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The Iconography of King Saint Stephen I in Prints 1450–1700¹

King Saint Stephen I is the most frequently depicted personality throughout Hungarian history. As a state-forming ruler and statesman who led the country into the European Christian community, and also the first canonized king of Hungary, he took on the characteristics of these patterns, which resulted in his prompt transformation into a symbol and also, a force to create new symbols. His cult was spread in the Carpathian basin from the 12th century, but not one authentic portrait of him has gone down to posterity. His representations in art and literature are usually adjusted to the prevailing ideals of saints and monarchs, and also to the current purpose of religion and politics. In his medieval iconography, the features of a wise, religious, yet martial king predominate. The richness of his iconography – with the exception of the imagery of King Saint Ladislas – surpasses that of other medieval kings of Hungary, and, beside the typical characteristics, a number of special features are attributed to him.

A separate investigation of the iconography of Saint Stephen in reproductional graphics is useful because this genre reveals clearly the alterations and innovations taking place in visual culture over several historical periods. The prints also reflect the geographical, temporal, and stylistic divergences in the mode of pictorial representation. Moreover, by the special conditions of the genre, we are able to examine the circulation of mass-produced images, the attempts to renew the picture structure, the formation of the picture-text relation and the subtle functions of images within the iconography of a single historical figure.

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Techniques, Masters, Function

Between 1450 and 1700 nearly eighty prints were produced showing the figure of King Saint Stephen.² Until the end of the 16th century he was represented exclusively in woodcuts. Engravings appear in the corpus around 1600, and in the 17th century all the images were made by this technique, with the exception of only two woodcuts. Only a few of the woodcuts are signed, but research into graphics history has already identified some of the wood-cutters. Among the 16th century unsigned leaves we find some which were made by Leonhard Beck (27), Hans Springinklee (33), Hans Sebald Beham (34) and Jost Amman (36), all well-known masters of German wood cutting. In addition we can in one case recognize Peter Flötner's (35) initials. Most of the woodcuts appeared in books printed in Vienna, Augsburg, Nuremberg, Frankfurt, Freiburg, Brno, Lyon and Venice, all of them ordered from Hungary.

Among the 17th century engravers we find several famous masters. Francesco Valesio (39, 40), Heinrich Raab (60, 61) and Hans Frank von Landgraff (partly 72, 73) each signed two engravings. Tobias Bidenharter (45), Raphael Sadeler (47), Peter Rucholle (53), Cornelius Schut and Lucas Vostermans (54), Jacob Rost and Bartholomäus Kilian (58), Adrian Bloem and Philipp Kilian (66), Domenico Rosetti (67), Justus van der Nypoort (68), Johann Azelt (69), Johann Siegmund Schott (71) and György Szelepchényi (partly 72) each made one print.

The list of names shows that the 17th century engravings were made in Vienna, Nuremberg, Munich, Douai, Venice, Rome, Parma, Nagyszombat/Trnava and Pozsony/Bratislava, and that Saint Stephen's representation in prints crossed the frontiers of Hungary and Central Europe. In Augsburg from 1488 onwards (3), in Nuremberg from 1493 onwards (4), in Vienna from 1508 onwards (13), and in Venice from 1505 onwards (10) publications containing Saint Stephen's images were printed for a longer period of time. Four prints appeared in Munich between 1628 and 1630, one in Frankfurt am Main in both 1581 and 1664, and one in Rome in 1630 and 1644.

Before 1600 nearly two thirds of the woodcuts were book illustrations. Stephen appears relatively often in the initials of liturgical imprints – missals, breviaries, psalters – at the beginning of the 16th century. In addition, we find his figure in some booksellers' insignia, in single-leaf woodcuts and as a monthly picture in calendars. About one-third of the 17th century images appear in ornamental title pages of different

² Éva Knapp, "Gyönyörű volt szál alakja": Szent István király ikonográfiája a sokszorosított grafikában a XV. századtól a XIX. század közepéig (Budapest: Borda Antikvárium, 2001). The bold-faced numbers in parentheses in the text refer to the catalogue in this book. Here one can find all the pictures and all references to the sources and to the secondary literature are given. The authors are grateful to Alison M Saunders and Éva Petróczi who helped them to express their ideas in what they trust is now clear English. – Cf. Árpád Mikó – Katalin Sinkó eds., *Történelem – kép: Szemelvények múlt és művészet kapcsolatából Magyarországon. Kiállítás a Magyar Nemzeti Galériában 2000. március 17 – szeptember 24* (Budapest: Magyar Nemzeti Galéria, 2000).

publications. Book illustrations and calendar-pictures are rather fewer in number. In some cases his figure occurs in frontispieces, in dedicational pictures, thesis papers, in linen altar cloths, in map illustrations and in “small devotional images”. Among the illustrated books we find not only works on history and church history, but also collections of legends, hymn-books and prayer books. The imprints with a frontispiece representing the figure of the king include philosophical works, theological compendia, catechisms, commentaries on the epistles and gospels, ecclesiastical works, Bible translations, calendars and biographies of Saint Stephen.

The compositional variety of the pictures is closely connected to their function. For example, the iconography of the highly representative and detailed ornamental title pages and thesis papers is much more complex than that of the initials and book illustrations. The function of the representations sometimes changed with use: initials were frequently applied to texts with a different content; book illustrations were taken out of their original context and often used as devotional pictures, and examples are found of ornamental title pages being converted into frontispieces.

The Survival of the Medieval Iconography until the End of the 16th Century

King Saint Stephen’s medieval image was mostly formed by hagiographic and liturgical tradition, by representations of the saint kings in European art and by the demands of court representation. The image formed in this way does not show personal features: the typical representation identified the monarch with the figure of an aged, bearded, crowned saint king with a sceptre and orb in his hands. As far as the iconography is concerned, the 15th and 16th century prints can be divided into three major groups:

- (a) Saint Stephen on his own;
- (b) The monarch in the company of other figures;
- (c) Scenes from his life and his legend.

