

Szabolcs Balázs Nagy

**ARCHITECTURAL PRESTIGE REPRESENTATION
IN THE MID-FIFTEENTH CENTURY:
NICHOLAS ÚJLAKI AND THE CASTLE OF VÁRPALOTA**

MA Thesis in Medieval Studies

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Budapest

May 2015

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Szabolcs Balázs Nagy

(Hungary)

Thesis submitted to the Department of Medieval Studies,
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of the Master of Arts degree in Medieval Studies.

Accepted in conformance with the standards of the CEU.

Chair, Examination Committee

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I, the undersigned, **Szabolcs Balázs Nagy**, candidate for the MA degree in Medieval Studies, declare herewith that the present thesis is exclusively my own work, based on my research and only such external information as properly credited in notes and bibliography. I declare that no unidentified and illegitimate use was made of the work of others, and no part of the thesis infringes on any person's or institution's copyright. I also declare that no part of the thesis has been submitted in this form to any other institution of higher education for an academic degree.

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Abstract

Architectural Prestige Representation in the Mid-Fifteenth Century: Nicholas Újlaki and the Castle of Várpalota

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Várpalota Castle is situated in western Hungary and was built by Nicholas Újlaki (around 1410 – 1477) in the first half of the 1440s. This was the time when Újlaki, an ambitious magnate, was about to reach the peak of his political career, being among the most powerful aristocrats of the kingdom along with John Hunyadi. According to a well-established historical model, in this short period of time, Várpalota Castle was meant to be the seat or main personal residence of his outstanding oligarchic power in western Hungary. Based on this historical background, the castle seems an ideal case for studying the ways by which power and prestige was displayed in the mid-fifteenth century.

The first indispensable step was a thorough revision of the castle's architectural history, a re-evaluation of all relevant publications, excavation records, restoration documentation, and the study of carved stone material kept in the castle's lapidarium. I was able to refine the fifteenth-century building periods and also identify a significant reconstruction of the castle, including the building of an elaborate courtyard corridor, executed probably in the third quarter of the century.

A comparative approach, overviews of the relevant contemporary residences of the elite and the magnate himself, opened the door for interpreting Újlaki's building activities. In the 1440s, prestige and power were primarily displayed by the appropriate type of the new residence, where the dimensions and the specific layout resembled the architecture of the royal court. In the second half of the century the castle was enlarged in a period when Várpalota presumably had already lost its outstanding significance. However, this very dichotomy, the seemingly purposeless, yet spectacular reconstruction, seems to have been a way of demonstrating wealth and prestige.

Acknowledgements

During my investigations at Várpalota Castle, in libraries and in data archives of museums I obtained invaluable help from a number of scholars, colleagues and assistants. I would like to thank all of them, although here I shall mention only those who provided the greatest support. First and foremost, I am very grateful to József Laszlovszky, the supervisor of this thesis. His encouragement was essential in the beginning, as well as his guidance, scholarly approach, and informative ideas in the whole course of the research. I am also indebted to Csaba László, who generously placed all his documents at my disposal, gave useful advice about archaeological sources and found time for productive consultations. I would also like to thank István Feld, who followed my investigations step by step, gave considered critical remarks, provided me with relevant secondary literature and, especially, drew my attention to the significance of Ilok Castle. I am really indebted to Judith Rasson for her tireless and sometimes heroic effort to improve the style and correct the mistakes of the text.

My thanks are also due to the Department of Medieval Studies, to Katalin Szende for her support and help with relevant recent historical studies, and to Annabella Pál for all her effort that made the circumstances of my investigations easier. I owe some notions concerning the dating and the structure of the Gothic courtyard corridor of Várpalota Castle to Gergely Buzás, I thank him for his remarks. Finally, special thanks go to my friends from Eötvös Loránd University (Budapest), who accompanied me to Várpalota, and helped moving, lifting and rolling heavy carved stone pieces in the lapidarium. I hope the muscles of my friends and the eyes and ears of my teachers and colleagues were not fatigued in vain.

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INTRODUCTION

HISTORIOGRAPHY AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The traditional “military” understanding of medieval castles was gradually overshadowed at the latest from the 1980s, when a new generation of scholars started to recognize and analyze the complexity of their functions. This paradigmatic shift was also supported by the so-called “spatial turn” of the early 1990s. Today the symbolic aspects of elite residences and the fact that castles could act as a medium for establishing or strengthening the owners’ social status is almost a commonplace in scholarly discourse.¹ In some cases power or prestige representation is actually regarded as the most important reason for constructing a new residence or refurbishing an older one.²

However, beyond general statements, identifying actual, concrete architectural features or elements that reflect this symbolic function is much more problematic. Therefore, I decided to take a close view of a single site, Várpalota Castle (Hungary), to answer these questions. How do the remains of significant building activities reflect the huge political ambitions of its aristocratic commissioner? What are the detectable traces, the actual architectural features, demonstrating this role of displaying prestige or power? To what extent did the builder, Nicholas Újlaki, a prominent aristocrat of the fifteenth-century kingdom imitate the architecture of the royal court and did his residence surpass those of other aristocrats?

¹ The relevant secondary literature is abundant, for some examples, see John M. Steane, *The Archaeology of Power: England and Northern Europe AD 800-1600* (Stroud: Tempus, 2001); Matthew Johnson, *Behind the Castle Gate: From Medieval to Renaissance* (London: Routledge, 2002), 1-18; Radu Lupescu, “The Castle as Symbol of Social Status. A Hungarian Case Study: Johannes Corvinus,” in *Castrum Bene 8: Burg und Funktion, Castle and Function*, ed. Martin Krenn and Alexandra Krenn-Leeb (Vienna: Verlag Österreichische Gesellschaft für Ur- und Frühgeschichte, 2006), 97; Katarina Predovnik, “The Castle as Social Space: An Introduction,” in *Castrum Bene 12: The Castle as Social Space*, ed. Katarina Predovnik (Ljubljana: University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Arts, 2014), 13-21.

² See, for instance, Virágos on the theory of Charles Coulson: Gábor Virágos, *The Social Archaeology of Residential Sites: Hungarian Noble Residences and their Social Context from the Thirteenth to the Sixteenth Century* (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2006), 90.

For this investigation, Nicholas Újlaki's building activities in Várpalota seem a good choice as a case study for several reasons. Written evidence verifies that Várpalota was transformed into an imposing main residence at the very moment when the builder, Nicholas Újlaki, was about to reach the peak of his power and political career. Therefore it can be a classic example of a building which is clearly strongly connected to the intention to display power, visualize wealth and social status and perhaps even to further political claims. This large-scale building activity at the castle can be dated quite precisely to the 1440s, which provides a good basis for interpretation.

The topic is also relevant from a historiographic viewpoint. The career and political ambitions of Nicholas Újlaki are quite well-known both from the written evidence and secondary literature, and recently Hungarian and Croatian historians have also dealt with his figure. Archaeological investigations from 2001 in the town and castle of Ilok (Croatia) fundamentally modified and enriched knowledge on the main residence of the family and Nicholas Újlaki. At Várpalota Castle the first archaeological and art historical investigations began in the 1960s in the framework of the architectural conservation and restoration of the monument which had already started in the 1950s.³ These investigations were fairly limited regarding both their time frames and extent. Unfortunately, the documentation of this early research is also far from being complete and sufficient. A thorough evaluation of the results of these field observations was missing, the few published articles generally lack details and facts which would convincingly support their statements and argumentation. From the 1980s, research was conducted by Cs. László, who made an essential contribution based on his careful, well-founded observations. Unfortunately, up to now, he has only published a small

³ Csaba László, "A várpalotai 14. századi *palota*" [The fourteenth century palace at Várpalota] in "Gondolják, látják az várnak nagy voltát...": *Tanulmányok a 80 éves Nováki Gyula tiszteletére. Burgenkundliche Studien zum 80. Geburtstag von Gyula Nováki* [Castle studies in honour of 80 years old Gyula Nováki], ed. Gyöngyi Kovács and Zsuzsa Miklós (Budapest: Castrum Bene Egyesület – Históriaantik Könyvesház Kiadó, 2006), 163.

proportion of his results, dealing almost exclusively with the early (fourteenth-century) period of the residence.⁴

SOURCES, METHODS AND STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

In this thesis I plan to evaluate different types of sources, apply various methods and finally summarize the results coming from diverse directions. In the second chapter I synthesize the research results of the secondary literature on Nicholas Újlaki's social status, political career and ambitions, based on the written sources. Since the historical background has recently been treated substantially in several papers, I do not go into detail and do not analyze primary sources, but I have to discuss it since it is essential for interpreting the castle.

Turning to the castle in the third chapter, the first step of the research is a revision of the medieval building periods. Beyond a thorough and critical review of the publications I engage in a systematic reevaluation of the available excavation records and restoration documentations. I also utilize some documents that have practically never been taken into consideration previously, although they include essential pieces of information concerning the architectural history of the castle.

The carved stone material of the medieval castle is a similarly indispensable base in my investigations. Some of the relevant fragments – that is, fragments of carvings which can be dated to the building period(s) of Nicholas Újlaki – are in situ, some have been replaced, and some are completely dislocated. Unfortunately, the poor level of documentation during certain research and restoration periods at Várpalota has resulted in the fact that – in some cases – one can hardly define which carvings were left untouched in their original positions and what the reconstructions were based on.

The dislocated carvings raise other difficulties. Currently several hundred carved stone architectural fragments, are kept in Várpalota Castle, of which only a minority (according to

⁴ László, "A várpalotai 14. századi *palota*."

some estimations, approximately 200 items⁵) come from the Middle Ages, predominantly the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. However, only a small group of these medieval carvings can help answering the research questions of the thesis. Most of the fragments – especially those from the fifteenth century – were found completely dislocated from their original contexts,⁶ while the provenience of other pieces was unrecorded. There is no complete inventory of the carvings recording where they came from and when they arrived at the present day lapidarium.

Some carvings were never part of the building complex of the castle, but – since it became a museum in the 1960s – were delivered to the castle for preservation purposes in the twentieth century.⁷ Other carvings could have gotten into the castle as early as the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries when they were reused as simple stones in building the fortification walls.⁸ What is more, most of the dislocated carvings are so simple, featureless or undecorated that one cannot really specify their dating or define their function. Under these circumstances, I had to select the carvings which unambiguously belonged to the castle, which can be dated and interpreted trustworthily, and, finally, which actually contribute to the question of Nicholas Újlaki's architectural prestige representation. On the whole, I have been able to identify fourteen fragments of a Gothic vaulted courtyard corridor and some further carvings which come from the same building period.

⁵ *Lapidarium Hungaricum 1: Általános helyzetkép* [Lapidarium Hungaricum 1: General overview], ed. István Feld, Miklós Horler, Tibor Koppány, Pál Lővei and György Székér (Budapest: Országos Műemléki Felügyelőség, 1988), 413-4. Although I have not listed all the medieval fragments systematically, the estimation seems to be correct by and large, or maybe somewhat greater.

⁶ Most of the carvings discussed below were found from the walls of the early eighteenth century building period of the castle. Gergelyffy, "Várpalota III," 108.

⁷ See the example of a corbel from the ruined medieval Franciscan friary in Várpalota in Péter Németh, "Várpalota" *Régészeti Füzetek* Ser. I. No. 17 (1964): 86.)

⁸ The medieval Franciscan friary of Várpalota, for example, was already deserted in the mid-sixteenth century, and its stones – both carved and raw – were probably reused during the subsequent building activities of the town, including that of the castle itself. See János Karácsonyi, *Szent Ferencz rendjének története Magyarországon 1711-ig* [The history of the order of St. Francis in Hungary until 1711] vol. 2, (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1924), 209-10; Beatrix Romhányi, *Kolostorok és társaskáptalanok a középkori Magyarországon* [Monasteries and collegiate chapters in medieval Hungary] (Budapest: Pytheas, 2000), 49.

The combination of archaeological, architectural historical and art historical approaches open the door for refining the fifteenth-century building periods and their datings.⁹ On this basis one can proceed to the level of interpretation and examine questions of prestige representation. In the fourth chapter I discuss the results of my investigations of Várpalota in the context of Nicholas Újlaki's further building activities and contemporary elite residences of the kingdom. The similarities and differences which occur in this wider context provide new data (or rather conjectures) about the ways Nicholas Újlaki could have displayed power and prestige through construction work.

⁹ Although the small finds of the excavations – except for a few stove tile fragments – have not been examined before, I did not engage in the study of them, since it would exceed the possibilities and limits of the thesis. Imre Holl, “Dunántúli kályhacsempék” [Stove tiles from Western Hungary], *Veszprém Megyei Múzeumok Közleményei* 17 (1985): 213-7.

Chapter 1: NICHOLAS ÚJLAKI

The building activity at Várpalota Castle and its significance can only be truly understood in the light of the political career of Nicholas Újlaki. This powerful aristocrat was born around 1410, the son of one of the most influential and powerful aristocratic families of the Hungarian kingdom.¹⁰ After the death of his elder brother he became the main figure of the family and consequently the governor of the huge family estates. In 1438, he received a significant baronial office (*ban* of Macsó¹¹). At this time he possessed only (at most) half of his later estates in four great blocks. Accordingly, he had an outstanding personal role in expanding the family's power and wealth.¹²

With the death of King Albert (1437-1439), almost two decades of political turbulence and uncertainty began in the Hungarian kingdom. Although the widowed queen was pregnant, some of the leading aristocrats wanted a powerful adult ruler from abroad and they elected King Wladislas I. In 1440, Hungary had two kings at the same time, as both Wladislas I and the infant Ladislas V were enthroned by the competing baronial leagues. Nicholas Újlaki was one of those who took great advantage of the turbulent situation, notably expanding the wealth and power of his family. Initially he appeared on the side of the infant king; in fact, he was asked to dub the infant Ladislas V a knight in 1440. However, he soon switched sides and entered into a long-term and decisive alliance with John Hunyadi and together they became the most significant supporters of Wladislas I. After a crucial victory over the supporters of

¹⁰ According to written evidence, he was born between 1407 and 1414. See Tamás Fedeles, "Egy középkori főúri család vallásossága: Az Újlakiak példája" [The religion of a medieval Hungarian aristocratic family: The example of the Újlaki], *Századok* 145. no. 2 (2011): 398 (footnote 154).

¹¹ The *bans* in medieval Hungary were provincial administrators, who governed larger provinces (consisting a number of counties) generally on the borderlands of the kingdom. The *banate* of Macsó was situated on the southern frontier of the kingdom.

¹² András Kubinyi, "A kaposújvári uradalom és a Somogy megyei familiárisok szerepe Újlaki Miklós birtokpolitikájában: (Adatok a XV. századi feudális nagybirtok hatalmi politikájához)" [The role of the estate of Kaposújvár and the *familiars* in Somogy county in the territorial policies of Nicholas Újlaki], *Somogy megye múltjából: Levéltári Évkönyv* 4 (1973): 5-6.

Ladislav V in 1441, Wladislas I appointed the two magnates to be voivode of Transylvania, which was the second highest political office after that of *palatinus*.¹³

The power and wealth of the two barons increased even further in 1444, when Wladislas I fell in the battle of Varna (Bulgaria) against the Ottomans, and the kingdom was left without a king. The diet of 1445 decided to divide the kingdom into four quarters, one to be governed by Hunyadi, another by Újlaki, and the two remaining quarters by five other prominent aristocrats.¹⁴ This decision endowed Hunyadi and Újlaki with power never seen before. Nicholas could practically act as a separate oligarch in the western part of the kingdom and seems to have tried to establish a territorial authority resembling a separate principality.¹⁵

In the case of Várpalota Castle, historians agree that the large-scale rebuilding of the residence, transforming it from a fourteenth-century manor house to an imposing castle in the 1440s, was closely linked to Újlaki's political ambitions. They assume that the new castle was meant either to be at seat¹⁶ or at personal residence¹⁷ in the heart of the expected Western Hungarian territory. By and large concurrently with the construction work at the castle, Nicholas Újlaki also founded a Franciscan friary, approximately 900 m east of the castle. In 1456, the *capitulum generalis* was held in this friary, which may reflect – besides the prestige

¹³ András Kubinyi, "Újlaki Miklós (1417 k. – 1477)" [Nicholas Újlaki (Cca. 1410 – 1477)], in *Nagy képes millenniumi arcképcsarnok: 100 portré a magyar történelemből*, ed. Árpád Rácz (Budapest: Rubicon-Aquila Könyvek, 1999), 48-9; "A kaposújtári uradalom," 5-8; Tamás Pálosfalvi, "Újlaki Miklós (1410 k. – 1477)" [Nicholas Újlaki (Cca. 1410 – 1477)], in *Hunyadi Mátyás, a király: Hagyomány és megújulás a királyi udvarban 1458-1490: Kiállítási katalógus* [Matthias Corvinus the king: Tradition and renewal in the Hungarian Royal Court, 1458-1490: Exhibition catalogue], ed. Péter Farbak, Enikő Spekner, Katalin Szende and András Végh (Budapest: Budapesti Történeti Múzeum, 2008), 267.

