

Costumes as Symbols. The Pictorial Representations of the Legend of King Ladislas of Hungary

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The main subjects of this study are the wall-paintings depicting the deeds of St. Ladislas, sometimes called the "national" saint of Hungary¹ in the so-called Battle of Kerlés in 1068. This part of the legend of the saint is lacking from his original *Vita*, but, strangely enough, is widely represented on the walls of small churches. The text of the whole story is preserved in its fullest form in the so-called Hungarian Illuminated Chronicle, around 1358, and goes as follows in my rough English translation:

"The saintly prince, Ladislas, then, espied a Pagan carrying on the back of his horse a beautiful Hungarian maiden. The prince thought that this maiden had been the daughter of the bishop of Várad, and, although being in severe wound, he started to pursue him, riding his horse whose name was Szög. But, when he reached him by a lance's point, he could do nothing, for his horse was unable to run faster, while the other's did not fall back in speed, and thus, something like an arm's length remained between the tip of the lance and the Cuman's back. Then St. Ladislas shouted to the maiden saying: "Fair sister! Take the Cuman by his belt and jump off from the horse to the ground!" And she did as she was asked. But then, when the Cuman lay on the ground and Prince Ladislas wanted to kill him with his lance, the maiden strongly asked him not to do so, but let him [*the Cuman*] go free. So it is clear from this as well, that there is no faith in women, for surely she wanted to spare the Cuman out of lusty love. The

¹ He is named thus in Ernő Marosi, "Der Heilige Ladislaus als ungarischer Nationalheiliger. Bemerkungen zu seiner Ikonographie," *Acta Historiae Artium* 33 (1987-88): 211-56. Also idem, *Kép és hasonmás. Művészet és valóság a 14-15. századi Magyarországon* (Image and likeness. Art and reality in Hungary in the 14th-15th centuries), *Művészettörténeti Füzetek* 23, (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1995), 67.

saintly prince, then, after a long battle, cut his [*the Cuman's*] sinew, and killed him. But the maiden was not the bishop's daughter."²

These murals are almost, one might say, "over-researched" in Hungarian historiography. Since I am attempting to add another "angle of scholarship" to help the understanding of the place of these representations in the contemporary (i.e. 14th-15th century) world,³ it is necessary to start my "tale" from the oven, however traditionally it sounds, that is, to introduce the historiography briefly, then to add my own remarks and contribution.

After some sporadic attempts mainly concerning the literary traces of Ladislás' legend and *Vita*, in the works of Flóris Rómer from the 70s of the last century, we can find the description of the murals known by his time⁴, along with the first copies of the wall-paintings themselves. These,

² *Vidit denique beatissimus Ladislaus dux unum paganorum, qui super dorsum equi sui ducebat unam puellam Hungaram speciosam. Sanctus ergo dux Ladizlaus putans illam esse filiam episcopi Varadiensis, et quamvis esset gravior vulneratus, tamen illum celerrime persecutus est super equum illum, quem Zug nominabat. Cum autem attingeret, ut eum lancearet, minime poterat, quia nec eius celerius currebat, nec equus illi aliquantulum remanebat, sed quasi brachium hominis erat inter lanceam et dorsum Cuni. Clamavit itaque sanctus dux Ladizlaus ad puellam et dixit: "Soror speciosa, accipe Cunum in cingulo et iacta te in terram." Quod et fecit. Cumque beatus Ladizlaus dux procul illum lanceasset in terra iacentem, voluit eum interficere. Quem puella valde rogavit, ne eum interficeret, sed ut dimitteret. Unde in hoc notatur, quod fides in mulieribus non sit, quia forte amore stupri illum liberare voluit. Sanctus autem dux diu cum eo luctando et absciso nervo illum interfecit. Sed illa filia episcopi non fuit.*

It is important to note, and will gain importance later that in other versions of the legend, however, it is the maiden, who either wounded the Cuman mortally by cutting his legs, or who even herself beheaded him. For the other versions: the chronicles of Heinrich von Mügeln (1352, 1360) can be found in Emericus Szentpétery, ed., *Scriptores Rerum Hungaricarum ducum rerumque Stirpis Arpadie gestarum* 1-2. (Budapest, 1937-38), II, 177 (the prose version of 1360) and II.270 (the *Chronica Rithmica* of 1352). Quoted in: Sándor Tóth, "Képesség és képtelenség," (Ability and nonsense), *BUKSZ* 10/1 (1998):70, n. 9,10. Also Zsuzsa Lukács, "A Szt. László-legenda a középkori magyar falfestészetben," (The legend of St. Ladislás in medieval Hungarian wall-paintings), in *Athleta Patriae. Tanulmányok Szt. László történetéhez*, (Studies to the history of St. Ladislás), ed. László Mezey (Budapest: Szent István Társulat, 1980), 161-204, 166, containing also reference to Russian annals mentioning the *historia* of Ladislás.

³ For "the main problem of interpretation lies in recognizing the concrete qualities which are bound to time and function." Marosi, *Kép és hasonmás*, 248, emphasis is mine.

⁴ Flóris Rómer, *Régi falképek Magyarországon* (Old murals of Hungary) Monumenta Hungariae Archeologica III. (Budapest, 1874).

however, were quite free interpretations of the originals, changing often crucially the weaponry or the costumes after the taste of the artist. The copies of József Huszka, made from 1880 onwards for years, on the other hand, are still valid for the research, and especially so because some of the murals already were destroyed.⁵ After him, between the two World Wars several authors touched the problem, from art historical points of view,⁶ while Géza Nagy called the attention to the eastern parallels and possible origins of certain motifs in the legend, but also warned against paying too much attention to the fact that almost all known murals are in the border areas of the country.⁷

In the present research two main tendencies can be seen, the first of which started in 1944 when Gyula László published his book on the conquering Magyars⁸. He claimed the Asian Steppe origins of the whole cycle, and supposed its survival without interruption from the Conquest period. His view was shared by Lajos Vargyas from ethnography's side, citing folk ballads and certain heroic epics of Asian Steppe people,⁹ while Czech and Romanian art historians tried to root the whole story in the

⁵ József Huszka, "A Szt. László legenda székelyföldi falképeken," (The Legend of St. Ladislás in murals of the Székely lands), *Archeológiai Értesítő* 5 (1885), 221-31. Evaluation of his work: Terézia Kerny, "Huszka József és a székelyföldi Szent László-legendák," (József Huszka and the Saint Ladislás-legends of the Székely lands), in *Művészet Zsigmond király korában. 1387-1437. I. Tanulmányok*, (Art in the age of King Sigismund 1387-1437. I. Essays.), ed. László Beke, Ernő Marosi and Tünde Wehli (Budapest: MTA Művészettörténeti Kutatócsoport, 1987), 347-51.

⁶ For example, as a complex study, Elemér Varjú, "A magyar viselet a középkorban," (Hungarian costume in the Middle Ages), in *Magyar művelődéstörténet*, (Hungarian cultural history) vol. I, ed. Sándor Domanovszky (Budapest: n.p., 1940), 329-354, hereinafter MMT; and idem, "A magyar viselet a középkor végén," [Hungarian costumes at the end of the Middle Ages] MMT, vol. 2, 487-508.