The prints which were made until the end of the 16th century, can all be classified in these three groups. They mostly follow the medieval tradition, but they also reflect a desire to innovate iconographically. We shall present the main types in a rough chronological order, considering also ideological relations.

The earliest print known at present is a coloured woodcut attributed to 1460-1470 (1). (Fig. 1.) In the round-cut leaf the full-body figures of Saint Stephen and his son, Prince Emeric can be seen facing each other against a stylized landscape. A contemporary Latin inscription identifies the figures. They are separated from each other by a double line, and Stephen and Emeric reflect each other iconographically. The

structure of the image follows the tradition of the 13th-14th century frescoes in which Stephen and Ladislav are shown together. The main attributes of the young, armoured Emeric, standing on the right, are his smooth face and wavy hair, the halo, the princely crown, the lily and the sword. Stephen is a middle-aged, vigorous, bearded, armoured man, clad in a mantle and with angels floating over his head bearing a crown. His attributes are the halo, the orb and the cross. According to research so far, this is the only representation from the late Middle Ages in which Stephen holds a cross instead of a sceptre. Georg Schreiber says that the cross is the so-called *Fünfwundenkreuz* (*The Cross of Five Wounds*), and the leaf was presumably issued in Franconia, where the pilgrim's route stretched out from Hungary towards Aachen and Cologne.

In the remaining woodcuts from the 15th century, Stephen likewise appears, in conformity with medieval iconographic tradition, as an elderly monarch, with bifid beard, long hair, halo, orb with cross, sceptre and the arms of the country. In the illustrations of the Schedel-chronicle he was depicted in the company of other figures, like Saint Emeric, his wife Gisela, and King Saint Ladislav (4, 5, 6, 7). The mode of expression is for the most part schematic; the wood-blocks were often used to represent other monarchs by changing the inscription, which are the only clue to identifying the figures. The illustration of the Augsburg edition of the *Thuróczy-chronicle* (1488) is one of the peaks of Stephen's medieval iconography in prints. On the right of the aged king the infant prince Emeric sits on the throne, and both hold a sceptre in their right hand. Stephen has the orb in his left hand, angels are placing the crown on his haloed head, and on the left of the king we see the coat of arms of the country (3). The woodcut served as a model for Stephen's representation in Francis Nádasdy's *Mausoleum* (56), which appeared in 1664 and influenced a number of depictions of monarchs up to the end of the 19th century. In the illustration of the Brno edition of the *Thuróczy-chronicle* Stephen sits on the throne by himself and appears in *Maiestas* form (2). In another, strictly round-cut, later mounted woodcut, two adoring angels surround the half-length portrait of the crowned, mantled, elderly saint king holding an orb with a cross in his hands (8).

The pictures in which Stephen is shown in the company of Hungarian saints were only used on the verso of the title page of missals from the first third of the 16th century. In three such leaves (9, 16, 34), the three Hungarian kings who were canonized, Stephen, Emeric and Ladislav, appear with the Virgin Mary (twice as the *Patrona Hungariae*, once as the 'Woman clothed with the Sun'). In a fourth (12) he appears with the motifs of the *Arma Christi*, by borrowing this from a woodcut from an earlier, not Hungarian related missal. In these woodcuts Stephen, Emeric and Ladislav are represented as the protectors of Hungary, according to medieval physiognomical and visual patterns. In the leaf made for the 1511 *Zagreb Missal* two floating angels hold a crown above the head of the Virgin Mary, who is identified by an inscription as the *Patrona Hungariae* (16).

Some images appeared on the title page of liturgical works, as insignia of the booksellers of Buda who ordered the works (10, 19, 23). In these, two portraits of Stephen can be seen, one depicting him from the waist upwards, and the other from the knee upwards. The representation is the usual one: the king is shown as an elderly, bearded, saint monarch with the crown, sceptre, orb and with a halo containing the denomination.

The majority of the 16th-century small, unscribed woodcuts in which Stephen is depicted on his own, can be found immediately before certain Saint Stephen related texts in liturgical and devotional imprints, partly serving as initials. These are the so-called representational pictures, which present a highly stylized, bearded, middle-aged or aged monarch. In other contexts, in connection with other saints, they were used in the same publication and in other similar imprints, several times. On many occasions the king is presented sitting, in Maiestas form, with the conventional attributes (e.g. 14, 17). Elsewhere he is depicted standing, and his attributes are supplemented with a war-axe or stylized sword (18, 20, 24), a shield showing the national coat of arms (13), and once with a hand formed secondarily from the frame of the initial (probably as a reference to the relic of Stephen's right hand?) (22). In three further woodcuts he is not represented by the usual figure of a monarch, but by a half-length portrait of a confessor- or apostle-type standing figure holding a book, and by another such figure, teaching a monk and leaning on a stick (26, 28, 29). Most of these pictures were also used before the text concerning the feast of other saints.

Among the early woodcuts, the compositions which show a complete scene are very rare, and a cyclic presentation is wholly absent. In a 1505 breviary there is a full-leaf woodcut preceding a versified prayer to Saint Stephen, which shows a coronation scene without any inscription (11). The young, unbearded monarch is characterised by stylized attributes and only the printed text refers to the fact that it is supposed to represent Stephen's coronation. In an illustration, which appeared in the 1534 edition of the *Thuróczy-chronicle* made by Hans Hauge zum Freistein, Stephen is middle-aged, short-haired, and has a bifid beard (35). The coronation is performed by angels, and here again the main figure is stereotyped, and does not have any particular characterising features. The same image was re-used in the same work to illustrate also the coronations of Peter, Ladislav and Louis I (the Great).