¹⁴ Kubinyi, "Újlaki Miklós (1417 k. – 1477)," 49; Fedeles, "Egy középkori főúri család vallásossága," 381.

¹⁵ Kubinyi, "A kaposújtári uradalom," 8-9, 32; András Kubinyi, "Nagybirtok és főúri rezidencia Magyarországon a XV. század közepétől Mohácsig" [Latifundium and aristocratic residence in Hungary from the mid-fifteenth century to the battle of Mohács in 1526], *A Tapolcai Városi Múzeum Közleményei* 2 (1991): 214; Richárd Horváth, "Várak és politika a középkori Veszprém megyében" [Castles and politics in medieval Veszprém county], Ph.D. dissertation (Debrecen: Debreceni Egyetem, 2002), 29-30; Fedeles, "Egy középkori főúri család vallásossága," 385, 411.

¹⁶ Kubinyi, "Nagybirtok és főúri rezidencia," 214; Fedeles, "Egy középkori főúri család vallásossága," 385.

¹⁷ Kubinyi, "A kaposújtári uradalom," 8-9, 32; Horváth, "Várak és politika," 29-30.

and influence of the magnate – the size and architectural standard of the monastery.¹⁸ Várpalota as a settlement also benefited from the changes; its development was reflected in its being mentioned as a market town (*oppidum*) in 1464.¹⁹

This presumed oligarchial effort in Western Hungary was later replaced by the chance of a new territorial authority in southwestern Hungary. Under the regular reign of Ladislaus V (1453-57), Nicholas Újlaki successfully retained his offices of Transylvanian voivode and *ban* of Macso, moreover, he was appointed as *ban* of Slavonia in 1457 (together with John Vitovec).²⁰ Accordingly, from the 1450s, at the latest from 1457, his new political ambitions were focused on this region with the seat of Ilok (Croatia), which had been the main residence of the family from the fourteenth century onwards. Large-scale construction work and a flourishing period began in the town, while Várpalota became again a less important local residence of the family.²¹

In 1459 the magnate was probably the leader of the opposition of the young King Matthias (1458-1490), son of the deceased John Hunyadi. His castle in Güssing (Austria) was the site where the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick III was elected Hungarian king by a baronial league. However, Nicholas Újlaki soon came to terms with Matthias, as early as the summer of 1459, after which he did not lose his large estates, but his political influence was reduced significantly. His offices of voivode of Transylvania and *ban* of Slavonia were taken back, although he remained the *ban* of Macso throughout his life.²²

¹⁸ Fedeles, “Egy középkori főúri család vallásossága,” 384-5; MRT 2, 214 and the document in LDM Data Archive under the inventory number 3788.

¹⁹ Dezső Csánki, *Magyarország történeti földrajza a Hunyadiak korában* III. [Historical Geography of Hungary in the Hunyadi period III] (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1897), 214.

²⁰ Kubinyi, “A kaposújvári uradalom,” 9-10; Kubinyi, “Újlaki Miklós (1417 k. – 1477),” 49; Pálosfalvi, “Újlaki Miklós (1410 k. – 1477),” 267.

²¹ Kubinyi, “A kaposújvári uradalom,” 9-10; Kubinyi, “Nagybirtok és főúri rezidencia,” 214-5; Horváth, “Várak és politika,” 29-30; Fedeles, “Egy középkori főúri család vallásossága,” 411.

²² Kubinyi, “A kaposújvári uradalom,” 33; Kubinyi, “Újlaki Miklós (1417 k. – 1477),” 49-50; Pálosfalvi, “Újlaki Miklós (1410 k. – 1477),” 267.

In 1471 King Matthias appointed him king of Bosnia, a kingdom (re)established on the Bosnian territories recaptured from the Ottomans in 1463.²³ In the same year the banate of Slavonia was also returned to him, although Matthias had to retract it after two years, probably because of his recurrent oligarchial ambitions. Although the capital of the Bosnian kingdom was in Jajce (Bosnia and Herzegovina), he kept his residence in Ilok. After his death in 1477, his son, Lawrence Újlaki (1459-1524), the last male member of the family, inherited all his wealth and estates.²⁴

²³ Kubinyi, “Újlaki Miklós (1417 k. – 1477),” 50; Fedeles, “Egy középkori főúri család vallásossága,” 381.

²⁴ Kubinyi, “Nagybirtok és főúri rezidencia,” 215; Kubinyi, “Újlaki Miklós (1417 k. – 1477),” 50; Fedeles, “Egy középkori főúri család vallásossága,” 410-1.

Chapter 2: VÁRPALOTA CASTLE

2.1 WRITTEN SOURCES

Although the ancestors of the family had already acquired property around the settlement in 1350, the first clear sign of a seigneurial residence at Várpalota dates back to 1393, when the *de Palota* ascription of the Újlaki family first appears in the written sources.²⁵ Here, Palota is not only important as the former name of Várpalota, since the word *palota* in medieval Hungarian referred either to a prestigious fancy building, or a great hall.²⁶ In both cases, the *de Palota* denomination suggests that in 1393 the family already owned a residence of high architectural quality in medieval Várpalota.

Around the 1440s – according to the written evidence – significant building activity took place in the noble dwelling, after which the former *curia* was consistently called *castrum*. A parliamentary decision of May 1445 ordered that all castles that had been erected without permission since the reign of King Albert I (1437-1439) must be demolished, except for the castles of Kismána, Pelsőc (Plešivec, Slovakia), Sajóvámos, Verőce and *Castrum Palota*.²⁷ However, the exact beginning of the construction of the new building is not completely clear. While A. Gergelyffy and D. Várnai definitely dated it between 1439 and 1445 according to the parliamentary decision, Cs. László is much more skeptical, and –

²⁵ Horváth, “Várak és politika,” 27 (footnote 111). Previously, 1397 was considered to be the first appearance of the place name Palota. From 1409 there is evidence of a certain Blasius Kezy who was *castellanus castrum Batorkw, alias curialis in Palatha*, which clearly proves that there was a *curia*, that is, a residence of the Újlaki family in Várpalota. See, e.g., András Gergelyffy, “Palota és Castrum Palota” [Palota and Castrum Palota], *Magyar Műemlékvédelem* 1967-68 5 (1970): 129 or László, “A várpalotai 14. századi palota,” 164. Several pieces of evidence for the place name date after 1393, as well as the *predicatum* of Palota. See Horváth, “Várak és politika,” 27-9.

²⁶ András Kubinyi, “Palota – terem: Terminológiai kérdések” [Palota – terem: Problems of terminology], in *Castrum Bene* 2/1990: *Várak a késő középkorban: Die Burgen im Spätmittelalter*, ed. Juan Cabello (Budapest: Castrum Bene Egyesület, 1992), 55-9. The term *palota* could also refer to a porch or a verandah, but this was a much less typical meaning of the word in the Middle Ages. On other the terms of manor houses in Hungarian charters see, e.g., István Tringli, “Ákos sátorhelye – Ákosudvarhelye” [Tent site of Ákos – Ákosudvarhelye], in “Magyaroknak eleiről.” Ünnepi tanulmányok a hatvan esztendő Makk Ferenc tiszteletére [“On the ancestors of Hungarians”: Studies in honour of the sixty years old Ferenc Makk] ed. Ferenc Piti (Szeged: Szegedi Középkorász Műhely, 2000), 655-671.

²⁷ András Gergelyffy, “A várpalotai vár építési korszakai III.” [Building periods of Várpalota Castle III], *Veszprém Megyei Múzeumok Közleményei* 13 (1978): 103.

supposing a long spell of construction – he refers to it as building activity in the first half of the fifteenth century which was not necessarily finished in 1445.²⁸ Nevertheless, I suggest that – for the beginning of the construction – the testimony of the parliamentary decision can be more or less accepted, since those turbulent years after the death of King Albert I (1437-1439) seem to have been the most probable period for building a castle without applying for royal permission. The parliamentary decision in itself shows that such cases were not exceptional and one of the most important aristocratic family, the Újlakis, clearly used their power in this respect. At any rate, during the reign of King Sigismund (1387-1437) – when royal power was significantly stronger than in the following decades – illicit castle building in Várpalota seems improbable.²⁹ The clear signs of Újlaki's Transdanubian political ambitions also correspond to this period, the years after 1439 (or 1437).³⁰

The completion of the castle building is more problematic. Naturally, as Cs. László suggests, it might have been a prolonged, more or less continuous process with several phases, lasting perhaps for decades. However, it also could have been relatively fast work, as – given the wealth of Nicholas Újlaki – no financial difficulties are likely to have occurred. In fact, one can only draw up guesses, models of differing certainty.

More pieces of information can be quoted concerning the chronology of the building activity. My argument here is based on R. Horváth's investigations into the place and date of letters written by Nicholas. Three months before the parliamentary decision, Nicholas Újlaki himself called his residence a castle in his letter dated *in castro nostro Palotha* in February

²⁸ See Gergelyffy, "Várpalota I," 271; Gergelyffy, "Palota és Castrum Palota," 125, 129, 132-3; Várnai, "Várpalota várának építési korszakai," 149; Gergelyffy, "Várpalota III," 103; Csaba László, "Újabb kutatások a várpalotai várban" [New research on the castle of Várpalota], in *Castrum Bene 2/1990: Várak a késő középkorban: Die Burgen im Spätmittelalter*, ed. Juan Cabello (Budapest: Castrum Bene Egyesület, 1992), 185-6.

²⁹ I assume that castle building without royal permission in Várpalota – which is close to the central part of the kingdom (the *medium regni*) and extremely close to the royal town of Székesfehérvár – could have been regarded reckless provocation of King Sigismund.

³⁰ Horváth, "Várak és politika," 28-30; András Kubinyi, "Nagybirtok és főúri rezidencia Magyarországon a XV. század közepétől Mohácsig" [*Latifundium and aristocratic residence in Hungary from the mid-fifteenth century to the battle of Mohács in 1526*], *A Tapolcai Városi Múzeum Közleményei* 2 (1991): 214.

1445. This letter also implies that the castle was in a – more or less – habitable state as early as 1444, since it does not seem realistic that significant building activity was continued during the winter. A shift in the series of datings of Nicholas Újlaki's letters and charters may also imply that building activity in Várpalota reached such a condition that the castle was already adequate for a baronial residence at the end of the year 1444. In the 1440s Nicholas wrote from his nearby castle Bátorkő (approx. 5 km from Várpalota Castle) four times: twice in 1442 and twice in 1444. These are his last known letters, charters from Bátorkő Castle. In the same period he dated correspondence from Várpalota once in 1443 and once in 1444, but six times from February of 1445 until January of 1446.³¹ In January 1446 Várpalota was the locale where Újlaki entered into an alliance with the Cillei brothers, who were – together with John Hunyadi, Ladislaus Garai and Újlaki himself – among the most powerful and wealthy barons of the kingdom at that time.³²

Újlaki's letters and the shift in the datings convincingly verify that the castle had become reasonably adequate for accomodating its owner (at least) by the end of 1445. In my understanding, the political alliance concluded in Várpalota may reveal even more: the castle became a usable baronial residence where Újlaki could receive his most appreciated guests and accomodate their entourages. Thus, it must have been a proper and prestigious place for such an important event. The parliamentary decision and Újlaki's own phrasing (referring to the residence as *castrum* from 1445 onwards) suggest that the rebuilt residence did not only involve a fancy palace but had some kind of a defensive character as well. On the whole, I argue that the main components of the new castle (the square-shaped castle form with its defensive wall, the corner towers, the northern and western palace wings), which by and large reflect an organic building conception, were probably built before 1445 or 1446.³³

³¹ Horváth, *Várak és politika*, 29, 106, 109.

³² Horváth, *Várak és politika*, 29.

³³ On the arguments for the dating of the palace wings see the next subchapters.

2.2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND BUILDING HISTORICAL OBSERVATIONS

Várpalota is situated right at the junction of a hilly woodland and a plain in Western Hungary, at the southern foot of Bakony Mountain. The exact location of the medieval Palota settlement is unknown. The castle itself was built in the middle of a formerly waterlogged plain surrounded by low hills on the west, north and east.³⁴

The antecedents of the castle: the first stone buildings on the site

The first two buildings of what became the castle were a small church and a rectangular manor house, the latter located only approximately 3 m south of the former. The ground plan of the church was composed of an almost square-shaped nave, a similar (but smaller) sanctuary, and a sacristy attached to the north side of the latter. The entrance of the church was located on the western wall of the nave. No window or door frames remain from the first period of the church; the rather simple stone frames that remain were added later and were originally parts of other openings. There are in situ ribs of the cross vaultings from the sanctuary and the sacristy, but whether the vaultings are contemporaneous with the walls or they represent a later reconstruction of the church still needs to be examined. The nave probably had a flat ceiling.³⁵

The manor house was a two-storied rectangular stone building 9×29 m (including the approximately 0.8 m thick walls).³⁶ Both the facades and the inner arrangement indicate a noble dwelling of high architectural standard. The ashlar structure imitation on the outer facades, the sgraffito-like decorated string-course (separating the ground floor from the upper story), the group of windows with the trefoil motif, and the wall paintings on the inner walls all imply a residence of a high status owner. The entrance of the ground floor opened to a

³⁴ István Éri, Márta Kelemen, Péter Németh and István Torma, *Veszprém megye régészeti topográfiája. Veszprémi járás* [Archaeological sites of Veszprém county: Veszprém District] Magyarország Régészeti Topográfiája 2. (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1969) 210-4.

³⁵ László, "Újabb kutatások," 184-185, 188 (endnotes 13, 16-17).

³⁶ The exact size with the thickness of the walls is from Cs. László's lecture ("Várpalota as *castellum*") from 2012 at the Castrum Bene conference, Szekszárd (Hungary). The author kindly loaned me a copy of his lecture.

room 15.5 m long, which, considering its size and the rich decoration of painting all around the walls, could have been a hall for communal activities such as receptions and feasts. This hall occupied the southern part of the ground floor and the two northern smaller rooms were accessible only through it. The ground floor was covered by a flat ceiling. The arrangement of the upper story is unknown, as is its access.³⁷ Presumably, the stone manor house was accompanied by some supplementary buildings (probably wooden structures) with economic and other functions – although excavations have not yet revealed any remains of them.³⁸ The noble dwelling (and probably the church as well) might have been surrounded by a fence (of either wood or stone).³⁹

This manor house can apparently be identified with the fourteenth-century residence of the written sources. The architectural details of the building – the arrangement of the group of windows, the moulding of the frames, the decoration of the facades, etc. – correspond roughly both to the social status of the family and the period. For lack of more solid archaeological evidence, the manor house have primarily been dated based on historical data to between 1350 and 1393. Nor do the remains contradict this dating from an art historical viewpoint.⁴⁰

³⁷ László, “Újabb kutatások,” 184; József Lángi, “Várpalota, vár: A falképek kutatása” [Várpalota Castle: Survey of the wall paintings], *Műemlékvédelmi Szemle* 12, no. 2 (2002): 162-163; Csaba László, “Várpalota, vár” [Várpalota Castle], *Műemlékvédelmi Szemle* 12, no. 2 (2002): 159-161; László, “A várpalotai 14. századi palota,” 164-170.

³⁸ Although archaeological excavations in most cases can only detect the most significant and best preserved elements of medieval noble dwellings (principally the stone buildings that had residential functions), these seats could hardly have operated without the appropriate supplementary buildings that corresponded to their economic, administrative and other functions. See, e.g., Elek Benkő and Attila Székely, *Középkori udvarház és nemesség a Székelyföldön* [Medieval manor house and nobility in the Székely Land in Eastern Transylvania] (Budapest: Nap Kiadó, 2008), 30, 33.

³⁹ Previously, in the 1960s, the remains of a wall approximately 1 m wide were identified as the possible southern line of this fourteenth century fence. See Dezső Várnai, “Várpalota várának építési korszakai” [Building periods of Várpalota castle], *Magyar Műemlékvédelem* 1967-68 no. 5 (1970): 149. I agree with Cs. László, who argues that although those remains are rather dubious, nevertheless some kind of fence may have encircled the dwelling, even if there is no certain archaeological sign of it. László, “Újabb kutatások,” 188 (18. endnote).

⁴⁰ The argument concerning the dating of the architectural details has lost strength to some extent in the twenty-first century. Recent investigations demonstrated that (at least some of the) figurative wall paintings – which formerly were among the most important elements of the dating – were not from the very first period of the building. See László, “A várpalotai 14. századi palota,” 167-9.

