

# Hungarian Trade Connections within and beyond Habsburg Central Europe (16<sup>th</sup> and First Half of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century)<sup>1</sup>

## Introduction, time frames and spatial dimensions

The first two centuries of the early modern period (1450–1650) coincide with the formation of global economic systems characterised by an interregional division of labour.<sup>2</sup> The central trend of the period was a shift of economic centre from the Mediterranean to northwest Europe. In the first half of the period, the southern German banking houses played the leading role in the European economic system.<sup>3</sup> The crisis processes that began in the late 1550s set in motion a broad trend of transformation in the second half of the century. By the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, there were also major changes in trade relations and in company structures. By the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the entire economic system had been fundamentally transformed. The turning point for Central Europe was 1526 (the Battle of Mohács). The Jagiellonian dominance was replaced by the Habsburg Composite State in Central Europe, which was dependent on the southern Germany merchant capital for its existence.<sup>4</sup> The period between 1526 and 1541 also resulted in the division of the Kingdom of Hungary into three parts: the central regions came under Ottoman rule, the western and northern parts of Hungary under Habsburg rule as the Kingdom of Hungary and the eastern parts in Ottoman dependence as the Principality of Transsylvania.

The change in political borders triggered a major process of realignment. The central region of the Kingdom of Hungary came under Ottoman rule. The economic centres here, mainly Buda and Pest, lost their central function. Their economic functions were taken over mainly by the cities of the western border region, Pozsony/Bratislava and Nagyszombat/Trnava.<sup>5</sup> A few lowland centres (Debrecen, Nagyőrös, Kecskemét) were able to take advantage of the boom in cattle exports until the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. However, the decline in Hungarian cattle exports brought the development of most lowland towns to a standstill. Debrecen, in particular, managed to survive the difficulties from the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. By the end of the century Debrecen had become the most populous Hungarian town.

Irrespective of the changes in the centres of the economic system, the significance of the period is that, thanks to the extensive transregional network of Hungarian business actors, the politically disintegrated Kingdom of Hungary remained an economically integral part of the European economic system.<sup>6</sup>

This was not only because of the close relations between the Habsburgs and their neighbouring regions, but also because of their different economic structures. It is very important not to imagine the interregional division of labour in the early modern period according to a kind of one-dimensional model, i.e. the Central European regions were economically not vulnerable to Western Europe. Another way of looking at it is that in the complex network of relations between the European regions, one was not exclusively the receptive market for the other. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century and the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, a balanced network still linked the regions. Each region was able to participate in multilateral trade with groups of goods that were essential for other regions. Textile and other industrial

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<sup>2</sup> Feldbauer, *Globalgeschichte*; Wallerstein, *Das moderne*; Landsteiner, *Kein Zeitalter*.

<sup>3</sup> Landsteiner, *Kein Zeitalter*. 95–96.

<sup>4</sup> Pálffy, *A Magyar*, 77–85.

<sup>5</sup> First name is the historical name in Hungarian or German, while the second is the name used today.

<sup>6</sup> Tózsá-Rigó, Ungarn, 411–413. In broader context: Kaps, *Über*.

products from the German, Austrian or Czech-Moravian regions, or luxury and other goods from Venice, found a market in Hungary. And Hungarian livestock was essential to the food supply of those regions.<sup>7</sup> Hungarian copper was in high demand throughout Europe and even outside Europe. While Hungarian wine was sold in smaller quantities, it sold very well in the regions bordering the Kingdom to the west and north.

The division of labour in Europe from the 15<sup>th</sup> century onwards is clearly visible. The regions of the Carpathian Basin contributed mainly raw materials and semi-finished products. Nevertheless, at the beginning of the period, Central Europe and the Hungarian regions within it were indispensable complements to Western Europe rather than vulnerable markets.<sup>8</sup>

Although the Carpathian Basin can be understood as an economically unified region even after the break-up of the Kingdom of Hungary into three parts, the focus of this chapter is primarily on the economic relations of the Kingdom of Hungary under Habsburg rule. The regions under Ottoman occupation and the Principality of Transylvania will be dealt with only in cases where goods were exported from there. Trade relations between Transylvania and the regions under Ottoman rule are examined in two other chapters of this volume (Authors: Lacko, Pakucs).

## Methods

For the trade in goods, the obvious starting point is to analyse the customs registers of the period. The source group E 210 of the Hungarian Chamber Archives of the Hungarian National Archives seemed promising at first glance. The collection contains the sources of 190 customs offices. However, the documents are sporadic in time and inconsistent in character. The main problem is that only occasionally is there a customs list covering a whole year, or at least a fragmentary one. We must therefore include in the analysis all sources that can provide additional sets of information.<sup>9</sup>

In 16<sup>th</sup> century trade, the entrepreneurial company (*Unternehmergesellschaft*) became the typical organisational form. According to some authors, they defined European economic life between 1450 and 1650.<sup>10</sup> The trade corporations that played a central role in maintaining the economic system formed a complex business network. We can agree with the criticism of traditional economic history that this approach often only goes as far as the activity of business actors influencing market processes is concerned.<sup>11</sup> However, in developing their strategy, business actors did not actually communicate with the market, but primarily with other business actors. Over the last two decades, research that explores the structure of the market by examining business networks has become increasingly important. By examining the network-like structural elements, the focus can be placed on the mutual flow of resources and currencies, and on multi-polar communication.<sup>12</sup> Accepting the above, classical trade history with its focus on commodity groups should be combined with a person-oriented economic history. This will give us a more complete picture of business actors. This chapter will not only focus on the traded goods and commodity flows but will also provide insights into the networks among business actors.

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<sup>7</sup> Tózsá-Rigó, *A dunai*, 66.

<sup>8</sup> Wallerstein, *Das moderne*, 125–128.

<sup>9</sup> I have recently had the opportunity to research the relevant sources in the neighbouring regions concerned (Austria, Germany, Czech Republic, Poland, Italy), and have thus been able to add a relatively good database to the sporadic customs data.

<sup>10</sup> Nutz, *Unternehmensplanung*, 94.

<sup>11</sup> Plumpe, *Ökonomisches*, 27.

<sup>12</sup> Powell, *Neither*.

Based on the available sources, it is possible to analyse Hungarian exports on the basis of a broader database. Finally, the study of business networks also puts more emphasis on exports, as Hungarian traders played a larger role in the export of goods from the Carpathian Basin, than in imports.

According to the spatial structure of early modern Hungarian trade, I will examine four major trade directions: west, southwest, northwest and north. Within the framework provided by the sources, the following thematic units are presented for each trade direction.

#### 1. Commodity groups, commodity flows

Hungarian export products were an important part of transregional trade. However, commodity flows cannot always be traced to the final point of use. In the analysis of transregional trade, the regions closer to the Kingdom of Hungary are given a more prominent role.

#### 2. The spatial dimension of trade: routes

We can set up commodity flows according to the regions to which Hungarian products were exported. Another important question is the routes that traders took in the border areas. In some cases, several parallel paths can be outlined, and these may have varied over time.

#### 3. Business networks

Business networks illustrate that the complex network of relations in Habsburg Central Europe cannot be discussed purely at an interregional level. These networks show the transregional entanglement and the positions of Hungarian merchants within them. The latter traded in various forms of merchant association with different groups of goods (as will be shown later for each trade route)

Map 1. Trade routes [map is under construction]

### **The Western trade direction**

The Danube route was one of the main trade axes or, in Braudel's words, the "lifeline" of the Central European region.<sup>13</sup> The Danube water and land route was one of Europe's busiest transport arteries. Broadly speaking, the following regions can be included: the eastern part of southern Germany, the eastern region of Upper Austria, Lower Austria, and the western and central regions of the Kingdom of Hungary. Several regions that were economically linked to the Danube route can be linked to this transport chain. The western connections of the large region under study covered the whole of southern Germany. From the north, it was closely linked to Southern Bohemia and Moravia and, via these, to Silesia and via Upper Hungary (now Eastern Slovakia) to Southern Poland. In the south, similar links can be traced with northern Italy and finally through the Kingdom of Hungary with the northern Balkans.<sup>14</sup>

Unfortunately, due to the large number of product groups and mainly the lack of quantitative sources, it is not possible to make a general estimate of the volume of each trade direction. It is certain that the western trade route (with the exception of the south-west and north-west) was the most significant.<sup>15</sup>

We only have fragmentary information on the customs administration of the Kingdom of Hungary in the early modern. The reason for this is that only a few customs registers have survived. At the northern and western borders were the main custom posts: Kassa/Košice, Trencsén/Trenčín, Nagyszombat/Trnava, Óvár (now Mosonmagyaróvár) and Pozsony/Bratislava. These had at the borders several smaller customs posts s.c. *filiale*. In the

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<sup>13</sup> Braudel, *A Földközi-tenger*, 300.

<sup>14</sup> Tózsá-Rigó, *A dunai*, 11–13.

<sup>15</sup> Ember, *Magyarország*, 29.

Transdanubian region was even Murszombat/Murska Sobota, in Croatia (part of the Kingdom of Hungary) Varasdin and Zagreb. The Kingdom of Hungary under Habsburg rule also had customs posts in the regions bordering the Territory of Ottoman occupation and Transylvania: Vác, Érsekújvár/Nové Zámky, Hollókő, Losonc/Lučenec, Rimaszombat/Rimavská Sobota, Tokaj, Kálló, (Kis)Várda, (Nagy)Károly/Carei, Szatmár/Satu Mare and Keresztúr. The collection of the National Archives of Hungary contains the source group *Miscellanea Tricesimalia* (E 210), which focuses on the customs system of the Kingdom of Hungary from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Based on the repertory of the assembly, we can expect a great deal from this collection. This group of documents contains no less than 190 customs offices in the Carpathian Basin and in the border regions of the Kingdom of Hungary. The documents of the almost 200 customs offices are divided into 29 fasciculus. At first glance, these figures sound quite good. However, the information base of the collection, that is indeed useful, is much narrower than one might hope. As we will see below, this group of sources is mainly useful for the analysis of exports to the Northwest.

