc (1695–1759), who taught at the University of Trnava, typically focused their narratives on seventeenth-century personalities whose devotion to the Habsburg dynasty was beyond doubt. In contrast, István Kaprinai (1714–1785), who taught at the academy of Košice, and members of his circle seemed to have adopted a much more forgiving attitude toward the Rákóczi family, who, of course, were enemies of the Habsburg House. Kaprinai emerged as perhaps the most prominent Hungarian Jesuit historian in the eighteenth century and successfully pushed the Kazy brothers and their work to the margins of the scholarly discourse.[131]

Together with two of his contemporaries, György Pray (1723–1801) and István Katona (1732–1811), Kaprinai is a towering figure of Jesuit history writing in Hungary. He hatched plans for the publication of critical, annotated editions of the works in Hevenesi's collection and his own collection, which came to some 323 volumes. Ultimately, only the charters from the first four years of the reign of King Mátyás I (1443–1490, r.1458–1490) were actually published. This was nonetheless an important accomplishment, as it was an early incarnation of the modern idea of publishing sources. Kaprinai not only published the sources but also offered critical assessments of their authenticity and complemented the texts with scholarly annotations. In his five-volume *Annales regum Hungariae* (Annals of the kings of Hungary), Pray covered Hungarian

130 Szabados, "Jezsuita 'sikertörténet,'" 206–7.

131 Elréd Borián, "A történetíró Kazy testvérek háttérbe szorításának politikai okai," in Szilágyi, *A magyar jezsuiták küldetése a kezdetektől napjainkig*, 300–11.

history from the foundation of the state to the death of Ferdinand I in 1564. He critically examined the medieval narrative sources, refuted parts of them, and in many areas strove to clarify chronological and genealogical questions. István Katona continued this undertaking with his *Historia critica regum Hungariae* (A critical history of the kings of Hungary), a monumental forty-two-volume work. Katona also offered an examination of Hungarian history from a critical perspective. His work, like Pray's, also began with the foundation of the state, but Katona came all the way up to his own time.[132]

There were interesting overlaps between astronomy and historiography during Hell's aforementioned expedition to Vardø. Hell traveled to Vardø with János Sajnovics (1733–1785), another Hungarian Jesuit. In the course of their travels, after having met inhabitants of the Sámi region, Sajnovics noticed the affinities between the Hungarian and Sámi languages. This realization led to the scientific discovery of the Finno-Ugric language family. In 1770, Sajnovics's *Demonstratio idioma Ungarorum et Lapporum idem esse* (A demonstration that the Hungarian and the Lappish languages are the same) was published in Copenhagen. As the first scientific work on the relationship between these languages, it had a significant impact on the scholarship and research on the prehistory of the Hungarians. The volume was soon published in Trnava in an expanded edition that included Hell's theory of the eastern origin of the Hungarians, according to which the ancestral homeland of the Hungarians and Finns lay in China. This was not Hell's idea. Rather, it harmonized with Pray's theory, put forward in his aforementioned *Annales regum Hungariae*, of the kinship between the Huns and the Hungarians. Pray had identified the Hungarians with the Xiongnu people mentioned in Chinese sources.[133] Further evidence of their joint scientific work is the discovery in the same year of the twelfth-century *Halotti beszéd és könyörgés* (Funeral sermon and prayer), the oldest known surviving contiguous Hungarian text. It was first published in print in 1770 in the second edition of the *Demonstratio* (the edition published in Trnava).[134]

The Jesuits actively pursued scientific endeavors in Hungary too. They were, in general, polymaths, and they made major contributions in several scientific disciplines. The Jesuit focus on education ensured that they would be able to share their most recent scientific findings.

132 István Soós, "Felzárkózás vagy lemaradás? Történetírás a 18. századi Magyarországon," in Tóth, *Clio inter arma*, 227–52, here 234–45.

133 Kontler and Aspaas, *Maximilian Hell*, 240.

134 Gergely Tóth, "A Pray-kódex," in Szokol and Szőnyi, *Jezsuiták Magyarországon a kezdetektől napjainkig*, 283.

As the careers of Jesuit teachers and scholars show, by the second half of the eighteenth century, a serious demarcation line between secondary and higher education was beginning to emerge. Beginning in the 1770s, a member of the Society who had taken a position as a university teacher was increasingly compelled to take some distance from the community of Jesuits as a result of the educational and ecclesiastical policies of the Enlightenment era. This distancing was in conflict with the Constitutions of the Society. There is a touch of irony to the fact that this conflict was ultimately resolved by the dissolution of the Society in 1773.[135] There were many Hungarian Jesuit scientists, both in the natural sciences and in the humanities, who only really began to thrive in their careers at the end of the eighteenth century.

4.3 *A Missionary Enterprise: Hungarian Jesuits in Latin America*

Although the Habsburgs lost their Spanish kingdom at the beginning of the eighteenth century, the kingdoms of the Iberian Peninsula continued to have a close dynastic relationship with the Austrian branch of the Habsburg dynasty. This can be seen in the composition of the missionaries in the vast colonial empires. On average, eight percent of the Jesuits working in Brazil came from non-Portuguese crownlands, and a significant proportion of them were "Germans" (meaning from territories where German was spoken as the mother tongue). This was thanks to the support of Queen Maria Anna of Austria (1683–1754), wife of King John V of Portugal (1689–1750, r.1706–1790). Among the Jesuits who came from the Austrian province, there were some from the Kingdom of Hungary, whether Hungarian, Croatian, German, or Slovak by mother tongue. Jesuits from Hungary were present in the largest numbers (between twenty and twenty-five) in the provinces of Paraguay, Quito, Peru, and Maranhão.[136] In the following discussion, I present an account of the activities undertaken by Jesuits from Hungary in Latin America on the basis of the activities of some of the most prominent individuals among them.

One of the first and most prominent Hungarian Jesuits to travel to Latin America was Károly Brentán (1694–1753). Brentán asked Superior General Tamburini to send him on an overseas mission almost immediately after joining the Society in 1714. It was not until ten years later, however, that he

135 Piroska Balogh, "Kényszerpályák nemzedéke? Szerzetespapság és felvilágosodás; Három esettanulmány," in *Katolikus egyházi társadalom Magyarországon a 18. században*, ed. András Forgó and Zoltán Gőzsy (Pécs: META Egyesület, 2019), 387–410.

136 Dóra Babarczi, *"A kedves Isten kedvezéséből* [...] *": Szluha János Nepomuk SJ brazíliai missziónárius levelei* (Budapest: Jezsuita Kiadó, 2018), 13; Dóra Babarczi, "A dél-amerikai jezsuita missziók," in Szokol and Szőnyi, *Jezsuiták Magyarországon a kezdetektől napjainkig*, 292–303, here 298.

was finally permitted to go to South America. In Quito, he began his theological studies in Spanish at the University of San Gregorio. He also learned the Quechua languages. In 1728, he was sent as a missionary to the Mainas missionary district, where he lived among the Omagua people. In the 1730s, he worked as a missionary among the Yameo, Iquito, and Miguano tribes, trying to bring nonbelievers into the fold, though initially with little success. He followed the usual approach of the missionaries of his day, first trying to gain the trust of his audiences by giving them various useful items (axes, knives, clothing) and then, as a second step, giving them rosaries. In 1736–1737, Brentán founded six reductions, where he brought large numbers of indigenous people from various tribes whom he persuaded to be baptized. Following his successful work in Mainas, he was appointed to serve as the head of the province of Quito in 1742. Brentán was the first provincial superior of Quito to visit all the Jesuit houses belonging to the province, even traveling as far as Panama.

In 1747, Brentán was elected general procurator, which meant he had to return to Europe to recruit missionaries from the houses in Italy and Spain. It had become dangerous to travel in the Caribbean because of the Anglo-Spanish war (1739–1748), so he took an unusual route across the Amazon to Belém do Pará, and from there, he set sail for Europe. During his travels, he made numerous ethnographic observations, but his manuscripts were lost. Only a map that he edited and published in Rome in 1751 has survived. This map, which depicts most of the Spanish colonies in South America, is distinctive because Brentán attempted to capture the entire Amazon basin. Brentán was preparing to return to America when he died unexpectedly in 1753.[137]

László Orosz (1697–1773) was sent to a mission in Latin America in 1726. Orosz studied in Seville for two years and then traveled to Buenos Aires in 1729 with two companions from Hungary, Ferenc Limp (1696–1769) and Lukács Bakranin (1692–1727). Although Orosz sought to work on converting the indigenous population, his superiors felt that he would be more valuable as a scholar, so he was appointed to teach at the University of Córdoba. In the more than four decades during which he served as a university teacher, he only once had a chance to travel to all the missions in Paraguay as visitator. The report he composed at the time is a valuable source for the history of the reductions of the Paraguay province. He returned to Europe as procurator in 1746, where he remained until 1748 to raise funds and recruit missionaries to travel to Paraguay. Orosz made important additions to *Decades* (*quinque*) *Virorum illustrium Paraquariae Societatis Iesu* (Five decades of illustrious men

137 Loránd Zajta, "Brentán Károly hittérítői és tudományos tevékenysége a Perui Alkirályság területén," *Világtörténet* 6, no. 2 (2016): 229–57.

of the Society of Jesus in Paraguay), a work by the French missionary father Nicholas de Techo (1611–1680) on the history of Paraguay, which was published in two volumes in 1759 in Trnava. In 1767, after the anti-Jesuit Spanish decrees had been issued, he was arrested and imprisoned in Cádiz, only to be released and returned to Hungary thanks to the intercession of Maria Theresa. He wrote a memoir in manuscript form in which he gave a detailed account of the activities of the Jesuits in Paraguay and of the indigenous populations.[138]

Father Ignác Szentmártonyi (1718–1793) was another prominent Hungarian Jesuit who played an important role in the Jesuits' work in the New World. In 1754–1756, he took part in the expedition to determine the northern frontier between the Portuguese and Spanish territories. The conflict between the two colonial empires was settled in the Treaty of Madrid in 1750, and expeditions were launched to establish the precise borders. Szentmártonyi had already been given this task when he set sail for South America. In 1750, at the request of the king of Portugal, the Jesuit superior general Franz Retz (1673–1750, in office 1730–1750) asked the Austrian provincial superior to send a qualified expert to establish the borders. Szentmártonyi, who was chosen for this role, was already in Portugal in 1752, where he presented an experiment at the University of Coimbra involving "electrical instruments" ordered from England. He was considered a reliable expert due to his knowledge of astronomy and mathematics, but his work in South America was strongly influenced by Portuguese anti-Jesuit policies spearheaded by the marquis of Pombal. The governor of Maranhão also repeatedly accused Szentmártonyi of being untrustworthy and of rebelling against Portuguese rule. When the Society of Jesus was dissolved in Portugal in 1760, Szentmártonyi was arrested and brought to Portugal. He was held prisoner in several places in Portugal and was only released in 1777. He returned to Hungary and taught for a short time in Varaždin. He died in 1793 at seventy-five years of age.[139]

Hungarian Jesuit Ferenc Xavér Éder (1727–1772) was active in the Moxos mission near the Pacific coast of South America in 1753–1768. While working among the Moxos natives, he learned their language and made detailed ethnographic observations. In addition to the customs of the tribe, however, he also devoted considerable attention to the scientific study of the primeval forest, compiling a rich collection of drawings of the flora and fauna. His notes remained in manuscript for many years, although Éder survived the Jesuit exile

138 László Bartusz-Dobosi, *Jezsuiták és conquistadorok harca az indiánokért a XVII–XVIII. században* (Budapest: Szent Gellért Kiadó, 2007), 45–51.

139 Dóra Babarczi, *Magyar jezsuiták Brazíliában 1753–1760* (Szeged: SZTE BTK TDI, 2013), 106–9, 120–26, 145–49.

and died only after returning to Hungary in 1772. The aforementioned László Orosz continued to work on his manuscripts, but he was unable to finish them. Others began to use the remarkably rich collection and claimed to have made the findings themselves. In 1791, two decades after Éder's death, *Descriptio provinciae moxitarum in Regno Peruano* (Description of the Moxos province in the Kingdom of Peru), a thick tome coming to some six hundred pages, was published in Buda. It remains a fundamental work of Peruvian ethnography to this day.[140]

Many more of the Jesuits from the territories of the Hungarian crown who journeyed to South America to pursue missionary work left behind a rich body of scientific, ethnographic, and geographical scholarship and correspondence. Their fates, however, were closely intertwined with the stormy events that ultimately sealed the fate of the Jesuit missions in South America. The Guaraní War (1752–1756), which broke out between Spanish–Portuguese forces and Guaraní natives who were resisting the cession of their lands by Spain to Portugal, provided a pretext for the Portuguese and Spanish colonial powers finally to be done with the Jesuit missions and reductions. The missionaries were arrested, brought back to Europe, and imprisoned. The Jesuits from Central Europe were released relatively quickly, thanks to Maria Theresa's intervention. Those languishing in Portugal, however, were only freed following the fall of the marquis of Pombal in 1777. Not all of them survived to see this day. Dávid Fáy (1722–1767), for instance, a Jesuit of Hungarian origin, died in Lisbon after ten years of imprisonment.[141]

4.4 *The Tears of the Queen*

After the expulsion of the Ottomans and the end of the War of Independence, the Kingdom of Hungary enjoyed a period of relative peace, which also meant favorable conditions for the Society of Jesus to continue to develop and expand. However, while the eighteenth century can certainly be regarded as a period of prosperity, social and ideological processes were already underway that would ultimately undermine the Society's stability in Hungary. The Jesuits sensed this, and from 1753 on, reforms were introduced in institutions of higher education, including in Trnava and Košice. New subjects were introduced (such as ethics and history), and the study of philosophy was restructured and modernized. This did not change the fact, however, that the monopoly on education that the Jesuits had enjoyed in the seventeenth century was increasingly a thing of the past. This was partly because other religious orders were beginning to play larger roles in education, especially with the establishment of the Piarist

140 Bartusz-Dobosi, *Jezsuiták és conquistadorok*, 69.
141 Babarczi, "A dél-amerikai jezsuita missziók," 293–95.

colleges and grammar schools. Bishops sought to reform the education of the clergy so as to displace or completely exclude the Jesuits. Archbishop of Esztergom Ferenc Barkóczy (1710–1765, in office 1761–1765) took the seminaries away from the Jesuits in 1761 and placed them under diocesan administration, a move consistent with an increasing tendency for the state to assert greater control over education during the reign of Maria Theresa.[142]

In the 1750s, the Society of Jesus began to come under increasing political pressure all over Europe. At first, the Portuguese and Bourbon courts were content simply to disband the Society in their own countries between 1759 and 1768, though they often mercilessly imprisoned Jesuits. In the end, however, they were not satisfied with this and began to bring increasing diplomatic pressure to bear on the Holy See. They tried to involve Vienna as well, but with little success. The king of Spain had already asked the Viennese court for its view on the question of a ban on the Society of Jesus in 1770. The answer was given by Austrian court chancellor Wenzel Anton Eusebius von Kaunitz (1711–1794, in office 1753–1792), but it presumably reflected the view of Maria Theresa as well. Vienna adopted a cautious stance, and in its reply, it emphasized the unimpeachable conduct of the Jesuits, which had earned them the highest recognition. But if the pope were to decree reforms to or the abolition of the Society, as a Catholic monarch, Maria Theresa would defer to the Holy See.

The draft text of Pope Clement XIV's (1705–1774, r.1769–1774) brief had already been made known to the Viennese court in March 1773. Maria Theresa's reaction essentially reflected her earlier stance: though she had no objection to the presence of the Society in her crownlands, if the pope were to order the dissolution of the order, she would accept his decision but only in the context of state enforcement. The *Dominus ac Redemptor* papal brief arrived in Vienna on August 30, 1773. Maria Theresa set up a special commission to assess the financial situation of the Society, dispose of its assets, and ensure some sort of maintenance allowance for the former Jesuits. On September 18, 1773, following the commission's first meeting, the empress issued a decree concerning the process by which the Society of Jesus would be dissolved, and she also ensured that all its assets would become the property of the state.[143] Similar measures were taken in the Kingdom of Hungary. The dissolution of the Jesuit houses in Hungary was handled by a joint committee consisting of members of the Royal Council of Lieutenancy and the Hungarian Chamber. The assets that had belonged to the Society were given to the university, various educational

142 Siptár, "A virágkor," 240–41.

143 József Borovi, *Az esztergomi érseki egyházmegye feloszlatása* (Budapest: METEM, 2000), 84–88.

institutions, and certain dioceses. Anything that remained was merged into the *Fundus studiorum*, a state educational fund, in 1780.[144]

Public opinion of the time was somewhat surprised by the queen's willingness to show deference to the Holy See and dissolve the Society, and this sense of bewilderment was fertile ground for various conspiracy theories. According to one popular story, in 1772, the queen told her confessor of her spiritual struggles over the partition of Poland. The Jesuit confessor, Ignaz Parhamer (1715–1786), passed this on to Rome, as he hoped that the leadership of the Society would give him some guidance. Parhamer, however, was not the queen's confessor. Rather, he was a confessor for her daughter, Archduchess Maria Elisabeth (1743–1808). According to another story, the queen's confessor, a certain Father Kauphenhutter, shared the queen's life confession with Rome. There was no Jesuit by that name, however. Maria Theresa had a confessor named Ignaz Kampmiller (1693–1777), but by then, because of his old age and ill health, he was imperial confessor by title only. According to the story, Chancellor Kaunitz tried to persuade the queen to dissolve the Society, but Maria Theresa, in tears, resisted. Kaunitz then showed her the confession she had made and her confessor had then sent to Rome, and the queen, broken, signed the decree abolishing the Society of Jesus in her lands.

We will never know whether Maria Theresa actually wept over the suppression of the Society, but her surviving private letters offer clear testimony to her genuine sense of dismay. In the autumn of 1773, she wrote in affectionate terms of her confessor, the elderly Father Kampmiller, referring to him as "my poor Father." After the arrival of the papal brief, she wrote the following to her son, Archduke Ferdinand (1754–1806): "I have just been informed by a messenger of the dissolution of the Jesuits. I confess, this pains me." On October 16, she wrote to her intimate friend, Countess Sophie von Enzenberg (1707–1788), of her sense of anguish: "I am disconsolate and despairing about the Jesuits. I have loved and respected them all my life." This suggests that, while Maria Theresa may well have agreed with the idea of placing some restrictions or limitations on the Jesuits, she was deeply shocked by the complete dissolution of the Society. She supported transferring the Jesuits to positions in the dioceses. As noted in the previous discussion of Jesuit scientists and scholars, many of them were permitted to keep their university positions or given assistance finding posts where they could pursue scientific work. The queen also supported many of them with annual grants.[145]

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144 Maksay, *A Magyar Kamara Archívuma*, 44.

145 Antal Pezenhoffer, *A magyar nemzet történelme: A Katolikus Egyház és a Habsburg-ház történelmi szerepe; Történelmi apologetika* (Pilisszentlélek: Béke és Igazság Pilisszentléleki Modell Alapítvány, 2004), 296–98.