In two woodcuts Stephen is depicted as a saint and dynastic ancestor, appearing in this form in an official history of the Roman Emperor Maximilian I. Stephen's figure is here accompanied by the figure of Queen Gisela, and the images are connected to Maximilian's power ambitions in Hungary. In the supposedly first, 1516-1522 edition of *Seel und Heiligenbuch Kaiser Maximilians (A Book On the Spirit and Holiness of Emperor Maximilian)* [...] by Jacob Mennel, he is presented on a separate page, as a monarch standing in a hall (27). In this series by Leonhard Beck, which shows Maximilian's real and alleged ancestors, Stephen is young and his face can be related to the type of representation of the Habsburgs. In *Triumphzug Kaiser Maximilians I (The Triumphal March*

of *Emperor Maximilian*), a series containing 136 woodcuts, Stephen is placed among the major dynasty-founding ancestors. The woodblocks of the triumph-representation (revived through the influence of antique models) were made between 1512 and 1519 and the first prints were made in 1526. Here the king is portrayed as a standing monarch, in the company of the tombstone monuments of Charlemagne, Clodvig and Rudolph I (33).

The number of prints after 1534 decreased suddenly because of the increased impact of the Reformation and the lack of Catholic art patrons. Between 1534 and the end of the century we find only three further woodcuts. The first is an illustration in a large map of Hungary, which was engraved in Basle in 1552 by the famous Austrian physician, histo- and cartographer, Wolfgang Lazius, and which appeared in Vienna in 1556. (Fig. 2.) The second depicts Stephen's death and appears in the 1581 German edition of Antonio Bonfini's chronicle of the history of Hungary (36). The third is a monthly picture of a calendar (37) probably produced in the German-speaking countries which can be dated to the end of the 16th century. Here Stephen is shown as an aged monarch standing in a stylized landscape, and his distinguishing attribute is the Hungarian national coat of arms with the crown in the bottom right corner.

The most prevailing illustration of the *Lazius-map*, ordered by Ferdinand I and dedicated to him and to Maximilian, depicts the Virgin Mary with the infant Jesus in her arms, surrounded by the kings Stephen and Ladislas.³ The picture belongs to the imago-type of representation of monarchs, and, more particularly to the one in which hero monarchs are depicted and the composition is more dynamic as a result of the standing position. The Basle woodcut – in contrast to the Hungarian iconographic tradition – depicts both kings with the orb in their hands, but Stephen wears an arch shaped crown, similarly to the Hungarian Corona Sacra. The Latin verse below the picture is a prayer to the Virgin Mary and to the Hungarian kings for the safety of the country, and it refers to the great deeds of the two saint kings, as well as to the sufferings of the Hungarian people.

The print marks the bringing together of Mary and the Hungarian saint kings as patrons of the country and, at the same time, it shows the consolidation of a picture type of the saints and the Patrona Hungariae which was constructed as a homogeneous composition and used for illustration in early 16th-century printed missals. In contrast to the earlier tradition, here the two canonized kings appear in the same intellectual and physical space as Mary. As they seize her open mantle, the composition as a whole can be also interpreted as a particular variant on the Virgin of the Protecting Cloak (Schutzmantelmadonna) type. This image is an early example of the process, in which the function of the Virgin Mary and the saint kings as patrons of the country renews and joins the idea of the liberation of the country from the Turkish occupation as well as the restoration of its territorial and confessional integrity.

³ Júlia Papp, „... vitézül védjétek a nemzetet ...« Wolfgang Lazius nagy Magyarország-térképének Szűz Mária, Szent István és Szent László ábrázolásáról,” *Ars Hungarica* 30.1 (2002): 25–49.

The overview thus far shows that the prints made between 1460 and 1600 essentially follow the medieval iconographic tradition. To some extent, the lack of cyclic representation indicates a kind of temporary impoverishment of iconography. The new attributes (the cross, sword, war-axe, and sacred relic of Stephen's right hand) and new figures around the king (Gisela, Roman emperors) usually carry a special meaning. The representation of the three canonized kings with the Virgin Mary at the beginning of the 16th century is not completely new; it supported the notion of the Patrona Hungariae and of the Hungarian saint kings as patrons of Hungary. The scheme, known from other earlier genres, appears after the realignment of the cult in the second half of the 15th century in panel painting. The type-variants, expanded by the inclusion of new elements, carry the notion of the sovereignty of the monarchs and the nation. That is the reason why this type – together with the iconography of the offering – contributed remarkably to the innovative character of the Saint Stephen iconography from the beginning of the 17th century.

Renaissance of the Iconography From the Beginning of the 17th Century

At the beginning of the 17th century, prototypes provided by the medieval iconography were available as the main sources of artistic representation. When the desperate historical situation of the country seemed to become more stable, both its independence and its separate statehood were called into question, and the Counter-Reformation gathered strenght, interest in the figure of Saint Stephen increased on the part of Catholics. Beyond the symbolic representation of the first Hungarian king, who converted the Hungarians to Christianity and established the independent state by force of arms and laws, there was a need for a physical representation. The search for outside attributes was intensified, and these became more important than the application of the medieval ideal-typical visual schemes. While enriching the components of the physical representation, new imperatives arose: on the one hand there was a desire to go beyond the medieval traditions, and on the other a desire to shape a new kind of physiognomy.

One of the main manifestations of the search for a new mode of expression was the king-series, which satisfied the representational needs of the Habsburg court and were accompanied by the figures of the Hungarian leaders and Habsburg monarchs. The other group consists of the images which were either closely or loosely connected to current historical and political events, as well as to social life and thus embedded into current themes. Among these latter we also find adaptations of earlier representations and the secondary application of new compositional schemes, as allegorical compositions reflecting the continuous search and renewal.