In the west, the busiest customs posts in Hungary were the customs offices (*tricesima*, *harmincad*) in Óvár and Pozsony/Bratislava. In 1542, 15 of the 19 customs offices of the *tricesima* at Pozsony/Bratislava had preserved customs records.<sup>16</sup> This source material reflects the West-East division of labour mentioned in the introduction.

In the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the largest share of Hungarian imports from the west was made up of industrial goods. The majority of these were textile products (68.5%): made up of woollen cloth (39.5%), linen (12.1%) and various articles of ready-made pieces of clothes (15.2%). Metal goods and to a lesser extent glassware accounted for a relatively large share of imports (9.9%). Foodstuffs (8.7%), mainly spices and fruit, also made up a significant proportion of imports, followed by leather and fur products (2.3%).<sup>17</sup>

Thanks to positive demographic trends in Europe, there was a growing demand for fustian (*barchent* in German, a fabric blended of linen and cotton) during this period. The textile centres of southern Germany played a major role in production. Augsburg, Ulm and Memmingen, among others, became such centres, thanks to the investments of companies from Augsburg and Nuremberg. Their merchants sold their goods to the south-east at considerable profit. In the Central European region, the price of fustian rose until the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>18</sup> Information on the market positions of the southern German centres is also provided by the Habsburg government's customs decree 1523, which lists at least 19 types of cloth named after one of these southern German centres.<sup>19</sup> In addition, South German entrepreneurs also marketed cloth from England and the Low Countries in Central Europe. Sales in Hungary were often managed by their Austrian or Hungarian partners.

The most important elements of Hungarian exports were agricultural products (livestock, animal skins, wine) and mining raw materials (mainly copper). The livestock population of the Hungarian Great Plain is estimated at two million animals, of which 5–10% was exported.<sup>20</sup> Exports to the West boomed until the early years of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Until the 1560s, an annual average of around 100,000 slaughter animals were exported westwards, but also to the south and northwest. This figure rose to between 150,000 and 200,000 a year in the 1570s and 1580s.<sup>21</sup>

In the exports to the west, livestock was overwhelmingly dominant in the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century, accounting for 93.4% of exports. In addition, foodstuffs accounted for 3.8% of

<sup>16</sup> Ember, *Magyarország*, 16.

<sup>17</sup> Pach, *Magyarország*, 25. Ember, *Magyarország*, 95–97.

<sup>18</sup> Warnemünde, *Augsburger*, 170., 172. Denzer, *Die Konquista*, 43.

<sup>19</sup> ÖStA FHKA NÖHA W61/c/48/A f. 383v–384v.

<sup>20</sup> Makkai, *Der ungarische*, 492.

<sup>21</sup> Pickl, *Die Handelsbeziehungen*, 557.

exports and leather goods for 2.2%. Livestock was predominantly cattle (93.6%). Horses (4.5%) and sheep (1.5%) were also exported. In 1542 this amounted to some 29,000 head of cattle, 1,400 horses and 16,000 sheep. More than half of the foodstuffs exported were wine and another third honey. The vast majority (83.9%) of the leather goods exported were cowhides.<sup>22</sup>

From the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the consumption centres of southern Germany, Austria, Bohemia and Italy showed an increasing demand for Hungarian agricultural products. The increase in meat consumption had a direct impact on the trade in cattle and on the Hungarian production structure. The interdependence of the regions is illustrated by the fact that the Hungarian cattle epidemic of 1518 had already caused serious supply problems in German regions. The Ottoman expansion and the civil war in Hungary in the 1530s caused serious concern among Nuremberg cloth producers, as one of their most important markets was under threat.<sup>23</sup> According to the documents of the Chamber of Lower Austria (*Niederösterreichische Kammer*), in the period 1548–1558, an average of 50–55,000 head of cattle were shipped annually to the markets of Vienna and smaller Austrian cities.<sup>24</sup> This number continued to grow until the last decades of the century. From the markets of Vienna, a significant part of the cattle was moved westwards. It is known, for example, that 1,820 cattle passed through customs at Pregarten near Linz in 1577 and 3,922 in 1592. We can agree with Hans-Heinrich Vangerow's hypothesis that these animals were exported from Hungary.<sup>25</sup>

Wine is also mentioned in the literature as a major export. The main markets for wine were southern Poland and Moravia. The Danube route, which offered favourable transport opportunities, was not a viable option for a significant volume of traffic because of Vienna's resistance. Vienna had a relatively high-quality wine-growing area. However, these wines could not compete with Hungarian wines, and Vienna tried to prevent foreign merchants from importing Hungarian wines into the city.<sup>26</sup>

Copper was another important commodity of Hungarian exports. However, this does not appear in the Pozsony/Bratislava customs lists. The reason for this may be that the Fugger-Thurzo concern, which controlled copper production in Besztercebánya/Banská Bystrica in the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, was able to benefit from exemption from customs duties because of loans granted to the Habsburgs.<sup>27</sup>

At the turn of the century and in the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, significant changes took place. In addition to the Long Turkish War 1591–1606 (German: Langer Türkenkrieg, Hungarian: Hosszú háború i.e. Long War or Fifteen Years War), anti-Habsburg struggles in the first decades of the 17<sup>th</sup> century contributed greatly to the destabilisation of the region. However, trade remained largely unchanged until the second phase of the Long War (1603/1604); moreover, the war boom had a positive effect on the cattle trade. The decline in trade was all the more marked during the Bocskai rebellion (1604–1606) and the campaigns of Gábor Bethlen, Prince of Transylvania (1619–1621; 1623; 1626). From then on, traders from Transylvania and eastern Hungary increasingly turned to Poland and Silesia instead of using the western routes.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Ember, *Magyarország*, 94., 97–99.

<sup>23</sup> Gecsényi, *Folytonosság*, 412–413, 419.

<sup>24</sup> Landsteiner, *Zur Geschichte*, 69.

<sup>25</sup> Dahlede, *Zum europäischen*, 8.

<sup>26</sup> Tschulk, *Weinbau*, 46., 55., 68.

<sup>27</sup> Tóza-Rigó Attila. Kupferbergbau in Neusohl. A little-known fact about the relationship between the two families: György Thurzó married a daughter of Fugger and thus received the citizenship of Augsburg. StA. Abg. KuH L 2. f. 83r-84r.

<sup>28</sup> Gecsényi, *Bécsi*, 80.

In the western direction, can be followed the interregional routes relatively accurately. Four routes (two northern and two southern ones) started from Óvár towards Vienna. The two northern ones headed for Köpcsény, merged here and passed through Hainburg, following the Danube towards Schwechat. The two southern routes crossed the border at Zurány/Zurndorf and Nezsider/Neusiedl, merging below Bruck. The two routes joined at Schwechat. Finally, they reached Vienna at Stubentor.<sup>29</sup> On the Hungarian section, it was possible to sail south of Pozsony/Bratislava on the Moson branch of the Danube, via Győr and Komárom, as far as Vác or, depending on the war situation, Pest.<sup>30</sup>

In the methodological introduction, I mentioned that it makes sense to combine a trade history focusing on trade in goods with a person-oriented approach. According to the 1542 customs logs, Hungarian traders accounted for 79.5% of cattle exports and 72% of cloth imports. Austrians and Germans were still a significant group in livestock exports, with 10% and 9.4%, respectively. Silesian traders accounted for 11.4% of imports of cloth, Austrians for 9.5% and Moravians and Czech traders for 6.3%. Imports of animal skins differed significantly from these. Austrians accounted for the largest share (36%), while Hungarians (24.7%) and Silesians (24.5%) also made up a significant group. Hungarians did not control the food trade, but they did dominate it, either (57%). Moravians cleared 12.7% of foodstuffs, Silesians 10.3% and Austrians 8.3%.<sup>31</sup>

The actual business relationships are less clear from customs records. Fortunately, a great source from the period has survived, the *Verbotbuch* of the City of Pozsony/Bratislava (1538–1566), which contains cases of unpaid debts, mostly arising from trade credit.<sup>32</sup> The majority of the debtors were citizens of Pozsony/Bratislava, from whom their business partners demanded payment of debts (the creditors have effectively mortgaged the debtor's assets). The *Verbotbuch* therefore provides a good way of building up a business network of Pozsony/Bratislava citizens.<sup>33</sup> The source includes 1406 claims, and 82% of the Verbote (bans on selling real estates) were from a foreign partner. The distribution by origin is illustrated in Figure 1.

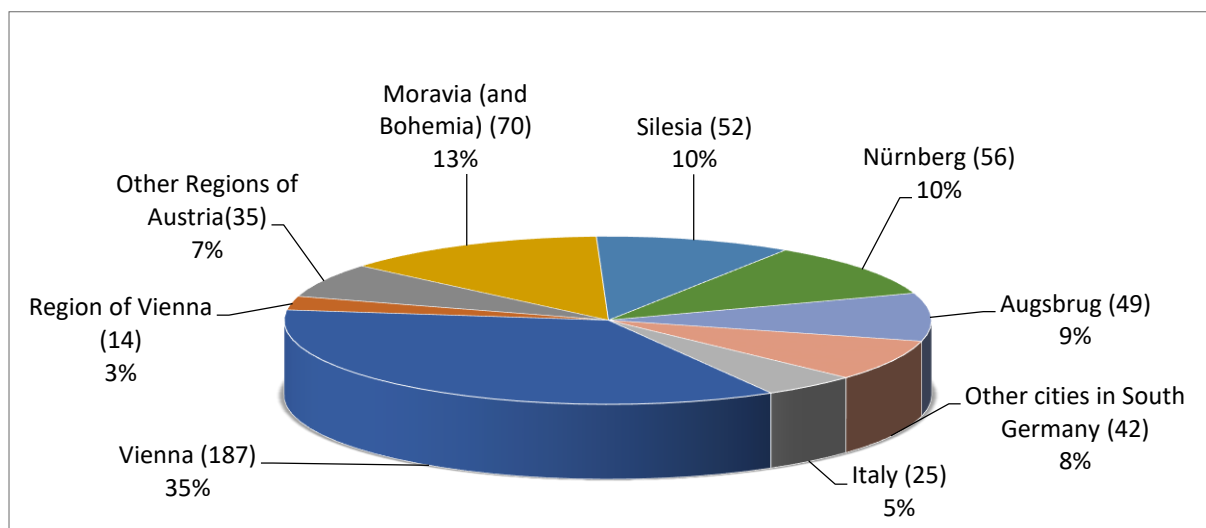


Figure 1. Distribution of Bratislava merchants' partners by origin (based on the number of Verbote 1538–1566)

<sup>29</sup> Geccsényi, Harmincadok, 132. Tózsá-Rigó, Handelskonjunktoren, 314–315.