Some of the Jesuits went on to have impressive careers in the Catholic hierarchy. Miklós Muszka (1713–1783), for example, who had served as the last Austrian provincial superior (1770–1773), became grand provost of the newly founded bishopric of Banská Bystrica (Besztercebánya in Hungarian). Mihály Paintner (1753–1826) became the titular bishop of Nova. Paintner made considerable efforts to collect and preserve the documents of the Society and the manuscripts of other Jesuits. This collection later became part of the library of the Benedictine Archabbey of Pannonhalma and remains a valuable repository of sources on Hungarian Jesuit history.[146] Following the suppression of the Society in 1773, some seventy-five ex-Jesuits became prebends in different chapters and seven became bishops.[147]

Many of the Jesuit scientists also had impressive careers. Károly Ferenc Palma (1735–1787), who was teaching at the Theresianum in Vienna in 1773, became court chaplain to one of Maria Theresa's daughters. This helped him launch his ecclesiastical career, at the height of which he became titular bishop and general vicar of the archdiocese of Kalocsa. He was also able to continue his research as a scientist, and several of his works were published after 1773. The publication of the second edition of *Notitia regni Hungariae* (Description of the Kingdom of Hungary) in 1775 was a clear demonstration of loyalty to the Habsburgs. Palma justified the Habsburgs' claim to Galicia with his historical research, with which he also sought to justify the partition of Poland in 1772. He remained silent on the dissolution of the Society of Jesus, however. Indeed, he even praised Maria Theresa's earlier university reforms, which had marginalized the Jesuits. Pray, the outstanding historian, won the title of Hungarian royal historian (*historiographus Hungariae regius*), which came with an annual grant of four hundred forints, and later became the director of the university library. Pray also remained loyal to the Habsburgs in his works, and, like Palma, he avoided the sensitive subject of the dissolution of the Society. In his *Historia regum Hungariae stirpis Austriacae* (History of the kings of Hungary from the Austrian lineage), published in 1799, he makes only a brief mention of the fate of the Jesuits. In the section on the partition of Poland in 1772, he notes that part of Lithuania had been annexed by the Russian Empire. According to Pray, it was thanks to Maria Theresa's envoy, the Hungarian Károly Reviczky (1737–1793), that the subjects here were able to retain their former privileges. Pray makes a brief reference in a single sentence to the fact that this allowed

146 Paul Shore, "Ex-Jesuits in the East Habsburg Lands, Silesia, and Poland," in *The Jesuit Suppression in Global Context: Causes, Events, and Consequences*, ed. Jeffrey D. Burson and Jonathan Wright (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 229–47, here 233–34.

147 Siptár, "A virágkor," 254.

the Society to remain in Belarusian territory: “It preserved the remnants of the Society of Jesus, which the decree from Rome had dissolved.”[148]

5 Return to Hungary (1853–1909)

5.1 *Challenges and Invitations*

Paradoxically, the situation caused by one historical tragedy saved the victims of another: in 1773, Empress Catherine II of Russia (1729–1796, r.1762–1796) did not permit the dissolution of the Jesuit colleges that, with the partition of Poland, had fallen under Russian rule one year earlier. Thus, when Pope Pius VII (1742–1823, r.1800–1823) authorized the Society to resume its activities in his bull *Sollicitudo omnium ecclesiarum* of August 7, 1814, a solid foundation remained on which efforts toward reconstruction could begin, or rather, could have begun. In an odd twist of fate, however, the situation in Russia made it quite impossible to rebuild during those years. Tsar Alexander I (1777–1825, r.1801–1825) banished the Society of Jesus, first from Moscow and Saint Petersburg and then, in 1820, from the whole of the Russian Empire.[149]

The Jesuits fled to Galicia, which had fallen under Habsburg rule in 1772. At the request of the Roman Catholic archbishop Andrzej Ankwicz of Lviv (Lemberg in German [1777–1838, in office 1815–1833]), the Austrian emperor Francis I (1768–1835, r.1804–1835) agreed to allow the Jesuits to settle in the region, but official recognition would only come years later. The Josephine ecclesiastical policy in Vienna did not look favorably on the fact that the Jesuits took their orders from the superior general in Rome. Only in 1827, after prolonged negotiations, did the Austrian monarch agree to allow them to pursue their work within the framework of the Constitutions of the Society and in close contact with the Jesuit curia in Rome. Major steps were taken in the meantime, however. In 1821, a novitiate was opened in Stara Wieś, which later became one of the major centers of Jesuit reorganization in the Habsburg monarchy. Over the course of the following decade, several other religious houses were opened in Galicia, theological and philosophical faculties were established,

148 Gergely Tóth, “Önkép, önreprezentáció és a rend 1773. évi megszüntetésének emléke Palma Károly Ferenc, Pray György és Katona István történeti munkáiban,” in *Katolikus egyházi társadalom Magyarországon a 18. században*, ed. András Forgó and Zoltán Gőzsy (Pécs: META Egyesület, 2019), 411–26, here 411–13, 419–20.

149 Marek Inglot, *How the Jesuits Survived Their Suppression: The Society of Jesus in the Russian Empire (1773–1814)*, ed. and trans. Daniel L. Schlafly (Philadelphia: Saint Joseph’s University Press, 2015), xi–xii, 159.

and a house was founded for third probation.[150] Galicia was also the point of departure for the resettlement of the Society in Austria, which began in Graz in Styria in 1829. By 1846, there were already 152 members of the Society living in five Jesuit houses in Austria. The Austrian province was reestablished that year, separate from Galicia. The selection of the first Austrian provincial superior was of important symbolic significance. Jakob Pierling (1784–1870, in office 1846–1850), who had been born in Saint Petersburg, linked the old Society and the new.[151]

The re-establishment of a Jesuit presence in Hungary, however, was still to come. Initial tentative attempts to restore the Society had begun at the end of the eighteenth century. At the diet of 1790–1791, the bishop of Szombathely, János Szily (1735–1799, in office 1777–1799), spoke on behalf of the Jesuits, noting their outstanding achievements in education. The elderly ex-Jesuit poet, Dávid Baróti Szabó (1739–1819), expressed his hope in verse that he too might be reborn if the old Society were to be re-established. The leading figure among the Hungarian supporters of the Jesuits was the influential aristocrat Count Ferenc Széchényi (1754–1820), who had the support of several bishops. Although their position grew stronger after 1814, they continued to face obstacles in the Viennese court. Nonetheless, as early as 1817, with Széchényi's support, András Lieszkovszky (1786–1846), who would later play a significant role in the Jesuits' return to Hungary, entered the new Society.[152]

At the national synod of 1822, it became quite clear that the Society finally had the support of the bishops. The possibility of the return of the Jesuits had already been mentioned in the preliminary proposals for the synod. Bishop József Kluch of Nitra (1748–1826, in office 1808–1826) and Péter Klobusiczky (1752–1843), bishop of Satu Mare (1807–1821) and himself a former Jesuit, attributed an alleged decline in morals to problems in education. They insisted that these troubles were due to the dissolution of the Society of Jesus. They called for the Society to be brought back to Hungary and for the re-establishment of the Marian congregations. The Viennese nuncio Paolo Leardi (1762–1823, in office 1816–1823) informed the Holy See that Prince Primate Sándor Rudnay (1760–1831, in office 1819–1831) would argue at the synod in favor of the return of the Jesuits to Hungary. These efforts were so successful that the synod's resolutions described the return of the Jesuits as a necessity. The synod met with continued opposition from Vienna, however, and the resolutions were

150 Piechnik, "Polonia," 3180–81.

151 *Festschrift zum 100 Jährigen Jubiläum der österreichischen Ordensprovinz s.j.* (Vienna: Verlag des Ignatiusbundes, 1929), 6–12.

152 Petruch, *Száz év a magyar jezsuiták I.*, 39–43, 47–49.

not ratified. Francis I had no objection to the Jesuits, but politically influential court circles thwarted all efforts to have them invited to return.[153]

The changing Hungarian political climate of the 1820s did not make it easy for the Society to return. The liberal reformist opposition was repeating anti-clerical mantras, often with an anti-Jesuit edge. A particularly vigorous debate broke out during the 1839–1840 diet over the role of the religious orders and the possible return of the Jesuits. Liberal politicians feared the immediate return of the Society to Hungary, because the Jesuits had already returned to Austria. Opposition speaker László Palóczy (1783–1861), who was active in church politics, insisted that the Jesuits, "who had risen from their graves and are already causing unrest," should not be allowed to settle in Hungary without the diet's permission. News of the dispute made it to Rome. In 1846, Superior General Jan Roothaan (1765–1853, in office 1829–1853) invited Palóczy, through a Hungarian canon, to see for himself "how pious, godly, and brilliant the Jesuits of today are." In Palóczy's eyes, however, the Jesuits were merely the vanguard of the Catholic Church's political ambitions. They were, in his words, "the fox-skinned sons of Ignatius of Loyola."[154]

The liberal opposition may also have feared that some Hungarian bishops were already engaged in negotiations with the Jesuits. János Hám, bishop of Satu Mare (1781–1857, in office 1827–1857), had exchanged letters with Lieszkovszky, a Hungarian Jesuit working in the Galician province. Hám had even offered to return the building of the former Jesuit residence in Satu Mare, though this building, in the meantime, had become the episcopal palace. Nothing came of Hám's plan. Lieszkovszky died in 1846, which meant he did not live to see the Society return to Hungary.[155] Also, the political environment continued to worsen from the perspective of the Society. In 1848, revolution broke out in Hungary, and in the first National Assembly the liberal majority hastily passed legislation intended to push the Jesuits to the margins. In the debate before the vote, the Jesuits were classified as a social group that promoted harmful principles. The centrist politician Ágost Trefort (1817–1888) was explicit in his insistence that the Jesuits were little more than subversive agitators: "I am also

153 András Fejérdy, ed., *Az 1822. évi nemzeti zsinat története* (Budapest: MTA BTK TTI, 2018), 56–57, 129–30, 148–49, 185–86.

154 Csaba Fazekas, "A szerzetesrendek közéleti szerepének megítélése a reformkorban, különös tekintettel a jezsuitákra," in *Fiatal egyháztörténészek írásai*, ed. Csaba Fazekas (Miskolc: Miskolci Egyetem BTK Újkori Magyar Történeti Tanszék, 1999), 76–113.

155 Klára Antónia Csiszár, *Megújult lendülettel: A szatmári jezsuiták története* (Budapest: Jezsuita Kiadó, 2015), 45–51.

no friend of the Jesuits, and if we exclude them, we exclude all the breeds of dangerous people, not only Jesuits, but also communists."[156]

Ferdinand v (1793–1875, r.1835–48) did not approve the laws, and the revolution grew into a war for independence in Hungary. The situation was hardly any simpler in the other half of the Habsburg Empire. In March 1848, the revolutionary forces were victorious in Vienna, and they put political pressure on the court. On May 7, the emperor banned the Jesuits from the Habsburg Empire. Only a few Jesuits in Innsbruck were able to hold out under the leadership of Provincial Superior Pierling. The Austrian Jesuits who fled abroad were not idle, however. They took an active part in organizing missions in two places where flourishing provinces were later established: the United States and Australia.[157]

The new ban on the Society was also a heavy blow for the Jesuit houses that had been built in Galicia, which was also under Habsburg rule. Only in 1852, after Vienna had managed to achieve some political consolidation in the wake of the defeat of the Hungarian War of Independence, did it gradually become possible to reorganize the houses in Austria, Galicia, and now also in Hungary. Paradoxically, while the bloody suppression of the 1848–1849 Revolution and War of Independence and the subsequent period of harsh authoritarian rule were two of the more tragic chapters in Hungarian history, it was precisely this radically changed political situation that opened the way for the Jesuits to return.

Superior General Roothaan sent the Flemish Jesuit Pieter Jan Beckx (1795–1887) to Vienna to begin reorganizing the Austrian province. Archbishop of Esztergom János Scitovszky (1785–1866, in office 1849–1866) had already written a letter to Roothaan on February 7, 1852. Essentially, the primate was seeking the return of the Society on the basis of the ideas expressed some thirty years earlier at the national synod of 1822. He asked Roothaan to provide assistance for two Jesuit fathers at the archiepiscopal grammar school in Trnava at the beginning of the 1852–1853 school year.[158] Beckx traveled to Hungary, and in his assessment, the situation was quite hopeless, as the 1848 imperial decree banishing the Jesuits was still in force at the time.[159] From the perspective of the return of the Jesuits to Hungary, it was of considerable importance that on June 23, 1852, in Buda, in the course of a visit to Hungary, Emperor Franz

156 Fazekas, "A szerzetesrendek közéleti szerepének megítélése."

157 *Festschrift zum 100 Jährigen*, 16.

158 Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu (ARSI), Austria, no. 1003. 3., fasc. Esztergom, February 27, 1852.

159 ARSI, Austria, no. 1003. Epistolae, 3:fasc. 1, no. 36, Vienna, April 27, 1852.

Joseph (1830–1916, r.1848–1916) revoked the revolutionary decree banning the Jesuits.[160]

The primary problem for the Society was simply that, because of the exile of 1848, the Jesuits of Austria had scattered to distant lands the world over. There were, however, very clear efforts to resolve the issue of reestablishing a strong Jesuit presence in Hungary. Roothaan asked not only the Austrian provincial superior Peter Lange (1788–1858, in office 1850–1852) but also the Galician provincial Mikołaj Baworowski (1796–1887, in office 1846–1854) to help ensure that Scitovszky's request would be fulfilled.[161] It was logical to involve Baworowski in part because the Hungarians who had entered the Society after 1814 had received their education at the novitiate in Stara Wieś. By the early 1850s, however, only two of them, József Polánkay (1802–1887) and János Zimányi (1802–1879), were still alive.

Financial backing was perhaps the least of the problems the Jesuits faced. Archbishop Scitovszky made a donation of fifty thousand forints, as did Count István Károlyi (1797–1881). On December 13, 1852, Franz Joseph authorized the establishment of a novitiate in Trnava. Finally, as part of a solemn ceremony held on May 22, 1853, or Holy Trinity Sunday, Scitovszky gave the Jesuits the building and church that had previously belonged to the Trinitarians of Trnava.[162] Eighty years after their dissolution, the Society of Jesus returned to Trnava. The Jesuits established themselves in the very city in which they had first settled in 1561, again at the initiative of the archbishop of Esztergom. The two Hungarian Jesuits, Polánkay and Zimányi, were able to come home from Galicia, the former to Satu Mare, the latter to Trnava, thus providing a kind of link between the old Society and the new.

In the following years, Jesuit houses were founded in rapid succession. They settled again in Bratislava (1854) and Satu Mare (1858), two of the cities in which they had established themselves before 1773. In 1858, the Society also acquired the lands of the former Benedictine abbey of Nagykapornak as a donation made by Franz Joseph. In 1860, they set out on what was perhaps their most important undertaking to date, taking over the management of the archiepiscopal grammar school and boarding house in Kalocsa at the invitation of Archbishop József Kunszt (1790–1866, in office 1852–1866). With this step, they essentially established what was to be an enduring structure of Jesuit houses in Hungary for the next three decades. The novitiate of Trnava and the philosophical college of Bratislava became important bastions of education

160 ARSI, Austria, no. 1003. Epistolae, 3:fasc. 1, no. 39, Vienna, July 6, 1852.

161 Petruch, *Száz év a magyar jezsuiták I.*, 103.

162 Petruch, *Száz év a magyar jezsuiták I.*, 108–16.

and training for the next generation of the Society. Nagykapornak provided the financial and economic backing for the Jesuit houses in Hungary. The boarding house in Satu Mare and the grammar school and boarding house in Kalocsa became institutions that accepted responsibility for addressing social needs. They undertook roles in youth education (as the Hungarian bishopric wanted them to do) and maintained the educational traditions that had been associated with the Society for centuries.

The Hungarian Jesuit houses again became part of the Austrian province. The reestablishment of a strong Jesuit presence in five locations in Hungary in the space of just over a decade is striking in part simply because, at the same time, the houses that had been swept away by the revolution had to be reestablished in other parts of the Austrian province. In 1860, in addition to the five institutions in Hungary, there were five other houses in Austria, as well as one in Bohemia and one in Croatia-Slavonia, all of which were run by fathers from the Austrian province. By the end of this short decade, the Austrian province had 349 Jesuits, one hundred of whom lived in the houses in Hungary.[163] This rapid reestablishment of the Society, which took place in only a few years, required a considerable effort from the Austrian province, which was also responsible for the mission in Australia.

It is also telling that there was a remarkable demand for more Jesuits, though the leadership of the Society found these invitations somewhat impractical. The archbishop of Eger and the bishops of Győr and Košice all wanted Jesuits to settle in their dioceses.[164] The biggest obstacle was the lack of Jesuit fathers with an adequate knowledge of Hungarian. The German-speaking and growing Slovak communities of Trnava and Bratislava could, of course, be served by members of the Society from the Austrian and Galician provinces, but in many cases, the Hungarian language remained a significant barrier, even if there were some Austrian Jesuits who later managed to learn the language to some degree. At the end of 1853, Rome gave its approval for the decision taken by Austrian provincial superior Athanasius Bosizio (1809–1896, in office 1853–1856), who had refused the requests of the archbishop of Kalocsa and the bishop of Satu Mare. As was noted in Rome's response, "the lack of knowledge of the Hungarian language there would almost certainly hinder our progress."[165] The Jesuits were able to establish a permanent presence in Kalocsa and Satu Mare only in the late 1850s.

163 Austria: Vienna, St. Andrä, Innsbruck, Linz, Kalksburg; Czech Republic: Mariaschein (Litomerice); Croatia-Slavonia: Pozsega. *Catalogus provinciae Austriae Societatis Jesu ineunte anno MDCCCLXI* (Vienna: Typis Congregationis Mechitharisticae, 1861).

164 Petruch, *Száz év a magyar jezsuiták I.*, 114.

165 ARSI, Registri, provincia Austriae I. pp. 76–77. Rome, December 9, 1853. Letter from Superior General Pieter Jan Beckx to Athanasius Bosizio, Austrian provincial governor.

The rapid establishment of the Jesuit houses had an effect on internal discipline. Rome received shocking news about life at the Jesuit house in Trnava, for example. Leaders of the Society in the Eternal City found it hard to believe that the rector in Trnava had held neither a solemn Mass nor the adoration of the blessed sacrament on the feast of Saint Ignatius, the founder of the Society.[166] In 1858, provincial regulations (*consuetudines provinciae*) were drawn up to deal with disciplinary problems and regulate the internal life of the Austrian province. Provincial Superior Anton Schwitzer (1811–1898, in office 1856–1860) stressed in a proposal to the superior general that it would be important and beneficial if members of the Society in the individual houses would observe certain universal customs and rules. He had the regulations examined by the consultors and then submitted them to Superior General Beckx (in office 1853–1887).[167] The first part of the regulations dealt with the rules of church life. In the first chapter, they regulated the order of the churches under Jesuit care in general, including the order and manner of liturgical rites and the maintenance of the altars. The second chapter specified the rituals for the various feasts and festive seasons. The third chapter regulated the care and burial of members of the Society who had fallen ill. The second main part of the regulations dealt with various aspects of religious life. They provided a detailed overview of the daily agenda and then turned to the area of pastoral care (*cura spiritus*) and regulated the process by which members of the Society would take Holy Communion, as well as the manner in which the house sermons and other minor devotions and the renewal of the vows would be reformed. The regulations also touched on the "health" of the body, including the manner of taking meals in the religious house, the blessing that would be said before meals, the sermon that would be held during meals (the "roast oration"), and even recreation. Rules concerning the conditions and costs of travel were also listed. The final subsection on life in the Jesuit houses dealt with the required documents (house histories, reports) and their preservation in the house's library and archives.[168] These regulations were intended to help eliminate the increasing number of disciplinary complaints so that more energy could be devoted to educational and pastoral tasks.