⁷ Géza Nagy, "Nőrablás emlékei a magyarságnál," (Traces of woman-abduction among the Magyars), *Ethnographia* 4 (1894), 272-79. For the whole historiography of the problem see the summary of Terézia Kerny "Művészettörténeti adalékok a kerlési ütközet ábrázolásaihoz," (Art historical remarks on the representations of the battle of Kerlés), in Gyula László, *A Szt. László-legendája középkori falképei* (The medieval wall-paintings of the legend of St. Ladislás), (Budapest: Tájak-Korok-Múzeumok Egyesület, 1993), 213-226.

⁸ Gyula László, *A honfoglaló magyar nép élete* (Life of the conquering Hungarians) (Budapest, 1944).

⁹ Lajos Vargyas, "Honfoglalás előtti hagyományok Szent László legendájában," (Pre-Conquest traditions in the legend of Saint Ladislás), in *Athleta Patriae*, 9-19. Also Marcell Jankovics, »Csillagok között fényességes csillag«. *A Szent László-legendája és a csillagos ég* ("Shining star among the stars" The legend of St. Ladislás and the stary sky) (Budapest: Képzőművészeti Kiadó, 1987), 13-20.

Byzantine legend of Digenis Akritas.¹⁰ In 1981 the article of András Vizkelety was published which gave rise to the second main stream of opinions about the origins of the cycle. He supposed that some of the scenes could have been borrowed from Western chivalric epic.¹¹ His opinion was shared by Ágnes Kurcz writing about the chivalric culture of 13th-14th century Hungary,¹² and, most recently by Ernő Marosi.¹³ However, while Vizkelety only supposed the origins of some scenes in the chivalric literature of the West, Marosi, going further, utterly rejected any Eastern influence.¹⁴

More works could be cited from the sides of various studies concerning the questions of church *patrocinium*, stylistic connections of the murals, artistic archetypes, literary elements in the legend, etc..

Some scenes of the murals were discussed from the point of view of costume research as well. The most detailed analysis dealt with the oriental costumes of the Cuman warrior only¹⁵, due to the specific interest of its author. One has to observe, though, looking through publications concerning the wall-paintings that discuss the garments, that the terms used are at least vague, if not utterly incorrect. To prove this, together with an attempt of a better description I will cite several examples later.

My goal with this article is to support with the help of costume studies the frequently used statement that St. Ladislav – as he was viewed and propagated by the Angevin kings – the ideal ruler-knight of the realm wears always the most-up-to-date dress and weaponry of the given

¹⁰ For example Vlasta Dvoráková, "La légende de saint Ladislav découverte dans l'église de Velka Lomnica. Iconographie, style et circonstances de la diffusion de cette légende," *Buletinul Monumentelor Istorice* 4 (1972), 25-42., and Vasile Drăguț, "La légende du »héros de frontière« dans la peinture médiévale de la Transilvanie" *Revue Roumaine d'Histoire de l'Art* 12 (1975), 11-41. Also László, *Szt. László*, 228.

¹¹ András Vizkelety, "Nomádkori hagyományok vagy udvari-lovagi toposzok? Észrevételek Szent László és a leányrabló kun epikai és képzőművészeti ábrázolásához," (Nomadic traditions or courtly-chivalric *topoi*? Observations on the epic and art representations of the legend of Saint Ladislav and the Cuman) *Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények* 85 (1981), 243-75.

¹² Ágnes Kurcz, *Lovagi kultúra Magyarországon a 13.-14. században* (Chivalric culture in Hungary during the 13th- 14th centuries), (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1988).

¹³ Marosi, *Kép és hasonmás*, 76.

¹⁴ The criticism of this opinion Tóth, "Képesség és képtelenség," 69.

¹⁵ András Pálóczy-Horváth, "Le costume coman au Moyen Age," *Acta Archeologica Hungarica* 32 (1980), 403-29.

period.¹⁶ At this point, certainly the problem of dating arises, which, one might say, often happens with the help of costumes. However, as one looks through the existing scholarship, actually very few attempts can be found to date any mural – or work of art in general in Hungary – with the help of costumes.¹⁷ Perhaps one of the most important conclusions drawn right here at the beginning should be that till the identification of costume elements, and – if possible – the chronological arrangement of these along a rough timeline do not happen, there are only hypotheses that can be offered concerning dating. My article, therefore, can be taken as one of the possibilities among various others.

If Ladislas served as a “model of knightly behaviour” – embodying, of course, besides the secular knightly virtues the main characteristics of a *miles Christianus*¹⁸ – for the young noblemen of the country, painted on the church walls, his up-to-date dress also could be an example, a set, a kind of code: how an ideal knight – perhaps it is not too bold to suggest – an ideal courtier should look like. We should not underestimate the value of murals as messages for everyday life, even if in this case “everyday” means the days of an upper social class.

A kind of “ideal”, wearing fashionable garments: but one might ask what these exactly were? Or what was considered as “fashionable” by this time? And, more, why do I say that the terms used in the research are incorrect? To answer these questions, and to discuss the main issue posed earlier, a digression is to be made concerning the nature of fashion in the late Middle Ages. For all this, of course, I will use the wall-paintings as examples, or, more precisely, their three central figures: the abducted maiden, St. Ladislas, and the Cuman warrior.

¹⁶ Kerny, “Művészettörténeti adalékok”, 215; Marosi, *Kép és hasonmás*, 68; Lukács, *A Szt. László-legenda*, 171.

¹⁷ Examples for this will be shown in the subsequent pages.

¹⁸ The system of knightly virtues, as reflected in charters and chronicle writing of the thirteenth and fourteenth century Hungary, was organised around the virtue of *fidelitas* towards the king (or the lord, more generally said, although few Hungarian aristocrats had *familiares* in the Western sense), linking with it the fame and glory of the brave and valorous warrior. See Kurcz, *Lovagi kultúra*, 221-54, and Gábor Klaniczay, “L’image chevaleresque du saint roi au XIIe siècle,” in *La royauté sacrée dans le monde chrétien. Bilan et perspectives* Colloque de Royaumont, mars 1989, ed. Alain Boureau and Claudio Sergio Ingerflom (Paris: Éditions de l’École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 1992), 53-62.

Clothing and dress always bore a special meaning for a medieval person, especially so in the late Middle Ages. Costumes composed a part of courtly life, their special meaning having been defined and refined by members of the aristocracy for their own usage. The great changes of the fourteenth century concerning costumes were the spread of short upper garments among the men and the general trend towards tight-fitting clothing both in male and female clothing. But, as there are other factors besides the mere utility functions of a given garment, the symbolic aspects of dresses also should be considered.¹⁹

It is generally agreed within the field of medieval costume studies that one of the main functions of a given garment was to distinct according social rank as precisely as it was possible. But this can be confused when fashion appears. To be fashionable always meant to be different from the others through the usage of not only dresses, but with several other special signs as well. Fashion, changing and pulsing in cycles²⁰, meant for its follower, besides to be among those who are fashionable, that he or she could be clearly distinguished from those who were *not* fashionable. Fashion borrows, therefore, some very characteristic signs of a certain, distinguished group (like the aristocracy's clothing habits in the late Middle Ages were endangered by the *bourgeoisie*)²¹, in order to make somebody similar to the imitated. But at once the sign, no longer being in the original

¹⁹ Anne Hollander, *Seeing Through Clothes* (Berkeley-Los Angeles-London: University of California Press, 1993), 311.