<sup>30</sup> Geccsényi, Bécs, 273–274.

<sup>31</sup> Ember, Magyarország, 103–106.

<sup>32</sup> AMB MmB VB a i l.

<sup>33</sup> Tózsá-Rigó, A pozsonyi.

The largest group of Bratislava's partners were the Viennese. Vienna played a prominent role in the multipolar transregional business networks of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. The Viennese were the 'second line' behind southern Germany and Italian capital in terms of trade. Their regional role was, however, decisive and further strengthened during the period. This is part of a general process in which the former commercial and financial centres (Augsburg, Nuremberg) gradually lost importance in the urban networks of the various regions to the residential cities.

In the last third of the 16<sup>th</sup> century and especially in the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Vienna's role as a centre of consumption increased. Thanks to the stabilisation after the Long Turkish War, Vienna's population grew by at least 50% in the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The city had already surpassed the southern German centres in terms of consumption by the turn of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, which had a major impact on Vienna's economic potential by the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>34</sup>

In the south, the Trieste–Venice–Milan line was the limit of the Viennese business elite's activities. To the west, they maintained active contacts with their partners in Strasbourg and Frankfurt. In the north, they did business in the Czech-Moravian region and Silesia.<sup>35</sup> In Hungary they maintained an extensive business network based in Pozsony/Bratislava. Several Viennese traders also had significant operations in southern Poland, while in the east their business network extended to Upper Hungary and Transylvania.<sup>36</sup>

The role of Vienna-based merchants in Hungarian trade increased in the last decades of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. For the Germans and Italians, Vienna became the centre of the network with the Hungarian regions. The Viennese maintained active contacts with Hungarian cattle traders. They also traded many foodstuffs. There were also significant textile imports. The most expensive fabrics were imported from northern Italy, and other fabrics from England and the Low Countries were sourced from German partners. The Viennese often exported Hungarian copper to Venice. Finally, they also played an important role in the trade in luxury goods from Venice. The volume of trade carried out by the Viennese increased steadily from the 1580s onwards. This trend was interrupted in the 1640s by military events directly affecting Lower Austria.<sup>37</sup>

Vienna's function as a 'rotary-wing centre', as elaborated by Landsteiner, can be justified beyond doubt, with the addition that in the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century southern German merchants often went beyond Vienna to the Hungarian border region and had direct contact with their partners there (as will be shown later).<sup>38</sup>

During this period, 8–10 Viennese families are known to have carried on significant amounts of trade with the East (also), mainly the Eiseler-Egerer-Stamp-Gastgeb-Katzbeck-Blo-Marb-Thau-Wulff family business network. Of central importance was the bimodal (kinship and business) network between the Eiseler and Stamp families. The scope of this chapter does not permit a detailed analysis of all families, so I will illustrate the networks of families with central functions with Figures 2–4.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Landsteiner, Wien, 134., 136.

<sup>35</sup> Buchinger, Die Wiener, 83.

<sup>36</sup> Geccsényi, Bécs. Pap, *Kolozsvári*.

<sup>37</sup> Landsteiner, Handelskonjunkturen, 202–203.

<sup>38</sup> Landsteiner, Strukturelle, 188.

<sup>39</sup> For kinship networks: Buchinger, Die Wiener.



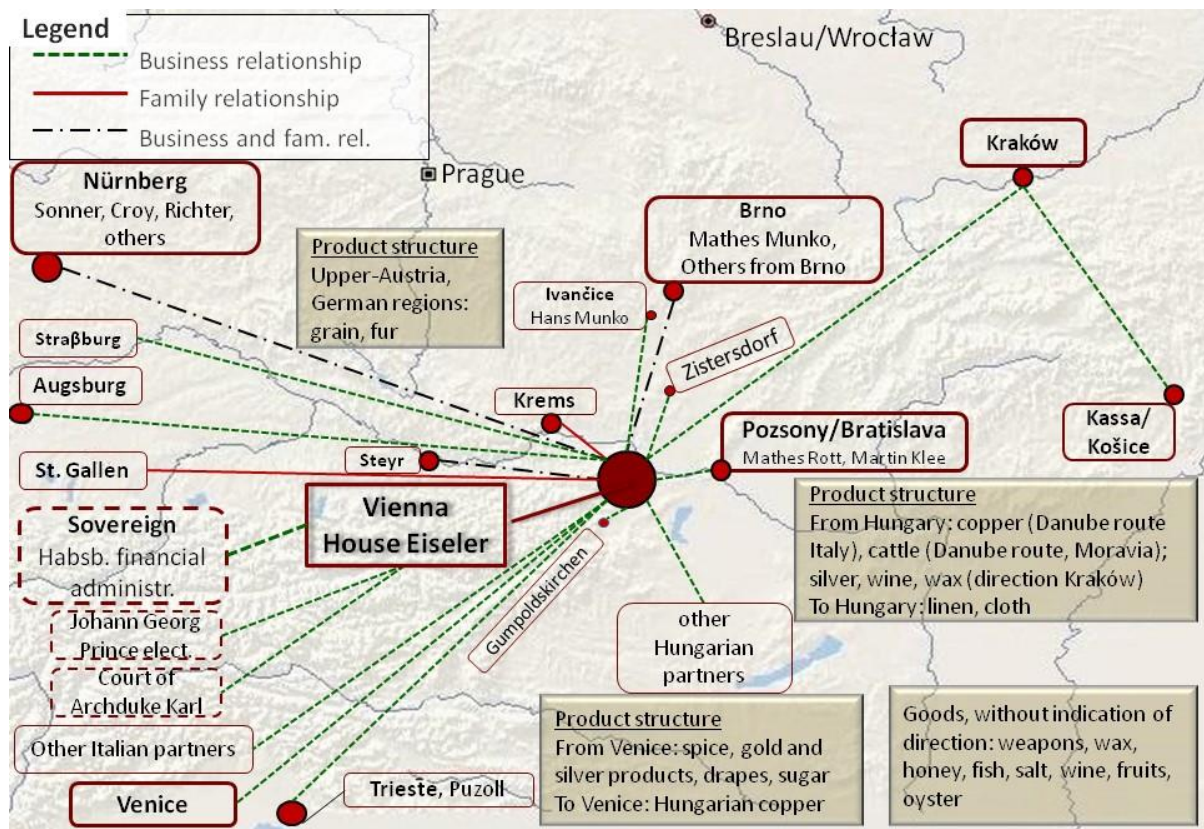


Figure 2 Bimodal networks of the Eiseler family traders  
Field with dashed line: origin/residence of person(s) cannot be determined or is not relevant for the network