After having overcome many external and internal difficulties, by the early 1850s, the Society of Jesus managed to reestablish its presence in Hungary.

166 ARSI, Registri, provincia Austriae I. pp. 83–84. Rome, February 13, 1854. Letter from Superior General Pieter Jan Beckx to Athanasius Bosizio, Austrian provincial governor.

167 ARSI, Austria, no. 1003. Epistolae, 3:fasc. 3, no. 21, Vienna, April 11, 1858.

168 ARSI, Austria, no. 1003. Epistolae, 3:fasc. 3, no. 22. Consuetudines provinciae Austriae Societatis Jesu.

Within roughly a decade, an institutional structure had taken form that would shape the Society's operations in Hungary for the next half-century. The rapid reestablishment of the Jesuit houses brought several problems to the surface, but concerted efforts were made to address them. The Jesuits realized they would not be able to accept all the invitations they received, but they successfully performed the apostolic tasks they were able to undertake. This gave some stability to the Jesuit institutions, which were thus better able to withstand the fluctuations in the political and social climate.

5.2 Kulturkampf *in Hungary?*

Internal consolidation and a stronger institutional structure prepared the Society to face the challenges of the following decades. The Prussian–Austrian–Italian War of 1866 was a difficult period for the Austrian province. The defeat of the Habsburg forces at Königgrätz (today Hradec Králové in the Czech Republic) triggered a social and political crisis in which public opinion turned against the Jesuits. In Prague, there were even instances of violence. Angry protesters broke into Saint Ignatius Church to disrupt the afternoon sermon and poured some kind of foul-smelling liquid in front of two of the altars. On another occasion, protestors used sticks to create a disturbance, and a group of rowdy children tried to throw stones through the windows of the church, though they were stopped by the local police.[169] Some people urged the archbishop of Prague to expel the Jesuits, and similar demands also received political support in Vienna. One Viennese city councilor spoke out against allowing expelled Italian Jesuits to settle.[170] In Hungary, however, things remained relatively calm, though the local press took an anti-Jesuit slant.

The political consequences of the defeat in the war had a strong effect on the province. It was simply no longer possible to maintain the authoritarian system that had been put in place after the defeat of the Hungarian War of Independence in 1849. Franz Joseph was compelled to reconcile with the Hungarians, and in 1867 the famous Austro-Hungarian Compromise was signed, creating a dualist political system. This system was based, essentially, on the political equality of the two parts of the Habsburg Empire, which was henceforth known as the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. This change was seen in the Austrian Jesuit province, which in 1871 became the Austro-Hungarian province. All this went hand in hand with the transformation of the European power structure. After defeating Austria, Prussia turned against France. At the beginning of 1871, after the Prussian forces had marched victorious into

169 *Fővárosi lapok* 3, no. 224 (October 2, 1866): 924.
170 *Politikai újdonságok* 12, no. 43 (October 24, 1866): 531.

Paris, the German Empire was proclaimed in the Hall of Mirrors at the Palace of Versailles.

The new German Empire, however, which had been created under Prussian leadership, was hardly to everyone's liking. Major internal political debates broke out. There was strong anti-Prussian sentiment in the southern Catholic German states in particular. German domestic politics quickly became polarized, and in this climate, the Jesuits were made one of the scapegoats for the country's domestic political tensions. Anti-Jesuit measures played a major role in the political *Kulturkampf* launched by Chancellor Otto von Bismarck (1815–1898, in office 1871–1890). In the 1871 elections to the first Reichstag, the Catholic Center Party (Zentrumspartei) formed the second strongest faction. The party propagated federalist ideas that posed a serious domestic political threat to Bismarck's policy of unity. Bismarck adopted a series of anti-clerical measures as part of his efforts to counter their influence, including measures taken against the Jesuits, such as the launch of a negative press campaign that portrayed the Society as unpatriotic. The Jesuits were also characterized as representatives of the First Vatican Council (1869–1870) and the doctrine of papal infallibility. In 1871, the Protestant general assembly in Darmstadt launched a petition against the Jesuits and then submitted a proposal to ban the Society. On June 19, 1872, the Reichstag voted by a sixty-six percent majority to ban the Society from the German Empire.[171]

The German *Kulturkampf* spread almost immediately to the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. Chancellor Bismarck met Austro-Hungarian foreign minister Gyula Andrássy (1823–1890, in office 1871–1879) in Salzburg in the autumn of 1871, just as anti-Jesuit voices were growing ever more clamorous in Germany. When German anti-Jesuit laws were passed in the summer of the following year, the Hungarian press made mention of the Salzburg meeting. Church policy issues such as the First Vatican Council, the doctrine of papal infallibility, and the Jesuits had indeed been discussed at the meeting. Andrássy, however, did not wish to see the monarchy follow German church policy. According to one anecdote, referring to the Jesuits, he said to Bismarck that he did not "consider it expedient to shoot a cannon among sparrows."[172]

Given the increasingly tense political climate, *Katholikus néplap* (Catholic people's journal), which was the most important Hungarian Catholic newspaper, devoted a long editorial to the Jesuit question in February 1872. The article blamed the Freemasons first and foremost, analyzing at length, for example, the anti-Jesuit atrocities that had been committed under the Paris Commune

171 Klaus Schatz, *Geschichte der Deutschen Jesuiten: Bd. 1. 1814–1872* (Münster: Aschendorff, 2013), 257–74.

172 *Politikai újdonságok* 18, no. 30 (July 24, 1872): 360.

in May and June of 1871.[173] The liberal press was indeed beginning to turn against the Jesuits. Several historical articles presented the history of the old Society in a very prejudicial way and helped create an anti-Jesuit climate. The anti-Jesuit writings of István Toldy (1844–1879), which were published in a separate volume in the following years, contributed significantly to this growing anti-Jesuit sentiment.[174]

The most significant political wave, however, was set in motion by the city of Sibiu in Transylvania. At a meeting of the city council on July 5, 1872, a proposal was made to put into law that "the immigration and settlement of Jesuits and members of related orders into our homeland not be permitted under any circumstances."[175] This proposal soon gained support in other cities and counties, and on October 22, the assembly held in the city of Sopron made an explicit request to abolish the Jesuit houses in Hungary.[176] The negative press campaign and the political debates exerted a strong influence on public opinion, and in August 1872, crowds hurled both imprecations and stones at Jesuits in Bratislava.[177] The Catholic Church, however, and in particular Archbishop Lajos Haynald of Kalocsa (1816–1891, in office 1867–1891), took a strong stance in support of the Jesuits. Gradually, the anti-Jesuit tone that had become such a strident part of the political climate in Germany grew increasingly muted in Hungarian domestic politics.[178]

The overflow of the German *Kulturkampf* into Hungarian domestic politics did not have any major political consequences for the Jesuits except perhaps to make it clear to them how quickly and easily public opinion could be turned against the Society. Against this backdrop, it was essential for the Jesuits to broaden their social engagement in Hungary, thus strengthening their position in the country.

5.3 *School and Mission*

The first decade after the return of the Society bore witness to the rapid foundation of many new Jesuit institutions in Hungary, with Jesuits being invited to several new dioceses. The leadership of the Society had to proceed with caution, lest it embark on ventures that might end in failure. Several factors had

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173 *Katholikus néplap* 28, no. 7. (February 15, 1872) 49–50.

174 István Toldy, *A jezsuiták Magyarországon és egyebütt: A Jézus-Társaság szervezetének, tanainak, s működésének ismertetése és jezsuita-kérdés Magyarországon* (Budapest: Athenaeum, 1873); Brutus Bocskay [István Toldy], *A jezsuiták története*, vols. 1–6 (Leipzig: Köhler, 1873).

175 *Politikai újdonságok* 18, no. 29. (17 July, 1872) 344.

176 *Pesti napló* 23, no. 246. (evening edition of October 24, 1872).

177 Petruch, *Száz év a magyar jezsuiták I.*, 273.

178 Petruch, *Száz év a magyar jezsuiták II.*, 282–95.

to be taken into consideration, particularly with regard to financial backing and qualified people available to fill the various positions. Perhaps the most remarkable undertaking of the first decade was the takeover of the episcopal grammar school in Kalocsa, which became one of the most important Jesuit institutions in Hungary over the course of the next century.

The Kalocsa grammar school was founded in the eighteenth century, and its management was entrusted to the Piarists. By the middle of the nineteenth century, however, relations between the Piarists and the archdiocese had deteriorated. The Piarists were responsible for half of the maintenance costs of the institution, and in their view, the endowment provided by the archbishop of Kalocsa was not adequate to allow for further development of the school. Archbishop Kunszt, however, wanted to transform the four-form grammar school into a classical, eight-form school. The Jesuits maintained good relations with the later archbishops, which ensured stability for the school. As noted earlier, the archbishop of Kalocsa, Cardinal Haynald, supported the Jesuits in the disputes that broke out as part of the *Kulturkampf* in Hungary. Considerable sums of money were spent to support the Jesuits and the school. Archbishop Kunszt spent three hundred thousand forints on the renovation of the buildings and created an endowment of more than two hundred thousand forints to ensure the long-term operation of the institution. When the Jesuits assumed the management of the school, it had just under one hundred students. Ten years later, it had five times as many.[179]

Jesuit pedagogy drew heavily on the idea of putting students in competition with one another. One important part of this was providing rewards for outstanding performance. A system of verbal and written praise was developed, with the best students winning recognition in the form of a monthly merit cross. A rich student life also flourished outside the classroom, including for instance the so-called "academies" for students in the lower classes. These academies were intended primarily to give the students an opportunity to improve their command of Latin but also to allow them to better their knowledge of Hungarian, German, and mathematics. Students who were in their last year of studies attended "philosophical circles," where they discussed social issues. The best works by students were presented to the public at the academy ceremonies, and plays were regularly performed. Students could also attend sports circles, alongside their regular physical education, which offered a wide range of activities (athletics, tennis, fencing, and swimming). Orchestras,

179 Andor Lakatos, "Jezsuita oktatás-nevelés Kalocsán (1860–1948)," in *Múlt és jövő: A magyar jezsuiták száz éve (1909–2009) és ami abból következik*, ed. Antal Molnár and Csaba Szilágyi (Budapest: METEM, 2010), 76–79.

chamber groups, and self-education circles were also organized, providing students with an array of additional activities.[180]

In 1885–1886, a dormitory providing accommodation for 180 people was built to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the opening of the Jesuit grammar school. The rest of the students were, for the most part, young people from the town or from one of the nearby villages. Some 150 to two hundred students were housed with local families, where they were given room and board. Each form was provided with separate learning, sleeping, and recreational spaces. The students were expected to follow a strict daily schedule. They got up at 5:30 in the morning, and their days were rigidly structured until 9:00 in the evening.[181]

The Marian congregation was also re-established in the school in 1870, though within a more modernized framework compared to the early modern period. The congregation was led by a Jesuit father who served as prefect and worked alongside a board of officers elected from among the students. The congregation's members were chosen from among the most outstanding students. The primary aim remained the deepening of religious life and active social engagement as representatives of the church. In the twentieth century, the congregation became more active in social issues that also touched on religious life, and a separate social and press division was even formed.[182]

The grammar school in Kalocsa was not the only place where a Marian congregation was reestablished. The congregations became the modern heir to the rich life of social work among the Jesuits in the early modern period, and they represented the Society's social engagement on a larger scale. The first congregation was organized in 1853 in Trnava, but within a few years, several other new congregations had been established. Alongside school-age boys, for the most part, the nascent congregation movement involved girls and women. By 1912, there were some 182 societies in the country with almost twenty-three thousand members.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, however, the congregational movement began to depart in new directions. The three decades following the Compromise of 1867 bore witness to unprecedented industrial development in Hungary (as was the case in many parts of the Habsburg lands), and the number of workers in the big cities doubled. Regular religious life among the working class declined, a general problem to which Pope Leo XIII (1810–1903, r.1878–1903) drew attention with his 1891 encyclical *Rerum novarum*. The pope

180 Magdolna Rébay, "Jezsuita iskolaügy Magyarországon (1860–1948)," in Szokol and Szőnyi, *Jezsuiták Magyarországon a kezdetektől napjainkig*, 363–81, here 365–67.

181 Lakatos, "Jezsuita oktatás-nevelés," 80–85.

182 Rébay, "Jezsuita iskolaügy," 363–64.

emphasized the importance of engaged apostolic activity among the working classes and called for the organization of this social stratum on a Christian social basis. The idea of Christian socialism soon found an echo in Hungarian political life, drawing primarily on Austrian and German examples. This went side by side with years of vigorous church policy debate in Hungary, which focused in particular on the regulation of civil marriage. The overlap of general religious policy and Hungarian church politics gave rise in 1895 to the Catholic People's Party, which was based on Catholic-Christian socialist principles.[183]

The Jesuits recognized these increasingly pressing social issues and gradually expanded their apostolic activity to previously neglected classes, such as industrial apprentices and servant girls. They remained firm, however, in their insistence that the congregations be segregated by social class and gender. Although many people quite wrongly saw the Marian congregations as a kind of elite group, the Society, in fact, made concerted efforts to expand the social circles with which they engaged. For instance, they began to become increasingly active in villages.

The congregations also tried to keep pace with the religious trends of the time, which is why the adoration of the Blessed Virgin came to play a central role in the life of the congregations. This harmonized perfectly with the doctrine of the immaculate conception, which had become a dogma in 1854, and for this reason, most of the new congregations took the title Immaculata. This also reflected the increasingly prominent role of women in the church. Much as Mary figured as a mediator and intercessor who could help bring one closer to Christ, the Catholic women of the congregations took on this role with regard to the working men in industry.[184] The Jesuits thus gave an increasingly important role to women's apostolic engagement, though the real breakthrough only came in the twentieth century.

The missionary-style activities undertaken in rural settlements by the Marian congregations were not the only way in which the Society strove to establish a stronger presence in smaller, more distant communities. This had been an important priority for the Society from the moment of its reestablishment. As soon as the Jesuits established themselves in Trnava in 1853, they immediately began sending missionaries to the most remote corners of Transylvania, including in the so-called Saxon Lands, which were largely German-speaking

183 Egyed Hermann, *A katolikus egyház története Magyarországon 1914-ig* (Munich: Aurora, 1973), 469–70.

184 Bernadett Smid, "A megújult Mária-kongregációk," in Szokol and Szőnyi, *Jezsuiták Magyarországon a kezdetektől napjainkig*, 353–62, here 354–58.

communities in southeastern Transylvania, stretching roughly from the city of Sibiu in the west to Brasov in the east. Under the leadership of Max Klinkowström (1819–1896), they launched missions in Brasov and Sibiu in the autumn of 1853.[185] However, the language barrier remained a significant obstacle for these early missions. They went primarily to areas with German-speaking populations, where Austrian priests could reach larger social groups with their sermons. Sándor Weninger (1813–1896) became one of the first Austrian-born priests to learn Hungarian well. He had served as rector in Kalocsa for many years and was later active in Bratislava and Budapest as a preacher.[186] In addition to these internal missions, Hungarian Jesuits were also involved in missions to Africa at the end of the nineteenth century. István Czimmermann (1849–1894) was active in the mission in Zambezia from 1885, where he founded a mission station in Zumbo in 1893. He also founded an orphanage and a school. The indigenous peoples referred to him as the "father of letters," because he produced the first catechism in Nyungwe, as well as a prayer book, a dictionary, and a book on grammar, thus making significant contributions to the evolution of Nyungwe as a written language. Interestingly, he even used Hungarian words when he felt that the existing expressions in Nyungwe were not adequate as translations, and some of these words then became a part of the Nyungwe language. Czimmermann's colleague László Menyhárth (1849–1897) did a great deal of scientific work as a member of the mission. He produced daily weather reports, analyzed soil conditions, and helped make improvements to local agricultural life with the introduction of new crops and tools. He also discovered several new species of plants and insects.[187]

Missionary activity was also linked to efforts to spread veneration of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which connected to the Apostleship of Prayer movement led by French Jesuit Henri Ramière (1821–1884). Ramière first visited Hungary in 1866, coming to Pest-Buda when the two were still formally separate cities, followed by more missionary trips to the country in subsequent years. The Society of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which formed as part of the movement, was later embraced by the Jesuits, and they also gradually took over the related press activities. The Jesuits of Kalocsa took over the editorship of *Jézus Szent Szívének Hírnöke* (Herald of the Sacred Heart of Jesus) and the accompanying periodical, *A Szűz Mária virágoskertje* (The flower garden of the Virgin

185 ARSI, Registri, provincia Austriae I., p. 69. Rome, September 16, 1853. Letter from Superior General Pieter Jan Beckx to Max Klinkowström.

186 László Velics, *Magyar jezsuiták a XIX. században* (Kalksburg: Kollégium, 1902), 186–94.

187 Szabolcs Sajgó, "Magyarországi jezsuiták Afrikában," in Szokol and Szőnyi, *Jezsuiták Magyarországon a kezdetektől napjainkig*, 382–85, here 384–85.

Mary).[188] The liberal press of the time published scornful and derisive reports on Ramiére's activities in Hungary. In 1868, the illustrated weekly *Magyarország és a nagyvilág* (Hungary and the wider world) offered the following description of sermons given by Ramière in Pest for Lent:

> Uselessly wringing his pudgy hands in the pulpit, Father Ramière, the orator for Lent brought in with dear, dear money for the aristocracy of the capital [...], has no effect on the crowd, and apart from the "clientele," only a few listeners enjoy his terrible play with his face and arms.[189]

The aforementioned Sándor Weninger continued Ramiére's work. For more than a quarter of a century, he visited the Hungarian capital every spring and delivered lectures and sermons. Despite the disdainful articles in the Hungarian press, the movement for the veneration of the Sacred Heart of Jesus gradually began to spread, slowly becoming one of the most important social and religious initiatives of the Jesuits, alongside the Marian congregations.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the Hungarian capital, Pest-Buda, was conspicuously absent from the Jesuit institutional structure in Hungary. Although the rapidly growing city became a regular site for missions for the Society from the 1860s onward, a permanent Jesuit institutional presence was only established at the end of the century. This was the overture, however, to the creation of a new center, a center that would be able to grow into the seat of an independent Hungarian province.

5.4 *The Fulfilment of an Old Dream*

Buda, the old capital, and Pest, a thriving mercantile city on the far side of the Danube, had played important roles in Hungary's political, economic, and social life since the Middle Ages. A century and a half of Ottoman rule had left its mark on both, however. Vienna and, at times, Bratislava had taken over the role of capital. After Buda was recaptured from the Ottomans in 1686, Jesuits settled in the city almost immediately. Buda only began to reclaim its earlier status as capital, however, toward the end of the eighteenth century, that is, just after the dissolution of the Society of Jesus. The increasing importance of Buda as a political and cultural center was marked by the relocation of the university from Trnava to Buda in 1777, then the transfer of the Royal Council of Lieutenancy from Bratislava, and finally the coronation of Francis I in Buda in 1792.