There are no relevant historical data for the erection of the church. Based on its ground plan arrangement and architectural details (openings, window frames and ribbed vaultings) it could have been built (at the latest) from the thirteenth to the fourteenth century. The only firm datum is provided by the sequence of building periods. After the church was finished, in the framework of later construction activity, a two-storied building was added to its northern side. Later the whole complex was incorporated into the castle of Nicholas Újlaki.⁴¹ Since the construction of the latter – as I will discuss below – can be dated to the 1440s, the church must have been built at least some decades earlier. Patrons of medieval churches tended to establish private access to their churches, either connecting them physically or sometimes even incorporating them into their dwelling.⁴² In the case of Várpalota there are no signs of any direct (physical) connection between the two, which rather suggests that the church may have been built first.⁴³ Probably it was not built much earlier, as the floor level of the two proved to be the same.⁴⁴

These long, storied stone manor houses with 1 to 5 rooms arranged in a single row, built in the center of settlements, frequently close to the (parish) church were rather typical (although not obligatory) for contemporary Hungarian aristocratic families' residences. Similar topographical situations, ground plans and sizes can be seen, e.g., at the residences at Kislána and Tar, built around the mid-fourteenth century and at the turn of the fourteenth century.⁴⁵ (Regarding topography and the proximity of the church also Pomáz, Zsaluzsány

⁴¹ László, "Újabb kutatások," 185, 188 (endnote 13).

⁴² Virágos, *The Social Archaeology*, 97-111.

⁴³ Although a primary connection can not be excluded with one hundred percent certainty. There were no doorways in the eastern part of the southern nave wall, but the western part of it is not preserved. The northern wall of the manor house definitely did not have a doorway, but the story may have been connected by chance to an incidental western gallery of the church's patron. László, "Újabb kutatások," 185; László, "A várpalotai 14. századi palota," 165.

⁴⁴ For the floor levels see Gergelyffy, "Várpalota I," 262. Also Cs. László assumes that the church may have been built first, although he does not go into detail about why. László, "Újabb kutatások," 185.

⁴⁵ On Kislána, see Szabolcs Balázs Nagy "A Kompoltiak udvarháza a kislánai várban" [The Kompolti family's mansion in Kislána Castle] in *Várak nyomában: Tanulmányok a 60 éves Feld István tiszteletére* [On the trail of castles: Studies in honour of István Feld on his 60th birthday], ed. György Terei, Gyöngyi Kovács, György Domokos, Zsuzsa Miklós and Maxim Mordovin (Budapest: Castrum Bene Egyesület – Civertan Grafikai Stúdió, 2011), 161-168. On Tar, see Juan Cabello, "A Tari család udvarháza" [The manor house of the Tari family] in *A*

(present-day Hrnčiarске Zalužany, Slovakia) and Ozora are analogous to this period of Várpalota.⁴⁶)

The owners of these residences held county *comes* and even higher political offices, and consequently, possessed significant political power and influence. Regarding their landed properties and the number of their estates, however, they did not belong to the few wealthiest families of the kingdom. Residences of the most powerful aristocrats, similarly in the center of the settlements, were characterized by a higher level of complexity and different architectural standard, such as Kismarton Castle of the Kanizsai family, probably built before 1392.⁴⁷

The antecedents of the castle: Construction work before the 1440s

Some details of the manor house are from later refurbishings, but certainly antedate the building activity of the 1440s. The group of windows with the trefoil motif on the western facade of the middle room involved three oblong openings and two round windows located almost symmetrically above them. However regular the arrangement seems to be, the present-day middle oblong opening either was completely missing in the first period or it contained a smaller stone frame differing from the other two oblong windows and located south of the vertical axis. At least it is sure that its lintel and present-day jamb were unlike the others and the wall painting on the southern jamb (depicting a woman) represents a later refurbishing of the building. At the same time, the original timber coverings of the other two oblong window jambs were taken away.⁴⁸ At least some of the figurative wall paintings of the southern hall also derive from a later period, since an earlier layer of greyish painting was uncovered under

tari Szent Mihály-templom és udvarház [The church of St. Michael and the manor house in Tar] ed. Juan Cabello, Ferenc Dávid, Tünde Wehli, Éva Derdák, László Bérczi, János Sedlmayr and György Székér (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1993), 116-118.

⁴⁶ Virágos, *The Social Archaeology*, 97-111.

⁴⁷ Ernő Marosi (ed.), *Magyarországi művészet 1300-1470 körül* [Art in Hungary 1300-1470] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1987), 402.

⁴⁸ Some minor alterations were also made to the window later walled up in the southern hall as well. László, "A várpalotai 14. századi palota," 167-8.

them.⁴⁹ Unfortunately, there have been no attempts at a thorough analysis of the wall paintings from an art historical viewpoint, therefore these smaller refurbishings can not be dated precisely between the first period of the building and the 1440s.

Similarly, the dating of the two-storied building added to the northern side of the church is rather unsettled in this time frame.⁵⁰ There are also some buildings for which even the 1440s as *terminus ante quem* is uncertain. In 2001 Cs. László identified a rather small (maybe ancillary) building that was added to the southwestern corner of the manor house with walls only 0.6 – 0.65 m thick. It is from the Middle Ages and antedates the southern gatehouse – but nothing more is certain.⁵¹

Even more vague is an early northeastern gate house of the building complex, of which only the foundation walls are preserved. A. Gergelyffy claimed that it was built (and demolished) before the 1440s, since the corner tower of the mid-fifteenth century castle was erected upon its foundation. However, this interpretation of the early gate house was later questioned by Cs. László.⁵²

According to A. Gergelyffy and D. Várnai, the mid-fifteenth-century corner tower was built partly above the early gate house and partly on the barrel vault of the northern palace wing. Consequently, A. Gergelyffy and D. Várnai dated (at least some parts of) the northern palace wing before the 1440s.⁵³ Opposing previous interpretations, Cs. László disproved its dating to the first building period with the help of two arguments. 1) The impression of its

⁴⁹ László, “A várpalotai 14. századi *palota*,” 169. The figurative wall paintings depict, e.g., the standing figures of a young lay woman and a man, a scene of a two-headed dragon and a man, a portrait in a round frame or a heraldic(?) representation. Lángi, “Várpalota: A falképek,” 163.

⁵⁰ László, “Újabb kutatások,” 185, 188 (endnote 13). In his lecture in 2012 (“Várpalota as a *castellum*”), Cs. László suggested that they were erected not much later than the church itself. Unfortunately, he did not state his case in detail.

⁵¹ László, “A várpalotai 14. századi *palota*,” 165.

⁵² Gergelyffy, “Palota és Castrum Palota,” 132; Gergelyffy, “Várpalota III,” 107; László, “Újabb kutatások,” 184. In his study of 1992, Cs. László notes (although without any justification or reference), that until the end of the fifteenth century the castle gate was in front of the northeastern tower. Otherwise, he only mentions the early gate-house when summarizing the previous publications. He also indicates it on a ground plan of the different periods. László, “Újabb kutatások,” 184, 186, 191, fig. 1.

⁵³ Gergelyffy, “Palota és Castrum Palota,” 131; Gergelyffy, “Várpalota III,” 103; Várnai, “Várpalota várának építési korszakai,” 149.

demolished vaulted story is clearly recognizable on the northeastern tower's western facade.

2) One of the ground floor door frames was put together from reused frame stones that were originally parts of window frames.⁵⁴ He suggested that the northern palace wing is contemporaneous with the mid-fifteenth century castle, that is, the castle of Nicholas Újlaki.⁵⁵

In my opinion, Cs. László's first argument (about the impression of the vaulted story) only implies that the *story* is contemporaneous or posterior to the tower. Regarding the door frame, photos taken during the excavations of the 1960s testify that one of the reused carvings is a head stone of a mullion window. Although the size cannot be measured exactly on the photos, the window frame seems to be identical with the one found on the eastern facade of the mid-fifteenth-century western palace wing. According to the photos, the carving is not a corrupted waste item but at one time could have actually been used for a window frame.⁵⁶ This suggests that the northern palace wing is (at least) not earlier than the mid-fifteenth-century. However, one should not ignore the possibility that this door frame may be posterior to the palace wing.

On the whole, it seems unlikely that the northern palace wing was built in the first building period. However, it is questionable whether its first form was built before, during or (perhaps) after the 1440s. Presumably, its barrel-vaulted story is related to an extension of the palace wing. Both excavation sketches and photos certify that after the ground floor was completed, some years or decades later a new wall layer was attached to the inner side of its longitudinal (northern and southern) walls. This new wall was meant to support the barrel vault of the ground floor. In situ plasterwork (noted on the earlier longitudinal walls)

⁵⁴ László, "Újabb kutatások," 185.

⁵⁵ László, "A várpalotai 14. századi *palota*," 164.

⁵⁶ See photos No. 082.804-806 ND in the Forster Photo Archive. Probably even a mortise (i.e., a small hole for joining) could be observed on the photos, however, it does not appear on the proper surface of the carving.

demonstrates that the barrel vault is a later addition – and perhaps contemporaneous with the story or with barrel vault of the story.⁵⁷

Previous research also claimed that the western palace wing was built in the fourteenth century, but, in fact, no actual arguments were published which would support this theory.⁵⁸ According to Cs. László, there are no signs which would suggest that it was built before the corner towers and castle wall, therefore it should be considered simultaneous with them.⁵⁹ Reevaluating old documentation I have found only two data items which (at first sight) seem to indicate some antecedents of the mid-fifteenth-century western palace wing. On the one hand, one of the excavation sketches from 1962 represents the foundation of a ground floor partition wall as being earlier than the western wall of the wing.⁶⁰ However, considering all of the documentation, it seems much more probable that the sketch is incorrect, in which case one should suppose an antecedent of the wing based on this single section of foundation.⁶¹ On the other hand, the field notebook of the same year mentions a foundation wall discovered in front of the courtyard facade of the wing, running at a right angles to it, and continuing *under* the eastern wall of the palace wing.⁶² Thinking in terms of stratigraphy, this definitely means that the foundation wall must be earlier than the mid-fifteenth-century palace wing wall. Nevertheless, later excavations uncovered five other similar foundations of the same sizes and orientation, regularly 3 or 3.5 m from each other in a row.⁶³ No doubt the six foundations

⁵⁷ See the excavation sketches of 1968 in the Laczkó Dezső Museum Data Archive, inventory number: 18274-80. See photo No. 082.863 ND in the Forster Photo Archive.

⁵⁸ On the previous dating see, e.g., Gergelyffy, “Várpalota I,” 262; Gergelyffy, “Várpalota III,” 103.

⁵⁹ László, “Újabb kutatások,” 185; László, “A várpalotai 14. századi *palota*,” 164. Also recent research confirmed its simultaneity, as Cs. László stated in his lecture “Várpalota as a *castellum*”.

⁶⁰ See excavation sketches No. 2 and 14 in the documentation of M. G. Sándor, 1962 (kept in the Forster Data Archive).

⁶¹ First, this single detail without further remains is not sufficient to infer an early stone building preceding the western palace wing. What is more, the excavation sketches in the documentation contain several self-contradictions, which makes their trustworthiness questionable to some extent.

⁶² See the entry February 2. in the field notebook of M. G. Sándor’s documentation, 1962 (kept in the Forster Data Archive).

⁶³ See Margit Cs. Dax, “169. Várpalota-Vár” [169. Várpalota Castle] *Régészeti Füzetek* Ser. I. No. 30 (1977): 71. and especially the excavation sketches from 1968 and 1976 in the LDM Data Archive, inventory number: 18274-80. M. Cs. Dax’s short report dates the foundations similarly to the fourteenth century, but in this case the reason for her mistake is clear. Dax uncovered fifteenth-century pillar foundations on top of the demolished foundations

were related elements of the same structure. None of them could be observed continuing inside the palace wing and no walls were found that would connect them – except for the eastern wall of the palace wing. According to their position, they must be related to the western palace wing and not an unknown previous building, of which not a single fragment could actually be identified.

All in all, Cs. László's opinion seems to be validated by the excavation records; no definite sign of an early western palace can be seen. Naturally, without new excavations or a thorough study of the standing walls, one cannot be completely sure whether or not some smaller stone (or perhaps timber) buildings preceded the palace wing.

The building complex might have been fortified by some kind of earthwork as early as the first half of the fifteenth century. Horizontal timbers 40×40 cm square in cross-section and 80-100 cm long vertical posts – excavated 3-4 m under the floor of the southern gate house – probably indicate the timber structure of a rampart.⁶⁴ Similar remains were found in a excavation trench at right angles to the southern castle wall, 12 m west of the gate-house. In this case, the vertical and horizontal timbers were discovered under a clay layer with sixteenth-century potsherds.⁶⁵ According to its find-spot, the timber structure must be earlier than the southern gate house, which means that it was either contemporaneous with the mid-fifteenth century castle or preceded it. Since the remains seem to testify a rather wide and significant rampart, this might refer to a fortification regarded as a *castrum* in the Middle Ages – which would date the structure to the 1440s. However, the location of the earthwork contradicts this possibility; it is hard to imagine a rampart running *directly* in front of the

in question, and that is why she supposed that those foundations belonged to an earlier, fourteenth-century, building.

⁶⁴ See the records of Á. Kiss and A. Vajkai from 1955 in the LDM Data Archive, inventory numbers: 1528-1538.

⁶⁵ See the records of I. Éri from 1961 in the Forster Data Archive, (especially the entries in the field notebook March 30. and April 7.).

southern castle wall,⁶⁶ therefore the earthwork probably preceded the building of the wall. Since the remains seem to enclose a rather large area (including the spot of the later western palace wing), they might be posterior to the fourteenth-century manor house and church.

On the whole, although several questions are unclarified concerning the building period before the 1440s, it seems that the former manor house was strengthened and probably enlarged to some extent. However, the building complex of this period still differed significantly from the later castle of the mid-fifteenth century and presented an unambiguously lower architectural standard.

The building activity of Nicholas Újlaki in the 1440s

After all these unsettled refurbishings and enlargements of the fourteenth-century residence, a distinct new building conception converted the noble dwelling to a castle with an almost square-shaped castle wall and four corner towers. The main entrance to the castle was located in the middle of the southern castle wall.⁶⁷ This gate might have been equipped with a portcullis and a drawbridge.⁶⁸

The most important component of the new conception could have been the castle wall and the four corner towers. The six-storied towers did not protrude from the square block of the castle. The castle wall was adjusted to the previous buildings – but only to some extent. The southeastern tower was built above the early manor house. It was made by utilizing the standing walls; the square tower was placed above the northern end of the southern hall. The latter's northern and western fourteenth-century walls were strengthened by a new layer of

⁶⁶ Timber remains were found in the whole area of the southern gate house directly attached to the castle wall. North of the gate house no remains were discovered in the trench.

⁶⁷ According to the secondary literature, the residence's previous entrance was located on the northeastern corner, in the already mentioned, rather vague northeastern gate-house. This transfer could have been significant from several viewpoints (the transfer of the main facade; transformations of prestige representation; the change of access of rooms; the questions of defensibility and room functions, etc.). However, one should be rather cautious with the remains that were interpreted as the early northeastern gate-house, since there is no reliable documentation on them. Gergelyffy, "Palota és Castrum Palota," 125; Gergelyffy, "Várpalota III," 103; László, "Újabb kutatások," 185-6.

⁶⁸ Gergelyffy, "Palota és Castrum Palota," 133-4.

stone wall on the inside. These strengthening walls covered the previous wall paintings as well. The southern, approximately 6 m long, end of the fourteenth-century building was not incorporated. However, this protruding part was not demolished until the fortification works of 1537, thus it spectacularly overhung the otherwise almost square block of the castle. It is not clear how they used the overhanging part, but the ground floor of the northern, incorporated part was still accessible through its original entrance. Some minor alterations of its door frame and the correction of the ashlar structure imitation on the western facade indicate its continuous (but necessarily modified) use.⁶⁹

According to A. Gergelyffy and D. Várnai, the northeastern tower was built above the previous walls and barrel vault of the northern palace wing and the (otherwise rather vague) early northeastern gate tower, utilizing its western wall as a foundation.⁷⁰ In the case of the southwestern and northwestern towers, no signs of previous buildings are recorded. The castle wall connected all four towers in a regular straight line, except for the eastern side where it was adjusted to the differing eastern walls of the early manor house and the buildings north of it.⁷¹ Some alterations of the chapel⁷² (including the vaulting of the nave) might have taken place when this eastern castle wall was built, but their dating is unsettled.⁷³ However, all observations verify that the chapel preserved its original sacral function until the end of the seventeenth century.⁷⁴ Although Nicholas Újlaki's *supplicatio* from 1475 implies that the

⁶⁹ Gergelyffy, "Várpalota III," 107; László, "Újabb kutatások," 184; László, "A várpalotai 14. századi *palota*," 167-70.

⁷⁰ Gergelyffy, "Várpalota I," 268-9; Várnai, "Várpalota várának építési korszakai," 149; Gergelyffy, "Várpalota III," 103, 107. D. Várnai dated this barrel vault to the fifteenth century and therefore he claimed that the tower built above it could have been erected at the end of the building period. Cs. László seems to accept his argument: László, "Újabb kutatások," 185-6.

⁷¹ Gergelyffy, "Várpalota III," 106.

⁷² The word *chapel* refers to the originally freestanding, but later incorporated, fourteenth-century(?) church.

⁷³ According to Cs. László, the alterations to the chapel (including the vaulting of the nave) can be dated either to the building period of the castle wall and towers or to the 1530s. László, "Újabb kutatások," 185-6.