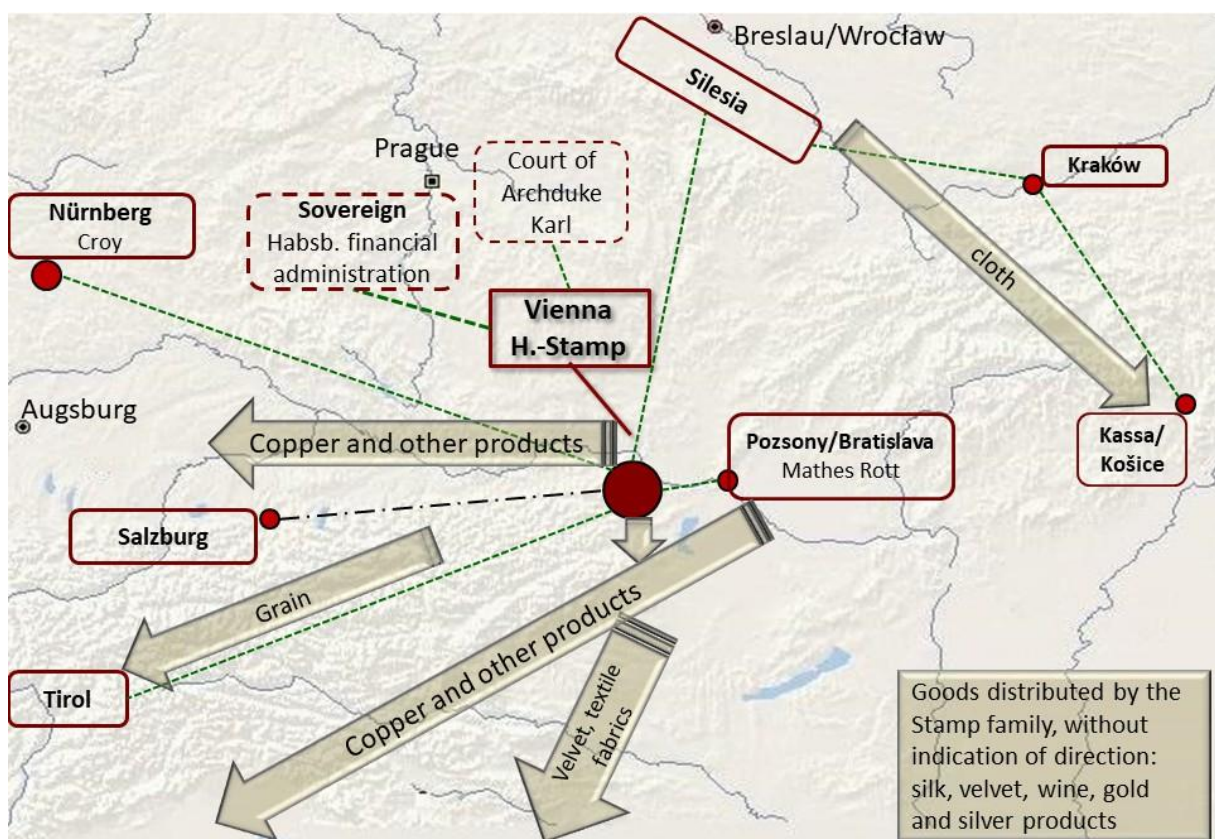


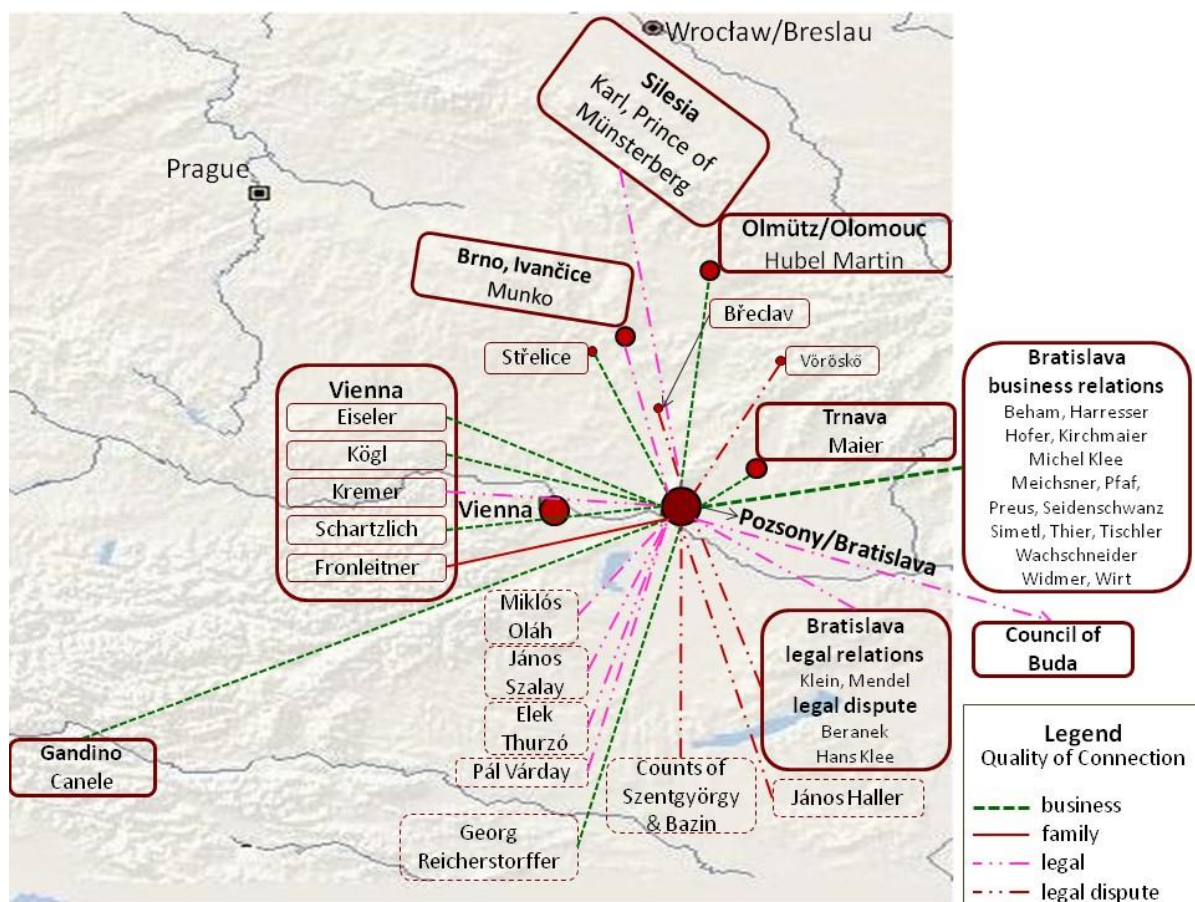


Figure 3. Networks of Stamp family

Austrian traders from outside Vienna also maintained active contacts with Hungarian business partners. Their share among foreign creditors is close to 10%. A minority of them came from the Vienna region, while the remaining Austrian merchants (at least 15) were citizens of municipalities to the west or south of Vienna.

On the Hungarian side, one of the most significant groups of the transregional turnover surveyed was made up of traders from Pozsony/Bratislava. The transregional business network of the business elite in Pozsony/Bratislava is illustrated by the network of one family. A prominent figure of the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century was Martin Klee. He is listed in the Verbotbuch more than twenty times, three of his creditors were Viennese. The correspondence of the City of Pozsony/Bratislava also provides rich material for his contacts. Klee was in contact with, among others, the Viennese Wolf Kremer, who often worked for southern German banking houses.<sup>40</sup>

Martin Klee's network also includes mainly Moravian and Silesian connections.<sup>41</sup> Klee exported wine to Moravia with Georg Reicherstorffer, one of the most important diplomats of the period.<sup>42</sup> Brünn/Brno, Olmütz/Olomouc and Břeclav appear in Klee's Moravian network.<sup>43</sup> He was also in contact with Prince Charles I of Münsterberg.<sup>44</sup> Finally, he also had significant links with the political elite of the Kingdom of Hungary.



<sup>40</sup> Horváth, *Archív*, reg. 5725.

<sup>41</sup> Horváth, *Archív*, reg. 4700.

<sup>42</sup> Horváth, *Archív*, reg. 5126.

<sup>43</sup> Horváth, *Archív*, reg. 5561., 5112.

<sup>44</sup> Horváth, *Archív*, reg. 5291.

Figure 4. Martin Klee's social and business networks

I will conclude the discussion on the western direction with the business players from southern Germany. For Southern German capital, the stagnation of the development process in the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century was largely caused by the Western state bankruptcies (mainly in Spain and Portugal, and even in France) after 1557.<sup>45</sup> The loss of capital was accompanied by a shrinking of the western markets, as the Atlantic trade was increasingly competing with the merchant-capital of the Low Countries. In addition, the relationship with Venice was becoming less important for southern German merchant capital.<sup>46</sup> From the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the attention of southern German entrepreneurs avoiding bankruptcy turned increasingly eastwards.<sup>47</sup>

The most significant groups of South German trader-entrepreneurs who maintained active contacts with Hungarian merchants were those from Augsburg and Nuremberg. There is relatively extensive information on the role of the business actors in Augsburg (Fugger, Manlich, Paller & Weis) in copper production in Hungary.

Southern German citizens also had other types of positions in Hungary. They were engaged in a wide range of commercial activities. One of the most remarkable group in the Danube region was the *Österreicher* from Augsburg. Their fustian was sold in the Austrian and Hungarian regions. They were joined by, among others, the companies of Wolfgang Paller, a central figure of the region, Paller & Herbst and Paller & Weis. Members of the Weis family also traded independently, one of them, Tobias Weis, having moved to Vienna and married into the Eiseler family.

The Bratislava Verbotbuch contains 147 cases in which citizens of Pozsony/Bratislava were indebted to South German businessmen. Of these, 28% were from an Augsburg partner. In more than half of the nearly 50 cases, the Augsburg creditor was personally present when the claim was registered. Between 1540 and 1560, at least 15-16 Augsburgers must have visited Pozsony/Bratislava personally. When the southern Germans were not personally present, they were mostly represented by their Viennese factors. In these cases, too, a transregional business network can thus be clearly outlined. The largest debts of receivables were from the cattle trade.

In the final decades of the century, it became more and more common for South German entrepreneurs or their agents to purchase cattle on Hungarian territory. Thus, in 1573 just between May and October, the Paller concern bought 6,110 head of cattle from merchants in western Hungary.<sup>48</sup>

From the South German region, the role of the Nurembergers was still significant. Trade with central European areas played a significant role in helping the Nuremberg economy to weather the waves of depression that extended into the first decades of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>49</sup> The sources illustrate the importance of Hungarian cattle imports in the economic life of Nuremberg. According to a report from 1574, the southern Germans had previously been forbidden to buy on Hungarian territory. However, this was not to the advantage of the Nurembergers. In later decades it was the practice to try to obtain permission to buy on Hungarian territory through intermediaries.<sup>50</sup> According to a source from 1576 in Auspitz/Hustopeče, the Nurembergers also joined forces with the people of Prague to export

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<sup>45</sup> For information on Nuremberg see the documents from the association of traders. StadtAN E8 Nr. 573.

<sup>46</sup> Denzer, *Die Konquista*, 45.

<sup>47</sup> Diefenbacher, Handel, 66. Lütge, Der Handel, 318., 344–345.

<sup>48</sup> This tendency was reinforced by the prohibition of entry into Austrian territories from 1556 onwards for "Rác" (South Slavic) and "Turkish" cattle traders. Landsteiner, Zur Geschichte, 71.

<sup>49</sup> Diefenbacher, Handel, 78–79.

<sup>50</sup> MNL OL MKA E 41, 1576. Nr. 127.

cattle to Moravia.<sup>51</sup> At the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Göswein-Lang-Rotenburger company, which maintained an extensive network in Hungary, played a major role in the cattle trade.<sup>52</sup> Another important actor in the region was Jobst Croy from Nuremberg (see later the description of trade on the southwestern direction). According to the Verbotbuch, other southern German cities involved in cattle trade include Ulm (16 claims) and Sankt Gallen (15).

Other sources also provide data for multilateral networks. Regarding the Danube route the Dreiling–Reisner company can be mentioned as an excellent example. In the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century, Thomas Dreiling and Wolfgang Reisner of Pozsony/Bratislava were major cattle exporters. In 1547, the Dreiling–Reisner company drove 1,500 head of cattle through Óvár.<sup>53</sup> A year later, they were authorised to export 300 cattle customs-free.<sup>54</sup> The company maintained an extensive business network, with businessmen from Nuremberg, Augsburg, Sankt Gallen, Styria and Vienna among its creditors. Among their partners in Augsburg was one of the most important person of the European business network Bartholomäus Welser. The business strategy of the above mentioned Hungarian cattle traders is reflected in the credit flow with their Partners from South Germany and Vienna. Not only were the Western connections of the Dreiling–Reisner company important in that they could easily sell their large livestock herds, but also because the loans they received from their partners in southern Germany and Vienna played a significant role. The amount of capital used by the company is naturally not comparable to the southern German Bank Houses, however, the Dreiling–Reisner partnership can nevertheless be described as a significant factor in the Central Danube region with connecting function in a multilateral network.