²⁰ A detailed study in modern times showed the cyclic change of the extension of female dresses from long to short, and from loose to tight-fitting in the past three hundred years. A. L. Kroeber and Jane Richardson, "Three Centuries of Women's Dress Fashions: a Quantitative Analysis," *Anthropological Records* 5 (1940), 111-153. The same tendency was shown concerning the eleventh-twelfth century male costumes, so often criticised by moralists. Gábor Klaniczay "Divatos szakállak és eretnek rongyok," (Fashionable beards and heretic rags), in idem, *A civilizáció peremén* (On the margins of civilization), (Budapest: Magvető, 1987), 175.

²¹ New approaches: Liselotte C. Eisenbart, *Kleiderordnungen der deutschen Städte zwischen 1350 und 1700* (Göttingen: Bausteine zur Geschichtswissenschaft, 1962), and Diane Owen Hughes, "Sumptuary Laws and Social Relations in Renaissance Italy," in *Disputes and Settlements. Laws and Human Relations in the West*, ed. John Bossy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 69-101. Neithard Bulst, "Kleidung als sozialer Konfliktstoff: Probleme kleidungsgesetzlicher Normierung im sozialen Gefüge," *Saeculum* 44 (1993): 32-46.; idem, "Zur Entstellung 'bürgerlicher Sittlichkeit' in Deutschland und Frankreich (14.-18. Jahrhundert)," in *Sozialgeschichte des neuzeitlichen Bürgertums. Deutschland im internationalen Vergleich. Arbeits- und Ergebnisbericht für die dritte Forschungsphase 1992-1994* (Bielefeld: Universität Bielefeld, 1992-1994), 65-111.

context, where it had its special meaning, loses its significance, and the original, imitated social group immediately looks for another different distinctive sign – thus changing, so to say, the fashion itself, and becoming "trend-setter". Therefore, fashion confuses the system of distinction, originally developed by a given society, by evading even the ideologies of it. Thus, the moralists and preachers of the Middle Ages warned their flock continuously against the sin of vanity expressed by the following of fashion. With the fear of abandoning the old virtues came the fear of confusion between social groups and the order of God.

To understand the importance of fashion, fashionable dress and garments for medieval man, this short digression was necessary. But now let me show in the actual examples, namely, the murals of small churches mainly outside of present-day Hungary, how the three main characters of the legend, i.e. the saintly prince, the abducted maiden, and the Cuman warrior are represented and characterised with their costumes.²²

It is especially interesting that the long tunic and cloak of saints, kings, and dignified persons,²³ in the late Middle Ages are replaced in the case of St. Ladislav by the image of a fully armed knight. But the armour of a knight was always more than a mere defensive weapon – soon after its development it became an expression of a whole ethos, and even the meaning of each part of it was elaborately discussed in the contemporary writings.²⁴ Therefore it is not a mere overcautiousness if one tries to be precise in the description of a given armour part.²⁵

While reading about the oldest recently known representation of the Ladislav legend, the Kakaslomnic one, (Vel'ká Lomnica, Slovakia) dated usually around 1317²⁶ (fig. 1), one may find the "cloak" used to indicate "surcoat", or "coat armour" for the mail hauberk. Among Hungarian

²² For the sake of convenience, not for a kind of patriotism, I decided to indicate the present-day names only together with the first appearance of every place-name. Otherwise I use the Hungarian place names throughout. .

²³ Odile Blanc, *Parades et parures. L'invention du corps de mode à la fin du Moyen Age* (Paris: Gallimard, 1997), 22, 136.

²⁴ Keen, *Chivalry*, 154-62; Marosi, *Kép és hasonmás*, 258.

²⁵ David Edge-John M. Paddock, *Arms and Armor of the Medieval Knight* (New York: Crescent Books, 1993), glossary in 183-89. In the following, I will try to be consistent and use the terminology of this book.

²⁶ Marosi, *Kép és hasonmás*, 71; László, *Szt. László*, 109.

scholars, the general term for coat armour is the German word *Lentner*.²⁷ In the thirteenth century the crusaders' gannent, named *surcoat*, or *surcotte*, was the first stage in the evolution of both the coat armour and the universal upper garment of that age, worn by men and women.²⁸ In the same century the coat armour is also named *cyclas*, although this name can be applied as well to a short, coat-like garment, lined with fur or silk, cut in one piece. The *surcoat* as coat armour in the thirteenth century is loose, made from cloth, and has no sleeves. This is the one worn by Ladislás in the Kakaslomnic paintings, and, it is, more interestingly, striped. The colour of the stripes is questionable, though there were attempts to identify it as the coat-of-arms of the Árpáadian dynasty.²⁹



Fig. 1: Ladislás fighting the Cuman (Kakaslomnic, c. 1317)

²⁷ Gyula Kristó, *Az Anjou-kor háborúi* (War in the period of the Anjous), (Budapest: Zrínyi, 1988), 241; László, *Szt. László*, passim. See also Harry Kühnel, ed., *Bildwörterbuch der Kleidung und Rüstung* (Stuttgart: Kröner, 1992), s.v. "Lentner".

²⁸ Joan Evans, *Dress in Medieval France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1952), 19-20; Marion Sichel, *Costume Reference 1: Roman Britain and the Middle Ages* (London: Batsford, 1977), 32.

²⁹ László, *Szt. László*, 113, while Marosi, *Kép és hasonmás*, 71 defines the colours as "black and white".

The Gelence murals (Ghelița, Romania) dated to the turn of the 13th-14th century, however, give a slightly different picture about the armour of a knight. There, Ladislas' surcote is made of leather pieces, but his red *aketon*, i.e. the garment worn under the mail hauberk, is still long and loose.³⁰ The absence of arm defences and the general "mail period" look of the knightly armour confirms the earlier dating. The same can be said about the shorter hauberk and the more tight-fitting leather *jupon* worn by Ladislas in the Bögöz cycle (Mugeni, Romania).³¹ This tightening effect is the characteristic and most fundamental change of male clothing habits from the middle of the fourteenth century, often taken to exaggeration and extravagance, as seen in the Chronicle of St. Denis in writing about the battle of Crécy. There, the knights' garments are cited as the main causes of the defeat: Their clothes, the writer says, were so tight that the knights had to be laced up as women, their tights were multi-coloured, and the ends of their hoods dragged on the ground after them, as did the ends of their sleeves.³²

The paintings at Ócsa Premonstratensian church were restored quite recently, in 1991. Although earlier, from the fragments of that time seen, it was dated to the end of the 13th century, in the light of some newly discovered parts the painting time can be corrected as to mid-fourteenth century. There is a scene in the beginning of the cycle, showing the so-called "Departure from Várad" (i.e. Nagyvárad; now Oradea, Romania), and the horsemen on the scene wear *cotehardies* with characteristically hanging sleeves.³³ Less details are in the Vitfalva murals (Vitkovce, Slovakia) concerning the saint's garments, dated to the mid-14th century, while the "Byzantinizing" style lamellar armour of the Tereske (Slovakia)

³⁰ This garment is clearly worn *under* the hauberk, and not *over* it, as it stressed by Marosi, *Kép és hasonmás*, 71.