188 Géza Bikfalvi, *Jezsuita olvasókönyv* (Budapest: METEM, 2008), 87.

189 *Magyarország és a nagyvilág* 4, no. 15 (April 12, 1868): 177.

Unsurprisingly, the Jesuits who were returning to Hungary recognized the roles of the dual city. After establishing themselves in Trnava, they raised the idea of creating residences in Bratislava and Pest. Count Károlyi offered fifty thousand forints to fund a Jesuit house in Pest. It was perfectly clear to the Society, however, that it would not be able to take on the foundation of new institutions in these two cities, Bratislava and Pest, at the same time. The order simply did not have enough people.[190] Even in the autumn of 1854, Superior General Beckx asked the Austrian provincial superior not to abandon the idea of establishing a residence in Pest and to discuss the matter with Count Károlyi.[191] Three years later, the idea was raised, partly by the Austrian minister of religion and education, Count Leo von Thun-Hohenstein (1811–1888, in office 1849–1860), that some of the Jesuits should take part in instruction in the seminary in Pest and also get involved in local pastoral work and establish a small missionary station (*statio*).[192] This would have been a practical solution, since the idea of moving the novitiate also came up in connection with the construction of this station, because the provincial superior felt that the building in Trnava would have been too small and cramped for this purpose. In other words, they hoped to be able to pursue their ambitions under better conditions in Pest.[193]

In addition to Count Károlyi, Prince Primate János Scitovszky and Archduke Albrecht (1817–1895), governor of Hungary (1851–1860), would also have supported the idea of establishing a Jesuit house in Pest. Scitovszky also proposed that the Jesuits settle in the "Víziváros" or "Wasserstadt" district of Buda (along the west bank of the Danube River), where in the eighteenth century they had had a church and house, which could be given back to them.[194] The Austrian provincial superior, however, felt that it would be impracticable to establish an institutional Jesuit presence in so many places at once, although Superior General Beckx asked him to negotiate with Archduke Albrecht to see if it might be possible for Jesuits to settle in the larger cities.[195] Pest-Buda had a majority German-speaking population at that time, so the lack of Jesuits with a strong command of Hungarian would not have been a problem, as it was elsewhere. Even so, however, the Austrian province would not have been able

190 ARSI, Registri, provincia Austriae I., p. 80. Rome, December 31, 1853. Letter from Superior General Pieter Jan Beckx to Athanasius Bosizio, Austrian provincial.

191 ARSI, Registri, provincia Austriae I., p. 93. Rome, September 21, 1854. Letter from Superior General Pieter Jan Beckx to Athanasius Bosizio, Austrian provincial.

192 ARSI, Austria, no. 1003, Epistolae, 3:fasc. 3, no. 11, Vienna, February 4, 1857.

193 ARSI, Austria, no. 1003, Epistolae, 3:fasc. 3, no. 14, Innsbruck, June 6, 1857.

194 ARSI, Austria, no. 1003, Epistolae, 3:fasc. 18, no. 10, Esztergom, March 5, 1856.

195 ARSI, Registri, provincia Austriae I., pp. 152–53, Rome, June 19, 1856. Letter from Superior General Pieter Jan Beckx to Athanasius Bosizio, Austrian provincial.

to provide enough people for the Society to establish itself in the burgeoning city of Pest-Buda.

Given the increasing importance of the city, however, the Austrian Jesuit province hardly intended to ignore it, as the aforementioned missionary journeys of Ramière and Weninger (who, however, also spoke Hungarian) to Pest-Buda demonstrate. In 1873, the three rapidly growing cities of Buda, Óbuda, and Pest were united under the name Budapest and became the unquestioned center of the country. In terms of both population and infrastructure, the new, unified city was on the verge of a period of explosive growth. The Society could not fail to establish itself in the capital. Although the earliest record of the address of a Jesuit mission in Pest is found in the provincial catalog from 1888, two Jesuits had moved to the city two years earlier. They had rented a building belonging to a member of parliament in the Józsefváros (Josefstadt) district, where the regal palaces of aristocratic families stood. They even built a small chapel in the six-room house.[196]

Their humble beginnings notwithstanding, the Jesuits still had influential supporters, including, for instance, Count Nándor Zichy (1829–1911), later founding president of the Catholic People's Party, and Countess Teréz Győry (1843–1936). The Society of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus was founded in 1887 and brought together patrons belonging to the nobility. Thanks to their help, the foundation stone of the Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus was laid on July 2, 1888. Suffragan bishop of Esztergom Nándor Cselka (1834–1897, in office 1893–1897) took part in the ceremony and gave his solemn blessing. Although it took nearly two decades to complete the construction and furnishing of the church, the neighboring Jesuit house was completed by 1890. The church was finally consecrated on April 27, 1909.[197]

The Jesuit house and church soon became one of the pastoral centers of the Hungarian capital. Church institutions were established one after the other alongside the majestic palaces of the nobility. Soon, indeed, there were so many church buildings in the area that the district came to be known as the Little Vatican. After the difficult beginnings, congregational life also began to flourish, and by the turn of the century, a congregation of gentlemen and a congregation of students had been established. The movement for the veneration of the Sacred Heart of Jesus also gathered momentum in Budapest, as marked by the organization of the first procession of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the founding by the Jesuits of the Catholic People's Association of Józsefváros and the Catholic Circle. In 1901, a temporary house for the Ignatian spiritual exercises was opened

196 *Catalogus provinciae Austriaco-Hungaricae Societatis Jesu ineunte anno MDCCCLXXXVIII* (Vienna: Typis Rudolphi Brzezowsky & Filiorum, 1888), 90; Bikfalvi, *Jezsuita olvasókönyv*, 76.

197 Bikfalvi, *Jezsuita olvasókönyv*, 77–79.

in connection with the Budapest house, where not only diocesan clergy but also an increasing number of laypeople attended.[198] Budapest was not only the capital of the country; it was also the center of the Society of Jesus in Hungary.

The successful creation in Budapest of thriving Jesuit institutions made the Hungarian presence in the Austro-Hungarian province felt. It is thus hardly surprising that, in 1891, the same year in which a Jesuit residence was established in Budapest, the Hungarian Jesuits rekindled their centuries-old ambition to create an independent province. The political conditions were favorable, thanks to the dualist system, and there was no reason to expect any particular obstacles. However, within the Austro-Hungarian province, several objections were raised, and a number of factors that might hamper the realization of this dream came to the surface. One of the most important problems, one that merited serious reflection, was the small number of Hungarian-born members of the Society and the small number of young people entering the novitiate in Trnava. This factor alone made it seem unlikely that a separate Hungarian province would be able to tend to its apostolic work on its own. However, in the course of the roughly two decades of negotiations, this argument was reversed. The contention was made that it was precisely the Austrian character of the province that discouraged young Hungarians from joining.

Another argument, which had roots stretching back to the early modern period, was that the Hungarians, by nature of their character, were inherently incapable of managing and unsuitable to lead an independent province. In the words of Alfred Billot (1873–1965), the rector of Bratislava, "the Hungarians lack [...] the ability to think long term, the calm consistency necessary for leadership: depending on their state of mind, they are sometimes too gentle, sometimes too hard." Those who argued in favor of an independent Hungarian province, however, claimed that the vastness of the Austro-Hungarian province made it impossible to judge what the specific local needs of each individual Jesuit house were from the center in Vienna.

Others condemned Hungarians for being prone to excessive nationalism, which would create tensions with Jesuits of different ethnic backgrounds. This was not an entirely unfounded accusation. Ethnic tensions were palpable in Trnava, for example, and they had personal consequences. In Rome, however, they realized that this notion of national bias was, in fact, an accusation against the Austrian provincial leadership. The Austrian provincial superior was instructed to appoint Czech and Slovene members to the provincial council, which was to be restructured.[199]

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198 Petruch, *Száz év a magyar jezsuiták II*, 332–42.

199 András Fejérdy, "Provincia Hungariae: Az 1909. évi alapítás története," in Molnár and Szilágyi, *Múlt és jövő*, 13–22, here 13–16.

Within the multi-ethnic province, there were indeed efforts to form and strengthen a Hungarian identity. As early as 1853, with the re-establishment of a Jesuit presence in Hungary, Prince Primate Scitovszky tried to strengthen a distinctive Hungarian identity by building on the local history of the Society. In 1855, he began to lay the groundwork for Rome's canonization of the three martyrs of Košice, Márk Kőrösi and the two Jesuits Menyhért Grodecz and István Pongrácz, killed in 1619, for which he also sought the support of Superior General Beckx.[200] The matter was still being discussed in 1863 by the Archiepiscopal Consistory of Esztergom.[201] Their beatification, however, took place only in 1905, after some forty years had passed, when negotiations were already well underway for the creation of an independent Hungarian province. After a year of intensive negotiations, Superior General Franz Xavier Wernz (1842–1914, in office 1906–1914) issued the founding charter of the independent Hungarian province on August 15, 1909. The main justification for the creation of a new province was that the Austro-Hungarian province had grown so much that it was no longer possible to govern the scattered houses from a single center, and therefore "there seems to be no more suitable decision than to separate the Hungarian part from the Austrian part and create a province of its own right." Three territorial units were created: the Austrian and Hungarian provinces, which were separate, and the Croatian mission, which was dependent on the Austrians, and the territory of which extended to Slavonia and Bosnia–Herzegovina.[202] The superior general deliberately set the official date of the creation of the province on September 7, the feast of the Martyrs of Košice, symbolically linking the threads of the history of the old and the new Society in Hungary and also fulfilling a centuries-old wish for an independent Hungarian province.

6 The Independent Province (1909–1950)

6.1 *War and Collapse*

The history of the new, independent Hungarian province began with reassuring signs. Jakab Bús (1861–1935) became its first provincial, and he launched large-scale construction projects. One of these was the establishment of a new grammar school in Pécs. The school was founded by Bishop Gyula Zichy (1871–1942, in office as bishop of Pécs 1905–1925), who himself had studied at the Jesuit

200 ARSI, Austria, no. 1003. Epistolae, 3:fasc. 5, nos. 9a–9b, Esztergom, March 28 and July 3, 1855. Letters of Archbishop János Scitovszky to Superior General Pieter Jan Beckx.

201 *Katholikus néplap* 16, no. 13 (March 26, 1863): 103.

202 Fejérdy, "Provincia Hungariae," 20–22.

grammar school in Kalksburg. Initially, leaders of the Society did not support the idea, as they felt that the two schools, one in Pécs and one in Kalocsa, would be too close geographically . The school opened its doors in 1912, however, thanks to a generous donation by the bishop. A boarding school, named Pius was attached to the school, following the Stephaneum in Kalocsa as an example. The institution in Pécs had been named in honor of Pope Pius x (1835–1914, r.1903–1914). The Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus was built in 1930, and there was a wide array of facilities for students on the vast plot of land belonging to the building, including a stadium, a shooting range, and a sledding and skiing track. Student life and the various student organizations followed the universal Jesuit educational system, and in their distinctive features, they resembled the gymnasium in Kalocsa.[203]

The other major undertaking was the complete construction of the center in Budapest, which included the erection of a large congregational home next to the church and the Jesuit house. Bús himself had been an active participant in the Marian congregation movement, so the creation of a worthy center in the capital for the congregations was an issue that lay close to his heart. The foundation stone was laid in the spring of 1911, and the home opened its doors in the autumn of the following year. The center was arranged in a practical manner, and particular attention was paid to pastoral considerations. A congregational chapel was built at the center of the enormous building, as well as meeting rooms on the first two floors for the congregations of the Virgin Mary, which were separated by gender and social class. Space was also made in the building for a university boarding school and the editorial office of the Marian congregation's newspaper. In the basement, the Apostle Printing House (Apostol Nyomda) was opened, which played an important role in the development of the Catholic press.[204]

These two construction projects drained the coffers of the young Hungarian province, and all further development was halted for a decade. The primary reason for this, of course, was the outbreak of the First World War. In the summer of 1914, the Society of Jesus was preparing for the centenary of its reestablishment, but on July 28, barely a week before the celebrations were to begin, the Austro-Hungarian Empire invaded Serbia, and soon the whole continent was at war. Against this tense wartime backdrop, Włodzimierz Ledóchowski (1866–1942) was elected superior general in early 1915 (in office 1915–1942). Ledóchowski was the scion of a Polish aristocratic family, but he had been born in Austria. Shortly after having been elected, as an Austrian, he was compelled to leave

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203 Rébay, "Jezsuita iskolaügy," 372.

204 Bikfalvi, *Jezsuita olvasókönyv*, 94; Béla Bangha, "A kongregációi otthon," *Mária kongregáció* 5, no. 7 (1912): 214–18.

Rome, since Italy had entered the war on the side of the Allied powers. He moved to his mother's family estate in Zizers, Switzerland, which remained neutral throughout the war, and directed the Society from there. This only made him seem more suspicious, and for a long time, he was regarded as a figure in some kind of Jesuit–German alliance. In fact, Ledóchowski strove to maintain links with the Allied powers as well.[205]

Although there were essentially no military hostilities in the interior of the Kingdom of Hungary until the end of the war, the First World War nonetheless had a strong impact on the functioning of the province. War hospitals were set up in several Jesuit institutions, which completely disrupted normal life. In Pécs, a four hundred-bed military hospital was opened in the grammar school over which the Society itself had little control. It was only able to prevent infectious patients from being sent there. The hospital in the boarding school run by the Jesuits in Satu Mare was seriously overcrowded, and even the building suffered damages. The congregational home in Budapest was also used as a war hospital.[206] According to a 1916 account, some forty Jesuit brothers were conscripted, and three Jesuit fathers served as camp chaplains. Five Jesuits were taken prisoner of war by the Russians, seven were wounded, and one disappeared on the front in the autumn of 1914. Provincial Superior Ferenc Speiser (1854–1933, in office 1912–1918) asked Ledóchowski for permission not to send the Hungarian Jesuits to Sankt Andrä in Carinthia for the third probation, because the area was already a war zone.[207] In the summer of 1916, for example, several Jesuit students completed their third probation in Trnava under the direction of the novice master because they were unable to return to Carinthia.[208] There were registered fatalities among the Jesuits sent to the front. Provincial Speiser's nephew Antal Speiser (1883–1918), who was also a Jesuit, was killed on the Italian front in the summer of 1918. After having been exposed to the horrors of war, many of the Jesuits who had been conscripted grew estranged from the community and left the Society after the war.[209]

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205 Philippe Chenaux, "Father Włodzimierz Ledóchowski (1866–1942): Driving Force behind Papal Anti-communism during the Interwar Period," *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 5, no. 1 (2018): 54–70, here 54–55.

206 Tibor Klestenitz, "Önálló provinciában," in Réka and Szilárd, *Jezsuiták Magyarországon a kezdetektől napjainkig*, 390–485, here 412.

207 JTMRL I.3.a.2. Documents of the independent Hungarian province, Epistolae praepositi provincialis, Budapest, June 16, 1916.

208 JTMRL I.3.a.2. Documents of the independent Hungarian province, Epistolae praepositi provincialis, Budapest, June 3, 1916.

209 JTMRL I.3.a.2. Documents of the independent Hungarian province, Epistolae praepositi provincialis, Budapest, December 30, 1918.

The collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the wake of the war also put the Hungarian province in danger. With the 1920 Treaty of Trianon, the historical Kingdom of Hungary was no more. Transylvania and, with it, the Jesuit house in Satu Mare came under Romanian rule. Territories to the north, including Trnava and Bratislava, were made part of the newly formed state of Czechoslovakia. Pécs fell under occupation by Serbian forces until the summer of 1921. The province thus lost four of its houses, as well as the novitiate in Trnava and the grammar school in Pécs. The houses that remained in Hungarian hands soon faced even greater difficulties. Following the proclamation issued by Charles I of Austria (1887–1922, r.1916–1918) (known in Hungary as Charles IV) in which he relinquished any part in the administration of the state (though notably, he did not actually abdicate), a republic was proclaimed in Budapest in the autumn of 1918. This fragile government was soon toppled by the many upheavals of the moment, and in the spring of 1919, Hungarian Bolsheviks under the leadership of Béla Kun (1886–1938) took power and proclaimed a Soviet-style republic. Upon seizing power, the communist government set up a Religious Liquidation Commission, the essential task of which was to seize church property.[210] Teaching was still permitted in the Kalocsa grammar school but only until the end of the school year. The school year, however, was suspended early, in mid-May.[211] The congregational home in Budapest had been marauded by social-democratic industrial workers in February 1919, before the Bolshevik takeover. They destroyed the machinery and devices that had been used by the Apostle Printing House to publish materials for the Catholic press. On March 30, Masses were banned, and the Marian congregations were also shut down because of a prohibition on gatherings. The head of the Liquidation Committee, a former Piarist named Oszkár Faber (1879–1945), openly told Provincial Superior Jenő Somogyi (1879–1954) that he had been brewing "special spices for the Jesuits," or in other words that he had been preparing for something of a final showdown with them. The Jesuits left Budapest for their own safety. Some took refuge in rural parishes, and others fled to areas occupied by Czechoslovaks and Serbs. Somogyi fled to Vienna.[212]

210 Csaba Fazekas, "A 'likvidáló hivatal': Megjegyzések a Tanácsköztársaság egyházpolitikájának intézményi hátteréről," in *A Tanácsköztársaság és az egyházak: Egyházpolitika, keresztényüldözés, egyházi útkeresés*, ed. András Fejérdy (Budapest: Szent István Társulat, 2020), 102–13, here 106–9.

211 Ede Lányi, *Vörös naplóm* (Budapest: Pius Kollégium, 1919), 11.

212 JTMRL I.3.a.3. Documents of the independent Hungarian province, Epistolae singulorum seu variorum, Historia collegiorum et domorum provinciae Hungariae tempore bolshevismi (18 Martii–1 Augustii anni 1919).

Thus, the promising beginnings and rapid growth with which the history of the independent Hungarian province had begun were soon cut short by the war. The new province faced unanticipated challenges. By the summer of 1919, the province was on the verge of total collapse as a result of the Bolshevik Soviet Republic's anti-ecclesiastical measures and Hungary's major territorial losses at the close of the war.

6.2 *New Paths*

After 133 days, the Bolshevik dictatorship in Hungary collapsed in August 1919, as the Romanian army marched into Budapest. Over the course of the autumn months, the situation consolidated somewhat, and in November, Miklós Horthy (1868–1957) marched into Budapest at the head of the National Army. On March 1, 1920, Horthy was elected regent, and the kingdom was restored at least in name, though Charles IV, who had reigned for a brief two years, was never permitted to reclaim his throne. With the political turmoil finally settled, the Hungarian Jesuits returned, but in order to reorganize the province, they had to arrive at a new definition of their mission. The province had lost many of its houses and many of its members, and it was now faced with a completely new situation in terms of both infrastructure and staffing. In order to lay the groundwork for the creation of a new framework, Provincial Superior Somogyi asked Superior General Ledóchowski to send a visitator to Hungary.