⁷⁴ Although the sacristy was walled off, the chancel was kept and the chancel-arch was renewed. The windows of the nave and chancel – which would have been covered by the castle wall – were kept as well and their stone frames were rebuilt on the facade of the castle wall. Gergelyffy, "Palota és Castrum Palota," 132-3; Gergelyffy, "Várpalota III," 106; László, "Újabb kutatások," 185-6.

chapel of Várpalota (among four other castle chapels) was built by himself, there are no actual traces of the construction of a new one.⁷⁵

Whether or not its ground floor dates back to the fourteenth or early fifteenth century, the northern palace wing probably became a two-storied building concurrently with the erection of the corner towers. Its story involved (at least) one vaulted room with significant headroom and (presumably) corresponding size.⁷⁶ Otherwise the northern palace wing of this period is almost completely unknown. Not only are the lay-out and function of its rooms ambiguous, but even the western end of the palace is slightly uncertain. Although it would be logical that the northern wing was directly attached to the northwestern corner tower and the western wing, excavation records of 1962, 1968 and 1976 seem to contradict this possibility. Two pillar foundations convincingly imply that the western and northern palace wings were connected by a storied corridor only in a later building period.⁷⁷ Unfortunately, the standards of the documentation in 1968 and 1976 were extremely poor, therefore many questions concerning the northern palace wing remain unanswered.⁷⁸

The similarly two-storied western palace wing was, as discussed above, erected concurrently with the castle wall and towers. On the first floor a hall was equipped with a line of (relatively) large windows both on the outer (western) and courtyard (eastern) facades.⁷⁹

⁷⁵ Fedeles, "Egy középkori főúri család vallásossága," 391-3. "*supplicat idem Rex ut V[estra] S[ancti]tas velit confirmare disponere capellarum, quas idem Rex edificari fecit in diversis castris suis videlicet [...] Palotha, Wýlac, Rahoza, Zenthdemeter et Nemethwýwar*".

⁷⁶ Gergelyffy, "Várpalota III," 107; László, "Újabb kutatások," 185.

⁷⁷ Both A. Gergelyffy's and Cs. László's ground plans indicate the palace wing as attached to the northwestern tower and western wing, see Gergelyffy, "Várpalota," 283 (fig. 211) and László, "Újabb kutatások," 191 (fig. 1). Contradicting records are: Excavation sketches No. 2 and No. 19 from the documentation of M. G. Sándor, 1962 (kept in the Forster Data Archive), excavation sketches of M. Cs. Dax from 1968 and 1976 (kept in the LDM Data Archive, inventory number: 18274-80).

⁷⁸ For instance, the interpretation of wall sections attached at right angles to the building on the south is so vague that they are usually missing from the published ground plans.

⁷⁹ The almost regular line of windows on the courtyard facade is quite well known from the research documentation of 1976. See the reconstruction plans of the "Újlaki-loggia" in Várpalota Castle by P. Sándy, Forster Data Archive, inventory number: 16.008. The original arrangement of the western windows is more questionable but at least the existence of fifteenth-century window niches is recorded. Péter Németh, "142. Várpalota, Vár" [142. Várpalota Castle] *Régészeti Füzetek* Ser. I. No. 18 (1965): 83. Although the report does not clarify whether it speaks about the exploration of the western or eastern windows, according to the research documentation of 1976, one can assume that the eastern windows were investigated only in that year.

Originally it may have had a flat ceiling supported by stone corbels, one of which was preserved in the eastern wall in situ.⁸⁰ A later(?) ceiling in the same room is marked by the remains of an arch rising from the western wall and a huge stone column, opposite the arch, also found in situ in the longitudinal axis of the hall.⁸¹ The column might have supported two transverse arches, presumably of a barrel vault. There are no signs of a Gothic ribbed vault and the capital of the column also goes against this possibility.

The six foundations (noted above) attached at right angles to the eastern wall of the palace probably belong to the first form of the building. Similar structures are known, for instance, from Gyula, Szászvár and Nyírbátor castles. According to these analogies, the foundations could have supported buttresses, which were presumably connected either by arches or a flat wood ceiling and supported a courtyard corridor serving the first floor of the palace. The alternative interpretation (valid, e.g., for Szászvár castle), that the buttresses supported the protruding facade wall of the story, is not so likely in this case.⁸² On the one hand, the eastern wall of the palace is wide enough to support the first floor, and statically it does not seem to be favourable to weigh it on the buttresses. On the other hand, a later Gothic vaulted corridor replacing these buttresses would have made such a construction completely

⁸⁰ At the same time, the corbel may imply only a modification of the conception during the construction process. László, "Újabb kutatások," 185.

⁸¹ Since the column is located in the northern part of the hall, a southern one was also supposed but no unambiguous signs of it are preserved. Gergelyffy, "Várpalota I," 270-1; Gergelyffy, "Palota és Castrum Palota," 131; László, "Újabb kutatások," 185.

⁸² On Gyula and Nyírbátor castles see István Feld, "A gyulai vár a középkorban," [Gyula Castle in the Middle Ages] in *A középkori Dél-Alföld és Szer* [The south part of the Hungarian Great Plain and the place Szer in the Middle Ages], ed. Tibor Kollár (Szeged: Csongrád Megyei Levéltár, 2000), 276 (fig. 5-6, 8-9); Virágos, *The Social Archaeology*, 72 (fig. 96-98). In the case of Szászvár castle Gerő mentioned both interpretations, but preferred the one without a corridor. Győző Gerő, "Siedlungsgeschichte und Baugeschichte der bischöflichen Burg zu Szászvár. Szászvár: A püspöki vár településtörténete és építéstörténete," in *Die Bischofsburg zu Pécs – Archäologie und Bauforschung: A pécsi püspökvár – Régészet és épületkutatás*, ed. Kálmán Szijártó and Mária G. Sándor (Budapest – München: Országos Műemlékvédelmi Hivatal – Bayerische Landesamt für Denkmalpflege, 1999), 126-130. G. Buzás first supposed a corridor, but later in his detailed paper convincingly suggested a protruding facade wall. Gergely Buzás, "Szászvár" [Szászvár], *Castrum* 15 (2012): 125; Gergely Buzás, "Előzetes jelentés a szászvári vár 2013-as ásatásáról" [Preliminary report on the excavations at Szászvár castle, 2013] *Archaeologia – Altum Castrum Online* 2013. <http://archeologia.hu/content/archeologia/193/szaszvar-jelentes.pdf> (last accessed December, 2014).

unreasonable (since in that period the facade wall of the story was doubtless above the ground floor wall).

On the whole, the new building conception resulted in a castle with four corner towers, large, two-storied palace wings, a significant growth in habitable space and an essentially, but not strictly, regular arrangement. The southern palace wing seems to be the legacy of later building activity. The buildings that stood on the eastern side, i.e., the early manor house and the so-called chapel wing (involving the chapel and the rooms attached to its northern side) were not arranged in one straight line. The wings surrounded a rectangular (almost square) courtyard.⁸³ According to the ideal reconstruction of D. Várnai, a well may have stood at the center, but there are no further actual data available about it.⁸⁴ A rather simple carved stone kept in the lapidarium might have belonged to the curb of the well, but the interpretation as well as the dating of this piece is insecure.

There have been no real attempts to date this crucial building period irrespective of the written evidence.⁸⁵ In fact, based only on archaeological and art historical observations one hardly can define an absolute chronological time frame narrower than 30 to 50 years without adequate numismatic evidence or a solid study on stratigraphy and typochronology of the finds. For lack of those, one cannot but accept the dating based on the written evidence, which suggests that this period took place between 1439 and 1445 (or perhaps 1437 and 1445).

Building activity of the Újlaki-era after 1445

In front of the southern gate a freestanding one-storied gate-house was likely to have been built later than the 1440s. Between the gate-house and the gate a moat could have been

⁸³ However, referring to the buildings that stood on the eastern side as the eastern palace wing is perhaps a bit misleading. The arrangement of these buildings also resulted in the courtyard being far from being completely regular rectangular.

⁸⁴ Várnai, "Várpalota várának építési korszakai," 149, fig. 152.

⁸⁵ In fact, A. Gergelyffy generally dated building periods according to the written evidence, and applied a rather problematic method for dating the periods that are not mentioned in the sources. He tried to distribute them proportionately in time, so that building periods should not be too close to each other. See Gergelyffy, "Várpalota I," 271 or Gergelyffy, "Palota és Castrum Palota," 125.

constructed.⁸⁶ Probably for lack of relevant research, further external buildings and constructions of this period (e.g., a great surrounding moat) are not mentioned in the secondary literature, except for a rather vague reference to a freestanding round tower at the northwestern corner of the castle.⁸⁷

While the northern and western palace wings are almost the same wide, the southern wing is approximately twice as wide. However, this wing also seems to differ in other ways. All researchers of the castle agree that the southern palace wing was presumably built in a later building period than the castle wall and four towers.⁸⁸ After the construction of the southeastern tower the western facade of the early manor house was not covered originally by other buildings, consequently, at least the eastern rooms of the southern palace definitely could not have been built simultaneously with the tower.⁸⁹ The middle room of the palace wing is a gateway leading to the courtyard. This gateway is decorated by a line of sedilia, simple niches without any ornamental stone frames, located on both sides. According to Cs. László, the barrel vault of the gateway and that of the two adjacent eastern rooms seem to correspond, which suggests that the middle and eastern rooms of the southern palace wing were built concurrently.⁹⁰ In fact, there are no signs which would contradict that the whole palace wing was built during the same period, therefore the whole wing was likely to have been built after 1445.

A minor change in the western wing also appears to have been carried out after the original architectural conception had been realized in the first half of the 1440s. In the story hall a new partition wall was built incorporating both the corbel, the column and the arch

⁸⁶ Gergelyffy, "Palota és Castrum Palota," 133-4; and Cs. László's lecture in 2012 "Várpalota as *castellum*".

⁸⁷ Giulio Turco depicted this round tower on a ground plan of the castle by from 1572 but it has never been actually investigated archaeologically. Its dating to the fifteenth century was only based on its shape and size as it appears on the drawing. Cs. László does not even mention its existence. See Gergelyffy, "Palota és Castrum Palota," 133-4, 136; Várnai, "Várpalota várának építési korszakai," 149.

⁸⁸ Gergelyffy, "Várpalota III," 106; Várnai, "Várpalota várának építési korszakai," 149, fig. 152; László, "Újabb kutatások," 184.

⁸⁹ See László, "A várpalotai 14. századi *palota*," 168.

⁹⁰ László, "Újabb kutatások," 184. Cs. László also recognized that originally, instead of the two narrow eastern rooms, they wanted to build one great vaulted room but the plans were modified during construction.

noted above.⁹¹ This alteration perhaps correlated with some functional change in the room as well as the construction of a spectacular vaulted courtyard corridor that connected the story rooms and some of the wings.

This Gothic storied corridor replaced the former courtyard corridor (from 1439-1445) in front of the western palace. Both the arrangement and the dating of this vaulted corridor – or loggia, as the secondary literature often referred to it – has been heavily debated. Former publications claimed that it might have been built in front of all four courtyard facades⁹², later publications (often by the same authors) argued that it served at least three,⁹³ probably three⁹⁴ or probably two⁹⁵ palace wings. Unambiguous in situ remains of the structure were found only in the case of the western palace wing: foundations of the ground floor arcade and damaged arches of the story vaulting on the courtyard wall of the building. Dislocated carved stone elements suggested that the corridor had connected other wing(s) as well, but whether some excavated foundations in front of them can be connected to the loggia or not remained unsettled.⁹⁶ Similarly, the question of whether the corridor was built concurrently with the western palace wing or in a later building period was contested.⁹⁷

⁹¹ On the partition wall see, e.g., Gergelyffy, “Várpalota III,” 108; László, “Újabb kutatások,” 185. Distinct traces of the original white plaster can be detected on the column’s surface which verifies that the partition wall was built in a later building phase. Naturally, one cannot be sure whether this new phase followed the previous one after some decades, years or only months.

⁹² Gergelyffy, “Palota és Castrum Palota,” 132-3; Várnai, “Várpalota várának építési korszakai,” 149; András Gergelyffy, “Várpalota” [Várpalota Castle], in *Várépítészetiünk* [Castle architecture in Hungary], ed. László Gerő (Budapest: Műszaki Könyvkiadó, 1975), 284.

⁹³ László, “Újabb kutatások,” 184.

⁹⁴ Gergelyffy, “Várpalota III,” 108.

⁹⁵ László’s lecture in 2012, “Várpalota as a *castellum*”.

⁹⁶ A. Gergelyffy expressly claims that in situ remains of the loggia in the standing walls were identified only on the western courtyard facade. Gergelyffy, “Palota és Castrum Palota,” 132-3; Gergelyffy, “Várpalota” 284. On the foundations of the arcade in front of the western palace wing see Cs. Dax, “169. Várpalota-Vár,” 71. Before his publication of 1978 (Gergelyffy, “Várpalota III”) A. Gergelyffy claimed that foundations uncovered in front of the southern palace wing might have belonged to the corridor, see Gergelyffy, “Palota és Castrum Palota,” 132-3. In her short report on the research of 1968 M. Dax wrote that a line of fifteenth-century pillars surrounding the courtyard was excavated, see Margit Dax, “Várpalota-Vár” *Régészeti Füzetek* Ser. I. No. 22. (1969): 94. (She did not clarify where she had found the pillars and whether the corridor had encircled the whole courtyard or not.)

⁹⁷ According to Gergelyffy, “Várpalota I,” 270-1 and Gergelyffy, “Palota és Castrum Palota,” 132-3, the corridor is contemporaneous with the western palace wing. However, in his last publication on the castle, A. Gergelyffy asserted that the in situ arches (and, consequently, the corridor) are posterior to the palace wing itself: Gergelyffy, “Várpalota III,” 108. According to the short report on the excavations in 1976, the researcher, while

The reevaluation of the excavation records sheds light on these problematic points. Although there are hardly any textual records available, excavation sketches testify that eight pillar foundations in front of the western wing were uncovered in 1968 and 1976. The sketches seem to be rather superficial and not detailed enough, thus raising the question of their trustworthiness. However, the far more thorough documentation from 1962 securely proves that the exact location of the foundations supporting the loggia were actually documented properly.⁹⁸ The arrangement is regular, the foundations follow one after the other in a straight line, spaced at intervals of 2.8 to 3 m. The corridor distinctly narrows northward, the space between the foundations and the wall of the western wing is reduced from 1.45 m to 0.8 m. According to the sketches, the lowermost parts of the masonry pillars were preserved on top of four foundations; the width of these pillars is consistently 0.8 m.⁹⁹

There can be no doubt that these pillar foundations signify later building activity compared to the buttress foundations of the western palace wing. The excavation documentation from 1962 and 1976 are also congruent in this regard; the two types of foundations represent separate periods. Not only are the rhythms of the foundations different, but also the stones and mortar of the masonry.¹⁰⁰ In addition, the pillars' foundations lay deeper than those of the buttresses.

These remains lay on the ground floor of the construction, however, there are some in situ fragments of the story as well. The courtyard facade of the western palace wing preserved the truncated (secondarily shortened) wall-arches and corbels of the loggia's story vaulting.¹⁰¹ Theoretically, these remains could have also belonged to the previous courtyard corridor

uncovering the foundations of the ground floor arcade, observed that they were built above the foundations of an earlier building. See Cs. Dax, "169. Várpalota-Vár," 71. Cs. László also seems to be uncertain about the simultaneity of the loggia with the castle wall and four towers. László, "Újabb kutatások," 185-6.

⁹⁸ The sketches of 1968 and 1976 are kept in the LDM Data Archive, inventory number: 18274-80. See excavation sketch No. 19 in the documentation of M. G. Sándor, 1962 (kept in the Forster Data Archive).

⁹⁹ Naturally, the sizes of the foundations are not so strictly regular, their cross sections varies from 0.7 – 0.85 × 0.9 – 1.2 m.

¹⁰⁰ Recorded on one of the sketches from 1976.

¹⁰¹ Gergelyffy, "Várpalota I," 270-2; Gergelyffy, "Palota és Castrum Palota," 132-3; Gergelyffy, "Várpalota," 284; 103, 108.

(which was supported by these buttresses), but the arrangement of the corbels and wall arches clearly testifies that this construction was built posteriorly to the windows of the story. This is also proved by one of the dislocated corbels, discussed below.

Two rows of pillar foundations were uncovered in front of the southern palace wing as well. Five foundations were found in a line running near to the southern palace.¹⁰² The sizes and arrangement of these, the space between them and the palace wing correspond by and large with the western remains.¹⁰³ These and the western foundations apparently belonged to the same structure, however, there is a hypothetical chance that the southern and the western rows of pillars were erected in different building periods. The area where the two lines should cross each other was not investigated, but the ideal location of the corner element does not fit the regular rhythm of the western foundations.¹⁰⁴ Although the remains do not answer the question clearly, an overview of the carvings may provide a better understanding of the issue. The foundations revealed in the other, far line seem to have belonged to a separate and later construction.¹⁰⁵

A small fragment of only one pillar foundation may indicate that the courtyard corridor turned northward at the eastern end of the southern row, and continued in front of the eastern wing. The foundation is exactly in line with the last southern foundation and its cross section size (0.8×1 m) also suggests that it supported a pillar belonging to the same corridor.