³¹ His *jupon* is called "lamellar hauberk" in László, *Szt. László*, 59.

³² *Chronique des Religieux de Saint Denis*, V. 463, in French translation: "*Et les autres avoient robes froissées sur les reins comme femmes; aussi portoient une chausse d'un drap et l'autre d'un autre et leur venoient leurs cornettes et leurs manches près de terre et sembloient mieux jongleurs que autres gens*". This remark has sometimes been interpreted as the earliest mention of the corset. However, the passage refers only to the characteristic attribute of the pourpoint, continuous through the period: Besides the trend of slenderizing, the back part was made even more tight-fitting by lacing.

³³ See Zsuzsa Lukács- Juan Cabello- Péter Csengel, "Az ócsai premontrei prépostság kutatásai," (The research of the Ócsa Premonstratensian monastery), *Műemlékvédelmi Szemle* 1 (1991): 16-20.

knight-king corresponds to the representations of the Hungarian Angevin Legendary nicely.³⁴



Fig 2: Ladislás in the Bántornya-cycle (Johannes Aquila, 1383)

The next stage in the development of Ladislás' image as an ideal knight in weaponry as well is shown in the Bántornya (Turnišče, Slovenia) cycle,

³⁴ Marosi, *Kép és hasonmás*, 71.

painted by Johannes Aquila.³⁵ The late 14th century short *jupons* (the painting was made in 1383) with *aketons* more tight-fitting under the even shorter hauberks can be observed, along with conical helmets, and belts on the hips.³⁶ Belts were always important costume accessoires. They held the dress together and, at the same time, drew a line separating the upper and lower parts of the costume, and, therefore, the human body as well, bearing a deeper significance in courtly symbolism. They came to be more elaborately decorated in this period than in the thirteenth century, and, worn on the hips, supported the wearing of the courtly civilian garments, as the *cotehardie* and *pourpoint*, and were worn for military dress, termed often as *cingulum militaris*.³⁷ Mounted belts – even mounted with silver – spread beyond the nobility. In Hungary, the mounted belts were observed in cemeteries of peasant communities in the Alföld region (Ágasegyháza, Aranyegyháza,³⁸ Kaszaper³⁹), and near Buda, at Csut⁴⁰, as parts of everyday costume, although in lesser quality and artistic degree than among the aristocracy. Decorative and practical items were hung from belts, like the different bags, named in the thirteenth century *aumonière*, used mainly for almsgiving.⁴¹ This belonged mainly to female garments. In the fourteenth century the male costume borrowed it, under the name of *gibecière* or *escarcelle*. Among the other accessoires, often a dagger was

³⁵ Johannes Aquila und die Wandmalerei des 14. Jahrhunderts. Tagungsbeiträge und Dokumente aus den Sammlungen des Landesdenkmalamts Budapest, ed. Ernő Marosi (Budapest: MTA MKI, 1989)

³⁶ The precise dating of this cycle was helped by the identification of the painter, and by an inscription as well. See Marosi, *Kép és hasonmás*, 72, and Lukács, *Falképfestészet*, 190.

³⁷ An account from 1364 mentions a dress bought for the French king, with belt: "*une surceint a une boucle et mordant et cinq clos d'or*". The testament of Louis d'Anjou, from 1379, includes a belt with mounts forming the beginning letters of a popular *virelai*. Evans, *Dress in France*, 29.

³⁸ Kálmán Szabó, *Az alföldi magyar nép művelődéstörténeti emlékei* (Remains from the cultural history of the people at the Great Hungarian Plain) (Kecskemét, n.p., 1938), chapter on costume history, esp. 42-7.

³⁹ Alajos Bálint, "A kaszaperi középkori temető," (The medieval cemetery of Kaszaper) *Dolgozatok a Magyar Királyi Ferencz József Tudományegyetem Régiségtudományi Intézetéből* 14 (1938), 7-36.

⁴⁰ László Gerevich, "A csuti középkori sírmező," (Medieval burial finds at Csut) *Budapest Régiségei* 13 (1943), 140, the belt buckle of the grave no. XXXVI, decorated with dotting and engraved hearts. The author claims it to be of Byzantine origin, but the dating of a similar buckle from grave no. XLVI, with the help of a coin of Queen Mary (1382-1395), makes this connection a bit uncertain.

⁴¹ For an interpretation see Blanc, *Parades*, 27, and *ibid.*, fig. 2.

added, fastened to the bag, borrowed for civil usage from the knights' wardrobe.

The next two examples are known only from the sketches made by József Huszka around 1898, because they were destroyed shortly after 1900.⁴² The Erdőfőle (Filia, Romania) church's St. Ladislav can be paralleled with the knights of the famous manuscript of the so-called Hungarian Illuminated Chronicle, painted around 1360.⁴³ He wears red *aketon* and tights made of cloth in the same colour, but there is no indication of hauberk, at least in the sketches. The main relation between the two representations is, however, the white coat armour⁴⁴, which is fringed at the sleeves and below, like many figures' in the *Chronicle*; and the first appearance of a *gauntlet* among the murals also can be observed here. The second destroyed church was at Maksa (Moacşa, Rom.), where again the main characteristics of the Illuminated Chronicle's armour were present: *aventails*⁴⁵ attached to *bascinet* type hehnets on the figures of the Hungarian soldiers in the battle scene; an *aketon*, a hauberk worn over it, ending above the knee, and a fringed, tight-fitting coat armour with sleeves.

The paintings of Rimabánya (Rimavská Baňa, Slovakia) church, if seen only from the point of view of knightly armour could be dated further to the beginning years of the 15th century. Here Ladislav wears an almost full-plate armour, along with a supposed breastplate under his coat armour, a significantly shortened hauberk, and a complete lower arm defence (*vambrace*) with elbow guards (*couters*), and *gauntlets*. But, as will be discussed later, a special headdress form of some female figures in the first scene pushes back the dating rather to the very last third of the 14th century, as it was claimed to be circa 1375.⁴⁶

The 15th century brought the flourishing of full plate armour in Central Europe, although it appeared earlier in Western Europe.⁴⁷ It

⁴² The church was destroyed at the turn of the century, and the paintings are therefore known only from the sketches made before that time. László, *Szt. László*, 72.

⁴³ *Képes Krónika. Hasonmás kiadás* (Illuminated Chronicle Facsimile copy) General editor László Kispéter (Budapest: Corvina, 1964).

⁴⁴ This is considered a "white mail" in László, *Szt. László*, 74.

⁴⁵ This part of the armour was to be replace the mail coif (hood) of the earlier period: a mail curtain, covering the shoulders, attached to the base of the helmet by small staples. Examples: Edge-Paddock, *Arms and Armour*, 66, 78, 87, 183.