The common feature of the scenes, which were not depicted earlier, or which were differently depicted, is their functional diversity: they could equally be used in

ornamental title pages, thesis papers and so-called calendar pictures (depictions of the month-marking saints). The prints appear from the first third of the 17th century and new variants were made from time to time. Their main novelty is seen in the energetic figures which suggest a readiness to act, and by the compositions, which are full of life. The former, static setting becomes active, scene-like, and while preserving dignity, it also suggests activity. All these were greatly helped by the new technique of the engraving, by the more complex world of thought represented in the images, by the break with the motif of the aged king and by the fact that the figure of Stephen became filled with power. The standing saint king- and Maiestas-type presentation is changed: Stephen often kneels, prays, walks, uses vivid gestures, drives a chariot, accepts homage, takes or offers the crown. Longer or shorter – closer or more loosely connected – passages of text accompany the pictures, serving to specify the intended message.

The new iconographic types and type-variants appearing in the 17th century indicate the development of the cult in the early modern period, and they include features which transform the figure of the saint in accordance with the needs of the period. These compositions were created both in Hungary and in the European centres of worship of Stephen, that is to say primarily in the South German territories. Most of the prints were ordered by the Jesuits and the Catholic aristocracy. Their common feature is that they not only revive memory of the king, but also encourage to think, to meditate, and to face the problems of the time. The scenes suggest immediacy, and substitute for an abstract figure of Stephen an image of a monarch full of life and power. The main types are as follows:

(i) *Saint Stephen in His Domestic Circles*

The representations with Gisela and Emeric – unlike the earlier, static concept of the theme – are scene-like, and they carry other meaning beside family relatedness. For example, in one of the illustrations of Matthäus Rader's *Bavaria Sancta* (Munich, 1628), a collection of legends, Stephen is presented under the Hungarian coat of arms as the husband of Gisela (she is depicted under the Bavarian arms) and as the father of Saint Emeric (47). The eight-line German poem under the picture praises Gisela, who converted Stephen to the Christian faith. Gisela appears as a church founder, and, with a gesture familiar from the iconography of Saint Elisabeth of the House of Árpád, gives alms. Saint Stephen's middle-aged, bearded figure, turning his back on us, is made forceful by having hands on hips, and legs straddled, and his head is turned towards the spectator.

A 1688 calendar-icon printed in Salzburg shows the scene from the legend of Saint Günther in which Stephen regales his brother-in-law in the presence of Gisela, and the hermit makes the fried chicken fly by means of his prayer (63). Though ideologically he is only an accessory figure, Stephen sits in the middle, at the head of the table, raising his hands in astonishment.

These examples indicate that the royal archetype, complemented with Gisela and other family members or relatives, is typical of the foreign-edited prints, but it was influential in the arts of Hungary, as well. As well as expressing family relatedness, the representations show the dignified canonized king, who had been put into the distant sphere of sanctity, more closely related to everyday life of the period. The figures appear in clothes and in an environment contemporary to the time when the picture was produced, thus diminishing the temporal remoteness of the events and promoting a direct reception of the prints.

(ii) *Saint Stephen as an Active Ruler Rich In Christian Virtues*

The leaves belonging here do not derive from the former iconographic tradition, and they reflect the new ideas which emerged continuously from the beginning of the 17th century. In 1629 and 1630 the figure of Stephen asking help from the Virgin Mary against Emperor Conrad, was depicted in three versions. All three engravings can be set into a calendar-icon series dedicated to the Munich confraternity of the Virgin Mary, which was led by the Jesuits. In an illustration of the *Christliches Heldenbuch (A Book Of Christian Heroes)*, the middle-aged Stephen, kneeling in a military tent with his royal insignia beside him, prays to the Virgin (48). The related text compares the king represented as a Christian hero to Moses. In the German and Latin versions of Andreas Brunners' *Fasti Mariani* (1630), a calendar-icon series, a variant of the same composition appears in an extended form, with German and Latin commentaries (49, 50). The composition is enriched by the inclusion of further tents and of soldiers watching the scene, while the Virgin Mary stretches out a hand towards the praying king. In the Latin version the crown can be seen on Saint Stephen's head. The scene is put into an oval frame but further motifs, depicted outside the frame, also help the interpretation of the main scene. For example, the palm branch above the clouds, Mary's initial and the dove refer to Stephen's victory with the help of the Virgin and also refer to peace. The rain pouring from clouds, the lightning, the defeated warrior lying on the ground and the lion refer to the fight and the defeat of Emperor Conrad.

In an allegorical illustration of György Alajos Erdődy's apologetical work *Gloria virtutis Hungaricae*, which was published in 1633 in Douai and dedicated to Ferdinand III, then king of Hungary, Stephen is seen in contemporary Hungarian costume as a hero triumphing over the heathens (53). He sits in Jupiter's chariot drawn by four horses, and like Jupiter he bears a bundle of lightning rods in one hand. In all probability, Peter Rucholle of Antwerp made his engraving according to Erdődy's idea, of which the inscriptions ('In hoc signo vinces' – 'Idololatriae' – 'Profligatio') assist the interpretation. The king, who converted Hungarians to Christianity, is here the destroyer of idolatry, victorious hero, who drives his chariot through the demolished antique statues, the pagan sacrificial animals and the defeated heathens. An iconographic parallel of the type is the representation 'Saint Leopold in a triumphal chariot', in which Leopold is depicted as the prophet Elijah.

Stephen appears as a victorious commander in a scene of the 1633 Douai thesis paper of György Alajos Erdődy (54). The young monarch sits on the throne and takes tribute from the defeated Bulgarians and the representatives of Mysia territory. He gesticulates strongly with his right hand and his right foot is thrust back, and his left foot forward. In all these prints, the king is depicted in different military and warlike settings and represented either as a young or a middle-aged monarch at the peak of his powers.