Ledóchowski selected Franz Lassberg (1862–1936) from the province of Upper Germany for the task. Lassberg was in Hungary from March to July 1922, and he was careful to travel to the houses in rural settings as well as the institutions in the larger cities. According to Lassberg, discipline and customs all followed the traditions of the Austrian province and were in perfect accordance with the Constitutions of the Society. The new situation, however, demanded new practices. The visitation offered considerable help and motivation for the young Hungarian province, which had already suffered many cataclysms. In particular, Lassberg emphasized the generational differences. A freer manner of speaking had become more common among the younger members, and they were becoming too engaged in activities beyond the walls of the Jesuit institutions, especially in questions touching on politics and secular issues. According to Lassberg, the younger generation had exerted a considerable influence on Somogyi, and as a result, they were able to conduct themselves with little concern for the views of the prefects. Lassberg called attention to two Jesuits whose behavior, in his assessment, should have been more firmly controlled. One was Béla Bangha (1880–1940), the other Ferenc Bíró (1869–1938). Both were active in the Catholic press, but they had engaged in several undertakings for which they had not sought the permission of the superior general. Two influential

periodicals, *Magyar kultúra* (Hungarian culture) and *A Szív* (The heart), had been established without permission, as had the Central Press Company (Központi Sajtóvállalat). Bíró was also associated with the foundation of the Societas Jesu Cordis, a female religious community. Others had cast a critical eye on Bangha's influence, and both the bishops and the papal nuncio had cautioned him to moderate his activism.[213]

In the nineteenth century, the Jesuits had recognized the growing importance of the press, in part because of the cultural struggles in Hungary, but in the 1910s and 1920s, they came both fully to grasp and to exploit the potential of this increasingly ever-present new agora of public life. Bangha and Bíró played a major role in this and became key figures in the Hungarian province in the interwar period. In 1910, Bangha took over the editorship of the newspaper *Mária kongregáció* (Marian congregation) and the following year, set up the Catholic Women's Press Committee, drawing on support from female members of the congregations. Their task was to propagate the cause of the Catholic press by attracting supporters and subscribers. Bangha considered it important to counter the influence of the liberal newspapers by winning the support of the intelligentsia. To this end, in 1913, he launched the aforementioned periodical *Magyar kultúra*. Bíró founded *A Szív* two years later, which soon became immensely popular and, indeed, emerged as the most widely read Catholic newspaper of the time, selling two hundred thousand copies a week by 1948.

In order to unite the Catholic press, Bangha sought to establish a large network of newspapers. In his assessment, *Alkotmány* (Constitution), the newspaper of the Catholic People's Party and the only Catholic daily of the time, failed to speak to larger cross-sections of society. Bangha, therefore, wanted to launch a new central daily, followed by tabloid newspapers and periodicals in rural areas. He won the support of the archbishop of Esztergom, Cardinal János Csernoch (1852–1927, in office 1912–1927), for his plan, and in 1918 he founded the Central Press Company. As its informal leader, Bangha gained considerable influence in public affairs, and this in turn created an awkward political situation for the Jesuits. Lassberg's journey to Hungary in 1922 as visitator highlighted this. In the end, Superior General Ledóchowski stepped in. He summoned Bangha to Rome in 1923 and gave him the task of managing the international organization of the congregations. He then kept Bangha in the Italian capital for three years.[214]

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213 Antal Molnár and Ferenc Szabó, *Bangha Béla SJ emlékezete* (Budapest: Jézus Társasága Magyarországi Rendtartománya–Távlatok, 2010), 77–80.

214 Klestenitz, "Önálló provinciában," 400–9.

Following the disintegration of the historic Kingdom of Hungary and the loss of several houses, the Hungarian Jesuits established a Jesuit presence in many new places. The consolidation of the political situation after 1920 set the province on a new path of expansion. New Jesuit communities were established in Szeged (1920), Érd (where the novitiate was located from 1921 to 1928), and Mezőkövesd (1923), and a house for spiritual exercises was opened in Budapest-Zugliget (1928). This, of course, placed many burdens on the province, particularly its financial resources. In 1934, on the occasion of the quarter-century anniversary of the creation of the Hungarian province, Bíró, who was then provincial superior, offered the following summary of the challenges they had faced:

> The storm caused much damage, but by the grace of providence, much fruitfulness was also given. We lost two-thirds of our province; our foundations were all destroyed; we laid the money saved by our hard-working fathers on the altar of the homeland, and what remained was consumed by terror and devaluation. We have indeed been reduced in number and impoverished.[215]

The most immediate problem was the construction of the Manresa, a house for spiritual exercises in Zugliget. The novitiate in Trnava had been lost, and though an attempt was made to replace it in Érd, a settlement near Budapest, the conditions there were not ideal. The solution to the question of the novitiate was therefore linked to the need to build the Manresa house. The foundation stone was laid in Zugliget, on the outskirts of Budapest, in 1926 and was blessed by Archbishop of Kalocsa Gyula Zichy. Bank loans were used to cover most of the construction costs.[216] The Dutch loans came at an interest rate of 7.5 percent, which placed an immense burden on the Hungarian province. In addition, the philosophical college in Szeged was operating in rather modest conditions. Repairs were urgently needed, and the construction of the Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which was connected to the Pius boarding school in Pécs, was underway.[217] In 1928, the Manresa was finally opened. It was also used to house the novitiate of the Hungarian province.

The financial difficulties were only worsened by the outbreak of the Great Depression, which caused grave economic and social problems. The global

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215 Ferenc Xav. Bíró, "A huszonötéves jubileum," *Provinciánk hírei*, jubilee issue, 33 (1934): 42.

216 Bikfalvi, *Jezsuita olvasókönyv*, 108.

217 Antal Petruch, *Jézus Szíve apostola. P. Biró Ferenc s.j. emlékezete* (Budapest: Korda, 1942), 246.

economic crisis had consequences that went far beyond the financial resources of the Hungarian province, and a number of social issues came to the fore to which the Hungarian Catholic Church, and the Jesuits within it, had to offer some answer. Bíró, who had been appointed head of the province in 1927, believed that the best way out was to pursue more ambitious development. He wanted to promote spiritual and intellectual growth, and in keeping with the old tradition, he also wanted the Jesuits to play prominent roles in the sciences. Bangha stood out among the consultants as the figure on whom he could most rely to help him implement his plans. In 1930, the Jesuits were entrusted with the management of the new seminary in Szeged. The work involved in overseeing the seminary and providing instruction at the theological college constituted significant tasks for the Hungarian Jesuits, but the cooperative endeavor in Szeged also provided help to the financially struggling province. On the basis of a decision made by Bíró, from 1935 on, most of the young Hungarian Jesuits continued their theological education at the Szeged theological college rather than in Innsbruck. This relieved the Hungarian province of many of the financial pressures it faced, and it also gave greater weight to the institution in Szeged.[218] At the same time, there was a debate among the province's leadership over whether the philosophical college should remain in Szeged or whether the two schools should be separated geographically. Finally, after lengthy deliberations, it was decided to move the philosophy training to Budapest, to the congregational home. This proved an unfortunate decision, because there was not much room for Jesuit philosophical training alongside the faculty of theology in Budapest. When Hungary regained territories from Czechoslovakia in 1938, the Jesuits moved the Philosophical College to Košice, which had again come under Hungarian rule.[219]

Bíró also managed to settle tensions that had plagued the relationship between the Jesuits and the political world. He established an almost friendly relationship with Kuno Klebelsberg (1875–1932), the influential minister of religion and education (1922–1931) of the time, and with the minister of the interior. The former was important because of the Jesuits' educational institutions, the latter because of the various social tasks of the Society, such as providing for the poor during the Great Depression. In December 1929, Bíró announced his social program, which proclaimed that the Jesuits aimed to "do our part in alleviating social misery." A week and a half later, under the oversight of the Society of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Kitchen for the Poor was opened in the basement rooms of the congregational home. The kitchen was maintained mainly

218 Petruch, *Jézus Szíve apostola*, 249.
219 Molnár and Szabó, *Bangha Béla*, 97–98.

through donations made by the faithful and purchases from food vendors at reduced prices. According to a report from July 1930, the kitchen provided food and social services for some three hundred people a day.[220] A placement office run by Father Károly Kipper (1875–1934) opened at roughly the same time. The office helped children from poor backgrounds find lodging with families abroad, where, in exchange, they would help with daily chores while profiting from the opportunity to learn languages such as French, German, and Spanish. After just over six months, the office had placed nearly two hundred people, mostly children, in homes in Western Europe (mainly in Belgium, where some 130 people were sent). The Ministry of the Interior, having noticed the rapid successes of the office run by Kipper, entrusted the Jesuits with the management of similar state initiatives. They managed to open an office in Paris and established direct ties with the French Ministries of Agriculture and Labor.[221]

In 1931–1932, another visitation took place in the Hungarian province. The general superior sent the Dutch Pieter Jan Willekens (1881–1971) to Hungary. In the wake of discussions with Bíró, Willekens commended the work that the Hungarian province had undertaken with regard to spreading the faith despite the comparatively small number of Hungarian Jesuit missionaries. He was referring with this observation to the missions to China and Turkey.[222] His statement, however, also indicated the difficulties that had arisen under Bíró, especially in the case of the Chinese mission. It had become necessary to plan more enterprises more practically and more cautiously in order to ensure that the province would be able to continue to function long term.

6.3 *The Long Beard Jesuits: Hungarian Missionaries in China*

When Provincial Somogyi fled to Vienna during the brief period of Bolshevik rule in Hungary, he vowed that, were the province to survive, it would launch a mission abroad. Superior General Ledóchowski had no objections to the idea, but various alternatives were first considered: Africa, China, Finland, and Estonia. Finally, in 1921, Ledóchowski agreed to allow the Hungarians to play a role in the mission led by the French Jesuits in China. Miklós Szarvas (1890–1965), the first Hungarian Jesuit to be sent to the mission, arrived in China on September 22, 1922.[223]

Daming became the center of the Hungarian mission, and from 1924 on, more and more Hungarian Jesuits arrived. The idea of making the Hungarian

220 *Hírek a provinciából* 23 (February 1930): 3; 24 (July 1930): 5.
221 *Hírek a provinciából* 23 (February 1930): 4; 24 (July 1930): 19–20.
222 Petruch, *Jézus Szíve apostola*, 255.
223 Péter Vámos, *Magyar jezsuita misszió Kínában* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 2003), 66–68.

mission independent and raising its status to apostolic prefecture was raised only three years later, in 1927. In 1930, Ledóchowski informed the leadership of the French mission in Xianxian that, in principle, he supported the idea of making the Hungarian mission in Daming independent. He appointed Szarvas to serve as deputy head of the Daming house, and he instructed the Hungarian provincial superior to ensure that the necessary material and personnel conditions were met. The Xianxian prefect expressed his concern that the Hungarian province would not be able to send enough missionaries and that the financial resources might prove inadequate. He suggested that the territory be handed over to the Austrian province. The concerns of the head of the French mission were expressed to the Hungarian provincial superior, Bíró, during a visit to Hungary by Willekens. Bíró, however, was uncertain. In his view, the establishment and maintenance of an independent mission in China would have been well beyond the province's means, as it would have required seventy-five thousand Hungarian pengő a year. Bangha, however, advised Bíró not to reject the plans coming from Rome, but rather to ask for a few years' delay until they could send a sufficient number of Hungarians. Ledóchowski accepted the request, maintaining the status quo but insisting that as many scholastics as possible be sent to China. Bíró opposed the autonomy of the Hungarian mission in China essentially until the end of his tenure as provincial superior. In his assessment, given the global economic crisis and the poor financial state of the Hungarian province, the financial resources for such an undertaking simply were not at hand, and he would have preferred to launch a mission in Turkey. At the suggestion of the French missionary bishop Henri Lécroart (1864–1940), however, Pope Pius XI (1857–1939, r.1922–1939), in his bull of March 11, 1935, finally elevated Daming to the rank of apostolic prefecture, and he appointed the Hungarian Miklós Szarvas as its head the following year (in office as apostolic prefect 1936–1947). The decisions taken in Rome thus, in the end, overrode Bíró's objections, and the Hungarian province was given a serious mission.[224] The next step in the development of the mission came after the Second World War. In 1947, the apostolic prefecture of Daming was elevated to the rank of diocese. It was headed by the Hungarian Jesuit Gáspár Lischerong (1889–1972), who held the title of "administrator apostolicus" even after having fled China to live in exile in Taiwan, where he died in 1972.[225]

Daming already had an important administrative center in the imperial era, and the mission settlement was located on either side of the city's Eastern

224 Vámos, *Magyar jezsuita misszió Kínában*, 133–37.

225 Péter Vámos, "A magyar rendtartomány missziója Kínában," in Szokol and Szőnyi, *Jezsuiták Magyarországon a kezdetektől napjainkig*, 454–73, here 461.

Main Street. On one side was the Jesuit house, with workshops, a yard with space for plants and animals, a doctor's office, a school building, and a student dormitory. On the other side of the street stood the neo-Gothic church, which was modeled on the church of Lourdes. The Hungarian province strove to raise funds in Hungary for the Chinese mission. Various sponsors organized events, screenings, and presentations, and they also published a journal, *Katolikus misszók* (Catholic missions), which regularly reported news from Daming. The Hungarian missionaries continued with the tried and tested methods of inculturation and strove to follow local customs in their daily lives, for instance, in their dress and food, and many Hungarians grew long beards. Most of the missionaries traveled around Daming, living in villages among Chinese people. The most significant difference was that they ate with European cutlery instead of chopsticks. The missionary work was based on two important activities. Alongside preaching the Gospels, they also devoted considerable time and effort to education and healing. They set up clinics and hospitals and even did work as healers themselves. The Jesuit schools were open to people from every social strata, and women were not excluded from education. The Jesuits taught the boys, and the Congregation of School Sisters of Our Lady of Kalocsa educated the girls.

Daming was occupied by the Japanese in 1937, during the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937–1945), but the Hungarian missionaries were spared as citizens of an Allied state, and even the city was spared. During the war years, missionary work was limited, and at the end of the war the city almost immediately fell under communist occupation. In the autumn of 1946, the Jesuits closed their mission buildings in Daming and retreated to the southern part of the mission district, where they remained for nearly ten years. The last Hungarian Jesuit left China in 1955.[226]

In the 1930s, there was a palpable sense of uncertainty about the Chinese mission in the Hungarian province. This was due in part to the fact that Provincial Superior Bíró would have preferred to have launched a mission to Turkey. The idea of the mission came about by chance. Father János Vendel (1894–1971) had been intensely studying the history, ethnography, and language of the Turkic peoples during his studies at university and had traveled to Istanbul to deepen his knowledge of the language and pursue research. Bíró supported the study trip, and Vendel arrived in Istanbul in January 1930, where he stayed in the French Jesuit house. According to Vendel, there were about fifteen thousand Hungarians living and working in Turkey, and he wanted

226 Vámos, "A magyar rendtartomány missziója Kínában," 461–69.

to provide pastoral care for them. Budapest, however, saw Vendel's plans as overly ambitious, so Vendel decided to act independently of the leadership of the Hungarian province. He turned directly to the circles who moved in the vicinity of Pope Pius XI, and the pope responded to his suggestions with an open mind. The positive reception from the Holy See brought a radical shift in Superior General Ledóchowski's stance on the question, and he, too, urged Bíró to support the Turkish mission over the Chinese one. This caused a crisis of conscience for the Hungarian provincial—although he considered Vendel's ideas unrealistic, he nevertheless saw some potential in the idea of a mission in Turkey, yet at the same time, he did not want to give up the Chinese mission. The Turkish mission, furthermore, would have posed a considerable organizational challenge to the Hungarian province, which was struggling from a shortage of personnel. In 1934, seven percent of the Hungarian Jesuits were working in foreign missions, which was an outstanding achievement on an international level but posed risks for undertakings in Hungary.

The information reaching Bíró confirmed his concerns, and it became increasingly clear that Vendel's visions were naïve and that he had misled the Roman prefects. At Bíró's suggestion and with Ledóchowski's permission, Bangha traveled incognito to Turkey in the spring of 1931 to assess the possibilities on the ground. The memorandum prepared by Bangha and sent to the Holy See was again favorable from the perspective of the creation of a mission in Turkey, but Bangha called for the Holy See to assume a larger share of the costs. Given the difficulties created by the global economic crisis and other political considerations, Pius XI was unwilling to make this commitment. In 1933, Ledóchowski sent a clear message to the Hungarian prefects not to expect any financial support from the Holy See. Although Bíró was inclined to favor the idea of a Turkish mission out of mere deference, the consultation held on April 5, 1934, came to an unambiguous decision: the Chinese mission should be made independent of the French, and with regard to the plans for a Turkish mission, the Hungarian province would have to content itself with the two Jesuits who were already in Turkey, since no serious work could be done there without the support of the Holy See. There had also been an unfavorable change in personnel matters: József Kardas (1895–1983), who had returned to Hungary for his third probation, did not have the support of the Turkish authorities, who did not want to see him return to Turkey, since he had converted two young Muslim men to Catholicism. After that, the Hungarian province did not press the Turkish issue. They permitted the two Hungarian Jesuits who were already there to remain, but they no longer entertained visions of any further development. Vendel remained in Turkey until

his death in 1971. Before he died, he completed a Turkish translation of the New Testament.[227]

The two missionary undertakings thus demonstrated the strength of the independent Hungarian province, even if at the same time, they pushed the province's resources to their limits. Unmanageable ventures outside the country threatened undertakings in Hungary, and in the 1930s, it was particularly important to maintain a balance among the various tasks. In the years leading up to the Second World War, many new initiatives were launched in Hungary.

6.4 *Under the Protection of Madonna della Strada*

The Hungarian Jesuit province strove to respond to the social tensions caused by the global economic crisis in several ways. Provincial Superior Bíró was personally preoccupied with social and socio-political issues. After the fall of the Bolshevik dictatorship of 1919, he offered a profound analysis of the province's social ills and urged reforms, which he wanted to see linked to an inner, spiritual renewal. He expressed this view again in 1936 in his work *A kommunizmus és Jézus Szíve* (Communism and the Heart of Jesus). Bíró warned in this treatise that social and spiritual reforms must go hand in hand if Christianity was to triumph over communism.

Jenő Kerkai (1904–70), one of Bíró's disciples, wanted to use Christian socialist ideas to win back members of the peasantry who had distanced themselves from the Catholic Church. In 1935, the National Corps of Catholic Agrarian Youth Associations (Katolikus Agrárifjúsági Legényegyletek Országos Testülete [KALOT]) was established by Kerkai and his circle. According to Kerkai, the goal was to raise a generation of Christian, educated peasant youth with a sense of national identity. These very principles, based on firm Catholic teachings, would later become the foundation for the rejection of fervent nationalism, national socialist ideas, and anti-Semitism. KALOT soon became a nationwide movement, and in 1940 it launched its people's college movement. The primary task of the people's colleges was to educate young people in the Christian spirit so that they would oppose both communism and national socialism. Within a few years, the movement had gained thousands of followers, and the KALOT headquarters was increasingly unable to manage the organization of teaching programs held in individual local sites. They, therefore, embarked on the creation of a permanent system of people's schools, which was a great success.