¹⁰² Although these sketches indicate only four foundations, excavation photos attest a fifth one, which is also represented on the ground plan of 1974 which is kept in Forster Data Archive, inventory number: 66 721. See photos No. 079.762 ND, 079.766 ND, 079.767 ND in the Forster Photo Archive.

¹⁰³ The cross section of the foundations varies from $0.75 - 1 \times 0.9 - 1.15$ m. The space between the foundations and the southern palace wing is consistently 1 m. The space between the foundations is 7.5, 6, and 6.5 m. This may correspond to the western arrangement if there had been further, unidentified foundations between each known foundation. Although there are no trace of them, they may have existed. On the one hand, it is clear, that the excavations in this area were not complete and the archaeological trenches may have missed these remains. On the other hand, only the lowermost one or two rows of stones were preserved even in the identified foundations. If these further foundations actually existed, the rhythm of the western and southern pillars is roughly the same.

¹⁰⁴ The space between the corner foundation and the next (southernmost) foundation of the western line would be only 1.5 m, instead of the regular 2.8 – 3 m spaces.

¹⁰⁵ Three foundations were uncovered in this line, which is just to the north of the other. The cross sections are 1×1 m, 0.95×0.9 m and 0.95×2.5 m. No stratigraphic observations are known, but, based on their arrangement, they are not likely to have existed contemporaneously with the nearer line of pillars. Their interpretation and dating is unclear.

Furthermore, even the distance between that and the last southern foundation is precisely equal with the space between the foundations of the western pillars: 2.8 m.¹⁰⁶ However, this interpretation is rather ambiguous. Both foundations were built on top of the demolished walls of the former early manor house. After the demolition of the northern end of the early manor house it is completely unclear, what building was erected in its place, or perhaps the southeastern corner of the courtyard was left unbuilt. This means that there are absolutely no data about the building to which this hypothetical eastern continuation of the corridor was attached. Moreover, the foundation in question was built in line with the southern palace wing and at right angles to the eastern wing. It seems quite illogical, unless it indicates that the line of pillars turned east at this point. This orientation would also correspond to a stairway at right angles to the corridor, but otherwise its dimensions and shape imply a foundation for a pillar and not a stairway. On the whole, this single foundation in itself cannot prove undoubtedly the eastern continuation of the corridor.¹⁰⁷

Finally, the question of a northern corridor (running in front of the northern wing) is less difficult to determine. Although the excavation records of walls unearthed in this northwestern corner are not completely clean-cut, it is clear that the northernmost uncovered foundation of the western pillars is located roughly in line with the southern facade of the northern wing.¹⁰⁸ A further foundation was discovered east of it, also in the same line (at right angles to the row of western pillars). Its size and the 3 m distance between the two foundations attest that it supported a pillar of the same structure. A wall approximately 0.3 m wide attached at right angles to the pillar foundation was probably part of a stairway leading

¹⁰⁶ See the same excavation sketch from 1968 kept in the LDM Data Archive, inventory number: 18274-80. See also photo No. 079. 763 ND in the Forster Photo Archive.

¹⁰⁷ Actually, even the existence of this foundation may be questioned, since only the sketch from 1968 verifies it. The photo does not show it clearly and the ground plan from 1974 does not indicate it. However, it seems more probable that this is a mistake on the later ground plan (kept in Forster Data Archive, inventory number: 66 721) and not the excavation sketch.

¹⁰⁸ This pillar foundation is represented on the sketches both from 1962, 1968 and 1976.

to the story of both the palace wings and the loggia.¹⁰⁹ Presumably, the loggia did not continue in front of the northern wing, but it connected the western and northern wings, which formerly stood separately. Naturally, one cannot preclude the possibility of a separate northern courtyard corridor which would not have been connected to the western section.

Beyond the relative chronology of the alterations, there are few fixed points and references by which this building period could be dated. The demolition of the former courtyard corridor of the western wing clearly attests that the later Gothic vaulted corridor was not part of the original architectural conception of the first half of the 1440s. Thus, the Gothic loggia definitely represents a separate building period following the former one, presumably years or decades later. If the loggia was constructed during one single period both the erection of the southern palace wing and the demolition of the early manor house's northern end must have taken place beforehand. Naturally, these latter changes could also have been executed either concurrently or not. In order to answer these questions, one must take into account the carved stone material of the loggia, decide on its dating and settle whether they were all carved concurrently or not.

2.3 CARVED STONES FROM THE CASTLE OF NICHOLAS ÚJLAKI

Replaced, reconstructed and in situ carvings

The towers were probably equipped with large oblong mullion window frames. Three of them can be regarded as genuine on the southwestern tower (although supplemented or reconstructed in their present-day form).¹¹⁰ In situ fragments of a similar window were found on the story courtyard facade of the western palace wing; the size of the frame and its profile hardly differ. On this courtyard facade four other windows were identified in a straight line on

¹⁰⁹ This latter, somehow unsecure foundation is only represented on the sketch from 1968.

¹¹⁰ According to Gergelyffy, "Várpalota III," 108, fig. 13. and photos No. 1, 10 in the excavation records of I. Éri from 1961, Forster Data Archive. (It seems that A. Gergelyffy in his paper consistently separated the complete in situ frames and the incomplete or theoretically reconstructed ones.)

the story, each (approximately) the same width. None of the stone frames of these windows were preserved.¹¹¹ The regular arrangement of the fenestration suggests that all five windows were constructed in the same building phase, but that does not mean necessarily that their frames were identical.¹¹² Several fragments identical with the one in situ are kept in the lapidarium, and – accordingly – the modern reconstruction replaced five identical frames.

The window frames of the western wing's outer facade are completely unknown. Since the fifteenth-century wall was strengthened (and covered) by a new layer of wall in the sixteenth century,¹¹³ none of the frames of this new wall are from the age of Nicholas Újlaki. The modern reconstruction of three (probably) fifteenth-century mullion windows is based on dislocated fragments which originally could have been either there or elsewhere.¹¹⁴ A window head fragment of this type is kept in the lapidarium as well. One preserved carving verifies that the base elements of the windows (or at least one of the window frames) were decorated with shield-shaped blank (unmarked) coats-of-arms.¹¹⁵ An art historical overview of similar window frames does not really contribute to the refinement of the dating. These mullion

¹¹¹ Sándyné, Reconstruction plans of the "Újlaki-loggia".

¹¹² See the example of the bishop's palace in Eger, where two similar but apparently differing mullion windows (both in size and mouldings) were added to the story facade next to each other in the same building period (i.e., in the late fifteenth century). See Mihály Giber, "Az egri várbeli késő középkori püspöki palota" [The late gothic bishop's palace in Eger Castle], *Castrum* 7 (2008): 63, fig. 29-30. The royal palace of Visegrád is also a good example of this seeming irregularity, see the differing great mullion windows on the courtyard facade of the northeastern palace, carved in the 1480s. Gergely Buzás, *Visegrád, királyi palota 1: A kápolna és az északkeleti palota*. [Visegrád, royal palace 1: The chapel and the northeastern palace] (Lapidarium Hungaricum 2) (Budapest: Országos Műemléki Felügyelőség, 1990), 41, fig. 285-7.

¹¹³ See Gergelyffy, "Várpalota I, 134-7; Várnai, "Várpalota várának építési korszakai," 149-52. etc.

¹¹⁴ No medieval fragments remain on two of the three window frames, while a fragment of a horizontal mullion and a base fragment with a coat-of-arms are part of the third. These two fragments are indicated as original but not as in situ in the reconstruction plans. See reconstruction plans of the western wing by P. Sándy and A. Kisfaludy, Forster Data Archive, inventory number: 12385. Gergelyffy, "Várpalota III," 109, fig. 14 is also telling, since A. Gergelyffy published the reconstruction of another similar window frame with no in situ components. These components were found secondarily built into the second floor walls of the western palace wing. It seems highly probable that if these two fragments had been in situ, A. Gergelyffy would have published the reconstruction that way.

¹¹⁵ Of course, the original coat-of-arm may have been painted on the plain stone surface. The hypothetical reconstruction of a window frame of the same type depicts the base parts without the shield-shaped coat-of-arms, however, there are no signs or known fragments which would support that reconstruction. See Gergelyffy, "Várpalota III," 109, fig. 14. A carving with similar mouldings and coat-of-arms was built in secondarily on the southern facade of the southern gate-house. This fragment was probably also part of the base of a window frame although its coat-of-arms is not blank (unmarked) but it shows dog's-teeth hatching. A. Gergelyffy's interpretation of the carving as a vault springing is probably false, Gergelyffy, "Palota és Castrum Palota," 129, fig. 122. The proper interpretation of the carving is not clear, but – due to the dog's-teeth hatching – it probably has nothing to do with the medieval history of the castle.

windows with rather simple, concave mouldings (the so-called “graphic style” frames) were highly popular in royal, aristocratic and elite architecture over a relatively wide time span.¹¹⁶ According to analogies, these frames in Várpalota could have been carved from the end of the fourteenth until the mid-fifteenth century.¹¹⁷ Similar frames are also known from the second half and last quarter of the fifteenth century, however, these have some special, differing, features – therefore applying this late dating to the case of Várpalota is less probable (although not impossible).¹¹⁸ On the whole, since the most significant building period of the fifteenth century was the 1440s, this is the most probable date for the windows in Várpalota – but, naturally, there are no actual observations that would contradict an earlier (or perhaps later) dating.

¹¹⁶ One fragment of a window frame similar to those reconstructed on the outer facade can be found at Újlaki's nearby manor house as well (at the *castellum* of Öskü, less than 10 km from Várpalota), Tibor Koppány, *A középkori Magyarország kastélyai* [Manor-houses and castles in medieval Hungary] (Budapest: Akadémia Kiadó, 1999) 64-5, fig. 73. The carvings of the courtyard facade's windows are even simpler. The main residence of the family (Ilok Castle, Croatia) was also equipped with roughly similar mullion windows on the second floor outer facade of the castle, Zorislav Horvat, “Analiza srednjovjekovne faze gradnje dvorca Odescalchi, nekadašnjeg palasa Nikole Iločkog, kralja Bosne: Analyse der mittelalterlichen Bauphase des Schlosses Odescalchi in Ilok, des ehemaligen Palastes von N. Iločki, des Königes von Bosnien,” *Prilozi Instituta za arheologiju u Zagrebu* 19 (2002) 206, 208, fig. 16 and 18.

¹¹⁷ Examples are indeed abundant, only a selection of them is listed here. Royal buildings (Buda Castle, the palace and castle of Visegrád, Tata Castle, Várgesztes Castle), aristocratic buildings (Hunedoara Castle, Kisnána Castle, the manor houses at Szászvár and Tar), buildings of religious institutes (the bishops' palaces at Eger and Győr, the Hronsky Beňadik monastery), urban dwelling houses (Buda, Székesfehérvár). See László Gerevich, *A budai vár feltárása* [Recovering the castle of Buda] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1966), 285, fig. 405, 288; Buzás, *Visegrád, királyi palota*, 33-5; István Feld, “Gesztés várának kutatástörténete” [Research history of Gesztés Castle] *Castrum* 2 (2005): 23-4; Gerő, “Szászvár,” 114-5, 122-3; Cabello, “A Tari család udvarháza,” 116-8; István Czagány, “A középkori grafikus stílus emlékei a budai várnegyed területén” [The relics of the so-called medieval graphic style in the castle and town of medieval Buda] *Budapest Régiségei* 19 (1959): 35-56; Dorottya Cs. Dobrovits – Ferenc Erdei, “A székesfehérvári Zalka Máté utca 6. számú ház kutatása és helyreállítása” [Research and restoration of the dwelling house at Székesfehérvár Zalka Máté Str. 6] *Magyar Műemlékvédelem* 9 (1984): 143.

¹¹⁸ The cross-section of the carvings is roughly the same, however, there are special differences concerning the window-sill and the vertical mullion of these later window frames. Examples are from the royal palace and castle of Visegrád, from Somló Castle and from an urban dwelling house in Buda. Buzás, *Visegrád, királyi palota*, 38, fig. 238, 281, 334-5; Lajos Bozóki, *Visegrád, Alsó- és Felsővár* [Visegrád Castle] (Lapidarium Hungaricum 8) (Budapest: Kulturális Örökségvédelmi Hivatal, 2012), 54, fig. 170-1; András Fülöp, “Somló vára az első ásások tükrében” [Somló Castle in light of the first archaeological excavations] in “*Gondolják, látják az várnak nagy voltát...*”: *Tanulmányok a 80 éves Nováki Gyula tiszteletére. Burgenkundliche Studien zum 80. Geburtstag von Gyula Nováki* [Castle studies in honour of 80 years old Gyula Nováki], ed. Gyöngyi Kovács and Zsuzsa Miklós (Budapest: Castrum Bene Egyesület – Históriaantik Könyvesház Kiadó, 2006), 123, fig. 7; Czagány, “A középkori grafikus stílus,” 41, fig. 4/17, 15/H. At Nagyvázsony Castle the mullion windows do not have these special “late” features, although – according to recent observations – they can be probably dated to the 1460s. See István Feld, “A 15. századi castrum mint kutatási probléma” [The fifteenth-century castle as a research problem], in *Castrum Bene* 2/1990: *Várak a késő középkorban: Die Burgen im Spätmittelalter*, ed. Juan Cabello (Budapest: Castrum Bene Egyesület, 1992), 17, (38. footnote).

Turning to the hall of the western palace wing, the *in situ* corbel is simple and undecorated, with a relatively long projection which might be connected to a desire to shorten the span for the beams.¹¹⁹ The base and capital of the huge round column standing on the longitudinal axis of the hall are both also rather modest, although similar columns standing in a great hall were often richly decorated. The door frame in the partition wall (incorporating both the corbel and the column) was preserved partly *in situ*. Components of the door in the partition wall south of it are also partly in their original position, while the door frame north of it was reconstructed from dislocated fragments.¹²⁰ These rather simple carvings with bevel moulding and a shouldered arch¹²¹ can hardly be dated precisely between the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Similar (partly) *in situ* door frames were preserved in the northern wall of the southwestern tower and in the western wall of the southeastern tower.¹²² The damaged *in situ* wall arches of the loggia on the courtyard facade will be discussed below.

In general, even as a great hall, a chapel was likewise an outstanding place for architectural prestige representation in the complex of an aristocratic castle.¹²³ However, the known stone carvings of Újlaki's chapel are again rather simple and modest. Although the nave was probably vaulted in this period and carvings there are unknown, preserved fragments of the cross vault of the chancel and sacristy and the impost of the chancel arch do not represent particularly high architectural standards.¹²⁴ The rebuilt windows of the nave and chancel on the outer facade of the new castle wall were not equipped with elaborate new

¹¹⁹ See Gergelyffy, "Várpalota I," 273, fig. 36. See also photos No. 67.309, 68.569 in the Forster Photo Archive.

¹²⁰ Gergelyffy, "Várpalota III," 106-7, fig. 9, 10; Sándyné and Kisfaludy, Reconstruction plans of the western wing.

¹²¹ Only the northern door's shouldered arch lintel is known; the lintels of the other two are only reconstructed. Otherwise, the northern door differs slightly from them in that its bevel moulding is significantly wider.

¹²² See photos No. 55.134 and 67.278 in the Forster Photo Archive.

¹²³ See the example of Füzér Castle, Zoltán Simon, "The Fortress of Füzér," *Archaeologia Historica* 19 (1994): 298-9. Generally on the significance of chapels concerning "showing off" in aristocratic residences see Ernő Marosi, "A 15. századi vár mint művészettörténeti probléma" [The fifteenth-century castle as an art historical problem], in *Castrum Bene 2/1990: Várak a késő középkorban: Die Burgen im Spätmittelalter*, ed. Juan Cabello (Budapest: Castrum Bene Egyesület, 1992), 46; Feld, "A 15. századi castrum," 19.

¹²⁴ These components probably date back to the fourteenth century but even so were certainly not renewed by Nicholas Újlaki. *In situ* vault springings and ribs were preserved but the keystones are not known.

frames but with simple reused ones (from other dismantled windows).¹²⁵ On the whole, Nicholas Újlaki's chapel seems to have been rather poorly ornamented (unless the baron enlarged it with a story level – of which there are no actual signs).¹²⁶

The partition wall between the two eastern rooms of the southern wing incorporated a thick stone column, the round shaft and simple base of which are preserved. According to Cs. László, the column was meant to support the vault of the eastern room, which was later divided into two narrow rooms during the same building period. Thus, the column was walled off and it never filled its primary function.¹²⁷ The stone frame of the castle gate on the outer facade of the southern wing seems to be original.¹²⁸ The frame involves curb-stones on both sides and a groove for the portcullis. The segmental arch gate is decorated only with a bevel moulding.