In the scene of his receiving his crown from the hands of abbot Anasthasius, Stephen is depicted as a powerful, bearded man (64). The leaf, related to the feast of Saint Anasthasius, is part of the 1688 Salzburg series of calendar-icons, which introduces the Benedictine saints worshipping the Virgin Mary. In the four corners of the picture, further motifs relating to sin and to Redemption are added to the scene framed by the tree of life of Paradise.

In a late 17th-century edition of the *Martyrologium Romanum*, Stephen is depicted as a middle-aged, powerful saintly monarch with one hand on his hip, holding a sceptre in the other, and with a sword at his side (76). Here Stephen is a central figure, his positioning denotes power, determination, capacity to achieve and will. In the background of the main scene is a further subordinate one: Stephen, sitting on the throne, under the baldachin, surrounded by his attendants, receives homage from his subjects. In the top left corner we see the Hungarian coat of arms with the crown. The inscription does not identify the precise scene but merely reports that Stephen is the first king and the apostle of the Hungarians, who offered his country to the Virgin Mary, founded churches and cloisters in Rome, Jerusalem and Constantinople, and died in 1034 [1].

The leaves listed above present Stephen's active public work, his various actions that can serve as examples to encourage the restoration of the independence of the country, the practising of virtues and defence of the Catholic faith. In several prints from the 1660s, the attributes indicate that the powerful martial Saint Stephen-type became fashionable. In the frame decoration of János Melczer's 1665 Kosice (Kassa) thesis paper, the half-length framed portraits of Hungarian kings – including Stephen – are surrounded by war trophies (58). Under the portraits of the kings – with the exception of those of Stephen and Ladislas – we can see flags bearing the arms of the former territories of the country. In the ornamental title page of István Tarnóczy's 1680 Saint Stephen biography *Idea coronata* (discussed later), we see hanging arms, helmets and suits of armour (66). In a 1681 print the king is similarly represented with arms, wearing armour and holding a sceptre in his hand (67). In the crown-offering scene in Gábor Hevenesi's 1692 hagiographic collection *Ungaricae sanctitatis indicia*, Stephen again wears armour (71). (Fig. 3.)

All these leaves clearly express a socio-political message: they urge the ultimate driving of the Ottoman out of the country as promptly as possible. The engravings essentially reflect the same aim as was expressed in an important utterance by Miklós Zrínyi in his *Remedy Against the Turkish Poison* ('Az török áfium ellen való orvosság'):

“Our old saint King Stephen’s crown is nothing without his sword; he who does not gird on his sword, crowns his head in vain.”

(iii) *The Iconography of the Offering of the Country to the Virgin Mary*

The iconographic collective type of the offering, which can be traced back to medieval origins and which was considerably revised and formed into scenes, appears in several art genres from the second half of the century. Its unrivalled popularity is closely connected to the literary appearance of the theme within the frame of the *Patrona Hungariae* or *Regnum Marianum* concepts respectively. Stephen’s later attributes, beside the usual ones, can be a church building, the national coat of arms, a map of the country or the national flag. In special cases the Virgin Mary, after accepting the offering, intervenes with the Holy Trinity. Mary is also depicted as a mantled queen crowned by the Holy Trinity, instead of the figure of the *Patrona Hungariae* holding the Child in her arms.

The image of the offering of the country in reproductional graphics was especially popular when the reconquest of the country from the Turks and constant political change became the most urgent historical mission. This iconographic type was established by connecting the figures of the Virgin Mary and Saint Stephen. As a long lasting topical representational form, it remained in use until the end of the 18th century, and attracted other motifs also.

The most popular visual representation of the offering-idea was the scene in which Saint Stephen offers the crown to the Virgin Mary. The earliest example known today was made by the Viennese painter Tobias Pöck in 1665. It was ordered by Ferenc Nádasdy for the altar of the Mariazell chapel of his family. The composition was popularized by the engraving of Sigmund Schott, which appeared in the hagiographic collection of Gábor Hevenesi in 1692, and it generated a number of iconographic variants in different genres during the 18th century (71).

(iv) *King Stephen in the Company of Hungarian Saints*

This type of representation is closely connected to the medieval iconographic tradition of the *Sancti Reges Hungariae* in the 17th century, as well. Until the 1530s a variant of this type, contaminated with the Virgin Mary as the Woman clothed with the Sun, with the *Patrona Hungariae* (within the frame of the *Sacra Conversazione* type) and the *Vir Dolorum*, was still frequently used. The transformation of the popular form into a new compositional scheme and its extension to other Hungarian or Hungarian related saints started at the beginning of the 17th century, and this form remained common until around the end of the 18th century. The composition is based on the so-called passive, plotless, front set medieval concept of the iconography of Saint Stephen, and certain examples reflect mannerist characteristics. The form of the representation became common again as a result of the reorganization of the Catholic church from the 17th century, and the medieval tradition became the vehicle of new ideas and purposes.

The transformation and extension of the old type of the *Sancti Reges Hungariae* supported very effectively the cult of the representative saints of the country, the close connection between the faith and the patron saints, and their setting into a historical perspective, and offered thereby a strong defence of the Catholic faith. From the 17th century on, in the selection of “national” saints it became a condition that the applicant, who was not Hungarian born, should have acted in the country and had a considerable influence later. The cult of the gradually increasing group of saints, including Sigismund, Vencel, Zoerard and Benedict, Stanislaus, Demeter, Gerald, Emeric, Ladislas, Adalbert, Stephen first martyr, King Stephen I and Elisabeth of the House of Árpád, was first encouraged by the Jesuits. They also produced the first hagiographic compendium of “national” saints at the end of the 17th century. The combination and interpretation of the “national” saints shifted according to the intention behind of the representations.

