

## Foreword

Following the death of Albert II of Germany on 27 October 1439, the Hungarian Kingdom was left without a king once again in a short period of time. The peers of the realm held an electing diet in January 1440, and on the 18<sup>th</sup> they decided on inviting Władysław III of Poland to take the Hungarian throne and sent envoys to Kraków with an authorizing diploma. Władysław accepted the invitation on 8 March, and escorted by his company entered the Hungarian land in April. He seized Buda in May, then on 29 June the coronation of Ladislaus the Posthumous was declared invalid, and finally Władysław III – in Hungary Ulászló I – was coronated with the crown taken from St. Stephen's head reliquary.

The story is widely known, Jesuit historiographers already cited the relating diplomas in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, of which many are kept in Warsaw today. Five of those diplomas are particularly valuable in respect of Hungarian history as altogether nearly 200 seals can still be found on these, amongst which we can identify 71 personal seals that belonged to ecclesiastic and secular lords, and further 31 seal imprints of county envoys can also be analyzed. The significance of the diplomas was acknowledged relatively early. Elemér Mályusz already used them in his work on the society of the Hunyadi era and Pál Engel also deemed these sources necessary for his archontology. However, no comprehensive study was written up to this point which would publish the text of these five diplomas in a modern way, examine the seals and titles that can be found on them, and present a selection of their seals. This issue strives to fill this hiatus.

The idea of this issue arose during the editing of the 3<sup>rd</sup> book (1438–1490) of the source cycle entitled *Varsóban őrzött magyar vonatkozású oklevelek* [Hungarian related diplomas in Warsaw], which is published within the *Fontes Memoria Hungariae* series. It became clear over the course of the editing process that much more diplomas fit into the researched time interval, thusly their processing takes more time and, amongst others, demands archival research. Nevertheless, we believe that the uniqueness of the multi-sigillic diplomas published in the present volume renders them worthy of publishing on their own. We “surrounded” the original five diplomas with sixteen others. Three of those discuss the direct antecedents of the Polish-Hungarian relations leading to the election of Władysław III (Ulászló I), namely they inform us on the negotiations between the Hungarian and Polish kings, Albert and Władysław. The full text of the remainder diplomas contains less Hungarian related information, however, these still deserve our attention. Furthermore, it is

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needless to say that there is also an opportunity to complement the texts with an introductory study, a name list, and the images of the seals, which would normally not fit into the profile of the series.

The editorial of the *Történeti Tanulmányok* [Historical Studies], the journal of the Institute of History of the University of Debrecen adopted the work, as its separate supplement. The primary reason for this is that the work would not qualify as a monograph on its own, since it is the result of the direct and indirect activity of several scholars. Péter Tóth was able to study the original diplomas during his research trip to Warsaw, and he took the pictures of the seals together with his colleague. The revision of the texts was carried out by Orsolya Tóth, and the identification of the seals would have never been done without the many years of verbal and written guidance of Pál Lővei towards the writer of these lines. Last but not least, the sponsorship of the Waclaw Felczak Foundation was essential in order for the issue that deals with these exclusive sources of the history of Polish-Hungarian connections to be materialized in a sophisticated form.

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