The gate of the freestanding southern gate house is probably also authentic and its segmental arch frame with a bevel moulding and curb-stones is more or less identical with the inner gate frame.¹²⁹ In situ (and partly supplemented) window frames of the gate-house nicely imitate the form and mouldings of the gate frames.¹³⁰ From the inside, the windows were placed in bays equipped with seat berms on both sides. The frames had a special projecting window sill resembling the berm of a sedilia.¹³¹ There are no signs of iron grills on the frames. Further, here not mentioned in situ or replaced carvings from the age of Nicholas Újlaki (such as simple seat berms or ashlar quoins) are of less significance.

¹²⁵ László, "Újabb kutatások," 185.

¹²⁶ Three fragments of a tracery window in the *lapidarium* may well be dated to the fifteenth century, but their interpretation is problematic and will be discussed below.

¹²⁷ László, "Újabb kutatások," 184.

¹²⁸ See black and white photos from 1959 in the Forster Photo Archive, No. 49494-5.

¹²⁹ See the black and white photo in the Forster Photo Archive, No. 44604. However, D. Várnai's unpublished reconstruction drawing of this gate seems to query the authenticity of the frame, as it indicates another, more elaborate, frame, the base element of which was found dislocated and reused south of the gate. Unfortunately, the basis of this reconstruction is not clear – beyond the simple fact that the size and elaborate mouldings of the carving would not contradict D. Várnai's hypothesis. See the reconstruction drawing in the tracing-paper collection of Várpalota in the Forster Data Archive.

¹³⁰ See Gergelyffy, "Várpalota III," 110, fig. 16. and photos No. 5., 9. and 23. in the excavation records of I. Éri from 1961, Forster Data Archive.

¹³¹ See, e.g., the sedilia in the royal palace of Visegrád, Buzás, *Visegrád, királyi palota*, fig. 210.

Dislocated carvings kept in the lapidarium

Carved stones of the Gothic loggia

Previous research has already identified some carvings as part of the fifteenth-century Gothic loggia of the castle. However, a complete review of the fragments has never been executed, consequently, the interpretation and dating of the construction have remained unclarified.¹³² The most elaborate study was made by P. Sándy who – probably with the help of her colleague, D. Várnai – prepared a theoretical reconstruction of the loggia in 1976. Actually, this was meant to be the final construction drawing for a physical reconstruction, however, the rebuilding was finally not carried out. These drafts contain relevant pieces of information and actual observations, although – according to my investigations – they should be revised and refined.

In the lapidarium I was able to identify fourteen fragments that certainly belonged to the story of the loggia and two further fragments that are likely to have belonged to a stairway of the same structure. There are no carvings which could be surely associated with the ground floor – the pillar fragments discussed here do not seem adequate to support the weight of a vaulted story. The ground floor could rather have been equipped with stronger masonry arcade pillars, the foundations and the lowermost superstructure remains of which were discovered in front of the western wing.¹³³ Beyond these remains the ground floor is almost completely unknown. One of the drafts from 1976 indicates an in situ fragment of a segmental arch on the ground floor facade, which may be interpreted as a trace of the loggia's ground floor barrel vault.¹³⁴

¹³² Gergelyffy, "Palota és Castrum Palota," 132-3; Gergelyffy, "Várpalota III," 108, 110; László, "Újabb kutatások," 184, 186; Marosi (ed.), *Magyarországi művészet 1300-1470 körül*, 661.

¹³³ See the sketches of 1976 (kept in the LDM Data Archive, inventory number: 18274-80).

¹³⁴ Sándyné, Reconstruction plans of the "Újlaki-loggia". The report's text also mentions the identification of the segmental arch fragment.

The vaulted story of the loggia was supported (on the one hand) by octagonal stone pillars with elaborate stone bases and fancy capitals decorated with three-foil blind tracery. On the other hand, opposite the pillars, half-octagonal corbels were inserted on the wall, four truncated items of which were identified in situ, while two fragments can be found in the lapidarium. All the preserved corbels are decorated with the same mouldings. One of the dislocated corbels clearly testifies that the loggia's vaulting had to be adjusted to the earlier fenestration of the western wing's courtyard wall. The lower part of the carving's side surface was secondarily chiselled so that it would fit with the horizontal mullion of one of the window frames.¹³⁵ Interestingly, not a single fragment of the structure's most abundant element, that is, the pillar shafts, are preserved, but one of the bases shows their grooved octagonal cross section.

Out of the four pillar bases in the lapidarium, only one is an "ordinary" piece, while three bases had a special corner position in the structure; they indicate a right-angled shift in the range of the pillars.¹³⁶ They could have stood at the corners of the courtyard, where the loggia – following the western, southern, etc. palace wings – had square turnings. Accepting this assumption, one of the bases could have been located at the southwestern corner and one at the northwestern corner, while the position of the third is debatable. As has been already discussed, based on the ground floor pillar foundations it is not clear whether the courtyard corridor turned northward at the southeastern corner or not. Consequently, the third pillar base might indicate that the corridor continued somehow in front of the eastern wing or it demonstrates that a separate loggia with the same structure and carvings ran in front of the northern and eastern wings. However, one cannot preclude a different interpretation of the

¹³⁵ Naturally, the carving could have been chiselled after the demolition of the loggia (in the sixteenth century) as well, but the described chiselling was made precisely on that part where the corbel had to be adjusted to the mullion.

¹³⁶ A. Gergelyffy consistently mentions four corner bases (and consequently supposed four returns of the loggia), see Gergelyffy, "Palota és Castrum Palota," 132-3; Gergelyffy, "Várpalota III," 108. However, it is much more probable that it was only an inaccuracy of A. Gergelyffy, since there is no trace of a fourth corner base in either the lapidarium or the documentation. A. Gergelyffy might have been misled by another pillar base which was part of a door frame of the loggia, discussed below.

corner bases. Theoretically, beyond standing at the corners, they could also have been located in other positions, e.g., where a staircase was attached at right angles to the loggia.

One of the corner bases differs slightly from the other two since it had an extra decorative element, an angle spur (i.e., a leaf motif) on its internal corner. Otherwise the base was carved with the exactly same form and size as the others, therefore it is questionable whether it had a special function, an accentuated position in the structure or rather was carved somewhat more ornately simply by chance.¹³⁷

Beside the corner bases, there are further elements refining the knowledge of the arrangement. Four carvings attest that there was at least one door frame inserted in the loggia at right angles to the range of pillars. It is not completely clear whether all four carvings could have belonged to the same door frame or they are necessarily evidence of (at least) two separate door frames. Doors(?) seem to have separated or closed some sections of the loggia, since sockets on their interior surfaces show that they were equipped with doorwings. The external surface of two carvings clearly demonstrate, that some structure was attached to one of the doors at right angles to the loggia from the direction of the courtyard. According to the smoothed character of the surface, this adjoining structure was probably constructed partly of carved stone elements. The most plausible possibility would be a stairway connecting the story corridor with the castle courtyard. The ground floor foundations, noted above, define one at the northwestern corner of the courtyard. If all these assumptions are correct, there must have been a further stairway besides this northwestern one. The mouldings decorate only one side of the frame, and, located at the northwestern corner, it would mean that this stairway was primarily used for descending from the story corridor. The ascending stairway should be elsewhere. If the door frame was not located at the northwestern corner then again it

¹³⁷ Although it may seem unrealistic at first, some slight differences concerning the moulding of the capitals can also be recognized, which probably indicate different stone-masons working in the same team during the construction of the loggia. For an analogy (slight differences on the carvings of the same stone-mason team) see Buzás, *Visegrád, királyi palota*, 41.

presupposes a further adjoining stairway somewhere else, perhaps at the southeastern corner.¹³⁸ Two carvings – according to their particular forms, elements of a railing – are likely to have belonged to the loggia stairway.

Identifying the ribs of the loggia's cross vault is rather problematic. According to the fragments kept in the lapidarium, the ribs could have been carved either with a double grooved or a torus moulding. A cross-vault keystone of the latter type is also preserved. Some observations may imply that this type of rib was part of the loggia, however, the available data are not sufficient to answer the question definitively.¹³⁹

The width and height of these ribs' cross section total to an approximately 24×25 cm rectangular prism, which corresponds roughly to the 25×25 cm cross section of the pillar shafts, and to the 25 cm width of the loggia's doorframe. These sizes can be significant for the medieval practice of stone carving, in which the first step generally was to carve a square or rectangular prism from which the required form was carved later, frequently with the help of a master pattern.¹⁴⁰ However, one cannot connect different stone carvings only on the basis of matching sizes – they may have simply been related, e.g., to general medieval units of measure.¹⁴¹

Unlike the ground floor, the story of the loggia is quite well reconstructable. Thanks to the in situ fragments on the western wing's courtyard facade, the vault rise and span and the

¹³⁸ The reconstruction plans of Sándyné inserted the door frame in the range of pillars running in front of the western wing. However, there are no traces of such a position in either among the in situ remains or documentation. Apparently, she wanted to incorporate the known fragments in her partial reconstruction and therefore it was a necessity to locate the door in the western section of the loggia. Also, she may have tried to calculate its original position by the rhythm of the vault segments, but the in situ fragments do not indicate such a regularity and precision which would actually permit such an assumption. Naturally, there may also have been some unmentioned field observations supporting her idea, but one cannot detect such untraceable pieces of information.

¹³⁹ Sándy's reconstruction plans suggest that both types were used at the same time in the cross vault of the loggia. In my opinion, this possibility is unlikely, although not completely inconceivable.

¹⁴⁰ On the process, see, e.g., Gergely Buzás, Zoltán Deák and Balázs Bodó, *A visegrádi királyi palota Anjou-kori kőtára* [The Anjou-period lapidarium of the royal palace at Visegrád] (Visegrád: Mátyás Király Múzeum, 2003), 25-6.

¹⁴¹ Also the provenience of two rib fragments with torus moulding corresponds to that of a pillar capital, but, unfortunately, the secondary use of the carvings in Várpalota Castle does not seem to refer trustworthily to their original context.

arrangement of the pillars and vault segments are known. The height of the pillars is not obvious, but can be estimated. On the one hand, the corbels precisely determine the springing line, while other in situ remains by and large indicate the possible height of the story's floor level. On the other hand, preserved elements of the loggia's door frame may provide the exact pillar height. If the carvings belonged to the same frame, the pillar shafts were approximately 1.2 m high, while the total pillar height (including the base and capital) was approximately 2.2 m. These sizes correspond well with the estimated height of the slab between the ground floor and the story. Even if the carvings did not belong to the same frame, these sizes are likely valid since all the door frame elements (except for the capital) are consistently approximately 0.6 m high.

One further component of the structure is rather problematic. Although there are no signs at all (e.g., sockets) of a wooden or metal rail between the pillars, it seems highly improbable that the pillar bases would have stood on a parapet. Assuming such a parapet would result in very short pillar shafts and quite unusual proportions. Moreover, the position of a socket (made for jointing the hinge of the door wing) on the loggia's door frame makes sense only if the base element of the frame stood on a floor level. According to their identical shaping, the bases of the pillars and that of the door frame definitely stood on the same level. The top surface of a pillar base demonstrates rather convincingly that the grooved octagonal pillar shafts were built directly on top of the bases, without any parapet sill between them.

The sixteen preserved carvings of the loggia seem to verify that the whole structure was made (or at least its components were carved) during the same building phase. There are no detectable substantive differences, the style, the carving technology and the applied raw material is homogeneous.¹⁴² The slight differences (almost invisible to the naked eye) in some

¹⁴² The stone was a local type of limestone available in the vicinity of the castle. It was used for centuries for most of the carved stone elements of the castle, not only that of the loggia. See the report of 1985 on the petrological analysis in Forster Data Archive, inventory number 204.011/84-b/85.

mouldings of the capitals were (most likely) never recognized by the owners of the castle and imply at most different stone masons.

The loggia was covered by white plaster, preserved mainly on the capitals. Some tiny spots of red paint (on the door frame and on one of the pillar bases) may indicate that the structure was not completely unicoloured, and certain details of the carvings (according to the spots, probably the stick mouldings) were enhanced by red paint. This decoration would not be unusual in the period,¹⁴³ however, signs of it are far from conclusive in this case. Three carvings of the loggia preserved spots of a pale foxy layer of plaster under the white layer. This pale foxy layer was probably only a surfacing coat and contemporary with the superior white plaster. The same order of plaster layers can be detected on the partition wall of the western wing's story hall, the wall which incorporated the huge stone column standing on the longitudinal axis. This correspondence may raise the possibility that the alteration of the hall took place at the same time the loggia was constructed. Although the new Gothic courtyard corridor may have led to some reorganisation of the public spaces of the residence, these plaster remains in themselves cannot securely prove such a connection.

On the whole, the courtyard corridor was probably constructed in front of three or four palace wings but one could not go a full circle along the corridor as it was interrupted at the northwestern corner and perhaps also elsewhere. The ground floor of the structure is hardly known, however, it seems that at least two stairways led to the story. One of them was located at the northwestern corner where the loggia connected the two, formerly separated, palace wings. The story corridor could have been closed by doors inserted in the structure. It is not clear whether the doors also separated certain parts of the corridor or they only stood where

¹⁴³ On coloured architectural mouldings of the period see Gergely Buzás, "Festett építészeti díszítés a 14-15. században" [Painted architectural decoration in the fourteenth and fifteenth century] *Magyar Műemlékvédelem* XIV (2007): 228-233. Traces of red paint can be found also on further fragments from the *lapidariums*. These dislocated fragments belonged to two different window frames, but it is not certain, whether these frames derive from the castle of Nicholas Újlaki or not.

the stairways were attached to the loggia. The vaulted story corridor was built of elaborately shaped carvings with homogeneous geometric decoration.

Carved stones of the same building activity

Beyond the carvings of the loggia, there are some further architectural elements which were quite certainly the products of the same building activity at the castle. In the case of the fragments of a large oblong window frame with vertical and horizontal mullions, not only the 25 cm width, but also the similar profile and, especially, the corresponding base drum of the stick mouldings refer to the same period and the same stone masons. The fragments may belong to one or (perhaps) more frames. Located on the courtyard facades, these types of windows combined with the loggia may have offered a homogeneous, harmonic appearance – but, actually, nothing really confirms this suggestion. In the 1960s these fragments were found on the story of the southern gate house reused as building material.¹⁴⁴ Not only does this provenience differ from the find spots of the loggia's carvings,¹⁴⁵ but also clear signs of heavy burning can be recognized on the fragments. No such signs are visible on the carved stones of the Gothic corridor. On the whole, the original position of the window frame (or frames with the same shaping) is unknown.

A base element of a huge elaborate door frame can be associated with the same building period based similarly on its profile and (especially) the corresponding base drum of the mouldings. The frame, according to its size and rich moulding, certainly belonged to a

¹⁴⁴ See photos No. 082.798 ND, 082.800 ND and No. 67.242 in the Forster Photo Archive.

¹⁴⁵ Four carvings of the loggia's door frame were found secondarily built into the baroque stairway of the southern palace wing. One of the corbels was probably found built into the walled-up window of the western wing, the other was also re-used somewhere in the castle. One pillar base was discovered built into the nineteenth-century stable attached to the northern castle wall. Other carvings were found built into the ground floor, first floor rooms of the castle and the baroque stairway of the eastern wing. The proveniences of six carvings from the loggia are unidentified. See, respectively, photos No. 079.801 ND, 082.907 ND in the Forster Photo Archive, reconstruction documentations by P. Sándy, Forster Data Archive, inventory number: 16.008 (photo documentation 11.a), excavation documentation of I. Éri from 1961 in Forster Data Archive, LDM Data Archive, inventory number 13392 and Várpalota, Köleltár 1966 in Forster Data Archive.

particularly significant entrance, perhaps the southern main entrance of the castle.¹⁴⁶ The find spot of the carving may strengthen this assumption, since it was found built into the walls of the southern barbican.¹⁴⁷ No elements of the loggia are known to have been discovered there, which suggests that the door frame was not connected to the loggia and was probably torn down irrespectively of it. Also, the demolition of the door could theoretically have correlated with the construction of new southern defensive works.

Several other fragments, which may have been carved concurrently with the loggia construction, are kept in the lapidarium, but they cannot be associated so firmly with that building activity. A huge window frame and a fragment belonging (probably) to a gablet have similar cross-sections (with stick moulding or torus) and the same 24-25 cm width as the door frame of the loggia and the mullioned window frame noted above. The cross-section of another arched door(?) frame (of more than 2 m wide span) is also similar to them. A small octagonal pillar fragment 17 cm wide could have belonged somehow to either the loggia or to a completely different structure. Three fragments of a tracery window can be associated with the carvings of the loggia only by the pale foxy and white plaster layers preserved on them but, as already noted, this correspondence cannot be regarded as determined.¹⁴⁸ On the whole, these carvings were most likely made in the fifteenth century; but it is not unequivocally clear whether it was during the ownership of Nicholas Újlaki or not and in which building period. Some of them may even date to the fourteenth century. Furthermore, one cannot be completely sure whether all the carvings were part of the castle or whether some were taken from other demolished or damaged buildings (e.g., the Franciscan friary) of Várpalota. The original location of the tracery window, for instance, is especially interesting, since if it

¹⁴⁶ Actually, a reconstruction manual (probably by D. Várnai) also indicates the door frame at the southern main entrance, however, it provides no arguments for this. See the 1:20 scale reconstruction in the tracing-paper documents' collection of Forster Data Archive.