In an engraving, which was undoubtedly made as a devotional image around 1600, the tripartite image of the Hungarian saint kings was increased by the inclusion of the figure of Saint Elisabeth of the House of Árpád (38). In a cloud above the saints, the Virgin Mary sits on a throne with the infant Jesus. The halo around her head illuminates the whole scene and emphasizes the standing figures of the four saints, thus accentuating the close ideological connection between them and holding together the composition. The inscriptions name the saints, and Mary is referred to as *Patrona Hungariae*.

The earliest title page decorated with the simultaneous depiction of the *Patrona Hungariae* and the Hungarian saints, appeared in Parma in 1610 (39). The book, dedicated to Matthias II, is the philosophical dissertation of János Erdődy, made at the Jesuit University of Parma. In the engraving, composed presumably according to the idea of the Catholic Erdődy with Jesuit influence also, the oval-framed title is surrounded by oval-framed figures of two male and female saints on each side, and putti, making the whole into one single composition. In late mannerist style, the Virgin Mary is sitting with the Child with a *Patrona Hungariae* inscription in the centre top. Jesus makes a gesture of blessing towards Saint Stephen. At the top of the page are Stephen and Ladislas and at the bottom Saint Elisabeth of the House of Árpád and Blessed Margaret, whose figure rarely appeared at that time. The portraits of the Hungarian saints are bordered by one putto on each side. They each hold an attribute in hand which correlates to the saints and symbolically refers to antique gods. Stephen's portrait is held by a putto with the symbol of the virtue of temperance, while another putto, leaning on the picture, holds Jupiter's lightning rods. On both sides are further puttos, floating with the symbols of Prudentia, and the Church respectively (snake and mirror for the one, keys for the other). The setting of the *Patrona Hungariae*, of the Hungarian saints and of the symbols held by the putti is compositionally closed: together they convey the complex message together. The crescent moon below the feet of the Virgin Mary refers to the presence of the Turks in Hungary, and further motifs in the image effectively indicate the close connection to the Catholic church, the Jesuit order, and the

deliberate effort to re-Catholicize the country. The portraits of the Hungarian saints are integrated into a dynamic composition, and they mark the dignity of the historical past by their immobility. Their counterparts are the putti, depicted in different postures, suggesting action.

If we compare this print with the ornamental title page of the 1613 and 1623 editions of Péter Pázmány's apologetic *Compendium* (*Isteni igazságra vezérlő kalauz...*) (41, 45), the latter two seem to be works born of "Renaissance tranquillity" similar to the ornamental title pages of the Canisius-translation, as also of the commentaries on epistles and gospels by Gergely Vásárhelyi (42, 43). The ensemble of the *Patrona Hungariae* and the canonized Hungarian kings complemented by Saint Elisabeth of the House of Árpád, was developed by the figures of Saint Adalbert and Saint Martin in the title page of the 1623 edition of the *Compendium*, and by that of Saint Gerald in György Káldi's 1626 translation of the Bible (45, 46). All these ornamental title pages consist of artificially assembled independent elements, and the connection between them can not be approached in a visual, but rather in a logical way. These frames of title pages, which in their structure recall gothic, Renaissance and baroque altar architecture, are not unrelated to the motif of the triumphal arch, favoured by the Jesuits, too.

In the ornamental title page of the compendium of church history by Menyhért Inchofer – as also to the structure of earlier ornamental title pages of similar works, in an architectural frame – we find a nearly complete series of the Hungarian and Hungarian-related saints (55, cf. also 51). Beside Mary, seated above a crescent moon, appear Emmeram, Saint Martin of Tours, Saint Martin of Braga (born in Pannonia around 515), Adalbert, the hermits Benedict and Zoerard-Andrew, King Stephen, Pilgrim, Metod, Emeric, Ladislas, Saint Elisabeth of the House of Árpád and seven other figures. The composition includes the images of twenty persons in total.

All these ornamental title pages essentially break away from the late medieval tradition of representing the Hungarian saints together. The commonly rooted composition carried – in addition to the idea of trust in the Hungarian saints as patrons – a complex message, which remained topical after the 17th century, as well. That could be one of the reasons why the prints are in conformity with works of different genres and were also used secondarily in the 18th century. Thus, among others Tobias Bidenharter's 1623 engraving – originally made for the second edition of Péter Pázmány's *Compendium* with the title-text removed – was bound into the 1707 edition as a frontispiece for the fourth part of András Illyés's series of sermons, *Parable of a Christian Life* (*Keresztyeni életnek példája*) (45). A leaf of unknown original context, bearing the cardinal's insignia of Pázmány, presumably ordered in Pázmány's lifetime and made between 1634 and 1637 – decorated with the *Patrona Hungariae* and full length portraits of Saint Adalbert and Saint Stephen, signed by György Szelepcényi – was used secondarily as a frontispiece for the collection of Pázmány's sermons in 1695, and for the first part of András Illyés's work already mentioned (72). The ornamental title page of the 1626 Káldi Bible was engraved anew in an unaltered composition for

the 1732 edition (84). The collective representation of the Hungarian saints appears in calendar title pages on several occasions. In an engraving – depicting a view of Nagyszombat/Trnava made by Justus van der Nypoort in 1683 – both sides of the *Patrona Hungariae*, the figures of Saint Ladislav and Saint Adalbert, and Saint Stephen and Saint Emeric can be seen in a function which entitles them both to protect the country and its dependent parts and regions, and to have authority over them (68).