⁴⁶ For the earlier dating see Lukács, *Falképfestészet*, 198. Marosi in *Kép és hasonmás*, 73, states the later date.

⁴⁷ Edge-Paddock, *Arms and Armour*, 110.

showed up as consisting of a leather *aketon* under a very short mail hauberk, a breastplate with attached lamellar plates called *fauld*, continued on the back in the lamination of the *culet*, full arm defences (*rerebraces* and *vambraces*) including shoulder-guards (*pauldrons*) and elbow guards, gauntlets with knee pieces (the *poleyns*), and full greaves with lamellar *sallerets*.



Fig. 3: *Ladislav and the Cuman from Szekelyderzs (15th c.)*

The most splendid example of this type of armour can be seen in the Székelyderzs (Dîrjiu, Romania) murals (fig. 3), with some modifications: There are no shoulder defences, or sallerets, and the upper arm defences are also missing. But under the plate greaves the figure must have had at least leather greaves and pieces of mail, attached to the aketon by small cords: this was the only way to wear plate armour by this time, and later on.⁴⁸ The same full-plate type can be observed in the wall-paintings of Gömörrákos (Rákoš, Slovakia), although the absence of the breastplate can show an earlier phase of development. In the Szepesmindszent (Bijacovce, Slovakia) paintings (fig. 4), besides the short hauberk and the full greaves worn by the main figure, the "pigeon chest" effect of his coat armour either indicates the tightness and the padding of this type of garment, or rather shows an otherwise hidden breastplate, thus confirming the later dating of these scenes.⁴⁹



Fig. 4: Saint Ladislav and the Cuman from Szepesmindszent

⁴⁸ Ibid., 117-8.

⁴⁹ László, *Szent László*, 135-38, and Lukács, *Falképfestészet* dates the murals to the second half of the 14th century, while in Marosi, *Kép és hasonmás*, 73, the very fragmentary murals are dated to the first half of the 15th century.

The Sepsikilyén (Chilieni, Romania) frescoes show a St. Ladislav wearing an embroidered coat armour, indicating most probably a kind of ornamental woven silk; but other details of this painting, as the turban of the Cuman warrior, push the dating further on to the second half of the 15th century. To the same group belong the murals of the Zsegra church, (Žehra, Slovakia) but its heavy re-painting in the 17th century makes the study of the costumes almost impossible. Only the first part of the legend's scenes can be viewed as original, and from the short tight-fitting coat armour, reaching almost only the hips, and from the developed plate armour in legs and arms, it most probably can be dated to the early 15th century, although, and this should be remembered, the appearance of plate defences does not automatically suppose the fifteenth-century dating.⁵⁰

The anti-hero, the negative stereotype (in Western sense) of the *historia* is the Cuman warrior, who abducts the Hungarian maiden. If I proceed on to the discussion of his garments on the St. Ladislav murals, the term "orientalism" almost naturally jumps into the middle of the problem, so perhaps it won't be useless to say a few words about orientalism in general, and to sketch the situation of the Cumans and other eastern ethnic groups in Hungary in the 14th century.

Orientalism marks a special type of fashion, appearing in Western Europe, especially in the fourteenth and the beginning of the fifteenth century, meaning the spread of not only dresses regarded as "eastern" or "Asian", but certain decorative motifs, Asian servants, a general interest towards the "exotic", etc. In the fifteenth century, this was, no doubt, connected with the conquests of the Ottoman Empire in Europe as well, but in the following pages only the fourteenth century aspects of this question will be taken into consideration, in connection with Hungarians and, especially, Cumans, living in the Hungarian Alföld region since the middle of the thirteenth century.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Plate leg greaves appear already in a fair number in the miniatures of the Hungarian Illuminated Chronicle. See *Képes Krónika*, fol. 47a, fol. 69'a. For the description of the Zsegra paintings see László, *Szent László*, 115-120.

⁵¹ András Pálóczi-Horváth, *Petchenegs, Cumans, Iasians* (Budapest: Corvina, 1989), for the historical background of the Steppe people in Hungary during this period. See also for general orientation about the thirteenth century military history of Hungary, and the role of the Cumans: Kristó Gyula, *Az Árpád-kor háborúi* (Wars of the Árpadian period), (Budapest: Zrínyi, 1986), 271-281.

Oriental style dress elements – the caftan, the hat with turned-up brim – , and long beards etc., were regarded as a kind of "exotism". Chronicle writers from the beginning of the fourteenth century recorded strange habits of clothing and hairstyle in Styria, Bohemia and German territories. Arranging their hair "*ut Judei vel Ungari comam*" and "*more barbarorum barbas longas nutriunt*",⁵² the nobles of these territories were eager to differ from their contemporaries as all fashionable persons would like to do in any era.

The Cumans had rights granted to wear their traditional costume elements in the so-called "Cuman laws" of King Ladislas IV, issued in 1279.⁵³ The second paragraph of the laws assured the Cumans that they did not have to shave their heads, cut their beards, and that they would not be forced to give up their "costume habits".⁵⁴ The military value of these people was recognised, accepted and used in the second part of the thirteenth, and in the fourteenth century.⁵⁵ Archaeological remains found in the Alföld region testify the importance of Cuman and Petcheneg light cavalry and their leaders in the court of Charles Robert as well. Though the buckle of the Kigyópuszta belt, showing a knightly *melée* with figures wearing the characteristically armour of the sixties of the thirteenth century, dates this find earlier, but the additional mounts of the belt push the time of compilation of it to the beginning of the fourteenth century.⁵⁶

⁵²The chronicle of Anonymus Leobensis: *Scriptores rerum Austriae* I. 947: "*cessavit etiam tum usus mitrarum virilium, per quas inter laicos plures, Christianos agnoscebatur, a Iudeo de coma etiam valde paum vel omnino ut Judei vel Ungari comam dividebant*"; Peter von Zittau: *Chronicon Aulae Regiae. Fontes rerum Bohemicarum* IV. 404.: *Ungarice gentes portant curtas quoque mentes/est gens ista levis, iaculis sevisissima stevis*".

⁵³See István Gyárfás, *A jász-kunok története* (History of the Cumans and Iasians) I. (Kecskemét: n.p., 1870), 438-42. and István Szentpétery-Iván Borsa, *Az Árpád-házi királyok okleveleinek kritikai jegyzéke* II. (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1961), 236, 247.

⁵⁴"*preter abrasionem barbarum et abbreviationem capillorum et habitum vestium eorumdem, super quibus venerabilis pater dominus legatus, ad nostram devotam instanciam, enitate paterne pietatis condescendens, invitios non coegit, sed in aliis se moritus Christianorum conformabunt*", says the charter, since earlier the legate prohibited the wearing of Cuman hats. See Szentpétery, SRH I. 472-473, the text of the Illuminated Chronicle: "*pileos Cumanicos, quorum usus in Hungaria jam in consuetudine habebatur, abiicere demandat*" i. e. the papal legate.

⁵⁵For a general picture see Kristó, *Az Árpád-kor háborúi*, 252-59, and idem, *Az Anjou-kor háborúi*, 250 ff.