¹⁴⁷ See manuals of the carving in the tracing-paper documents' collection of Forster Data Archive.

¹⁴⁸ The order of the layers was the same as with the loggia's carvings. On top of the white plaster layer substantial spots of red paint can still be recognized. This red paint appears only on the interior surface of the tracery window.

originally belonged to the castle it could raise the possibility that Újlaki built a new, more representative, chapel (or perhaps built an additional story of it).

Dating of the carvings (the loggia and contemporaneous fragments)

No attempts have been made previously to date the loggia by art historical arguments, except for the encyclopaedic work on Hungarian art around 1300-1470. There, E. Marosi associated the pillar capitals of Várpalota with corbels from the first half of the fifteenth century from Garamszentbenedek and Siklós, decorated similarly with blind tracery. According to E. Marosi, these analogies attest that the Gothic courtyard corridor could have been built concurrently with the mid-fifteenth century building period, that is, between 1439 and 1445.¹⁴⁹ However, similar corbels were in use as early as the fourteenth century (both in the first half and the middle of the century)¹⁵⁰, by which the capitals of Várpalota could have been dated much earlier. On the whole, E. Marosi's argument does not seem satisfactory for a well-founded dating – which one perhaps cannot even expect from a such a great comprehensive synthetic work.¹⁵¹

Nevertheless, an art historical investigation for further analogies may provide a basis for refining the dating. Despite the elaborate character and the quantity of the carvings, unfortunately, there are only a few technical or stylistic details which can effectively be helpful. The cross-section and general character of door and window frames of the loggia and the contemporaneous carvings were highly popular in Hungary over a wide time frame,

¹⁴⁹ Marosi (ed.), *Magyarországi művészet 1300-1470 körül*, 661.

¹⁵⁰ See the corbels from Sibiu (Romania), Reghin (Romania) and Sopron (Hungary) in Marosi (ed.), *Magyarországi művészet 1300-1470 körül*, 327-8. See also the corbel from Szécsény (from the story room above the sacristy of the Franciscan friary) and Márianosztra (from the chancel of the Pauline monastery church). See, respectively, in Judit G. Lászlai, "A szécsényi ferences kolostor építéstörténete a 17. század végéig" [The architectural history of the Franciscan friary at Szécsény until the end of the seventeenth century], in *Koldulórendi építészet a középkori Magyarországon* [Architecture of the mendicant orders in medieval Hungary], ed. Andrea Haris (Budapest: Országos Műemlékvédelmi Hivatal, 1994), 502; and Károly Belényesi, *Pálos kolostorok az Abaúji-hegységben. Pauline Friaries in the Abaúji Hegyalja Region* (Miskolc: Herman Ottó Múzeum, 2004), 19-21.

¹⁵¹ This encyclopaedic work, by its very nature, could not examine every detail in depth and simply took statements from the secondary literature, thus, necessarily contains certain oversights as well. For the latter, see what is written on windows of the early manor house of Várpalota, on page 513.

approximately from the second half of the fourteenth to the end of the fifteenth century.¹⁵² All kinds of royal, aristocratic and elite residences, urban palaces, ecclesiastical and secular buildings applied very similar carvings. However, the specific, vertically grooved base drum of the stick and torus mouldings was much less prevalent. Although similar decoration appeared on pillar bases and capitals already by the end of the fourteenth century,¹⁵³ the first known examples of this type of base drums in the same position (i.e., on window and door frames) in Hungary are from the first third of the fifteenth century. Several such frames were carved in the 1410s and 1420s in Buda, during King Sigismund's building activity. Not only the royal palace, but also the Virgin Mary parish church was equipped with a frame decorated with vertically grooved base drums.¹⁵⁴ A close analogy for the carvings of Várpalota is a fragment from Csókakő Castle. Supposing that this dislocated window or door frame was made for the chapel, the carving can be dated between 1430 and 1460, most likely between 1446 and 1459.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵² Out of the innumerable analogies one can mention, e.g., window and door frames from the Royal Palace of Visegrád from the building period of the 1360s, frames from the Royal Castle of Visegrád dated between the end of the fourteenth and the beginning of the fifteenth century, window and door frames at Gyula Castle from the building period 1405-1420, a window frame from the archiepiscopal buildings at Esztergom from the first half of the fifteenth century and a door frame from the end of the fifteenth century, a window frame from the Benedictine monastery of Pécsvárad dated around 1491, and others. See, respectively, Bozóki, *Visegrád, Alsó- és Felsővár*, 53-4 (fig. 155-7, 156-161); Buzás, *Visegrád, királyi palota*, 29, 35 (fig. 188, 231.a and 168, 224.a, 320), on the dating of the relevant building period see Gergely Buzás, "A visegrádi királyi palota története" [The history of the Royal Palace of Visegrád], in *A visegrádi királyi palota* [The Royal Palace of Visegrád], ed. Gergely Buzás and Krisztina Orosz (Budapest: Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum Mátyás Király Múzeuma, 2010), 26-8; Feld, "A gyulai vár a középkorban," 264-74 (fig. 15.1, 16.1-3); *Az Esztergomi Vármúzeum kőtárának katalógusa* [Catalogue of the lapidarium of the Esztergom Castle Museum], Gergely Buzás and Gergely Tolnai, ed. (Esztergom: Esztergomi Vármúzeum, 2004), 171-8, 185; Balázs Bodó, "A pécsvárad bencés monostor építéstörténete az újabb kutatások tükrében" [The architectural history of the Benedictine monastery at Pécsvárad as reflected in the latest research], in *A középkor és a kora újkor régészete Magyarországon I.* [Archaeology of the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period in Hungary I], ed. Elek Benkő and Gyöngyi Kovács (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Régészeti Intézete, 2010), 376-7 (fig. 20).

¹⁵³ See the Pauline friaries of Márianosztra, Gönc and Kurtyán. The latter provides an analogy from the first third of the fifteenth century. Belényesy, *Pálos kolostorok*, 19-21; Marosi (ed.), *Magyarországi művészet 1300-1470 körül*, 398-9, 531.

¹⁵⁴ Gergely Buzás, "A budapesti Mátyás-templom középkori Mária-kapuja" [The medieval St. Mary door of the Mathias church in Budapest] *Archaeologia – Altum Castrum Online* 2012. <http://archeologia.hu/content/archeologia/73/buzas-g-matyas-templom.pdf> (last accessed December 2014). See also Gerevich, *A budai vár feltárása*, 29 (fig. 16), 147 (fig. 201), 290, 216 (fig. 319), 326 (table VI/1), 285 (fig. 405), 287 (fig. 406); Emese Nagy, "Zsigmond király budavári Friss-palotája" [The so-called Friss palace of King Sigismund in Buda Castle], *Budapest Régiségei* 16 (1955): 119 (fig. 18), 121 (fig. 22).

¹⁵⁵ Gábor Hatházi, "Csókakő vára az írott és a régészeti források tükrében" [Csókakő Castle as reflected in the written and archaeological sources], in *Csókakő a harmadik évezred küszöbén* [Csókakő on the eve of the third

In the second half of the fifteenth century a new, torsade, type of base drum became highly popular, in which case the formerly vertical grooves were twisted. Many more examples are known of these torsade base drums in Hungary than of the vertical grooved ones, but only from the 1470s and even more from the 1480s onward.¹⁵⁶ Beyond the torsade type, other new elaborate base drum types also spread.¹⁵⁷ The new styles seem to have gradually supplanted the previous type of base drum, but not completely and not definitively. On the one hand, some examples verify that both the former and subsequent type of base drums could appear on the very same carvings in 1461, (perhaps) in 1477, and as late as in the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth century.¹⁵⁸ On the other hand, fragments of a huge ornate mullioned window from Székesfehérvár shows, that vertically grooved base drums could also have been carved on their own (without the new base drum types) even after 1480.¹⁵⁹

millennium], ed. Kornél Béni, Ferenc Erdős, Gyula Fülöp and Gábor Hatházi (Csókakő Község Önkormányzata, 2010), 65-6, 87.

¹⁵⁶ Out of the many examples see frames, dated to the 1480s, at the Royal Palace of Visegrád; window frames at the bishop's palace in Eger, dated between 1475 and the beginning of the sixteenth century; a window frame from Gyula Castle, dated roughly between 1470 and 1520; a huge mullioned window from the Benedictine monastery of Pécsvárad dated around 1491; a window frame of the Franciscan friary at Szeged, dated after 1480, etc. See, respectively, Buzás, *Visegrád, királyi palota*, 38 (fig. 254, 257, 295-6), 40 (fig. 243-4, 286); Giber, "Az egri püspöki palota," 62, 70-1, 85 and Mihály Détshy – Károly Kozák, "Az egri várban álló gótikus palota helyreállítása" [The restoration of the Gothic palace in Eger Castle], *Magyar Műemlékvédelem 1959-1960* (1964): 54-5 (fig. 42); Feld, "A gyulai vár a középkorban," 276 (fig. 16.4); Bodó, "A pécsváradi bencés monostor építéstörténete," 376-7 (fig. 20); Zsuzsa Lukács, "Előzetes beszámoló a Szeged-alsóvárosi ferences kolostor kutatásáról" [Preliminary report on research at the Franciscan friary of Szeged-alsóváros], in *Koldulórendi építészet a középkori Magyarországon* [Architecture of the mendicant orders in medieval Hungary], ed. Andrea Haris (Budapest: Országos Műemlékvédelmi Hivatal, 1994), 467.

¹⁵⁷ See, e.g., the window frames of the oriel of the northwestern palace at the Royal Palace of Visegrád. Gergely Buzás and Pál Lövei, *A visegrádi királyi palota északnyugati épülete és az utcai homlokzat zárt erkélye* [The northwestern building of the Royal Palace of Visegrád and the oriel of the main facade] (Visegrád: Mátyás Király Múzeum, 2001), 29 (fig. 72).

¹⁵⁸ See the examples of the pillar base from the synagogue at Buda Castle, the door frame of the parish house in Cluj-Napoca (Romania) and the northern door of the Virgin Mary parish church of medieval Pest (Budapest). See, respectively, László Zolnay, "Középkori zsinagógák a budai várban" [Synagogues of the Middle Ages in the Castle of Buda], *Budapest Régiségei* XXII (1971): 277-9 (fig. 8-9); Szilárd Papp, *A királyi udvar építkezései Magyarországon 1480-1515* [Architectural projects of the royal court in Hungary, 1480-1515] (Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, 2005), fig. 325 and Géza Entz, *Erdély építészete a 14-16. században* [Transylvanian architecture in the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries] (Kolozsvár: Erdélyi Múzeum Egyesület, 1996), 117; Papp, *A királyi udvar építkezései*, 59-60, 63.

¹⁵⁹ The huge window probably belonged to the the medieval provostry buildings (but not to the provostry church). Papp, *A királyi udvar építkezései*, 21, 28-9. Both this example from Székesfehérvár and the above mentioned carvings from Buda, Cluj-Napoca and medieval Pest demonstrate that the survival of the former base drum type was not confined to less significant secondary architectural details or building activities.

Consequently, the vertically grooved base drums (appearing both on the loggia's door frame and other frames of the same building period), and the complete absence of the new (torsade or other) types of base drums cannot prove trustworthily that the loggia was constructed before the 1470s or 1480s. However, other details may also imply that the building period in question preceded the end of the fifteenth century. The mullion fragments in Várpalota verify that the window contemporaneous with the loggia was closed with four separate panels. This does not correspond to the practice typical for the end of the century, when windows started to be closed with a single panel.¹⁶⁰ On the whole, it seems that the carvings do not have any characteristics of the end of the fifteenth century. Although it is always insecure to determine dating by some kind of absence, the loggia and the concurrent constructions are much more likely to have been built before the 1480s than afterwards.

Fifteenth-century carved stones: A brief evaluation

Having overviewed the known architectural fragments of the two significant fifteenth-century building periods (i.e., the 1440s and the later period when the loggia was constructed), a certain difference is rather well-marked. Both the in situ remains and the dislocated fragments from the 1440s seem to reflect somewhat modest demands for stone masons' products and minor architectural details. Instead of ornate ribbed vaults, even the representative halls were covered by barrel vaults or flat wood ceilings. Except for the chapel (the vaulting of which is probably earlier) there is no data for ribbed vaults in the residence. Out of the known window and door frames even the most elaborate ones are quite simple and modest. As has already been demonstrated, even the great hall and the chapel, which one would consider among the most spectacular spaces, were characterized by surprisingly simple carved stone details. The relative modesty of the stone mason elements of the 1440s can theoretically be associated with the speed of large-scale building activity, but, naturally, there

¹⁶⁰ Buzás, *Visegrád, királyi palota*, 33.

can be various other interpretations as well. The vaulted loggia and the contemporaneous carvings apparently imply very different demands and remarkable stone mason expertise. This conspicuous contrast may reflect some kind of change regarding the owner's intentions concerning his residence and the primary functions that the castle was meant to correspond to.

SUMMARY: THE CASTLE OF NICHOLAS ÚJLAKI IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

Having revised the medieval construction history of the residence, the significance of the mid-fifteenth century building period is rather apparent. Naturally, it is not only the remarkable enlargement of the building complex and the increase in the number of habitable rooms which made the change so decisive. In the 1440s the new castle represented a specific type of the contemporaneous elite residence. First, the former manor house was replaced by a castle, a much more honourable noble dwelling. It should be noted that it is not the level of fortification which really counts here. As has already been discussed, the antecedents of the new castle were probably also fortified to some extent. The four corner towers with mullioned windows, the relatively thin castle walls and the preserved protruding southern end of the former manor house do not indicate strong intentions to create an impregnable residence. It seems that the (illusionary) defensive character and the prestige of possessing a castle may have been more important than the actual defensibility.

Furthermore, the new residence was clearly characterized by a certain search for architectural regularity. Despite the anomalies on the eastern side and southeastern corner of the castle (where the new walls were adjusted to the preceding structures), the building complex by and large could have given the impression of a regular arrangement. On the one hand, the four corner towers would have efficiently highlighted the quadratic layout of the castle; on the other hand, comprehensive and all-embracing regularity was not typical of this

period.¹⁶¹ However, the effort to create a near-regular ground plan arrangement was a general trend which can be seen at elite residences from approximately the late fourteenth to the early fifteenth century.¹⁶² Furthermore, the special quadratic layout of Várpalota Castle with a rectangular courtyard and four corner towers was typical only at the topmost social level, that is, at the residences of the royal court and some of the most powerful aristocratic families. Accordingly, high prestige would have been attached to this particular type of residences, a question which will be discussed more substantially in the next chapter.

The later enlargements of the castle with the southern palace wing, the courtyard corridor and (probably) the gate house indicate significant building activity around the third quarter of the fifteenth century, that is, presumably in the days of Nicholas Újlaki. This construction cannot be interpreted as marginal or minor alterations, since the new palace wing caused considerable growth in the habitable space, while the loggia and the contemporaneous stone carvings are first-class and elaborate stone-mason work. Since the construction of the loggia required the demolition of an earlier structure built between 1439 and 1445, I suggest that the loggia is unlikely to have been built before the 1450s. Although the southern palace wing could have been built either previously or concurrently with the loggia, neither seems to have been part of the original architectural conception of the 1440s. Thus, the loggia and the palace wing can probably be dated to a period when – according to the written sources – Várpalota had lost its outstanding significance and simultaneously Ilok Castle became again the much more important seat. This paradox between written evidence and archaeological results can be explained by different interpretations.

¹⁶¹ Even in the case of Ozora Castle (built around 1416) which seems to be completely regular in its ground plan, the arrangement of the windows on the facades is subordinated to the functions and arrangement of the inner rooms. See István Feld and Tibor Koppány, “Az ozorai vár” [The castle of Ozora], in *Művészet Zsigmond király korában 1387-1437. I. Tanulmányok* [Art in the age of King Sigismund 1387-1437: vol. I Studies], ed. László Beke, Ernő Marosi and Tünde Wehli (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Művészettörténeti Kutató Csoport, 1987), 332-46.

¹⁶² Feld, “A 15. századi castrum,” 16-9; István Feld, “Uralkodói és főúri reprezentációs épületek az Anjou- és Zsigmond-kori Magyarországról” [Royal and aristocratic buildings of representation value from the Anjou- and Sigismund-period Hungary], *Castrum* 3. no. 1 (2006): 40.