### Trade heading southwest

For the analysis of this direction of trade, it is worth outlining the routes in advance. The southwest route started from the Vienna area and passed through the Semmering (*Semmeringstrasse*).<sup>55</sup> Vienna's centrality was due to the fact that two major trade routes converged here: the Danube route and one of the most important north-south axes, the "Amber Road".<sup>56</sup> In the trade direction under consideration Styria was an important transit region. From here the route went via Terfis/Tarvisio to Venice. Styria also served as an important link in the west-east direction. The eastbound routes from Tyrol passed through Leoben and reached Hungary and Krain after Radkersburg.<sup>57</sup> The most useful documents for examining this trade flow are the sources of the *Finanz und Hofkammerarchiv* and the *Innerösterreichische Hofkammer*.

Until the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Hungarian exports also showed a tendency to grow in the southwestern direction. Cattle exports accounted for the lion's share of this. Although the heyday of cattle-exports lasted until the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century, exports to the southwest remained significant until the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>58</sup> In addition, the Styrian regions also functioned as a receptive market.

Unfortunately, the extent of cattle exports in this direction also can only be estimated. According to the customs of Fürstenfeld, at least 5,000 head of cattle per year were needed to supply Graz alone in the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century. This number certainly increased in the later period.

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<sup>51</sup> MNL OL MKA E 41, 1576. Nr. 169.

<sup>52</sup> MNL OL MKA E 41, 1576. Nr. 240.; 1583. Nr. 60.

<sup>53</sup> ÖStA FHKA HP W. Nr. 197. E 1547. f. 4r.

<sup>54</sup> ÖStA FHKA HP W. Nr. 200. E 1548. f. 92v.

<sup>55</sup> Pickl, Österreichs, 36. Demo, *Le fiere*, 707., 717–718.

<sup>56</sup> Czeike, *Wien*, 13.

<sup>57</sup> Sandgruber, *Ökonomie*, 91–93.

<sup>58</sup> Makkai, *Der ungarische*, 483.

The majority of the animals that passed through Fürstenfeld came from the southern Transdanubian and lowland regions. A significant part of the livestock imported, in part via Pettau/Ptuj, was also transported to the Tyrol and even to Switzerland.<sup>59</sup>

This trade segment, like that of the Austrian and southern German regions, was crucial for the supply of northern Italy and Venice in particular.<sup>60</sup> It was estimated at the time that at least 14,000 animals were needed annually to supply Venice (excluding the *terra ferma*). Large cattle came almost exclusively from Hungary, and by the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century there were at least 15,000 to 30,000 head traded each year. Pickl estimates that in the 1570s the Venetians bought 15,000-20,000 head of cattle a year in western Hungary.<sup>61</sup> Hungarian cattle exports covered at least two-thirds of the Republic's meat needs. The quantity sold in Northern Italy accounted for one-fifth of the total Hungarian cattle-exports.<sup>62</sup> Many cases (1566, 1598) are known when disruptions to exports threatened the supply of Venice.<sup>63</sup>

The boom in livestock export has of course had a significant impact on large-scale livestock farming in Hungary. Companies such as Dreiling-Reisner, mentioned above, played a prominent role in this tendency. Merchant-entrepreneurs took advantage of the sparse settlement network in the Hungarian lowlands, partly due to the Ottoman destruction, and acquired the land and pastures of the lowland villages. These areas provided the mass rearing of animals for sale. Specialised lowland market towns (*Oppidi*) bred large Hungarian grey cattle for export. It was of great importance for these cattle traders, that Venetians, Viennese and South German merchants could pay in cash.<sup>64</sup>

Apart from cattle, Hungarian copper was the most important export in the southwestern direction. In addition, precious metals were also exported to a lesser extent.<sup>65</sup> This was one of the most important routes for Hungarian copper exports. Venice was both a final destination and a transit point for this traffic. From here, Hungarian copper was transported further as far as Alexandria and Constantinople and westwards to Spain and Portugal (Hungarian copper exports to the North and West will be shown later).<sup>66</sup> Finally, Hungarian wine is of lesser importance, but can also be detected in the region's commodity structure.<sup>67</sup>

The Judenburg customs registers (1542, 1571, 1579, 1585, 1592) confirm the above conclusions. Judenburg was an important transit point on the Vienna–Venice route. In the last decades of the 16<sup>th</sup> century and the first decades of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, imports from Venice were dominated by spices and, to a lesser extent, foodstuffs (fruit, fish, oysters, etc.).<sup>68</sup>

Turning to the business players, the Viennese had been trying to establish a dominant position in the region since the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Their role grew from the 1580s until the first decades of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Many of the members of the Viennese business community examined earlier were also active on this trade route in this direction. Their commodity structure was diverse. They were involved in the cattle and copper trades, and also traded in

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<sup>59</sup> Pickl, *Die Handelsbeziehungen*, 557–558.

<sup>60</sup> Makkai, *Der ungarische*, 483.

<sup>61</sup> Pickl, *Der Handel*, 104.

<sup>62</sup> Pickl, *Der Viehhandel*, 44., 51., 67. Zimányi, *Gazdasági*, 525–526. According to Ember, 15,000–20,000 head of cattle were exported to Venice every year in the 1570s. Ember, *Der Außenhandel*, 104.

<sup>63</sup> Pickl, *Der Viehhandel*, 50.

<sup>64</sup> Sahin-Tóth, *A velencei*, 87.

<sup>65</sup> Sandgruber, *Ökonomie*, 79–80.

<sup>66</sup> Tózsá-Rigó, *Ungarn*, 422.

<sup>67</sup> Tózsá-Rigó, *Handelskonjunktoren*, 308.

<sup>68</sup> Tremel *Zur Geschichte*, 22–25.

foodstuffs in both directions and in luxury goods to the north.<sup>69</sup> The Eiseler and the Stamps were the most active trading houses.

According to sources, the Eiseler made several deliveries of Hungarian copper to Venice in the 1570s.<sup>70</sup> In this business, they partnered with Jobst Croy from Nuremberg. In 1579, a total of 1,227 quintal of copper was exported to Venice.<sup>71</sup> They continued their collaboration in the 1580s.<sup>72</sup> The surviving group of sources on Jobst Croy's business accounts provides further information. At this time Croy is already listed as a citizen of Vienna. Croy, like other businessmen, lent large sums of money to the Habsburgs. A large part of this (148,000 fl) was charged to the Lower Austrian Chamber, and was repaid to Croy in such a way that he was allowed to export goods from Hungary duty-free up to the value of the debt. Finally, 94,000 fl were charged to the copper production in Besztercebánya/Banská Bystrica. In return for this sum, Croy and his heirs were allowed to export 70,000 quintal of copper, probably to Venice.<sup>73</sup>

The Fuggers also traded earlier in copper in the region. According to a document from 1545, 800 quintal of copper were exported. Half of it was transported to Upper Austria and the other half was sold in Styria.<sup>74</sup> After the second 'Neusohl (Banska Bystrica) Treaty' (1572), Paller & Weis of Augsburg supplied increasing quantities.<sup>75</sup> The Augsburg company had a separate factor in Venice, Hans Baptist Troyler from Bolzano/Bolzano, who was responsible only for this export turnover.<sup>76</sup>

Returning to the merchandise structure of the Viennese, the Eiseler often delivered spices, fish or other exotic foodstuffs to the court of the Archduke in Styria.<sup>77</sup> In Terfis/Tarvisio, an agent called Khisl coordinated the imports.<sup>78</sup> At the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Andre Eiseler was the leading figure in the family, with extensive Venetian connections. The copper business was coordinated by another of their agents, Balthasar von Dornberg of Venice.<sup>79</sup>

The aforementioned Khisl also worked for the Stamps, and in 1578, for example, they supplied a significant amount of cloth to the Croatian army.<sup>80</sup> In later years, the Stamps continued to frequently carry fabrics in this direction.<sup>81</sup> Andre Eiseler's nephew, Sebastian Eiseler III, worked with Georg Katzbeck of Vienna in the region. According to the Judenburg customs registers, they were transporting spices northwards in the 1590s, and they were also mainly engaged in copper exports to the southwest.<sup>82</sup>

The Italians played an important role in the Central European economic system. Venice did not play an exclusive role in this, so the merchants of the Lombard region also held important positions. In the first decades of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Italians gained positions in Augsburg and Prague and especially in Nuremberg.<sup>83</sup> Already from the 15<sup>th</sup> century they had been trying

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<sup>69</sup> Tózsá-Rigó, *A dunai*, 48–49.

<sup>70</sup> ÖStA FHKA HF Ö Protokolle Nr. 346. R. 1578. f. 170v.

<sup>71</sup> I'm grateful to Rudolf Buchinger, who selflessly made the results of his research available to me. StLA IÖ-HK I, 1579. f. 15r., Akten 1579. Nr. 49.

<sup>72</sup> StLA IÖ-HK I, 1580. f. 57v.

<sup>73</sup> BayHStA RKG A, Nr. 4429. 1596. October 25. p. 101–105.

<sup>74</sup> ÖStA FHKA NÖ GdB Nr. 56. 1545. f. 93v–94r.

<sup>75</sup> Tózsá-Rigó, *Kupferbergbau in Ungarn*, 35.

<sup>76</sup> Hildebrandt, *Quellen* Nr. 80, 125; Reinhard, *Augsburger*, 609.

<sup>77</sup> StLA IÖ-HK A, 1580 Nr. 20., Nr. 26.

<sup>78</sup> StLA IÖ-HK I, 1580. f. 57r.

<sup>79</sup> ÖStA FHKA HF Ö Protokolle Nr. 356. E. 1580, f. 209r.