⁵⁶István Éri, "Adatok a kigyópusztai csat értékeléséhez," (Data to the evaluation of the Kigyópuszta belt buckle) *Folia Archeologia* 8 (1956): 137-51, and András

The Csólyos find contained elements of light cavalry armour: a helmet, a hauberk, two rounded shoulder pieces, all lighter than the contemporary Western ones, with analogies from Steppe people⁵⁷, dating the find also somewhere between the last decades of the thirteenth to the first quarter of the fourteenth centuries. Cemetery excavations in the same region also support the theory of the continuous usage of Cuman habits in dress during the fourteenth century: cloakpins or chest-discs, used to close and decorate caftans were found in the graves of Kaszaper, Ágasegyháza and Aranyegyháza.⁵⁸ To cite some written sources as well I can mention a legal case concerning six estates of the Csanád family (the relatives of the archbishop of Esztergom) in the mid-fourteenth century, when the estates are described as lands of the Petchenegs, living and serving the king in the "old way in military campaigns"⁵⁹, while a papal letter from 1399 mentions the Alföld Cumans and Petchenegs as "they have no towns, wandering with their tents, families and cattle".⁶⁰

In the two Naples campaigns of King Louis the Great a considerable amount of Cuman and Petcheneg light cavalry took part as well,⁶¹ best described by the chronicle writer Matteo Villani, who mentions such details of their costumes as leather "farsetti", that is, jupons worn several over each other.⁶² The Italian diffusion of orientalising representations, henceforth, could not be taken as a mere coincidence, for example in the representations of the Adoration of the Magi, or a bronze sculpture in the cathedral of Orvieto.⁶³ The appearance of these warriors in Italy "certainly

Pálóczi-Horváth, "A csólyosi kun sirlelet," (Cumanian grave goods from Csólyos), *Folia Archeologia* 20 (1969), 108-33., esp. 118.

⁵⁷ Pálóczi, "Csólyos," 120-133.

⁵⁸ Bálint "Kaszaper," 7-36.

⁵⁹ "*terras Byssenorum antiquo more exercituare debentium*". DL. 29138, quoted in György Györffy, *A magyarság keleti elemei* (Oriental minority elements of the Hungarian nation) (Budapest: Gondolat, 1990), 163.

⁶⁰ Gyárfás, *A jász-kunok...*, III. 532.

⁶¹ Gyárfás, *A jász-kunok...*, III., 67-8. also Györffy, *A magyarság keleti elemei*, 289.

⁶² Matteo Villani, *Cronica di Matteo Villani* (Firenze: Magheri, 1825-26), chapters VI., X., XII.

⁶³ Stella Mary Newton, *Fashion in the Age of the Black Prince. A Study of the Years 1340-1365*. (Woodbridge, Boydell Press, 1980), 92-93. The author examines the question from the point of view of international "fashion" of the period, especially in fourteenth-century Italy, quoting primarily pictorial examples. However, when in the case of the Hungarian Illuminated Chronicle she speaks about "tall conical hats from the sharp point of each of which a single feather rose" (93), the argument of this "Tartar" fashion connected with the Chronicle and its Cumans and Huns, is

made an impression which was eventually reflected in fashionable dress".⁶⁴ The expression "like Tartars", used in chronicles or moral treatises by that time, simply could refer to any easterner, but especially to Cumans and Hungarians, spreading through the Kingdom of Naples between the years 1347 and 1350, but remaining there with smaller contingents and mercenaries in the whole century.

What we can say if we look at the wall-paintings of the deeds of the "saintly prince"? The Cuman would be expected as wearing a caftan, this popular Eastern garment, which could be opened in the front or at the sides. These two main types can be the indications of two types of Eastern costume elements: a shorter variation, with slimming seam in the waistline, closed in the middle; and a longer, more loose garment, closed in the left, or the right side.⁶⁵ This second is the "classic" caftan, while the first type is defined as a "Petcheneg" variation.⁶⁶ However, this is not so in some cases. In the Vitfalva (Vítkovce, Slovakia) murals, while showing very schematic male figures in loose dresses, the abductor's caftan has buttons in the middle of the chest, which is at least uncommon in Eastern garments. He wears a Western type short dress, at Rimabánya (Rimavská Baňa, Slovakia): dark red, tight-fitting and surprisingly short (fig. 5). In the Bántornya (Turnišče, Slovenia) paintings, painted by Johannes Aquila, the situation is the same.

contradicted by the fact that in the Chronicle there are no hats decorated with feathers at all, although the hat is the most varied costume element in the Chronicle. Even a close examination of the miniature could not convince me to discover any feather on any hat of the Cumans or other oriental people depicted

⁶⁴ibid., 92.

⁶⁵Boncz, Ödön "Kun és magyar viselet az utolsó Árpádok és Anjouk alatt," (Cumanian and Hungarian costumes under the rule of Arpadian and the Angevin dynasty) *Archeologiai Értesítő* (1877):198-207, esp. 193. According to the traveler's descriptions of Rubruquis and Carpini, the caftan of the Tartars was always closed on the right. *Napkelet felfedezése. Julianus Plano Carpini és Rubruk útjelentései* (The discovery of the Orient. The travelers' reports of Julianus, Plano Carpini and Rubruk) ed. György Györffy (Budapest:?, 1965), 79-80.

⁶⁶Pálóczi, *Petchenegs*, 77.



Fig. 5: The Cuman from Rimabanya

But in most cases the Cuman is dressed in caftan, and, in an even more characterising way, this dress is yellow. [e.g. in Gelence, Vitfalva, Zsegra, Maksa, Szepesmindszent (fig. 4), Sepsibesenyő].⁶⁷ It should be observed,

⁶⁷ Unfortunately, there is not enough time and place to discuss the various interpretations of the rather mysterious name of the Cuman appearing in the Kakaslovníc murals above his head (THEPE). But perhaps the flames coming from his mouth in this painting and in the Székelyderzs and the Szepesmindszent ones, together with the yellow caftan can be taken as a strong indication of a negative figure/force. In the *Illuminated Chronicle*, for example, King Coloman, who in the text is rather negatively described, is consistently shown wearing a yellow caftan as well, even in fol. 51b, on his coronation scene.

however, that the caftans depicted are usually closed in the middle, and are rather short, like the type defined as "Petcheneg" [Kakasloinnic (fig. 1), Gelence], while the Erdőfű murals show a kind of woven decoration, with a neckline cut from left to right. A similar indication of decoration can be observed in the Maksa wall-paintings, and embroidered edges are shown on the dress of the Szepesmindszent Cuman (fig. 4); here his caftan is especially tight, which can be seen on the wrinkles of the long sleeves.

Almost everywhere the Cuman warrior wears another typical Eastern dress element, that is, a hat with a turned-up brim. The trimming of the hat is always in a different colour [for example, black hat with white brim in Szepesmindszent (fig. 4); red with white brim at Székelyderzs (fig. 3)], and in most cases he has a mail coif under the hat: this habit is not, however, contradicting to the "light cavalry" character of the Cuman warrior.⁶⁸

The tendency to schematise the Cuman's dress in the fifteenth century murals is clear, and this from on the one hand can be connected to the disappearance of these elements from the habits of the Cumans themselves, and, on the other hand, to the greater impact of international "stereotypes" concerning Oriental costume pieces, as pointed hats or yellow garments.