227 Antal Molnár, "Magyar jezsuita misszió Törökországban," in Molnár and Szilágyi, *Múlt és jövő*, 134–49, here 138–47.

The first school was opened in Érd in the building of the former Jesuit novitiate, and it was soon followed by other colleges.[228]

KALOT owed its popularity in part to the Catholic press created by Bangha. Bangha remained very active even in the last years of his life, and in addition to the press, a new opportunity arose for him to spread Catholic teachings. In 1938, the thirty-fourth International Eucharistic Congress was organized in Budapest, and Bangha, as a member of the congress's preparatory committee, was responsible for spiritual matters. Bangha intended the congress as a clear demonstration of global opposition to communism and atheism. Although Rome was not always receptive to Bangha's ideas, with the support of Cardinal-Archbishop Jusztinián Serédi (1884–1945, in office 1927–1945), all the bishops of the world were invited. They were all called to join the fight against atheism. As the political situation deteriorated, the congress became more modest in scale, but it remained one of the most important mass events of the period in Hungary and an unambiguous expression of strong anti-communist sentiment. Given the political situation in Hungary, however, it was more muted in its opposition to Nazism and fascism.[229] Even this restrained expression of protest, however, was enough to prompt Hitler (1889–1945) to forbid German bishops from attending the congress, and the Hungarian far right demanded the event be banned.[230]

By the late 1930s, the political situation had indeed changed radically. In the interwar period, Hungarian political life revolved around the revision of the Treaty of Trianon and the recovery of lost territories. This was inconceivable, however, without the assistance of a great power. Hungary's myopic focus on treaty revision increasingly tied the country to Nazi Germany. By the end of the decade, several territories had been recovered from some of the neighboring countries. This meant the growth of the Hungarian province as well. Košice became part of the Hungarian province again with the transfer of territory in southern Slovakia to Hungary in 1938 (and the college of philosophy was moved there in 1939) after the First Vienna Award, followed by Satu Mare and Cluj, which became part of Hungary with the annexation of northern Transylvania, which had been part of Romania since the Treaty of Trianon, after the Second Vienna Award in 1940.[231]

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228 Margit Balogh, *A KALOT és a katolikus társadalmi politika 1935–1946* (Budapest: MTA TTI, 1998), 26–41, 122–26.

229 Molnár and Szabó, *Bangha Béla*, 139–41.

230 Tibor Klestenitz, *Pajzs és kard: Bangha Béla élete és eszmeisége* (Budapest: Századvég, 2020), 373.

231 Klestenitz, "Önálló provinciában," 429–30.

Alongside the politics of revisionism, anti-Semitism also left its mark on the period. Borrowing from the anti-Semitic rhetoric of the nineteenth century, after the shock of the 1919 Bolshevik Soviet Republic, anti-Semitic discourse had increasingly come to dominate Hungarian political life. This became even more pronounced in the 1930s, as Hungary drew closer and closer to Nazi Germany, and at the end of the decade, harsh discriminatory laws were passed known as the Jewish laws. The anti-Semitic public discourse found clear echoes in Bangha's Catholic press. Bangha's writings often contained anti-Semitic views and promoted the idea of Hungarian racial purity, but his primary aim was to convert Jews to Christianity, and his principal enemy was the atheistic worldview. Bangha believed that the liberal politics of assimilation had failed. At the same time, however, he vigorously opposed Nazi ideas, which he saw as a brutal tendency and a new form of paganism. Bangha did not live to bear witness to the cataclysms of the Second World War and the Holocaust. He died in 1940, and assessments of his historical role were shaped by the post-1945 communist ideology, drawing primarily on his activities in public and political life in the 1920s and 1930s.[232]

Hungary entered the war relatively late, in 1941. As the imminent defeat of the German forces became increasingly clear, Regent Horthy (in office 1920–1944) strove to orient himself toward the Anglo-Saxon powers. On March 19, 1944, Nazi Germany invaded Hungary, and the mass deportation of Jews began in the summer. After Horthy's unsuccessful attempt to jump out of the war in the autumn, the far-right Arrow Cross Party, led by Ferenc Szálasi (1897–1946), seized power (in office 1944–1945). The deportation of Hungarian Jews, which had been briefly halted after a devastatingly rapid wave of deportations in the summer, began again, and now the Jews of Budapest, most of whom had not been targets of the mass deportations, were no longer spared. The Society of the Holy Cross, which was one of the main Catholic organizations, tried to help, primarily by providing assistance to Jews who had converted, but it did not distinguish between Jews and Christians. The Jesuit József Jánosi (1898–1965) became the ecclesiastical leader of the Society of the Holy Cross, but after the Arrow Cross takeover, it was no longer able to remain in operation.[233] The Jesuit "island" in Budapest became a refuge for the persecuted. Since the Jesuits owned several buildings, the congregational home, the Jesuit house, the church, and other adjacent buildings formed a coherent block with an extensive basement system. The Jesuits used these spaces to help Jews, deserters,

232 Molnár and Szabó, *Bangha Béla*, 15–22; Klestenitz, *Pajzs és kard*, 373.

233 Balázs Csíky, *Serédi Jusztinián, Magyarország hercegprímása*, ed. Krisztina Tóth (Budapest: MTA BTK TTI–MTA-PPKE Fraknói Vilmos Római Történeti Kutatócsoport, 2018), 402–3.

and the politically persecuted (a total of some 120 to two hundred people) hide from the authorities. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the events could not be recorded in contemporary documents, but there are numerous references to them in the *Historia domus* of the Jesuit house. The large number of people admitted to the house and the difficulties of providing for them are repeatedly mentioned. In the late autumn of 1944, the Society managed to bring in large quantities of food from its estates in Nagykapornak, thus ensuring that supplies would be available during the siege of Budapest (which lasted from October 29, 1944, to February 13, 1945). Soviet troops reached the city center in January 1945, and fierce battles broke out in the area around the Jesuit house. The church and the surrounding Jesuit buildings were hit several times by mortar shells and grenades. The Germans withdrew from the area on the evening of January 15, and Soviet soldiers appeared in the surrounding streets at dawn the next day. A Russian lieutenant and a soldier entered the house and were received by Father Jakab Raile (1894–1949), who was rescuing the Jews. Raile shared the following recollection of this encounter: "They checked everything on the ground floor and in the hiding place [...] and after about one and a half hours, they left. They were firm, military, but not offensive or harsh."[234] The siege of Budapest continued for another month, but the people who had taken refuge in the Jesuit house could breathe a sigh of relief. In 1991, Raile was posthumously awarded the Righteous Among the Nations title by the Yad Vashem Institute in Jerusalem for his work in saving the Jews. He is the only Hungarian Jesuit to be awarded this title.

The Second World War was followed by another period of political upheaval in Hungary. The country lost the territories it had regained between 1938 and 1940, and the cities of Košice, Satu Mare, and Cluj were returned to Czechoslovakia and Romania. For a fleeting moment, it seemed that there was some chance of a democratic transition in the wake of the war, but these hopes were soon dashed when mass Sovietization began, together with a communist takeover of the government. This had dire consequences for the Catholic Church in Hungary, including the Jesuits. There were, essentially, two competing tendencies. The first was to seek some form of *modus vivendi* with the Soviets, and this was the approach initially adopted by the Jesuits. The second was the complete rejection of any possibility of cooperation with the communists. Prince Primate József Mindszenty (1892–1975, in office 1945–1974), who became archbishop of Esztergom in October 1945, was a staunch representative of the latter stance. At first, the Jesuits supported his candidacy for

234 JTMRL II.3. Documents of the houses, Budapest: Mária utca, Historia domus 3, 1944–1950, pp. 57–74.

archbishop. Father Töhötöm Nagy (1908–1979), who was the first Hungarian Jesuit to reach Rome after the war in the summer of 1945 from the territories occupied by the Red Army, gave a lengthy presentation in which he detailed the advantages and disadvantages of Mindszenty's appointment. Nagy seems to have hoped that, by giving Mindszenty their support, the Jesuits could persuade the new and infamously stubborn archbishop to favor the more conciliatory Jesuit approach and adopt a more compromising stance. One of the other candidates for the position, however, would have been the Jesuit József Jánosi, who advocated some kind of reconciliation with the Soviets. Jánosi's position with regard to the communist government is shown by the fact that he went to Rome at the end of 1945 to negotiate on behalf of the government. Before that, he had also taken part in talks with the Communist Party leader Mátyás Rákosi (1892–1971, in office 1945–1956) and the head of the Soviet occupation forces, Marshal Kliment Voroshilov (1881–1969).[235] By early 1946, even Nagy, who was working closely with the American secret service, felt that Mindszenty was a serious obstacle to any possible rapprochement between Rome and the Soviet Union. One sure sign of such rapprochement would have been the reopening of the nunciature in Budapest after the war. However, under pressure from the Soviets, this was ultimately rejected in Budapest. The contention was that, had the nunciature reopened, this would have meant two "Mindszentys" in Hungary instead of one.[236]

The Jesuits, who supported the *modus vivendi* policy, not only came into conflict with Mindszenty but also began to find themselves increasingly isolated within the Hungarian province. Provincial Superior István Borbély (1903–1987, in office 1943–1949) severely reprimanded both Jánosi and Nagy and warned them to avoid coming into further conflict with Mindszenty. Borbély was too late, however, and in the summer of 1946, Mindszenty withdrew his support for KALOT, a movement founded by the Jesuits. KALOT was taking part in the work of the National Council of Hungarian Youth, in which the communists had gained considerable influence. This did not save KALOT from the communist government, however. On June 17, 1946, an assassination attempt was made in the center of Budapest, and Soviet soldiers were killed. The alleged perpetrator was found to have a KALOT identity card, which proved sufficient pretext for the complete liquidation of the association.[237]

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235 Margit Balogh, *Victim of History: Cardinal Mindszenty, a Biography* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2021), 151–55, 195–96.

236 Éva Petrás, *Álarcok mögött: Nagy Töhötöm életei* (Budapest: ÁBTL, 2019), 96–107.

237 Petrás, *Álarcok mögött*, 115–25.

By the summer of 1946, it was clear that the Jesuits' hopes of arriving at a *modus vivendi* were running out of steam. Ferenc Kajdi (1884–1945?) and Antal Laskay (1909–1945?), the first two Jesuits to fall prisoner to the Soviet forces, were captured during the siege of Budapest at Christmastime 1944. No one has ever determined precisely what became of them. In September 1946, József Vág (1914–1957), another Jesuit, was arrested on charges of inciting the murder of Soviet soldiers. Vág was deported to the Soviet Union and was only allowed to return to Hungary ten years later. In the years that followed, increasing pressure was put on the Jesuits and the Hungarian Catholic Church. In 1947, the communists won the elections by fraud, and the construction of a Soviet-style party-state dictatorship began. In 1948, church schools were nationalized, including the Jesuit grammar schools in Pécs and Kalocsa. In the same year, the Jesuit college in Szeged was also seized, making it impossible to train scholastics. And in the meantime, more and more Jesuits were being arrested. From the Jesuit headquarters in Rome, the Hungarian province was urged not to get involved in politics and to support Cardinal Mindszenty. However, Mindszenty was increasingly isolated, and Archbishop Gyula Czapik of Eger (1887–1956, in office 1943–1956) became the church's intermediary with the Communist Party. Czapik sent Imre Mócsy (1907–1980), a Jesuit, to Rome, but with the full knowledge of the communist government. Mócsy's task was to settle the Mindszenty affair peacefully. The cardinal would be sent to Rome, and the Vatican would send an apostolic visitator to Hungary. Mindszenty, however, knew nothing about this. Mócsy was selected for this task because he was on good terms with the Jesuit Robert Leiber (1887–1967), Pope Pius XII's (1876–1958, r.1939–1958) personal secretary.

The events of early December 1948 made Mócsy's journey vitally important for the Hungarian Jesuit province. On December 4, the economic leader of the province, Father József Vid (1893–1952), and his secretary were arrested. Vid later died in the Kistarcsa internment camp in 1952. It was rumored that Provincial Superior István Borbély would be next, and a sense of panic prevailed in the Jesuit headquarters in Budapest. With the support of the Hungarian prefects, Borbély fled the country in secret. Even before this, having been authorized by General Superior Jean-Baptiste Janssens (1889–1964, in office 1946–1964), Borbély had appointed his successor, Alajos Tüll (1894–1987, in office 1949).

Mócsy, in the meantime, was unable to get through to the pope, despite his good connections. He was only able to deliver the Czapik memorandum to the pope's closest colleague, Domenico Tardini (1888–1961). Meanwhile, Cardinal Mindszenty was arrested in Hungary on December 26. He was taken to the headquarters of the State Protection Authority—the Hungarian secret

police—in Budapest, where he was tortured in an attempt to force him to make a confession. Two days later, Tardini informed Mócsy that his mission to the Vatican was no longer relevant and that the Holy See would not support Archbishop Czapik's efforts to negotiate with the Communists.[238] The pope sent Mócsy back to Hungary with a letter urging the Hungarian bishops to resist.[239] Mócsy did not return to the Jesuits empty-handed, however. Janssens had sent a special authorization to the provincial superior. The State Protection Authority did not wait long. In January 1949, Mócsy was arrested, and at the end of the month, Provincial Superior Tüll was put under police surveillance before being taken from Budapest and interned in Mezőkövesd. By that time, however, Tüll, following Janssens's orders and having been given his approval, had already begun to organize the escape of young Jesuits abroad. There were two ways of fleeing the country. One was to cross the green border with the help of Jesuits from the area along the western border. Although the Iron Curtain had already begun to descend along the Hungarian–Austrian border, the strip of land at the frontier was not yet being mined. The other way required a bit more courage: a refugee could try to get to Vienna on a plank mounted on the axle of the Arlberg Express sleeper carriage.[240]

It was of symbolic importance that, at this time, a painting of the Madonna della Strada was put up next to the Jesuit Church of the Heart of Jesus in Budapest. The composition was commissioned by Elemér Reisz (1904–1983), the Budapest superior, and painted by the artist Masa Feszty (1894–1979). It was placed at the main altar of the Jesuit church in Pest during a three-day devotional ceremony in September 1948. Reisz had hoped that members of the Catholic fold who had been left homeless in the difficult situation after the Second World War and had suffered a great deal would find some comfort or solace in the painting when they entered the Jesuit church. The painting was vandalized on August 2, 1949, but it was quickly restored thanks to donations made by churchgoers. It became a place of pilgrimage and an important symbol for Jesuits who had fled abroad.[241] Jesuit Rudolf Feigl (1921–2015) mentions the painting in his recollections of the preparations he made before fleeing the country: "We left the house in Pest on Sunday afternoon. At first, we knelt before the image of Our Lady of the Road and prayed that our journey would

238 Gábor Bánkuti, *Jezsuiták a diktatúrában: A Jézus Társasága Magyarországi Rendtartománya története 1945–1965* (Budapest: L'Harmattan–JTMR–ÁBTL, 2011), 46–52.

239 Margit Balogh, ed., *A Magyar Katolikus Püspöki Kar tanácskozásai 1949–1965 között: Dokumentumok* (Budapest: METEM, 2008), 1:61–63.

240 Bánkuti, *Jezsuiták a diktatúrában*, 54–57.

241 Bikfalvi, *Jezsuita olvasókönyv*, 102–3.

be a success."[242] Those who were caught trying to flee were sent to prison or the internment camp in Kistarcsa for six months. In the spring of 1949, in the first wave, six Jesuit teachers and between forty and forty-five students left the country for Austria. In August 1949, in a further wave of escapes, more young Jesuits crossed the border. However, the State Protection Authority caught the novice master Jenő Kovács (1901–1996) and, on the basis of his confession, Provincial Superior Tüll was arrested.[243]

By then, after the internment of members of religious orders in Romania and then Czechoslovakia in 1949–1950, the Hungarian Catholic Church was already preparing for the anticipated dissolution of the religious orders. After the arrest of Mindszenty, the archbishop of Kalocsa, József Grősz (1887–1961, in office 1943–1961) became the leader of the Hungarian Catholics according to the old customary law. In September 1949, he had sent a circular letter with instructions from the Holy See for the expected dissolutions: (1) the members of the orders were not allowed to leave their houses until forced to do so, (2) new members were not obliged to do anything, (3) people who had taken temporary vows were considered members of the orders, and (4) only the Holy See could grant dispensation from perpetual vows and only the archbishop of Kalocsa from simple perpetual vows. In May 1950, the communist Hungarian Workers' Party, essentially made the decision to dissolve the religious orders, including the Jesuits. First, the monasteries and religious houses near the southern and western borders were dissolved, and then the deportations from Budapest began. The communists used the precarious situation of the religious orders to blackmail Archbishop Grősz and the bishops. On August 30, 1950, without consulting the Holy See, Grősz signed an agreement with the government "in the interests of the peaceful coexistence of the state and the Catholic Church." One week later, on September 7, the operating licenses of the religious orders were withdrawn by a government decree. This decree affected 2,582 members of twenty-three male orders and nearly nine thousand nuns of forty female orders. Only four orders were permitted to maintain two grammar schools each with only a limited number of monks.[244]

At the end of the 1930s and during the Second World War, the Hungarian province adopted an increasingly strong stance against the reigning totalitarian ideologies of the day, communism and Nazism. Although anti-Semitic discourse was featured in the articles published in the Catholic press and among

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242 Rudolf Feigl, "Kudarcok és eredmények Istenért," in *Magyar jezsuiták vallomásai*, ed. Ferenc Szabó (Budapest: JTMR, 1997), 1:155–88, here 158.

243 Bánkuti, *Jezsuiták a diktatúrában*, 59–61.

244 Bánkuti, *Jezsuiták a diktatúrában*, 32–33, 36–41.

the Jesuits in the interwar period, the Jesuits took a clear stand for the persecuted during the war. The political situation changed rapidly in the wake of the war, and the Hungarian Jesuits soon found themselves embroiled in the struggles over church politics. Although they initially supported the attempt to arrive at a *modus vivendi* with the prevailing powers, by the autumn of 1948 at the latest, it had become clear that it would be impossible to reach a compromise with the communists. Thus began what was arguably the most difficult period in the history of the independent Hungarian province.

7 Together in Dispersion (1950–1990)

7.1 *The Terror of Persecution*

In 1948, the Society of Jesus in Hungary had 417 members. By the autumn of 1950, many of them had fled the country. Those who remained, some 250, endured the most brutal forms of persecution in the following years. One important condition for the survival of the Society of Jesus in Hungary was that there would always be a candidate to lead the Hungarian Jesuits after the provincial superior's arrest. With the permission of Superior General Janssens, the provincial superiors were therefore permitted to nominate their successors themselves. This ensured that the Society would function with some continuity, even after the province was made illegal in 1950. With such a large proportion of the Hungarian Jesuits having fled the country, a kind of dual structure was established for the Hungarian province. Sectio 1 was the organization for the Jesuits who had remained in Hungary, and Sectio 2 was for those who had emigrated.

After Provincial Superior Borbély fled the country in December 1948 and the authorities arrested Tüll in August 1949, Elemér Csávossy (1883–1972, in office 1949–1951), who had already held the post in 1924–1927, became the new leader. As his first task, Csávossy visited the Jesuit houses and appointed new prefects to serve in the place of those who had either been arrested or had fled. He was able to maintain contact with the Jesuit headquarters in Rome through the Italian embassy in Budapest. Taking care to avoid attracting the attention of the authorities following the dissolution of the orders, Csávossy used two intermediaries to guide the Jesuits, meeting at times with them in private lodgings. Csávossy very clearly felt that the situation facing the Hungarian Jesuits in the autumn of 1950 was in no way valid from the perspective of canon law. Only the pope could decree the dissolution of an order, and thus, in his eyes, the Hungarian Jesuits remained members of the Society.