In all these title prints Stephen – in harmony with his historical significance – is given a distinctive position and is usually depicted on the right of the Virgin Mary. The images supported the idea of the catholic Hungarian monarchy for almost 200 years, and they got their special message in the given contexts. That made the compositions, with almost identical structures, available for the decoration of books of different genres. These genres incorporated science, as well as the Bible or calendars promising welfare and abundance for the relevant year. The reception of the changing motifs indicates the flexibility and timelessness of the structure, for example Moses, David and the four evangelists in the Bible translation, the view and the personifications of the four seasons in the Pozsony/Bratislava calendar. The transformation of the saint's position and the change of iconographic types whereby, for example, Saint Stephen's offering of the crown appears in the place of the *Patrona Hungariae*, reflect to the same tendency.

(v) *Legitimising Representations*

In these prints Stephen was mostly represented according to the medieval iconographic tradition, yet the complete picture carries a new message. The majority of them survived as ornamental title pages, frontispieces and dedicational pictures. In Johann Erdődy's 1610 dissertation entitled *Conclusiones*, mentioned earlier, a dedicatory picture was bound before the text of the dedication, completely filling both sides of the open book (40). (Fig. 4.) In the niches of the semi-circular interior broken up by columns, we see the statues of three Hungarian and two Austrian monarchs, depicted according to medieval tradition and arranged in a gallery-like structure. Before them, in his full monarchic splendour, the Hungarian king Matthias II is led towards the empty niche by figures personifying Faith and Mars. The left-hand statues can be identified as Saint Stephen, Saint Ladislav and Matthias I (of Hunyad) by virtue of their royal attributes. The composition not only celebrates Matthias II allegorically, but also emphasizes the legitimacy of his rule by representing the outstanding personalities of the two dynasties as royal ancestors together. The iconographic source of the leaf can be found among the woodcuts which were made at the beginning of the 16th century and served the official state of the Habsburg dynasty. The most important new element – other than the compositional arrangement – is the presentation of the Hungarian kings as dynastic ancestors equal to the Habsburg monarchs. In all probability, this composition was also instrumental in Johann Erdődy's appointment (within six years) to the bishopric of Eger by Matthias II and in his rise to the position of a royal councillor later.

In the title page of the 1664 historical work *Neue Ugarische und Siebenbürgische Chronick* (*A New Hungarian and Transylvanian Chronicle*), we see Saint Stephen and Emperor Leopold I as Hungarian kings (57). Stephen appears, in the imagined traditional wear, as the ancestor legitimizing Emperor Leopold on the Hungarian throne. Between the two standing images of the monarchs is placed the coat of arms of Hungary. Above it two floating angels – referring to the motif of Saint Stephen’s coronation by angels – hold the haloed *Corona Sacra*. One of them offers a victory palm to Stephen, the other is about to place a laurel wreath on Leopold’s head. The armoured Leopold holds an orb with a cross and a sceptre, while the crowned Stephen holds a sceptre in his hand. Such a sharing of the royal insignia symbolizes the unity of the dynastic ancestor and the contemporary monarch. In the bottom of the ornamental title page, in a separate frame, a Turkish-Hungarian battle-scene refers to the actual historical mission of driving the Ottoman out of Europe, while at the same time evoking Stephen’s fight against the heathens. The composition had also to represent the common sovereign features of the first Hungarian king and Emperor Leopold.

John Melczer’s 1665 Kassa/Kosice thesis paper can be interpreted as Emperor Leopold’s legitimising image, too (58). In the frame of the print, the Hungarian ancestral kings are placed in cartouches, in accordance with the positioning of the royal portraits in *Mausoleum*. Stephen is the first of them. In the central picture the Ottoman-defeating Leopold appears in an allegorical composition. Above his head, on clouds are lined up those of his Habsburg ancestors who also ruled as Hungarian kings. The compositional setting of the ancestors – beside showing the legal continuity – expresses the difference between the historical- and blood-related ancestors.

The idea of legitimacy is closely connected to the person of palatine Pál Esterházy, as well. It is indirectly reflected in the ornamental title page of István Tarnóczy’s biography of Saint Stephen, the *Idea coronata*, which was published with the support of Esterházy in 1680 (66). Before Stephen, who is seated on the throne, is an armoured knight holding a shield with the inscription ‘Arte et Marte’ and the coat of arms of Hungary: he symbolises Mars. Minerva, holding a shield with the motto ‘Virtute et Sanguine’ and the coat of arms of the Esterházy family, supposedly refers to the Maecenas of the book. The idea of legitimacy is indicated by Minerva’s gesture pointing towards Saint Stephen.

One year later, in 1681, appeared István Csete’s *Duodecim Stephani heroës Ungariae* (67). On the frontispiece, six students from Nagyszombat/Trnava pay homage in front of the bust of the patron of the book, the new palatine, Paul Esterházy. They are depicted with their coat of arms. Esterházy’s historical role and high position are emphasized by the range of the Hungarian kings, and especially the figure of Saint Stephen: on the top of the triumph arch on both sides, busts of the Hungarian leaders and kings line up. Above Esterházy’s head we see a miniature scene of Stephen’s coronation by angels.

Summary

This overview shows that after the advance of the Reformation and the reduction in the number of the representations of national saints, along with the strengthening of the Counter Reformation, the demand to revise traditional iconography likewise presented itself in reproductional graphics from the beginning of the 17th century. The fact of the country having been torn into districts, the confessional divide and the lasting presence of the Ottomans all meant challenges. The current historical and political tasks, involving action bearing on the whole country, helped to modify the earlier iconographic tradition. The Habsburg dynasty, the Catholic aristocracy and the secular clergy supported by the Jesuit order, collectively strove to reshape the cult of the national saints including Stephen, on a wide social basis. Reproductional graphics provided an effective artistic means of achieving that ambition.