<sup>80</sup> StLA IÖ-HK A, 1578. Nr. 18.

<sup>81</sup> StLA IÖ-HK I, 1578. 39v, 42v, 52v, 57r, 63v, 1579. 25v.

<sup>82</sup> Buchinger, *Die Wiener*, 74.

<sup>83</sup> Peters, *Strategische*, 162–163, 171–172.

to expand their activities to Austrian and Hungarian territories. From the 1560s onwards, more and more Italian firms established themselves here. The Italians controlled their Central European networks from Vienna.

The Venetians exported mainly cattle from the southwestern regions of Hungary. The routes in this trade segment were specific. The Venetians' representatives followed different routes from those of the Viennese and Germans who traded in the region. In the early 16<sup>th</sup> century, traffic to Italy was still concentrated on the Kanizsa-Zagreb-Zengg/Senj route. Thanks to the Ottoman advance, cattle exports were later shifted to the Kanizsa-Pettau/Ptuj-Laibach/Ljubljana-Gorizia/Gorizia (*Laibacherstrasse*) route.<sup>84</sup> From there, the destinations were Trieste, Rijeka and Venice.<sup>85</sup> A major change occurred in the 1560s. After the cattle drought of 1564 and the fall of Szigetvár (1566), the purchasing area shifted to the North Transdanubian region.<sup>86</sup> Until the 1570s, the citizens of Pettau and Laibach were the key exporters of cattle to the southwest. The Venetians were then putting increasing pressure on Archduke Charles, who in 1572, despite the old privileges of the Pettau and Laibach, allowed the Venetians to buy cattle in Hungary. As a result, from the 1570s the Venetian *Compagnia del partito della beccaria*, with its significant capital, had a monopoly on the Hungarian livestock market. In 1597, Rudolf, due to the shortage of meat in Vienna and southern Germany, had already tried to limit the position of the Venetians by depriving them the right to buy cattle in the Kingdom of Hungary. After that, Hungarian cattle exports were concentrated in Vienna, where Venetians were only allowed to buy cattle after the Viennese and southern Germans. The Long War and the regulations of the Habsburgs caused such serious problems in 1598 that the Signoria restricted meat consumption.<sup>87</sup>

Due to the war events of the 1590s, the purchasing area shifted even further north. At the turn of the century, the Italians were already buying cattle in the areas of Nagyszombat/Trnava, Szenc/Senec (Szenc was also a customs post under the main post Nagyszombat) and Auspitz/Hustopeče in Bohemia. According to some authors, the destabilisation of the Kingdom of Hungary in the first years of the 17<sup>th</sup> century led to a permanent economic decline in Venice.<sup>88</sup>

As in the Danube area, additional routes can be explored also here. The customs post of Ballino, on the route from Venice to Lombardy, has detailed customs registers. In the first years of the 17<sup>th</sup> century (1601, 1608, 1609, 1610), it is shown that cattle brought to Lombardy accounted for a significant part of the goods cleared here.<sup>89</sup> As with the customs in Linz (Pregarten) and the situation in Tyrol, we can reasonably assume that a significant part of this cattle came from Hungary.

The spatial framework can also be extended to the east, as the Italians had a significant trade in spices towards the eastern territories of the Kingdom of Hungary and Transylvania. This import of spices reached Brassó/Braşov and Sibiu/Szeben via the southern routes of the conquest, with the help of Hungarian partners.<sup>90</sup>

Following the person-oriented approach, I will also turn here to the Italians. Here again, I will only publish some information that is not yet known. Several Italian traders are mentioned in the sources. A constant problem in the analysis is that the exact place of residence/origin is not always given. In the Bratislava Verbotbuch there are 26 cases where an

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<sup>84</sup> Pickl, Österreichs, 36.

<sup>85</sup> Sahin-Tóth, A velencei, 75–79.

<sup>86</sup> Westermann, Zur Struktur, 150. Pickl, 1973. 151.

<sup>87</sup> Sahin-Tóth, A velencei, 79–80.

<sup>88</sup> Moroni, Mercanti, 71–72.

<sup>89</sup> AStT APTR C. 8. n. 42.

<sup>90</sup> Landsteiner, Strukturelle, 200.



Italian is mentioned. From the available data, two companies can be outlined for the time being. One is the Fossato family, the other a group of merchants from Gandino.

In the 1550s, Baptista and Marsilius de Fossato were in contact with the business elite in Pozsony/Bratislava. The Lower Austrian Chamber sources reveal what the Fossato brothers traded in. In the 1540s, they brought goods through the customs in Stein.<sup>91</sup> The goods sold are oranges, lemons and pomegranates.<sup>92</sup> The Italians supplied the three types of fruit on an annual basis.<sup>93</sup> The sources in Stein suggest that the Semmering was not used by the Fossatos. Instead, they most probably approached the Danube route from the Salzburg or Innsbruck area. This suggests that they came from the western regions of northern Italy. In a later source, it is defined as being from Milan (*„gebruedern von Fassato zu Mailanndt“*).<sup>94</sup> Their business network therefore extended eastwards, like that of the southern Germans, beyond Vienna. The name of Marsilius still appears in a source in 1576. In it, Emperor Maximilian admits that he had been lent nearly 3,000 crowns by Fossato, who had died in the meantime.<sup>95</sup>

The names of three persons in the Bratislava source are accompanied by the place names *Candin* or *Khandin*. This can be identified with Gandino, 25 km from Bergamo.<sup>96</sup> Its inhabitants were exclusively associated with people from Pozsony/Bratislava who were central figures in the business network along the Danube. One of the most important families in the Bergamo area, the Giovanellis, also had interests in Hungary.<sup>97</sup> Among the Venetians, Gian Maria de Cazi/Kazy can be pointed out. He also appears in Pozsony/Bratislava sources in the 1540s and early 1560s. He lent to Viennese and citizens from Szentgyörgy/Svätý Jur.

In the last decades of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Bergamo and Bozen/Bolzano and, to a lesser extent, the Vicenza people became increasingly active in the area. By the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the merchant-entrepreneurs of Bolzano had built up an extensive business network in the Danube area. From the turn of the century, but by the 1620s at the latest, the Bolzanoans were a strong competitor. The Venetians were forced to make constant financial compromises with them.<sup>98</sup>

The Beccaria family and the Castello family of Gandino, among others, made significant business inroads towards the end of the century.<sup>99</sup> The military events in Hungary in the first third of the 17<sup>th</sup> century also temporarily shifted the activities of the Italians to the West, and the role of Vienna in their business strategy became even stronger.<sup>100</sup> Thanks to state loans, the Castello company entered the Hungarian copper business in 1605. In the first decades of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Giovanelli of Gandino became even more important in copper exports, being official trader to the court of ores from the mines of Besztercebánya/Banská Bystrica and Selmecebánya/Banská Stiavnica between 1642 and 1681.<sup>101</sup>

## Trade heading northwest

In relation to the sources, I have already mentioned that the *Miscellanea Tricesimalia* source group is useful for the analysis of exports to the North-West. The sources of the customs of Nagyszombat/Tnava are useful for the study of the northwestern direction, as either complete

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<sup>91</sup> ÖStA FHKA NÖ GdB Nr. 50. f. 264v–265r.

<sup>92</sup> ÖStA FHKA NÖ GdB Nr. 50. f. 492 r–v.

<sup>93</sup> ÖStA FHKA NÖ GdB Nr. 50. f. 314v–315r.

<sup>94</sup> ÖStA FHKA NÖ GdB Nr. 52. f. 78r–v. Nr. 128.

<sup>95</sup> ÖStA FHKA NÖ GdB Nr. 128. f. 472r

<sup>96</sup> Many thanks to Andrea Bonoldi who helped me with the localisation.

<sup>97</sup> Bibliotecamai.

<sup>98</sup> Lanaro, *Periferie*, 32–33, 35–37.

<sup>99</sup> Peters, *Strategische*, 173–174.

<sup>100</sup> Landsteiner, *Strukturelle*, 193.

<sup>101</sup> Landsteiner, *Strukturelle*, 211.

or fragmentary lists of the records of the customs house have survived from several years (1549, 1556–1557, 1567 1574, 1575, 1593–1595 and 1597). The customs register of 1567 is outstanding, as it covers the export trade of the whole year.<sup>102</sup> The other source that can be analysed is a fragmentary customs register from 1597. The thirty years between the two sources also provide an opportunity to establish possible trends of change. The information base compiled from these two sources provides an exceptionally good basis for analysis. The fragmentary sources of 1574 and 1575 also contain sporadic information.<sup>103</sup> Only a few records from 1575 have survived, but even this has some analysable content, as it mentions merchants from Nuremberg and Transylvania, with considerable amounts of customs duties.