Following the dissolution of the orders by state decree, some sixty Jesuits were put in diocesan service, and the students who remained in Hungary were transferred to the diocesan seminaries. Paradoxically, the largest Jesuit student community was found in the internment camp in Kistarcsa. By 1951, the Kistarcsa "community" had grown to twenty-three members, and Mócsy even managed, with the permission of the camp commander, to organize a theological college for them.

Csávossy very deliberately reorganized the province to allow the members of the Society to live in a metaphorical catacomb. The Jesuits who lived dispersed in rural communities were organized into smaller cells. Csávossy maintained ties with them through the prefects he had appointed. The prefects, in turn, acted as a kind of council, helping Csávossy in his work.[245] The communist state was not blind, of course, and in May 1951 the State Ecclesiastical Office was set up. It was given a very clear task: to abolish the churches in Hungary within the next twenty years.[246] The office essentially pursued two aims. First, it sought to break the will of the bishops who were still putting up resistance. This included, for instance, the arrest of Archbishop Grősz of Kalocsa and the launch of a show trial against him.[247] Second, it sought to dismantle entirely the religious orders that were working underground. Csávossy was arrested on May 7, ten days before Grősz. Initially, the investigation focused on his acts as provincial superior and his efforts to help the Jesuits continue to function in an organized manner, despite the official dissolution of the Society in Hungary. Later, however, the focus shifted to Csávossy's alleged connections to the Vatican, first and foremost his trips to Rome in 1938 and 1946.[248]

After Csávossy's arrest and conviction, the leadership of the province was taken over by Antal Pálos (1914–2005, in office 1951–1954), whom Csávossy had appointed as his successor. The Jesuits who remained in Hungary found themselves in an increasingly difficult situation. Most of the members of the Society who had been transferred to diocesan service had to be dismissed, and the young people who had been transferred to the episcopal seminaries were also removed. Pálos tried to continue their training in secret. Father Alfonz Luzsénszky (1902–1975) dealt with the novices and Pálos with the scholastics. Adequate arrangements were made for the elderly Jesuits, at least, with

245 Bánkuti, *Jezsuiták a diktatúrában*, 65–82.

246 Jenő Gergely, "A 20. században (1918–1995)," in *Magyarország és a Szentszék kapcsolatának 1000 éve*, ed. István Zombori (Budapest: METEM, 1996), 255–92, here 281.

247 Csaba Szabó, ed., *A Grősz-per előkészítése 1951* (Budapest: Osiris–BFL, 2001).

248 Bánkuti, *Jezsuiták a diktatúrában*, 104–5.

the establishment of a priestly social home in the Benedictine Archabbey of Pannonhalma. In 1954, 110 elderly Jesuits lived in the home, making it the largest Jesuit community in Central Europe—in an old Benedictine monastery. It was difficult to maintain contact with Rome. Pálos relied primarily on the Italian and Belgian embassies. The Jesuit Curia in Rome, however, issued only general directives and did not give Pálos any specific instructions.[249]

Pálos also drafted a plan for a missionary church for Rome, since in his perception, the "legal" church could not adhere to the Vatican's anti-communist line because of the intimidation it faced. He, therefore, suggested the appointment of a "secret" missionary bishop who would perform ordinations. It would also be necessary to appoint an apostolic administrator who would have the power to annul certain episcopal decisions and restore the rights of priests. The primary foundation of this missionary church would be the dissolved religious orders. To Pálos's dire misfortune, in 1954, in an operation by the secret service, the plan on which he had worked so hard fell into the hands of the state authorities.[250] He was arrested that summer while leading a clandestine pastoral seminar for a group of high school students in Balatonszabadi. He had already named János Tamás (1915–1993, in office 1954–1955 and 1978–1984) as his possible successor. Tamás's appointment was temporarily kept secret. Only the group leaders working underground maintained contact with him. By 1955, however, the secret service had penetrated this organization, and Tamás was arrested with the other group leaders. Among the arrested group leaders was Ferenc Kollár (1912–1978, in office 1955–1978). As a result of a "certain agreement," the state security forces soon released him, and he then assumed leadership of the province, despite Tamás having named two other Jesuits to serve in his stead if for some reason he was displaced from his position (these letters were never opened). Of the prefects, only Kollár was released from prison, and in January 1956, he was able to inform Rome through the Belgian embassy that he had taken over the leadership of the Hungarian province. The other appointments Tamás had made were only later brought to light, and József Bálint (1916–2009), whom Tamás had appointed, was recognized by some as an "internal" provincial superior, but this was only known to a small circle. Kollár became a kind of "external" provincial superior who was able to maintain ties with church and state authorities. The awkward situation was resolved when Bálint appointed Kollár provincial superior, but only within a narrow

249 Gábor Bánkuti, "A túlélés alternatívái: A Jezsuita Rend és az ÁVH 1953–1956," in *Csapdában: Tanulmányok a katolikus egyház történetéből, 1945–1989*, ed. Gábor Bánkuti and György Gyarmati (Budapest: ÁBTL–L'Harmattan, 2010), 87–91.

250 Bánkuti, *Jezsuiták a diktatúrában*, 126–29.

circle, and nothing was known of this internal affair in Rome until 1972. The Jesuit center recognized Kollár as provincial superior in 1956, and the solution reached in the spring of 1956 to the question of who served as provincial superior was only later approved in 1972.[251]

Kollár's release, of course, came at a price. He had been recruited as an agent by the state security authorities. On July 13, 1956, he made a verbal agreement with the State Protection Authority. It consisted of ten points, and we only know of it because Kollár wrote it down as a reminder to himself.[252] According to the agreement, he would be allowed to appoint new prefects, and the Jesuits were free to hold spiritual exercises among themselves, but outsiders were forbidden to take part. No more than five or six Jesuits were allowed to assemble for a given occasion, including major feast days. Jesuits were free to order books, even from abroad, but they were not permitted to interfere in political affairs or criticize the regime. Young people who had been instructed in the spirit and teachings of the Society in the Kistarcsa internment camp (which had been closed in 1953) could be ordained. Kollár's agreement provided a framework within which the Jesuits could operate in some fashion while also ensuring that the state authorities would be able to monitor their activities through Kollár himself. In a manner that was without historical precedent, Kollár remained the provincial superior of the Hungarian province, which operated illegally, until his death in 1978. By recruiting Kollár, however, the State Protection Authority gained practically nothing. As the authorities later wrote of him:

> Kollár did not complete the tasks that we had assigned him. We later determined that he had agreed to being recruited only to help the Society continue to function illegally. His primary goal was to use our relationship to disinform us and also to learn more of our plans in connection with the Society. He soon informed Rome in writing of his recruitment. He discussed the favorable reply he received from Superior General Janssens with his advisors.[253]

On October 23, 1956, the revolution broke out in Hungary. In addition to the bishops, the Jesuits were also freed. The border was opened, and another

251 Antal Pálos, *"Viharon, vészen át": Jezsuiták a szétszóratásban* (Kecskemét: Korda, 1992), 82–85.

252 JTMRL I.5.a.9. Hungarian province, Sectio 1, Archives of the Provincial Office, History of the Hungarian Province of the Society of Jesus, no. 6, July 13, 1956.

253 Bánkuti, *Jezsuiták a diktatúrában*, 160.

thirty Jesuits left Hungary for the West. On October 31, 1956, Austrian provincial superior Anton Pinsker (1906–1989, in office 1955–1961) wrote a letter to Andor Varga (1917–1994, in office 1955–1965), the superior of the Hungarian Jesuits abroad. Pinsker optimistically believed that, if everything were to continue unfolding in the direction the events seemed at the time to have taken, the Hungarian Jesuits would soon be back home and would again be able to begin rebuilding the province.[254] With the arrival of Soviet troops in Hungary, however, these hopes were dashed. Varga wrote to Pinsker with a tone of bitter disappointment: "Alas, the sense of joy at the thought of our triumph proved premature. The situation seems hopeless, and the UN and America want to do nothing more than protest."[255] The Austrian provincial superior replied to the Hungarian provincial superior in a similarly shaken tone: "On the evening of October 30, everything seemed so wonderful, and now the horrible tragedy has taken place so unexpectedly. We experienced all this with the deepest outrage. We hope and pray that things will, nonetheless, come to a good end."[256] The trials that had been interrupted by the events of the revolution (such as the trial of former provincial superior Tamás) were not resumed until the following year, but in the end, the accused were released with time served. Two Jesuits were imprisoned for having taken part in the revolution, and two of the leading figures of the province who had been released in October 1956 were again imprisoned and forced to continue serving their sentences: former provincial superior Pálos and Kerkai, founder of KALOT.[257]

Pope Pius XII died in 1958, and his successor, John XXIII (1881–1963, r.1958–1963), proved more open to establishing ties with the communist countries. The Vatican was trying to find new channels of communication because of a fear that the Catholic Church in the West might find itself completely severed from the Catholic Church in Hungary, as had happened in the meantime in China. The People's Republic of Hungary, in turn, sought to open up to the West to some extent and break out of diplomatic isolation after having crushed the 1956 revolution.[258] While there seemed to be a touch of détente in

254 JTMRL, I.5.a.3, Hungarian province, Sectio 2, Provincial Archives, Foreign Correspondence, provincia Austriaca, no. 38, Vienna, October 31, 1956.

255 JTMRL, I.5.a.3, Hungarian province, Sectio 2, Provincial Archives, Foreign Correspondence, provincia Austriaca, no. 40, Fordham, November 9, 1956, letter from Andor Varga to Anton Pinsker.

256 JTMRL I.5.a.3, Hungarian province, Sectio 2, Provincial Archives, Foreign Correspondence, provincia Austriaca, no. 41, Vienna, November 12, 1956, letter from Anton Pinsker to Andor Varga.

257 Bánkuti, *Jezsuiták a diktatúrában*, 173.

258 András Fejérdy, *Pressed by a Double Loyalty: Hungarian Attendance at the Second Vatican Council, 1959–1965* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2016), 19–22.

foreign policy, in domestic policy the "illegal clerical reactionaries" were seen as the last remaining forces of the revolution, and the consolidated communist regime sought to eliminate them. In order for Hungary's foreign policy efforts to enjoy any success, however, domestic policy had to adopt a more conciliatory stance, and an amnesty was declared in 1963.[259] Of the Jesuits who had been arrested in the 1950s, Pálos, the former provincial superior, was the last to be released under this amnesty.[260]

The primary aim of the new regime, which is often referred to as the Kádár regime after János Kádár (1912–1990), who served as general secretary of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party for thirty-two years (in office 1956–1988), was to win the favor of the United States and get the issue of the suppression of the Hungarian revolution off the UN agenda. But the efforts made to win the goodwill of the West were little more than theater, and in the background, new measures were systematically being prepared. The amnesty and the negotiations concerning a partial agreement between the Hungarian People's Republic and the Holy See in 1964 delayed the new trials against the Jesuits, however. At the heart of these trials was the idea of "world solidarity," which essentially offered a social-theological alternative based on Christian social thought. On September 15, 1964, the Holy See concluded the agreement with the Hungarian People's Republic, and just three months later, in early December, the arrests of Jesuits began. Five Jesuits were arrested in connection with the "world solidarity" trial, and three more Jesuits were taken into custody independently of the trial. In the summer of 1965, six Jesuits were sentenced to prison. Of the Jesuits who were convicted in these show trials, Elemér Rózsa (1919–1995) was the last to be released—he was not set free until 1972.[261]

In the twenty-five years since the end of the Second World War, sixty-seven members of the Hungarian province were imprisoned or interned and spent a total of 280 years in prison. The sentences imposed on them, however, would have come to a total of more than one thousand years in prison. By 1957, 135 Jesuits had managed to flee the country in several waves.[262] Despite the severe persecution to which they were subjected, the Jesuits who remained in Hungary survived the most critical period, though they were forced to work underground. The many Hungarian Jesuits who had fled abroad, however, also set up their own organizations. They felt it their duty not simply to provide

259 Bánkuti, *Jezsuiták a diktatúrában*, 175–78.

260 Pálos, *"Viharon, vészen át"*, 99.

261 Bánkuti, *Jezsuiták a diktatúrában*, 185–97.

262 Bánkuti, *Jezsuiták a diktatúrában*, 7.

pastoral care for members of the Hungarian diaspora but also to provide some form of support for those Jesuits who had remained at home.

7.2 *A Spiritual Homecoming*

Throughout the postwar period, with the existence of a Hungarian Jesuit community in exile, there was a continuous debate as to whether a separate umbrella organization of its own was necessary or whether individual Jesuits living as refugees should simply become part of the Jesuit provinces in their host countries. Superior General Janssens essentially settled this question in 1949 when he appointed Father Reisz superior of the Hungarian Jesuits who had fled abroad. With this step, he established the structure that essentially provided the organizational framework for the Hungarian Jesuit province until 1990. As mentioned, Sectio 1 was the organization for the Jesuits who had remained in Hungary illegally, while Sectio 2 was the organization for the Hungarian Jesuits who had fled abroad. Each of these two organizations had its own provincial. Together, the two sections formed the Hungarian province. The individual Hungarian fathers who had emigrated also owed obedience to the prefects of the Jesuit provinces in which they lived. This completely unique organizational structure caused tensions on several occasions and called into question the very existence of Sectio 2. The ambiguities of the situation were amply illustrated by the fact that, initially, the prefect at the head of the foreign Sectio was often called vice-provincial, while the title of provincial only became permanent in 1977.[263]

Reisz first held his seat in Innsbruck, Austria, and then in Chieri in northern Italy, before moving to Hamilton, Canada, in 1950. Canada became important in part because several Canadian parishes were taken over by Hungarian Jesuits (in Toronto, Hamilton, Courtland, Vancouver, Montreal, and London) in the following decades. Reisz's primary task was to find a suitable place for the young Jesuits who were pursuing their studies. This involved a great deal of organizational work. Reisz's efforts were made only a bit easier by the fact that the successor institution to the Szeged theological high school was temporarily run in Chieri (1949–1951) and then in Leuven (1951–1954). Providing an education for young members of the Society became a priority again in 1956, with the new wave of refugees. Reisz and his successors faced a challenging task in part because there were Hungarian Jesuits living in more than twenty countries on five continents. Moreover, the financial resources necessary to maintain Sectio 2 had to be provided from somewhere. After considerable negotiation,

263 Zoltán Koronkai, S.J., "A külföldre menekült jezsuiták," in Szokol and Szőnyi, *Jezsuiták Magyarországon a kezdetektől napjainkig*, 539–63, here 539–40.

they managed to involve the host provinces in the efforts to provide finances for the education of young Jesuits and gradually to pay off debts. By around 1960, the Hungarian province abroad had managed to consolidate itself, enabling the exiled Hungarian Jesuits to undertake new commitments.[264] One of the first ventures was the relaunch of the newspaper *A Szív* in Canada in 1953. This periodical, which had been the most popular Hungarian Catholic newspaper, had been shut down by the Communists in 1951 after the editorial staff had refused to publish an official statement on the Grősz trial. Two years later, the Jesuits living in exile relaunched the paper. The paper was a considerable financial liability, however, as it was initially distributed free of charge in Hungarian émigré circles.[265]

Sectio 2 created a program of "spiritual homecoming" based on a system known as the three I's. One of these goals was to run an academic *institute* to analyze the situation in Hungary. This task was assumed by the Hungarian Church Sociological Institute (Ungarisches Kirchensoziologisches Institut [UKI]), which was founded in Vienna in 1958. The second goal was to provide *information* about the situation of churches in Hungary to the Western world and the Hungarian émigré communities. The third goal was *infiltration*, which meant getting ecclesiastical-religious works written in Hungarian and published abroad and synodal resolutions translated into Hungarian into Hungary.[266]

The more conciliatory stance adopted by Pope John XXIII with regard to the situation on the far side of the Iron Curtain did seem to create opportunities for more active relations between the two parts of the Hungarian province. The leadership of Sectio 2 realized this, and in order to assist the provincial superior who was in charge of affairs in North America, a European Hungarian superior provincial was appointed. In 1967, a body was created alongside the European superior called the Commissio de Ministeriis.[267] The various tasks with which it was charged included the process of mapping, which meant the completion of a sociological study of Hungarian church life and an examination of the new situation that had arisen for the Hungarian province.[268] The aforementioned

264 János Ádám, S.J., "A külföldi magyar provincia szervezése és munkássága 1962 és 1977 között," in Molnár and Szilágyi, *Múlt és jövő*, 23–24.

265 Ferenc Szabó, S.J., "A magyar jezsuiták sajtómunkája 1945 után itthon és külföldön," in Molnár and Szilágyi, *Múlt és jövő*, 66–74, here 67–68.

266 Imre András, S.J., "Így kezdődött [...] A külföldre menekült jezsuiták hazamenése," in Molnár, Szilágyi, and Zombori *Historicus Societatis Iesu*, 343–49, here 344.

267 JTMRL I.5.a., Archives of Sectio 2, Provincial Archives, Commissio de Ministeriis.

268 JTMR II.5.a., Archives of Sectio 2, Provincial Archives, Commissio de Ministeriis, August 30–31, 1967.

UKI, which launched the systematic collection of material and data, provided the institutional background for this undertaking. The materials collected by the UKI were also made available to the Western press and church organizations.[269] In order to further the goal of infiltration, establish contacts with the Hungarian church, and keep the secular clergy informed, an ecclesiastical journal was launched in 1968 titled *Szolgálat* (Service). The new editorial board of the journal gained support for this effort from Pál Brezanóczy (1912–1972), who was both archbishop of Eger (in office 1959–1972, until 1969 as apostolic administrator) and chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Hungarian Catholic Bishops' Conference. They wanted to begin by sending five hundred copies of the journal to bishops, seminaries, and Catholic newspaper editors in Hungary and then to determine, based on their reaction, whether it would be worth sending more copies.[270] The only stipulation of the State Office for Church Affairs was that a column entitled the "Domestic Situation" had to be left out. Otherwise, they would not allow *Szolgálat* to be distributed in Hungary. There was only one other conflict concerning the magazine. In the eighteenth issue, Mócsy signed his article with the initials "M.I." The state authorities suspected that these initials might refer to Cardinal József Mindszenty, so they sent the issue back and were only willing to allow it to be distributed after it had been reprinted without the article in question.[271]

Hungarians abroad managed to build up a strong position in Rome. In 1950, Jesuit refugees began editing the Hungarian broadcast of Vatican Radio.[272] In 1965, Varga, the provincial superior of the Hungarian Jesuits living abroad, was elected to serve as advisor to the new superior general Pedro Arrupe (1907–1991, in office 1965–1983).[273] Historians of the Hungarian Jesuits living in Rome (József Fejér [1913–1991], László Lukács, László Polgár [1920–2001], and László Szilas) did wide-ranging research in the Jesuit archives and the archives of the Holy See, and they also managed to play active roles in the work of the Jesuit Institute of History in Rome, the Institutum Historicum. As members of the so-called "Hungarian School in Rome," they did an impressive amount of work on the history of the Society of Jesus in general and in Hungary in particular. In the meantime, they provided help and support for Jesuit

269 JTMR II.5.a., Archives of Sectio 2, Provincial Archives, Consults, January 28, 1969, annex 8: Vienna, November 26, 1968, summary by Imre András of the Hungarian Institute of Church Sociology in Vienna.