The female costumes of the century had less variety than male ones, but were at least their equals in splendid appearance. The cut of the female garments in the fourteenth century did not change significantly from that of the thirteenth century, when the difference between male and female garments was not so definitely marked.

The *cotte*, the undergarment introduced in the thirteenth century, became more tight-fitting, as it was seen in the case of the male costumes as well.⁶⁹ The back was opened, and laced with ribbons.⁷⁰ The skirt part was cut in comparatively loose form. In the first part of the century the difference was not so striking, but the sleeves were buttoned in the same manner as in the case of the male ones, and the close-fitting cut made the

⁶⁸ See Kristó, *Az Árpád-kor háborúi*, 271, or Pálóczi, "Csólyos", 120-133.

⁶⁹ Under the *cotte* the *camise* could be worn, a kind of shirt, as well as the *chainse*, the undergarment of the eleventh-twelfth centuries. In the 14th century, the latter term was applied to a long undershirt. Sichel, *Costume Reference*, 157; Bradley, *Western Costume*, 151.

⁷⁰ The lacing of the undergarment was transferred to the front from the fifties of the fourteenth century. Bradley, *Western Costume*, 140.

introduction of the additional pieces necessary. The neckline was rounded, but by around 1340 it began to deepen and widen. A narrow belt was worn around the hips with it. In 1362 a certain lady named Yolande de Bar listed among other good stolen from her a scarlet cotte, the sleeves and edges being decorated with pearls and small gems.⁷¹ A much more modest cotte is worn by the abducted maiden in the Gelence murals, indicating a kind of "home garment".

However, the cotte itself could not have been seen, if the surcotte's sleeves had not been cut, making the armhole deeper and deeper. The two garments, cotte and surcotte were usually mentioned together: In 1338 the Queen of France had a robe of four pieces, composed of a cotte, two surcottes, and a corset, a mantle with round cut.⁷² As a general trend, from the middle of the thirteenth century, the cotte, surcotte and cloak/mantle was made of similar material, hence the definition "une robe" in the inventories of the period.⁷³

The surcotte itself in the beginning could be shaped with a wide neckline and with or without short sleeves. In the Kakaslomnic paintings (fig. 6), dated around 1317, the dress of the Hungarian maiden shows an early variation: green cotte with long, tight-fitting sleeves, and a red surcot lined with white. The neckline here is V-shaped, and the armholes are not too deep, as in the second half of the century, when a special variation, the *surcot ouvert* was used almost exclusively. This garment, although definitely represented in the wall-paintings, was misinterpreted by many researchers in the past, defined as a kind of "waistcoat", lined or trimmed with fur.⁷⁴ Strangely enough, research has failed to this error, which appears in quite recent works as well.⁷⁵ In the wall-paintings of the

⁷¹ Evans, *Dress in France*, 32.

⁷² Ibid., 31.

⁷³ In 1298, the Countess of Artois had a robe of five parts, namely: cotte, surcotte, gardecors (similar to that of the men), cape, belonging to the gardecors, and a cloak lined with miniver. Jeanne de Bourgogne, Queen of France, receives in 1316 a robe of five pieces, made of pink scarlet cloth, also with miniver. Evans, *Dress in France*, 25.

⁷⁴ Mihály Nemes-Géza Nagy, *A magyar viseletek könyve* (Book of Hungarian Costumes) (Budapest: Franklin Társulat. 1900), 110 "a sleeveless waistcoat", referred also in Varju in *MMT I.*, 330 and Endre Domanovszki, *Korok ruhái* (Dresses through ages) (Budapest: Corvina, 1979), 98 "a waistcoat was worn over it, at first reaching to the hips and was cut deeply under the arms". Wagner even goes further, and besides naming the dress appearing in fourteenth-century Bohemian manuscripts, "waistcoat" ("Jäckchen" in the German text), understands the French surcot ouvert similarly. See Wagner-Drobná-Durdik, *Tracht*, 16.

⁷⁵ László, *Szent László-legendá*, 73: "a light little waistcoat."

Erdőfüle church, for instance, one can recognise even in the raw sketch available at present for researchers, the surcot ouvert, almost identical with its French analogies. It has deep armholes, and is embroidered in front, and the white cotte worn under it is clearly visible.⁷⁶ In the Maksa murals the same type can be observed, which was again identified as "a waistcoat",⁷⁷ while in Vitfalva it appears over a red cotte, in blue, with white trim around the neckline and the armholes.



Fig. 6: The maiden from Kakaslomnic (c. 1317)

The Szentmihályfa wall-paintings are especially interesting for studies of female garments. These frescoes, restored in 1988-89, are in fragmentary

⁷⁶ Ibid., 72-74, the dating the paintings not earlier than the forties of the fourteenth century. St. Ladislav wears in the same picture a white pourpoint, with fringed edge and sleeves, interpreted as "cloak".

⁷⁷ László, *Szent László*, 69.

state, but fortunately, exactly the scene showing the maiden beheading the Cuman remained. Here a red *cotehardie*, that is, an outdoor dress with characteristic hanging parts, the so-called *coudières*, trimmed with fur, is worn over a red cotte with close-fitting long sleeves.

The Rimabánya cycle from the last third of the fourteenth century (fig. 7) shows a different dress type in all of its scenes:⁷⁸ the tight-fitting bodice, loose lower part from the hips, with deep décolletage and long, close-fitting sleeves is also worn by Queen Elizabeth, wife of King Charles Robert in the Hungarian Illuminated Chronicle⁷⁹ In the same manuscript, on fol. 36a, Initial P, the dress of the Hungarian maiden in the scene of her rescue from the Cuman by St. Ladislás resembles that worn by the one on the first scene of the Rimabánya wall-painting, but here the girl wears, under her tight-fitting surcoat, a longer *cotte* made from the same material. The dress of Queen Elizabeth on fol. 70a is nearly the same, but the seams at the hips and at the waist can be observed well.⁸⁰



Fig. 7: The maiden from Rimabánya.

⁷⁸Despite the opinion that "the dress of the maiden is different in the subsequent scenes", the decoration and the cut of the dress is the same, although the paint is slightly different. László, *Szent László*, 152.

⁷⁹For instance in fol. 70a, Initial A.

⁸⁰On the contrary, Varju, in *MMT II.*, 409, claims that the upper and lower parts of the female gown were always cut in one.