The main visual and ideological sources of the 15th-17th century period of the iconography of Saint Stephen consist partly of medieval literary and visual traditions and partly of the efforts to renew those traditions consciously, bearing in mind current events. The figure of the saint king became one of the most important examples and resources of the Counter-Reformation and the nation's struggle for independence. In him the country saw a symbol of its own revival, unity and future.

The new visual modes of expression, mostly set up under the inspiration of the Jesuits and supported by the Catholic aristocracy, were highly responsive to the threats to the country. There were attempts to change the traditional iconography of King Stephen by pushing the profane features into the background, representing new, vivid scenes and the motifs of the legendary tradition, making the physiognomy more complex and creating manifold pictorial contexts. In the course of this process of change, the problem of historical accuracy was considered secondary to the new message. The characteristics of the king's historic context, adjusted to the new scenes, simultaneously highlighted the unsolvable problem of realistic representation.

From the beginning of the 17th century the Jesuits effectively connected the cult of the Hungarian saints with the current historical objective of the nation, re-Catholicization and hostility towards the Ottoman Empire. The pictorial patterns, with their extended literary background, focused on the collective representation of the Hungarian saints, on scenes of the angelic coronation and on offering of the country for the Virgin Mary. In addition, Saint Stephen's figure often became a subordinate part of major compositions.

Both in context and in form, the prints significantly reinterpreted Stephen's figure in comparison to the tradition of the late Middle Ages. In many cases, the engravers aimed to create visual structures based on scenes taken from life. From the beginning of the 17th century, in the collective depictions of Hungarian saints – apart from the co-ordinating representation – variants appear formed into “functional” groups, in which Stephen regularly had a special position. Important means of reinterpretation ere

the representation of situations suggesting activity and of new attributes, allegorical compositions and the elevation of the figure of the king to a mythological level.

In the new iconography the representation of the past is specifically connected with the articulation of the current message. Stephen stands out above all among the Hungarian saints: the symbols, objects grouped around his figure and the images of his environment together suggest that after driving out the Ottomans, the country can regain its territorial integrity and its days of glory, reflected by the splendour of Saint Stephen's era. As major or background scenes, the depictions of different historical events also emphasize the continuity and the alterability of history.

In the attempt to renew iconography, we can strongly feel the influence of the cult of the saint towards and back from Europe. The main feature of the attempt is the disengagement from the medieval iconographic tradition, yet some of the elements of this were reused. The primary aim was to go beyond the schematic image of the aged, saint king, and to replace this with the figure of a young, powerful monarch accompanied by narrative elements, together with the Virgin Mary, with the figures of Saint Emeric, Saint Ladislav and other Hungarian saints.

The process of modification of the imagery of Saint Stephen can be traced in reproductional graphics over some two hundred years. The masters took extra care in the modelling of Stephen, since he was a figure symbolizing the whole country. As is usual in the visual representation of historical recurrent themes, here also the value of the example and the conscious joining of the effective means of expressions were decisive. The unity of content and form was realized at the highest level in the large-size original compositions.

With the exception of the offering iconography, the majority of the picture-types which became more direct, did not win significant popularity in other genres of fine arts. A large number of new compositions were created, which were unsuitable for adaptation to other genres, because of their far too detailed and specifically graphic features, their links to a particular occasion or context. Throughout the 17th century Stephen remained primarily a "confessor" or "pater patriae", full of dignity, the saint of faith and morals, the monarch taking care of his nation as a Christian king. While contemporary sermons often compared him to well-known biblical and historical figures and interpreted his deeds in different ways, such initiatives in the arts occur only sporadically.

Illustrations



Figure 1
King Saint Stephen I and Prince Saint Emereic, single leaf coloured woodcut, 1460-1470, Munich, Staatliche Graphische Sammlung, Inv.-no. 118257.



Figure 2
The Virgin Mary with the kings Saint Stephen and Saint Ladislav, woodcut, map illustration, 1552. From Wolfgang Lazius, *Regni Hungariae descriptio* (Viennae 1556), detail, Basel, University Library, Kartensammlung, In.-no. AA 86-89.



Figure 3
King Saint Stephen offers the crown to the Virgin Mary, engraving, book illustration, 1692. From Gabriel Hevenesi, *Ungaricae sanctitatis indicia* (Tyrnaviae 1692), Budapest, National Library Széchényi, RMK II 1718.

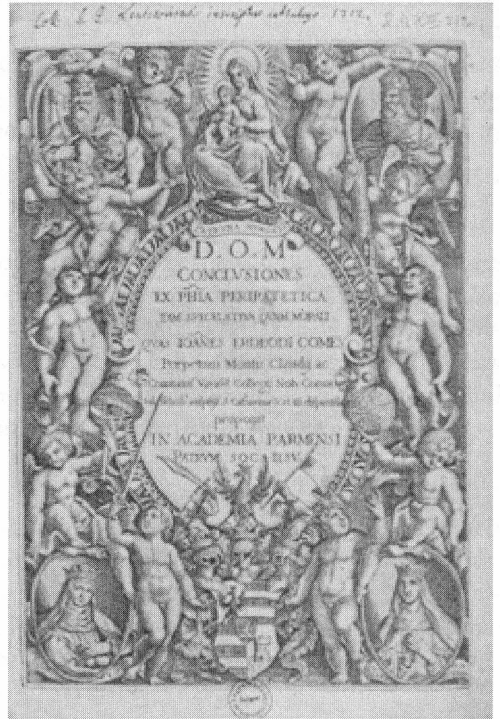


Figure 4
The Virgin Mary as Patrona Hungariae in the company of king Saint Stephen and other Hungarian saints, engraving, titl-page, 1610. From Ioannes Erdödy, *Conclusiones ex philosophia peripatetica* (Parma 1610), Budapest, University Library, RMK III 212.