270 JTMR II.5.a., Archives of Sectio 2, Provincial Archives, Commissio de Ministeriis, April 13, 1968.

271 András, "Így kezdődött […]," 344.

272 Szabó, "A magyar jezsuiták sajtómunkája," 68–69.

273 Ádám, "A külföldi magyar provincia," 24.

historians who had remained in Hungary (such as Antal Petruch and Flórián Holovics [1903–1988]).[274]

Although the seat of the Hungarian province in exile was in North America, this did not mean that the center of gravity of Sectio 2 had shifted entirely to Canada and then, after 1955, to the United States when the seat moved to New York. Many of the undertakings listed above were based in Europe. Alongside Rome and Vienna, Leuven in Belgium also played an important role. Training in philosophy for Hungarian Jesuits was held there for three years, and István Muzslay (1923–2007) founded the Mindszenty College in the city, which in the following decades became an educational center for Hungarian intellectuals living in exile in Europe.[275] Between 1977 and 1986, during which time János Hegyi (1920–2014) served as provincial superior, the headquarters of Sectio 2 moved to Munich. Two newsletters, *Cor unum* (One heart) and *Anima una* (One soul), served to maintain contacts among the Hungarian Jesuits scattered across Europe and the wider world.

In the 1960s, the essential goal of the Hungarian province was to develop a more distinctive profile in order to justify its existence. With the active work of the Hungarian Jesuits living in exile, they ensured the long-term survival of the Hungarian Jesuit province, helping provide pastoral care for the Hungarian émigré communities abroad and supporting the Jesuits who had remained in Hungary. In the 1970s, it gradually became possible to maintain closer and closer ties and even to visit the country, and thanks to the efforts made by the Hungarians living in exile, the relationship between the Hungarian Jesuits and Rome also became increasingly active.

7.3 *The Policy of Small Steps*

Historians do not agree on the results of the partial agreement reached between the Hungarian People's Republic and the Holy See in 1964. While it is true that the agreement helped clarify the framework within which the church was able to function and the Catholic Church in Hungary survived communism, the influence of the state had a negative effect on church life in the long term. Furthermore, the agreement did little to improve the situation of the church in the short term. This was particularly true for the religious orders that had been forced to operate underground, including the Jesuits, who, as noted earlier, were still being subjected to show trials even in the mid-1960s.

274 Antal Molnár, "A római magyar iskola (Magyar jezsuita történészek Rómában 1950 után)," in Molnár, Szilágyi, and Zombori, *Historicus Societatis Iesu*, 45–68.

275 Koronkai, "A külföldre menekült jezsuiták," 548.

The question of Cardinal Mindszenty's fate remained unresolved until the early 1970s, after Mindszenty fled to the US embassy in Budapest in 1956. Mindszenty was finally allowed to leave for the West in 1971 thanks to the intercession of Cardinal Franz König, archbishop of Vienna (1905–2004, in office 1956–1985). The Hungarian cardinal turned eighty the following year, and the Holy See assumed he would resign in accordance with custom, but he refused to do so. In 1974, after Mindszenty had declined to step down from his position as archbishop of Esztergom even after repeated requests by Pope Paul VI (1897–1978, r.1963–1978), the Holy See simply declared the seat vacant. Mindszenty died the following year in Vienna. In 1976, the pope appointed László Lékai (1910–1986) archbishop of Esztergom (in office 1976–1986) and then made him cardinal, and thus the Hungarian ecclesiastical hierarchy was complete once again. The policy of "small steps" in church politics prevailed, with the state and the church managing to cooperate in an increasing number of areas. The idea of reestablishing diplomatic relations with the Holy See even came up, but this was probably impossible because of Moscow. Nevertheless, ties became stronger, and visits became commonplace. High-ranking Vatican prelates were allowed to travel to Hungary, and the visit to Rome of Hungarian party secretary general Kádár and his wife in 1977 was of indisputable symbolic importance.[276]

All this had a clear impact on the situation of the Hungarian Jesuits as well. In 1972, Rózsa, the last Jesuit to be sentenced in the "world-solidarity" show trial, was set free. In 1974, there was even talk of allowing Hungarian provincial superior Ferenc Kollár to travel to Rome for the Society's Thirty-Second General Congregation, but Kollár had not yet been given a passport. In the spring of 1977, before Kádár's visit to Rome, Hungarian bishops went to the Eternal City for an *ad limina* visit. For this reason, Kollár also considered this occasion more suitable for a possible trip. His health was declining, however, and Rome even considered arranging a trip for him so that he could seek medical treatment. Finally, in the autumn of 1977, after lengthy preparations, Kollár arrived in Rome and was met at the airport by Johannes Schasching (1917–2013), the German assistant of the Society. The next few weeks were trying for Kollár, who suffered from a heart condition, although he was received with the greatest attentiveness by the Jesuit curia. One of the main purposes of his trip was to give the general curia in Rome a comprehensive picture of the situation in Hungary after two decades of minimal communication between Hungary and Rome. Kollár's report began in 1944 and was divided into three distinct periods: the search for a path after 1944, the suffering after 1950, and the "modus

276 Gergely, "A 20. században (1918–1995)," 286.

vivendi" era after 1955. The highlight of the trip was Kollár's private audience with Pope Paul VI on November 9, in which he was able to give a brief oral presentation on the situation of the Hungarian church and the Jesuits within it.[277]

During Kollár's visit to Rome, the question of a possible visit to Hungary by General Superior Arrupe was raised, and Arrupe was eventually invited to Hungary by Cardinal Lékai. Arrupe arrived in Budapest on July 12, 1978, and met with Hungarian Jesuits the following day. The meeting and the celebratory Mass were held in the Queen of Angels shrine in Makkosmária. They were attended by 101 Hungarian Jesuits. In his sermon, Arrupe referred to a publication on the history of the Jesuits in Hungary by Father Lukács, who lived in Rome. Arrupe had been shocked to learn, he said, that the Jesuits had first settled in Hungary during the difficult period of Ottoman occupation. He contended that the example they had set clearly illustrated that "the history of the Society in Hungary [...] is not yet closed. You are writing it, my Brothers, not with dead letters, but with your lives." Later that afternoon, Arrupe met with György Aczél (1917–1991), deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers (1974–1982), and Imre Miklós (1927–2003), head of the State Office for Church Affairs (1971–1989). He expressed to Aczél his wish that, in the future, the Jesuits be allowed to be active in Hungary according to their talents. On July 14, Arrupe met with the bishops and then went to the Benedictine Archabbey of Pannonhalma, where he visited the elderly Jesuits living in the social home there. He left Hungary on the following day, July 15. Over the course of the years that followed, the situation of the Hungarian Jesuits did indeed begin to ease. Although the state continued to refuse to allow them to operate legally, thanks to Cardinal Lékai's agile policy they were able to play an increasingly active role in the life of the Hungarian Catholic Church.[278]

Kollár's travels and the organizational work he undertook had a dire effect on his health, and he died thirteen days after Arrupe's visit. He was replaced by Tamás, who had already served as provincial superior in 1954–1955. Tamás maintained good relations with the episcopate. In the autumn of 1979, for example, he accompanied Cardinal Lékai on his trip to Moscow. Negotiations and discussions were already underway by then between Tamás and Lékai on the role the Hungarian Jesuits could play in church life. Lékai asked Tamás to nominate a few Jesuits who, after additional training in Rome, would be suitable to manage a house of spiritual exercises. While this was going on, work

277 Béla Vilmos Mihalik, "Egy történelmi látogatás: Pedro Arrupe Magyarországon," https://jezsuita.hu/egy-tortenelmi-latogatas-pedro-arrupe-magyarorszagon-1978 (accessed September 7, 2023).

278 Mihalik, "Egy történelmi látogatás: Pedro Arrupe Magyarországon."

began on the construction of such a house in Leányfalu, which ultimately consisted of thirty rooms, an auditorium, and a chapel. Alongside the Hungarian Catholic Bishops' Conference, Cardinal Joseph Höffner (1906–87), president of the German episcopate, provided substantial financial support to cover the costs. Arrupe also contributed some five million forints to the project. The house was finally opened in 1983. It was consecrated by Cardinal Höffner on July 31, the feast of Saint Ignatius of Loyola.[279]

By the second half of the 1970s, the socialist system in Hungary was no longer as rigid as it had been, and the relationship between the Hungarian church and Rome had grown stronger. Cardinal Lékai's policy of taking cautious steps had borne fruit, and after Arrupe's visit to Hungary, the Jesuits were able to become more actively involved in Hungarian church life. In the 1980s, it became increasingly clear that there might soon be some possibility for political change. The two sections of the Hungarian province, Sectio 1 and Sectio 2, began to prepare for an anticipated return home and the legalization of the Society of Jesus in Hungary as an active, functioning religious order.

7.4 *Where the Arms of Danube Meet*

In the mid-1980s, Cardinal Lékai's policy of small steps, the easing of the situation in Hungary, and the deliberate, strategic preparatory measures taken by the Hungarian Jesuits living in exile (the program of "spiritual return") essentially came together. Large gatherings among Hungarian Jesuits abroad became regular events held every three years. These gatherings allowed members of the Society in exile to maintain contacts and ensure community cohesion, and they also provided forums for discussions of apostolic work, reflection on the situation in Hungary, and discussions of measures that could be taken to help the Hungarian Jesuits who remained in Hungary.[280]

By 1986, there were more Jesuits in the community belonging to Sectio 2 than there were in Hungary. This was partly because, as a group, the population in Hungary had aged, but it was also a consequence of there being very few new, younger members of the Society in Hungary to replace the elderly. The Hungarian Jesuits living in exile, however, managed to establish a novitiate in Toronto in 1978.[281] In 1989, Pope John Paul II appointed a Hungarian Jesuit, Attila Miklósházy (1931–2018), as bishop of Hungarians living abroad, and this further increased the importance of the Hungarian Jesuits outside the country. At the same time, as a result of the political détente, after 1983, members of

279 Mihalik, "Egy történelmi látogatás: Pedro Arrupe Magyarországon."
280 Koronkai, "A külföldre menekült jezsuiták," 547.
281 Ádám, "A külföldi magyar provincial," 29.

Sectio 2 were also involved in the work of the house of spiritual exercises in Leányfalu, Hungary.[282]

In the following years, Provincial Superior Imre Morlin of Sectio 1 was also allowed to travel abroad, which meant he could take part in major gatherings. This allowed Hungarian Jesuits abroad to gain a more realistic picture of the situation in Hungary. Before 1990, they identified four main points that they wanted to focus on when they returned home. One of these points was the promotion of spiritual renewal through the Ignatian spiritual exercises. The second point was the promotion of apostolic activity in the press through the use of mass communication. The third involved active participation in teaching and academic work. The fourth was to continue to provide pastoral care, but with a particular emphasis on young people.[283]

By 1989, the process of regime change was clearly underway in Hungary, and it was against this backdrop that Presidential Council Decree no. 17/1989 repealed the earlier decree banning the operation of religious orders. In the last days of 1989, the Hungarian province of the Society of Jesus was officially registered again. Ervin Nemesszeghy (1929–2018), the superior of Sectio 2, was appointed head of the reunited province, and his inauguration took place in the presence of Superior General Peter Hans Kolvenbach (1928–2016, in office 1983–2008) on October 19, 1990, in the Jesuit Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Budapest.

The biggest problem lay in the simple fact that the members of the community of Jesuits who had remained in Hungary were now elderly. Thus it was necessary to call on Hungarian Jesuits living abroad to return to Hungary if the Society was going to undertake any genuine work. The provinces where many of these Jesuits had been living and working, however, were not eager to see them go. It was also important to create communities and establish Jesuit houses. The Society was able to recover some of its former buildings, and it also received financial compensation from the state, with which it was able to purchase other properties, though most of them were in need of renovation. At the appeal of Nemesszeghy, several foreign provinces made substantial donations to support the revival of the unified Hungarian province.

In his memoirs, Nemesszeghy admitted that there were noticeable tensions between the members of Sectio 1 and 2 after 1990. The Hungarian Jesuits who had returned from abroad often seemed overconfident, perhaps even haughty.

282 Koronkai, "A külföldre menekült jezsuiták," 548, 561.

283 Ervin Nemesszeghy, s.j., "A külföldi magyar provincia utolsó évei (1986–1990) és az újrakezdés Magyarországon (1990–1996)," in Molnár and Szilágyi, *Múlt és jövő*, 32–48, here 33–36.

Hungarian Jesuits who had lived through decades of pursuing their work illegally, underground, felt that the Jesuits who had left the country had fallen too much under the influence of secularism and relativism. To those who had lived in exile, however, the Jesuits at home seemed too conservative, too clerical, and fundamentally unable to understand developments since Vatican II. This is why Nemesszeghy found Morlin's metaphor apt: the two branches of the Danube met at the southern tip of Margaret Island, creating whirlpools, but these whirlpools then moved on with the ripples of the current, and the water was smooth again. In the reunited province after 1990, the potential differences in mentality and worldview soon calmed down, and in accordance with the centuries-old tradition, new apostolic endeavors were launched.[284]

8 Conclusion

The history of the Jesuits in Hungary within the framework of the Austrian province and of the independent Hungarian province founded in 1909 has always been a history of new beginnings. But these new beginnings did not mean a break with continuity. Even in the case of a long historical hiatus, such as the eight decades between 1773 and 1853, one finds symbolic signs of continuity and links between the old and new. Though these new beginnings should not necessarily be understood as historical milestones, they nonetheless always capture the experience of affirmation. With the new beginning in the early seventeenth century, already learning from the failures of the previous century, the Society established its institutions, soon creating a network that permeated the whole kingdom, even reaching into the territories under Ottoman occupation. After the expulsion of the Ottomans, the Society was able to develop and expand its institutional structure. In the nineteenth century, the Hungarian Jesuits again became active and established their presence at the traditional sites of the first Society, but they also strove to break new ground. The ruins of the Hungarian kingdom, which collapsed at the end of the First World War, almost left the Hungarian province buried under its rubble, but in the interwar period, the province embarked on enterprises that strained and almost exceeded its strength. Even in the 1950s, when the church in Hungary was subjected to brutal persecution, the Jesuits tried to find ways to survive, walking a fine line between open opposition, life underground, and cooperation.

284 Nemesszeghy, "A külföldi magyar provincia utolsó évei," 36–39.

The Jesuits in Hungary were, of course, also members of the larger Society of Jesus. The three pillars of their work were thus given from the general character of the Jesuit tradition: apostolic undertakings, missionary work, and education. The apostolic activity covered all areas of pastoral work, and it always sought answers to the challenges of the given time. For instance, their theological publications in the early modern era were almost naturally displaced at the beginning of the twentieth century by Catholic press publications. One of the peculiarities of the history of the Jesuits in Hungary—a peculiarity that was itself in large part a consequence of the vicissitudes of Hungarian history—was that in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, they provided pastors for many parishes, despite the specifications of the Constitutions of the Society. They found themselves performing this task again, if in a different form, after 1950. They were entrusted with the task of providing pastoral care for the Hungarian émigré communities in Canada. Jesuits of Hungarian origin were also active in missionary work. Initially, they did not have to go far. The central part of the Kingdom of Hungary, which had fallen under Ottoman occupation, was itself a territory for missionary work. Later, however, Hungarian Jesuit missionaries traveled to South America, Africa, and China. In the early modern period, they played an undeniable role in education and were at the head of the highest educational institution in Hungary at the time, the University of Trnava. A few years after having established their presence in the nineteenth century, they took over the grammar school of Kalocsa, which became one of the most important Jesuit institutions, to which the school of Pécs was added in the early twentieth century.

Even within the larger structural framework, that is, the universal Society of Jesus and the Austrian province, there were in the life of the Jesuits in Hungary always elements of a distinctive Hungarian identity. Jesuit authors who contributed to the rich literature on the religious debates of the post-Reformation world helped craft a Hungarian literary language. In the seventeenth century, the struggle for an independent Hungarian province was intertwined with the creation of Hungarian historiography by the Jesuits. On the eve of the dissolution of the Society in Hungary, Hell, during his expedition to Norway as an astronomer, made a linguistic discovery that had an impact on our understanding of the prehistory of the Hungarian people. The collapse of the Habsburg monarchy and the historical Kingdom of Hungary in the wake of the First World War led to an even stronger search for identity. In 1934, the Historical Archives of the Hungarian province were established, and a scientific research program was developed. Hungarian Jesuits began to collect archival sources, planned a series of scholarly books for publication, and ultimately

hoped to write a monograph on the history of the Jesuits in Hungary. Many of the Hungarian Jesuits who had fled to Rome after 1950 began to work systematically on the sources concerning the Austrian province and Hungary. After the reunification of the Hungarian province in 1990, the archives and library were almost immediately reestablished. When there was a talk in 2018 of the Hungarian province joining the new Central European province, the idea of writing a comprehensive volume was raised, resulting in a richly illustrated volume of more than six hundred pages that will appeal to both a scholarly audience and wider readerships.[285] The turbulent history of the Society of Jesus in Hungary has an incredibly rich cultural and educational heritage, and this has helped Hungarian Jesuits strengthen their Jesuit and Hungarian identities even at times of dire upheaval, both within the Austrian province and in times of communist persecution.

Today, the Hungarian province has fifty-one members, thirty-six of whom live in Hungary. The rest are young people pursuing studies abroad and older Hungarian Jesuits still living in Canada. The apostolic plan of the province written in 2021 covers five main areas: (1) culture supporting the vocations, (2) spiritual life and pastoral care, (3) support for those living on the margins, (4) intellectual apostolic work, and (5) community building. The province maintains a grammar school in the city of Miskolc in eastern Hungary, two houses of spiritual practice (one in Dobogókő, one in Püspökszentlászló), two religious houses in Budapest, and one in Szeged. There are also two religious houses in Transylvania, Romania, mainly in areas inhabited by Hungarians: in Târgu Mures and a mixed Romanian–Hungarian community in Satu Mare, and a house of spiritual practice in Beu (Székelybő in Hungarian). They also provide pastoral care for the Roma community in Hungary. The Jesuit Roma College in Budapest was established to help young Roma people with their university studies, and in 2020, the Jesuits became involved in a Roma integration program in Arló, a small village in northern Hungary. They also maintain four other vocational colleges for young university students in Hungary, Romania (Transylvania), and Belgium. In 2015, as waves of refugees were arriving in Europe from the Middle East, the Jesuits organized the office and work in Hungary of the Jesuit Refugee Service. In 2022, they provided help for refugees fleeing the Russian–Ukrainian war. The journal *A Szív* has been published in Hungary since 1990. The periodical continues to have a strong Jesuit profile, and it remains very popular among Hungarian Catholics.[286]

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285 Szokol and Szőnyi, *Jezsuiták Magyarországon a kezdetektől napjainkig*.

286 Zoltán Koronkai, s.j., "Az újraegyesüléstől napjainkig," in Szokol and Szőnyi, *Jezsuiták Magyarországon a kezdetektől napjainkig*, 568–609.

Few members of the generation that suffered persecution under the communist regimes are still alive today, and because of forty years of living scattered in exile, the middle generation is almost missing entirely. However, almost every year, two or three young people join the Society, so the number of members in the Hungarian province is expected to remain stable at around fifty. The average age of Hungarian Jesuits is fifty-four, the youngest in Europe. Thus, it is perhaps not overly optimistic to suggest that the history of the Hungarian Jesuits is still being written.

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