Foreign writings mention the exaggerated decoration of garments with small mounts and pendants as a special Hungarian habit which perhaps is indicated by the decoration of the garment of the Rimabánya maiden.⁸¹ Among the surviving examples one could mention the dress of Queen Agnes of Habsburg, wife of Andrew III.⁸² The treasure find from Kelebia included pieces with inscriptions, which made the identification of at least one owner possible.⁸³ Some other finds, like the treasure from Kiskunhalas-Fehértó, Kiskunhalas-Bodoglárpusztá, or Emesztháza, also contained mounts for dress decoration, sewn into various parts of the dress.⁸⁴

The finds from Zalaszentgrót, Kelebia or Emesztháza⁸⁵ include clasps which could not serve as belt-buckles, as it was supposed earlier – their decoration makes this impossible. They may have been used to fasten the mentioned mantles, and were used in pairs. Although the clasps from treasure finds are all in geometrical shapes, there existed several types of ornamental and even beast or bird-shaped clasps or fibulae-like buckles as well in the period. A description of the wedding ceremonies of Catherine of Burgundy and Leopold of Austria mentions clasps formed in the shape of daisies, roses, peacocks, finches, falcons, little dogs, squirrels, etc.⁸⁶

I already mentioned the Bögöz murals concerning some strange female head-dresses. These seem like kind of veils together with wimples arranged in "horns" in the middle of the foreheads. This can possibly refer

⁸¹ Boncz, "A magyar viselet..." 204, quotes the Anonymus Leobensis, for example: "*alii sinistram manicam ornabant diversi modo, vel cum sericio, vel cum argento...alii laminem, de alieno panno cum litteris argenteis vel sericiis in pectore deferebant: alii in sinistra parte pectoris imagines deferebant: alii circulis sericeis circa pedous per totum se circumcingebant*" *Scriptores Rerum Austr.* I. 947.

⁸² Emil Delmár, *Középkori magyar emlékek Svájcban* (Medieval hungarica in Switzerland) (Budapest, n.p., 1941), 9.

⁸³ According to the inscription, "*Armella consortis Pauli bani Dem...*": the person in question could be the wife of Pál Garai, *banus* of Macsó, namely Kós Nekcsei. Mihály Köhegyi, "XIV. századi ezüstkincs Kelebiáról," (A 14th century silver treasure find from Kelebia) *Cumania I. Archeologia* (1972): 209.

⁸⁴ Kurcz, *Lovagi kultúra*, 109; Magda B. Oberschall, "A kiskunhalas-bodoglárpusztai középkori kincslet," (A medieval treasure find from Kiskunhalas-Bodoglárpusztá) *Magyar Múzeum* (1945): 13-21.; and József Hampel, "Az ernesztházi leletről," (Remarks on the find from Emesztháza) *Archeológiai Értesítő* 15 (1881): 175-177.

⁸⁵ Éva Kovács, "Két 13. századi ékszerfajta Magyarországon," (Two 13th century jewellery types in Hungary) *Ars Hungarica* 1 (1973): 67-96.

⁸⁶ Evans, *Dress in France*, 55.

to a special Eastern type, like those of the ladies termed as "Cuman women" on the miniature of the Illuminated Chronicle fol. 16a.

Speaking about head-dresses, the figures of women standing at the gates of the town in the first scene of this cycle wear another type, namely the *krüsel*, perhaps the strangest headdress of the century. It also was called in the French and English-speaking areas the *nebulé*-headdress, after the heraldic device almost identical to its look⁸⁷. This headdress, appearing in the sixties of the century, was made of several veils, folded repeatedly into each other around the face, the edges being frilled and plated beforehand. Though this was most popular in areas like Germany, Bohemia, Hungary and England, it was completely absent in France.⁸⁸ In the Illuminated Chronicle Queen Elizabeth, the wife of King Charles Robert wears this type of headdress (for example on fol. 70a, on fol. 71b), as does Queen Helen, the wife of King Béla II (the Blind) on fol. 57b, and St. Elizabeth on fol. 62b.⁸⁹

Conclusion

Clothing as a public display played an important part in medieval life. One of the main functions of a given garment was exactly to distinguish according to social rank as precisely as it was possible. Therefore, the wall-paintings of the St. Ladislav-legend can be analysed by costume studies to see whether the garments appearing in the scenes can help gaining additional information concerning the connection between status and outer appearance.

In the figures showing Prince Ladislav, the armour depicted is always the most fashionable in the period, as it befits the later saintly king, and the concept of his bravery and justness often expressed in the fourteenth century.⁹⁰ Certain elements of the legend even derived from courtly epic of the chivalric world, although parallels for the two most

⁸⁷ Houston, *Medieval Costume*, 86-87. The type can be observed in the Illuminated Chronicle as well, but earlier studies consistently called it "a headdress trimmed with fur", what is, as we see, wrong.

⁸⁸ Kühnel, *Bildwörterbuch*, s.v., "Krüsel," while mentions its widespread usage in German territories, the diffusion of this headdress type in Hungary, is lacking from his listing. Marosi, *Kép és hasonmás*, 59, claims its surely Eastern-European origin, citing Stella Mary Newton. Newton in *Fashion*, 86-94, however, cites proofs that it appears in Germany and England, while lacks in France.

⁸⁹ For indications of *krüselers* in Hungary: Gerevich, "Csut," 161-162.

⁹⁰ Marosi, *Kép és hasonmás*, 76.

important scenes, namely, the wrestling and the beheading, were not to be found in pictorial sources. However, the literature of the Arthurian cycle contains stories about the beheading or wrestling down of an enemy, especially connected with the favourite hero of the English material, Sir Gawain.⁹¹ Also, the theme of a maiden's abduction can be derived from courtly epic, as it was already supposed in research.⁹² But the elements of old Eastern folklore material also should be considered, especially in the case of Hungary. The surprisingly fashionable elements of armour and costume in the murals show that the Western garments were spread and known among the strata of nobility connected to the courtly circles. The dress representations of the abducted maiden even confirm the knowledge of some of the most precious and fashionable female garments, which is lacking from the courtly manuscript of the Illuminated Chronicle. With the indication of these dresses, the high social status of the maiden is clearly shown, what is expressed in the existing written variations of the legend (sometimes the daughter of a bishop, then a high noble lady, or even the Virgin Mary).

The Cumans were one of those Steppe people who by the fourteenth century still pursued their old habits in the Alföld region. The warrior of the murals, on the other hand, is represented with a number of dress elements able to raise negative associations in the observers of the murals.⁹³ His caftan, popular among the light cavalry soldiers of the Hungarian Angevin kings, his hat, his equipment of composite bow and arrows, and the colour of his garment, the yellow, all together gave him the perfect air of the anti-hero.

⁹¹On this question see the chapter on Gawain in Richard Barber, *Arthur of Albion* (London: Barrie and Rockliff, 1961), 95-122., and Proinsias MacCana, *Celtic Mythology* (Feltham: Newnes Books, 1983), 98-99.

⁹² Vizkelety, "Nomádkori...", passim.

⁹³For the Western European view: Blanc, *Parades...*, 166-75. and Francoise Piponnier-Perrine Mane, *Se vêtir au Moyen Age* (Paris: Adam Biro, 1995), 114, 175. Also Ernő Marosi, "Zur Frage der Quellenwerken mittelalterlicher Darstellungen. 'Orientalismus' in der Ungarischen Bilderchronik," *Medium Aevum Quotidianum* 22 (1991): 74-107, but with a different opinion.

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HERAUSGEGEBEN
VON GERHARD JARITZ

GEDRUCKT MIT UNTERSTÜTZUNG DER KULTURABTEILUNG
DES AMTES DER NIEDERÖSTERREICHISCHEN LANDESREGIERUNG

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Vorwort

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Gerhard Jaritz, Herausgeber