The register of 1567, written in Latin, provides us with a picture of the goods that passed through the busiest customs point on the route between the Kingdom of Hungary and Moravia, as well as the regions of the traders who used the route, and finally, the customs register provides significant additional information on the merchants' association strategy. The 1567 source contains 471 customs entries. These can be linked to 220 persons. The following groups of goods can be distinguished on the basis of the customs duty amounts:

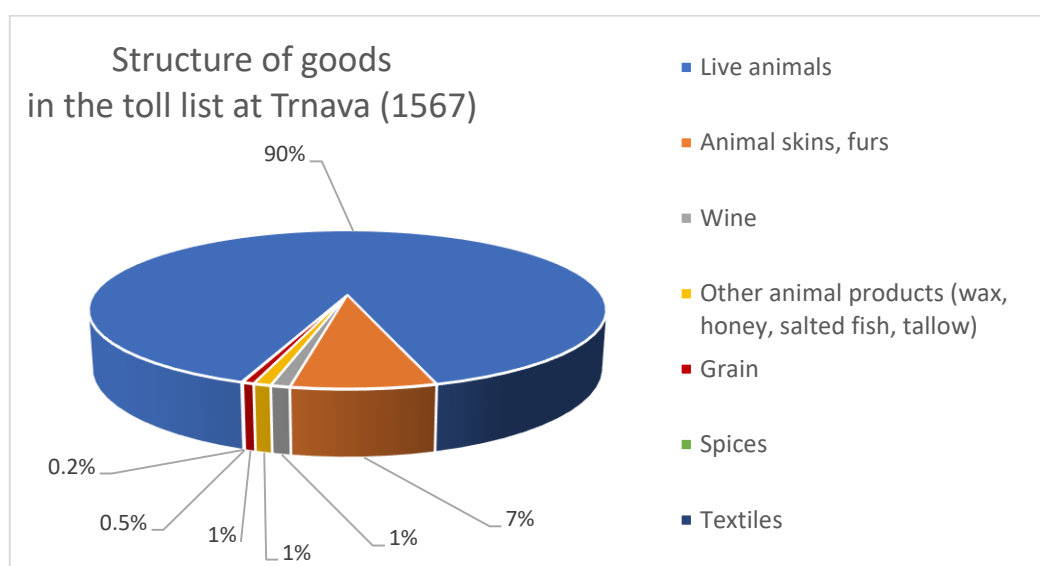


Figure 5. Structure of goods in the customs register at Trnava (1567)

The livestock proportions correlate well with those of the analysed source from Pozsony/Bratislava twenty-five years earlier (1542: 93.38%). The difference of 3-4% cannot be considered a significant difference. The different types of livestock show similar proportions. Based on the 1567 custom amounts, 94.6% of live animal exports were cattle, including cows. Horse exports accounted for 3.7% and sheep exports for 1.6%. If we look at exports by number of individual animals, 5,193 head of cattle, 202 horses and 2,350 sheep were driven to Moravia in that year.

In the source from 1597, the share of each commodity group does not show significant differences. The source includes 378 entries. The customs list does not cover the whole year, only the period from 5 July to 21 September. Livestock makes up the overwhelming majority among the commodity types. Again, the vast majority of these were cattle (240 items), steers (130), calves (13) and cows (5). On only one occasion were paid duty for sheep and horses. A small number of animal skins and wax were also exported. However, there is a significant

<sup>102</sup> MNL OL MKA E 210 fasc. 90. 102. f. 38r–79r.

<sup>103</sup> MNL OL MKA E 210 fasc. 90. 102. f. 86r–90r, 93r.

difference in quantity compared with the animal exports of thirty years earlier. In that short period 8,253 head of cattle and 690 steers were exported to Moravia. It should be stressed that some 8,900 animals were driven through in just two and a half months at Nagyszombat/Trnava. The significant positive variation indicates a significant increase in cattle exports and can most probably be attributed to the war conditions and the resulting economic recovery. However, the picture is further clouded by the fact that in 1567, in addition to cattle, a significant amount of sheep were also exported.

The boom in Hungarian cattle exports is also supported by data from the 1580s. In 1586, we find that 8,455 head of cattle passed through at Szenc/Senec, 16,720 at Nagyszombat/Trnava and 784 at Galgóc/Hlohovec. And more than 34,000 animals were driven over the bridge at Érsekújvár/Nové Zámky by cattle herdsman from the Lowlands (Hungarian Great Plain).<sup>104</sup>

The last decades of the century saw a spatial shift in trends alongside the increase in volume. By this time, the distribution centre for traffic in the northwest direction, Auspitz/Hustopeče, was approaching Vienna in terms of trade volume.<sup>105</sup> The strengthening of the northwestern direction can in fact be discerned from scattered data as early as the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century. It is likely that the change of centre of gravity to the detriment of Vienna had already begun by the middle of the century. The hypothesis is based on a figure for 1543, the year in which the heirs of Elek Thurzó alone drove 6,000 head of cattle through to Auspitz.<sup>106</sup>

A significant difference compared to the western direction is that in the middle of the century, the leather and fur category accounted for only 2.3% of exports in Western customs offices, while here animal skins and furs together accounted for 8.1%.<sup>107</sup> The reason for this can be found in the Moravian handicraft industry, which specialises in textiles. The significant production taking place in small and medium-sized towns obviously needed a strong raw material base, which was well complemented by the Hungarian trading system specialising in livestock exports.

For Moravian and Bohemian towns, the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century was a period of economic prosperity, especially in the textile industry. In the commercial sphere, however, they were not able to conduct business as equals in their relations with the southern German centres. In the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, there were already significant signs of crisis. Only the cloth industry was able to keep pace with the dynamism of the new era, but Moravian cloth could not count on a stable western market. The main destinations for Moravian cloth exports were the Austrian Provinces, Hungary and Poland. By the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the number of towns exporting cloth decreased significantly, and by the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century only Iglau/Jihlava and Brumov had managed to maintain their previous positions.<sup>108</sup> Local markets and interregional traffic to the east had become more important in the business strategies of Bohemian and Moravian traders.

The primary importance of regionality is reflected in the sources of the town Brunn/Brno. The Schultheissbücher can be used for the study of contact networks of the Brno citizens.<sup>109</sup> These town books contain a chapter for each year in which the debts were recorded. They can be analysed in a similar way to the Verbotbuch of Pozsony/Bratislava. Brno's contacts outside the city only account for about 20% of the content. Of this, 30% came from the Brno area, and a further 31% from the more distant regions of Moravia. The largest proportion of contacts outside Moravia are with German partners (15% of contacts outside the

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<sup>104</sup> Kocsis, *Az érsekújvári*, 293.

<sup>105</sup> Landsteiner, *Strukturelle*, 192.

<sup>106</sup> ÖStA FHKA NÖ GdB Nr. 54. f. 59r.

<sup>107</sup> Ember, *Magyarország*, 102.

<sup>108</sup> Janáček, *Die Städte*, 294–295, 305.

<sup>109</sup> AMBrna SchB Č 1731–1769, 1779, Č 1791.

city), but there are also contacts from Austria (7%), Hungary (5%), Silesia and Poland (2% each).

For the Moravian traders, a kind of predicament was thus created. They were forced to turn to trade with the Hungarian regions and to remain at the interregional level. A similar phenomenon can be observed in the business strategies of wine merchants in northwestern Hungary. As the Viennese defended their own market against Hungarian wine, the inhabitants of Nagyszombat/Trnava and Pozsony/Bratislava found sales opportunities further north. The cities in northwestern Hungary were well placed to reach the Moravian, Bohemian and Silesian centres. These regions, however, lacked good quality grapes and were therefore dependent on Hungarian wine imports. The Moravians also took advantage of this demand, often travelling to Hungary to buy wine.

In 1567, wine exported 26 times at Nagyszombat/Trnava. These items accounted for only 1% of the total annual customs duty. This amounted to 1,983 akó of wine (1 akó of Bratislava = 54.13 litres), thus 1.073 hl of Hungarian wine were exported to Moravia that year. This wine was exported by 24 persons. Most of the traders were from Nagyszombat. They were joined by Moravian (mainly from Uherské Brod) and Silesian merchants. The quantities involved suggest that these merchants sold wine in their own towns.

The northwestern route (to Moravia) joined the Danube route at Pozsony/Bratislava. The highest volume of traffic was via Hodonín and Auspitz/Hustopeče to Brünn/Brno. From there, it was possible to reach Silesia via Olmütz/Olomouc, while the other main route from Brünn/Brno led to Kuttenberg/Kutná Hora and Prague.

I have already mentioned the personal background involved in wine exporting. The 1567 customs register reports about forms of association that were set up for transit sale of goods and concentrated on regional trade along the frontier in terms of volume. Unlike the forms examined so far, these were more likely to have been short-term partnerships. Of the 471 customs cases examined, 156 cases were recorded where two or more traders crossed customs together. It is quite likely that traders from smaller border municipalities formed such occasional partnerships. In the Moravian border strip, the most frequent associations with other traders were those of Nivnice and Banov. On the Hungarian side, the merchants of Kopcsány/Kopčany were the most frequent users of this cooperation form.

The Verbotbuch of Pozsony/Bratislava shows that the people of the town maintained active contacts with their Moravian and Bohemian partners. A total of 70 claims from here are recorded in the source. Most of the citizens of the towns east of the Olomouc-Brno line appeared in person in Pozsony/Bratislava. The people of the city were also in contact with citizens from more distant towns (Iglau/Jihlava and Neuhaus/Jindřichuv Hradec). Sources from the town of Nagyszombat/Trnava also show that the inhabitants of Nagyszombat had active contacts with the towns of eastern Moravia (Uherský Brod, Strážnice, Uherský Ostroh and Uherské Hradiště).<sup>110</sup>

The cattle trade of 1597 offers an even better field for person-oriented studies. I have previously touched on the spatial segments of transregional cattle exports. Before Hungarian cattle arrived at the markets of Vienna or Auspitz, they had already crossed two borders. The breeding area was in the Hungarian Great Plain, which was under Ottoman rule. Therefore the merchants first had to move from the Ottoman-ruled part of the Kingdom of Hungary to the Habsburg-ruled Hungarian territories, and then crossed into Austrian, or Moravian territory on the western border of the Kingdom of Hungary. Half of the duty (*tricesima*) had to be paid at the first border crossing and the other half at the western border. From the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards, Vác gained geostrategic importance, as the routes of the Great Plain and Upper Hungary merged here with the Danube route.<sup>111</sup> The city of Kassa/Košice was the

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<sup>110</sup> ŠAB T MmT Miss

<sup>111</sup> Vass, *Vác*, 137.

centre of Upper Hungary. The transregional traffic was based on the cooperation of traders from Lower and Upper Hungary. The export of cattle from the Hungarian Lowlands also linked the centres of Eastern Hungary into the circulation with Western Europe. Debrecen, (Nyírbátor and Várada/Oradea are among the trade centres in Eastern Hungary.

The 1597 customs diary also mentions merchants from Upper Hungary. Very often (for 85% of the items), it is mentioned that the East Hungarian counterparts of Moravian border crossing merchants' had already passed through a northeastern customs post. The reason for this was that merchants arriving from the Lowlands received a certificate for the amount of customs duty paid at the Habsburg Upper Hungary border, in exchange for which the amount paid there did not have to be paid again at Nagyszombat/Trnava. Thus we can also trace the first phase of trade in Hungarian cattle. The eastern customs posts mentioned were Tokaj, Kálló, Hollókő, (Kis)Várada, Rimaszombat/Rimavská Sobota, (Nagy)Károly/Carei, Losonc/Lučenec, Szatmár/Satu Mare and Keresztúr. Here they reached Upper Hungary under Habsburg rule.

In addition to the commodity flows, it is also important to gain an insight into the practical workings of the partnerships. Among the West Hungarians, the most frequent exporters were those from Nagyszombat/Trnava (125 customs items) and Kopčány/Kopčany (34 items). Among the East Hungarians, the role of Debrecen stands out with 58 customs items (26 persons from Debrecen). From the East, the inhabitants of Várada/Oradea were also a significant group, with 22 items. Around 24% of the total goods can be attributed to traders from Upper Hungary and Northern Great Plain. From Upper Hungary, the most frequent traders were from Nyírbátor, Királyhelmeceiek/Kráľovský chlmeč and Patak. Two-man partnerships were the most typical. The cattle traders shared the activity spatially. Those from the northeastern part of Hungary drove the cattle from the northern regions of the Lowlands through the eastern customs posts, through Upper Hungary and into Lower Hungary (today Western Slovakia), probably in the region of the river Vág/Váh, where they were taken over by west Hungarian traders' men and driven on towards Moravia.

## Trade heading north

Another important export destination for Upper Hungary were the southern Polish regions. In the north, the two most important exports were Hungarian copper and wine. I will only briefly touch on the export of copper here, as this is also covered in the chapter by Miroslav Lacko. In the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Fugger-Thurzo company played the main role in the export of Hungarian copper to the north. It can be considered a common tendency for a company to be founded for a specific business objective. In this case, the aim was the exploitation of copper mining in Besztercebánya/Banská Bystrica. The founders' shares were divided into 50–50%. However, this division was based on different forms of capital. The Fuggers justified further mining investments with financial resources. Johann Thurzó contributed to the success with other types of capital. His technical knowledge and mining facilities played an important role, furthermore he had good connections to the Hungarian court. Finally Thurzó's extensive business connections in the Polish regions all the way to the Baltic Sea was important too.<sup>112</sup>

From the 1560s to the early 1580s, the aforementioned Paller & Weis concern was able to take advantage of the rising demand for copper at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century and managed to pay a much lower price for Hungarian ore than the market price, thus making a substantial profit from their mining business in Hungary.<sup>113</sup> One of the major routes for copper

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<sup>112</sup> Tózsá-Rigó, Kupferbergbau in Neusohl, 329.

<sup>113</sup> Tózsá-Rigó, Kupferbergbau in Ungarn. Tózsá-Rigó, A nagy.

exports was to Silesia, via Breslau/Wrocław to Hamburg and the Low Countries.<sup>114</sup> The most important transit centre for northern copper exports was Kraków.<sup>115</sup> From here the copper was carried northwards, reaching the Baltic Sea at Danzig/Gdańsk. From the northern ports, it was transported to the Low Countries, England and even Portugal, from where it was often shipped to the colonies in Africa and India.<sup>116</sup> And as we have seen before, Venice was also an important receptive market for Hungarian copper. In Besztercebánya/Banská Bystrica, the difficulties after the turn of the century were overcome by the arrival of additional investors: Lazarus Henckel from Vienna, who was related to the Eislers, and Bartholomäus Castello from Italy, who was related to the Weis family.<sup>117</sup>

From the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century, wines of the Tokaj-Hegyalja region took over from the wines of Southern Hungary as the leading wine for exports to the north. The routes also shifted. Economic and geographical factors played a role in this. Whereas previously wine had been exported via the towns of Upper Hungary, the wines of Hegyalja were mainly transported along the Zemplén routes to avoid the free royal towns. The Zemplén region was also more favourable due to good waterways and lower mountain passes.<sup>118</sup> The most important destination for Hungarian wine exports was Kraków. Unfortunately, no customs registers have survived from the North-East Hungarian region, but the sources from the city of Kraków can be well studied.

Kraków's wine tax lists from the period 1567–1585 provide a good database for Hungarian wine exports.<sup>119</sup> In the 18 years under review, a total of 21,250 złoty was received from wine sales. This corresponds to an average of roughly 4,100 hectolitres consumed per year. A detailed description of the municipal wine tax from 1584–1585 has also been preserved. It also states the origin of the wine. It is highly probable that 66% of the wine was from Hegyalja. In addition, wines from Sopron (18%) and Szentgyörgy/Svätý Jur (7%) were also exported from Hungary. Smaller quantities of Mediterranean type wines (*vini canari*, Malvasia – 5%) and Moravian wine (2%).<sup>120</sup> In these cases, unfortunately, we have no information on the trader associations.

## Overview, second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century

The changing trends of the early modern set the economic system of the Hungarian regions on a particular development path. The structure, concentrated on the export of agricultural products, meant that Hungarian crafts could not compete even with the industrial production of the Bohemian and Austrian regions. Hungarian urban development lagged significantly behind the Western level. Insufficient urban development prevented the emergence of a capital-rich entrepreneurial layer comparable to that of Western Europe. The impact of the European price revolution was also felt indirectly on prices in Hungary. Inflation, which was common in the period 1520–1620, gained momentum in the 1580s. This process was clearly reflected in the price of food in the towns of western Hungary.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> There were active relations between Silesia and Hungary as early as the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The people of Breslau/Wrocław received privileges in trade with Hungary from Matthias Corvinus, which were confirmed by Louis II as King of Bohemia. APW ASB Nr. 28. D6 T 80 241 f. 257.

<sup>115</sup> Lacko, Akteure.

<sup>116</sup> Weber, Mitteleuropa, 12., 14., 29.

<sup>117</sup> Kenyeres, A királyi, 101., Buchinger, Die Wiener, 66.

<sup>118</sup> Vinkler, Magyarországi, 130–131.

<sup>119</sup> AMKr APD Nr. 1630–1648.

<sup>120</sup> AMKr APD Nr. 1648. f. 5–27. The term *vini canari* does not imply that they really came from the Canary Islands, it was certainly just a generic term for Mediterranean wines.

<sup>121</sup> Tózsá-Rigó, A szőlő, 230–231. Dányi – Zimányi, *Soproni*, 200.



The general trends of change in the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century had ambivalent effects on the Hungarian economy. After 1648, routes to the Baltic and the Adriatic allowed Hungarian merchants to trade in these areas again. Developments in the means of production and the expansion of production were also characteristic of the Hungarian economic system. However, overall, sales opportunities were rather negative. From the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century onwards, the relative value of agricultural products declined. In production itself, the fact that Hungary was hit by a number of demographic crises during the period often caused problems. In the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, as in earlier periods, there was hardly a year in which the plague did not ravage a region, and frequent wars had a negative impact.<sup>122</sup>

The growing demand for minerals in European markets was a positive factor. The price of copper rose steadily between 1651 and 1672. In turn, Hungarian copper increasingly competed with Swedish and overseas ore production.<sup>123</sup>

The decline of cattle exports in the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, state intervention in the sector, and the decline in the relative value of agricultural products in general, led to a fundamental change in the more or less balanced relations between the regions of Western and Central Europe in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>124</sup> By the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the modest advantage of Western Europe in terms of the commodity structure, mentioned in the introduction, had already become a significant inequality in favour of the Western regions.<sup>125</sup>

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AMB: Archív mesta Bratislavy

MmB: Magistrát mesta Bratislavy

VB: Verbotbuch a i l

AMBrna: Archív Města Brna

SchB: Schultheissbücher; fond A 1/3, Zbírka rkp. A (Uředních knih)

Č 1731–1769: 1542–1581

Č 1779: 1590–1591

Č 1791: 1599–1602

AMKr: Archiwum Miasta Krakowa

APD: Acta Percepta Distributiones Nr. 1630–1648

APW: Archiwum Państwowe we Wrocławiu

ASB: Akten Stadt Breslau

Nr. 28. – Mikrofilm D6, T 80 241

ASStT: Archivio di Stato di Trento

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<sup>122</sup> Várkonyi, *Gazdaság*, 1275, 1279.

<sup>123</sup> Várkonyi, *Gazdaság*, 1284.

<sup>124</sup> As an illustration of the weakening of cattle exports, the tricesimator of Bruck mentions in a correspondence of 1658 that the Chamber had asked for an account of the too low customs revenue, to which the customs officer replied that the turnover had fallen drastically compared to previous years. MNL OL MKA E 210 fasc. 78. 15. f. 26r–27v.

<sup>125</sup> Wallerstein, *Das moderne*, 127–128.

APTR: Archivi Principatus Tridentini Regesta  
Capsa 8. n. 42. N° 14. Zollregister zwischen Lombardei und Trento

BayHStA Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv, München  
RKG Reichskammergericht  
Akten

MNL OL: Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár Országos Levéltára  
MKA: A Magyar Kamara Archivuma  
E 41: Litterae ad cameram exaratae  
E 210 Miscellanea Tricesimalia  
fasc. 75., 15. – Bruck  
fasc. 90., 102. – Nagyszombat

ÖStA: Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Wien  
FHKA: Finanz- und Hofkammerarchiv  
HF Ö: Hoffinanz Österreich  
HP: Hoffinanz- Protokolle  
NÖ GdB: Niederösterreichische Gedenkbücher  
NÖHA: Niederösterreichische Herrschaftsakten W 61/C/48/A

StA. Abg: Stadtarchiv Augsburg  
KuH: Kaufmannschaft und Handel  
L: Literalien

StadtAN: Stadtarchiv Nürnberg  
E 8: Handelsvorstand

StLA: Steirisches Landesarchiv  
IÖ-HK: Innerösterreichische Hofkammer  
Akten  
Index

ŠAB: Štátny Archív Bratislava  
T: pobočka Trnava  
MmT Miss: Magistrát mesta Trnavy, Missiles – Listy adresované mesty  
1513 – 1536: Kartón 1. inv. c 1–357  
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