On the one hand, based on the material evidence, one could argue that the supposed loss of significance was a slower, a later, or a less efficient process. On the other hand, it is clear that the high aristocracy of the period could afford to have expensive building activities executed at several sites at the same time, and perhaps even less significant residences could have been rebuilt in this way. These concurrent, seemingly purposeless building activities could have been one way of displaying power and wealth. This phenomena can clearly be recognized at the topmost social level, that is, the royal court. King Matthias (1458-1490) rebuilt and lavishly developed several castles and manor houses concurrently in the 1480s for his natural child, John Corvin; this building activity can primarily be interpreted in the context of prestige representation.¹⁶³ Also in the case of Nicholas Újlaki, written sources and archaeological evidence verify building activity around the mid-fifteenth century at some castles besides Várpalota and Ilok: Orahovica (Croatia), Sremska Mitrovica (Serbia) and Güssing (Austria) and several ecclesiastical institutions.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶³ Radu Lupescu, "The Castle as Symbol of Social Status. A Hungarian Case Study: Johannes Corvinus" in *Castrum Bene 8: Burg und Funktion, Castle and Function*, ed. Martin Krenn and Alexandra Krenn-Leeb (Wien: Verlag Österreichische Gesellschaft für Ur- und Frühgeschichte, 2006), 97-105; Radu Lupescu "Solymos vára a középkorban" [Solymos Castle in the Middle Ages] in *Építészet a középkori Dél-Magyarországon* [Architecture in medieval Southern Hungary] ed. Tibor Kollár (Budapest: Teleki László Alapítvány, 2010), 829-77, especially 872-4.

¹⁶⁴ Fedeles, "Egy középkori főúri család vallásossága," 383-95, 412-4. In all three castles chapels were probably built. At Orahovica perhaps also the construction of the castle can be ascribed to Újlaki. Although the leaders of the excavations dated the first building period to the late fourteenth to the early fifteenth century (or simply to the early fifteenth century), Z. Horvat suggested a mid-fifteenth century dating. See Mladen Radić and Zvonko Bojčić, *Srednjovjekovni grad Ružica* (Osijek: Muzej Slavonije, 2004), 320; Horvat, "Analiza srednjovjekovne faze palasa Nikole Iločkog," 207; Horvat, "Stambeni prostori u burgovima," 41-2. It is clear that the architectural features and the carved stone material do not contradict any of the possibilities.

Chapter 3: THE CONTEXT:

ANALOGIES FROM CONTEMPORARY RESIDENCES

3.1 THE BUILDING ACTIVITIES OF NICHOLAS ÚJLAKI AT OTHER CASTLES

Thanks to recent archaeological investigations carried out in Ilok, there is an outstanding possibility to achieve a better understanding of Várpalota Castle in the light of simultaneous construction works by the same owner. The castle, situated at the western end of the fortified town of Ilok, has been dated by and large to the mid-fifteenth century, definitely during the lifetime of Nicholas Újlaki. Since no attempts have been made at a more precise dating, and neither coins, small finds, architectural elements, nor written evidence seem to make this possible, one cannot decide surely whether its construction preceded the 1450s or not or whether its building was actually concurrent with one of the building periods of Várpalota. According to Z. Horvat, the construction of the residence was completed relatively quickly and it was one of the first steps of large building activity in the town beginning in the mid-fifteenth and finishing in the early sixteenth century.¹⁶⁵ Naturally, it would seem logical that the residence was built during or after the 1450s when the significance of Várpalota and the Western Hungarian estates were reduced and a flourishing period began in Ilok. However, it may well be that the residence had been already finished by this time and large-scale

¹⁶⁵ Željko Tomičić, "Ilok – Dvor knezova Iločkih. Rezultati istraživanja 2004" [Ilok – Castle of the Dukes of Ilok: 2004 Excavation Results (sic)], *Annales Instituti Archaeologici* 1 (2005): 12-3; Željko Tomičić, "Neue Erkenntnisse über die mittelalterliche Schicht der Stadt Ilok (Újlak): Beitrag zu den Verbindungen zwischen Ungarn und Europa in der Renaissance" in *Specimina Nova Pars Prima Sectio Mediaevalis VI*, ed. Márta Font, Gábor Kiss and Tamás Fedeles (Pécs: Pécsi Tudományegyetem, 2011): 189, 193; Zorislav Horvat, "Analiza srednjovjekovne faze gradnje dvorca Odescalchi, nekadašnjeg palasa Nikole Iločkog, kralja Bosne" [Analysis of the medieval building periods of the Odescalchi Castle at Ilok, the former palace of Nicholas Újlaki, king of Bosnia], *Prilozi Instituta za arheologiju u Zagrebu* 19 (2002): 199, 209; Zorislav Horvat, "Stambeni prostori u burgovima 13.-15. stoljeća u kontinentalnoj Hrvatskoj" [Residential spaces in continental Croatian castles in 13th-15th century], *Prostor* 17 (2009): 43-5.

construction work was initialized only at the ecclesiastical institutions and town fortifications of Ilok.¹⁶⁶

The remnants of Ilok Castle and the results of excavations confirm that the space management and ground plan arrangement there correspond remarkably to what can be observed at Várpalota Castle. It had a precisely square ground plan with three palace wings surrounding a rectangular courtyard. The courtyard was also precisely regular, the proportion of its length and width was exactly 2:1. The entrance to the courtyard opened from the eastern facade in front of which a longish rectangular gate house was built, similar to that of Várpalota. No buildings were erected on the entrance (i.e., eastern) side of the castle, in the same way as at Várpalota in the 1440s. The strict regularity of the castle's square block was broken only on the northern side where (between two buttresses) a rather small, probably storied, annex was attached to the castle wall. According to its position and a tracery window fragment found in the fill, the presumed story of the small annex could have been the chapel of the castle. Both the wide northern and the narrower southern palace wings were two-storied and the latter also had a cellar level. The great hall of the castle was probably located in the northern wing and, according to the massive in situ pillar remains, could have had an imposing two-naved structure. The castle was not equipped with corner towers but a surrounding moat highlighted its fortified character.¹⁶⁷

The similarities between the two residences are rather clearly visible. The higher level of regularity of the arrangement at Ilok can be explained simply by the lack of previous buildings on the site, which would have influenced the layout. According to the excavation results, some of the stones were secondarily built into the foundation walls of the castle,

¹⁶⁶ Tamás Fedeles speaks about the flourishing period of Ilok from the 1450s, but he mentions expressly only the developments in the town. See Tamás Fedeles, *A király és a lázadó herceg: Az Újlaki Lőrinc és szövetségesei elleni királyi hadjárat (1494-1495)* [The king and the prince in revolt: The royal campaign against Lawrence of Újlak and his allies (1494-1495)] (Szeged: Szegedi Középkorász Műhely, 2012), 95; Tamás Fedeles, "Egy középkori főúri család vallásossága," 411.

¹⁶⁷ Horvat, "Analiza srednjovekovne faze palasa Nikole Iločkog," 199-206, 210; Horvat, "Stambeni prostori u burgovima," 43-7; Tomićić, "Neue Erkenntnisse," 190.

extracted from an unknown previous building torn down not long before.¹⁶⁸ This previous building could have even been at the same location as the castle, since, it seems, some landscaping work (that is, preparation of the terrain for construction) removed all the layers of the early and High Middle Ages at the site.¹⁶⁹ However, it is clear that no walls or architectural structures could have been seen in the castle before the mid-fifteenth century.

Comparing the layout of the two residences, I would argue that the building conception was essentially the same. Slightly exaggerating, one can suggest that the arrangement at Ilok Castle shows more or less the “ideal arrangement” of Várpalota, that is, what could have been built if there had been no previous buildings at the site. For instance, the square block of the castle at Várpalota is significantly larger than that of Ilok (approximately 56×56 m and 47×47 m), but it can clearly be ascribed to the previously erected buildings on the eastern and northern side of the castle. This could also have been the reason for the size of the courtyard at Várpalota, which is disproportionately large compared to the size of the palace wings and the courtyards of similar residences of the period. Naturally, by interpreting Ilok Castle as a kind of “model”, I do not suggest that this was built earlier. It should also be stated that despite the apparent similarities of the ground plan arrangements, substantial differences can also be seen, probably the most obvious of which is the lack of corner towers at Ilok. On the whole, the relevant conclusion is that Nicholas Újlaki probably aimed to build a fairly regular castle at Várpalota in the 1440s, more or less similar to what was erected (earlier, concurrently or afterwards) at Ilok, but this architectural conception had to be accommodated to the already existing buildings, which he was apparently unwilling to tear down.

Besides the correspondence in the layouts, the two castles have an even more striking similarity. Z. Horvat reveals the very same contrast at Ilok that was characteristic of Várpalota

¹⁶⁸ Horvat, “Stambeni prostori u burgovima,” 47.

¹⁶⁹ Tomičić, “Ilok – Rezultati istraživanja 2004,” 12-3.

Castle in the 1440s, the contrast between the prestigious, monumental building form and the modest architectural details. The significant dimensions of the building complex and the great hall, the 5 m-high headroom of the spacious premises disagree with the simple door and window frames and certain other architectural features. There are no data showing vaulting ribs or other evidence of ribbed vaults. According to G. Buzás, the Gothic vaults of the northern palace wing's eastern rooms were probably constructed without ribs or without ribs in the wall arches.¹⁷⁰ The in situ mullioned window frames preserved on the second floor provide a good illustration of the character of this peculiar contrast. Their extraordinary size (the complete window openings are approximately 235×155 cm) definitely exceeds known similar windows of the region, however, they belong to the generally widespread, hardly decorated type of frames with the same simple moulding as on the windows of Várpalota Castle's towers.¹⁷¹

Naturally, there are several architectural features which are not preserved and, consequently, cannot be taken into consideration, although they might modulate this picture significantly. For instance, a report from 1702 mentions wall paintings in the castle, of which not a fragment could be identified during the recent investigations.¹⁷² (Instead of spectacular wall paintings, red-painted plaster could be observed on a window frame, probably fallen out of the first floor of the western facade.¹⁷³) However, the known minor details and especially the carved stone structures (or the lack of them) expressly reflect relatively modest demands regarding stone-mason work applied at both castles. This phenomena and the clear

¹⁷⁰ The impression of the former vaults were observed on the eastern wall of the castle. See Gergely Buzás, "Az újlaki Városi Múzeum középkori kőfaragványai" [Medieval stone-carvings of the Municipal Museum of Újlak], in *A középkori Dél-Alföld és Szer* [The south part of the Hungarian Great Plain and the place Szer in the Middle Ages], ed. Tibor Kollár (Szeged: Csongrád Megyei Levéltár, 2000), 521 (footnote 2).

¹⁷¹ Horvat, "Analiza srednjovjekovne faze palasa Nikole Iločkog," 205 (figures 16 and 18); Horvat, "Stambeni prostori u burgovima," 46.

¹⁷² Horvat, "Analiza srednjovjekovne faze palasa Nikole Iločkog," 198; Horvat, "Stambeni prostori u burgovima," 46.

¹⁷³ Željko Tomičić, "Dvor knezova iločkih, crkva Sv. Petra apostola, kula 8 i bedemi – rezultati zaštitnih arheoloških istraživanja 2007" [Ilok – Castle of the Dukes of Ilok, St Peter the Apostle Church, Tower 8 and Bulwarks. Results of Rescue Excavations in 2007], *Annales Instituti Archaeologici* 4 (2008): 10.

correspondence of the layouts suggest that during the 1440s the overriding principle for Nicholas Újlaki could have been to set up the proper prestigious castle type at Várpalota, while the architectural details may have been rather marginal for him. Prestige and power were primarily displayed by the imposing dimensions of the new castle and the characteristic layout resembling the architecture of the royal court rather than decorative details.

3.2 IMITATION OF THE ROYAL COURT?

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS SPECIAL CASTLE TYPE

During the reign of Louis I (1342-1382) and Sigismund of Luxemburg (1387-1437) several new royal residences were built in the Hungarian Kingdom with a particular ground plan arrangement characterized by a rectangular courtyard, completely surrounded by storied palace wings. A relatively high level of regularity was typical for all these castles, that is, Diósgyőr, Zvolen (Slovakia), Víglaš (Slovakia), Tata, and Bratislava (Slovakia). The special layout of Várpalota and Ilok seems to imitate these royal residences, especially those with square ground plans and corner towers.¹⁷⁴

Previous secondary literature has dealt with the problems of external or perhaps national origin of the castle form, however, the patterns and motivations of its spread from royal to aristocratic level in the kingdom has never been investigated substantially. The phenomena of conscious and purposeful imitation of the layout of these royal residences was

¹⁷⁴ Jolán Balogh, "Az Anjou-kor kérdéseiről" [On the problems of the Angevin period], *Művészettörténeti Értesítő* 30 (1981): 144-8; Imre Holl, "Négysaroktoronyos szabályos várak a középkorban" [Regular castles with four corner towers in the Middle Ages], *Archaeologia Értesítő* 111 (1984): 194-217; Ernő Marosi, "A reprezentáció kérdése a 14-15. századi magyar művészetben" [The problem of power representation in fourteenth- to fifteenth-century Hungarian art] *Történelmi Szemle* 27. no. 4 (1984): 519-21; Gergely Buzás, "Szabályos alaprajzú várpaloták mint az uralkodói hatalom jelképei a XIV-XV. században" [Regular ground-plan palaces as symbols of the rulers' power in the fourteenth through to the fifteenth century], *A Hadtörténeti Múzeum Értesítője* 4 (2001): 53-7; Gergely Buzás, Gyöngyi Kovács and Zsuzsa Miklós, "Castles, Forts and Stockades – Medieval and Ottoman Period Military Architecture," in *Hungarian Archaeology at the Turn of the Millennium*, ed. Zsolt Visy (Budapest: Ministry of National Cultural Heritage and Teleki László Foundation, 2003), 378-80; Feld, "Uralkodói és főúri reprezentációs épületek," 28-33, 40-3; István Feld, "Die regelmäÙigen "Burgschlösser" des Königreiches Ungarn im Spätmittelalter," in *Die Burg im 15. Jahrhundert*, ed. Joachim Zeune (Braubach: Deutsche Burgenvereinigung, 2011), 138-47.

analyzed in an M.A. thesis by Sabina-Lacramioara Stanila.¹⁷⁵ She argued that some late medieval castles of the Moldavian voievodes were built with a ground plan arrangement resembling Hungarian court architecture in order to display the prestige and power claims of the owners. This interpretation could be confirmed both by the political relations and the fact that the voievodes also insisted on this special layout at sites where the natural surface was fundamentally inadequate for this regular arrangement.

In the light of the historical background, similar imitation would also seem logical in the case of Nicholas Újlaki's building activity at Várpalota in the 1440s. Apparently, the baron who tried to establish territorial authority resembling a separate principality in western Hungary might have chosen to build castles by means of which he could appear to have king-like prestige or power exceeding that of other aristocrats. However, this theory is not affirmed by the context of residence architecture in this period. On the one hand, it is essential that Várpalota Castle seems to correspond to *secondary* residences of the court (perhaps except for Bratislava) and not to the capital of the Kingdom, i.e., Buda.¹⁷⁶ On the other hand, in the mid-fifteenth century this special castle form was no longer a characteristic exclusive to the royal court. Similar residences had already been erected by the most powerful aristocrats from the late fourteenth century in Nagykanizsa, Eisenstadt (Austria), Ozora and perhaps also in Ónod.¹⁷⁷ On the whole, the special arrangement and corresponding dimensions may still have been regarded as the most prestigious genre of residence architecture in the kingdom, but the extent to which these castles were perceived in the context of courtly architecture is dubious. Consequently, Várpalota Castle cannot be interpreted as a direct manifestation of Nicholas

¹⁷⁵ Sabina-Lacramioara Stanila, "Late Medieval Moldavian Castles. Functions, Images, Perceptions". M.A. Thesis in Medieval Studies, Central European University, Budapest 2003.

¹⁷⁶ Although the topography of Ilok is analogous to Buda in many respects, traces of direct imitation of the capital cannot be seen there either. See Tomičić, "Neue Erkenntnisse," 187-8; Horvat, "Analiza srednjovjekovne faze palasa Nikole Iločkog," 209.

¹⁷⁷ Buzás, "Szabályos alaprajzú várpaloták," 53; Feld, "Uralkodói és főúri reprezentációs épületek," 40-3; Gábor Tomka, "Az ónodi vár" [Ónod Castle], in *Ónod monográfiája* [The monograph of Ónod], ed. László Veres and Gyula Viga (Ónod: Ónod Önkormányzata, 2000), 170-4.

Újlaki's oligarchial ambitions – in the same way as this interpretation would be absurd for Ozora or Ónod Castle's owners.

CONCLUSION

According to the testimony of charters and narrative sources, Nicholas Újlaki was clearly a rather ambitious character in the mid-fifteenth century who expanded his power considerably in the Hungarian kingdom. Hungarian scholarship has interpreted his building activity at Várpalota that converted the former manor house to an imposing castle in the context of his presumed western Hungarian political ambitions to establish an oligarchial territorial authority. By this historical model, (formulated first by A. Kubinyi) Várpalota Castle would have been meant to be the basis or the personal residence of this western Hungarian oligarchy in the 1440s. Later, in the 1450s, these aspirations were replaced by similar efforts in southwestern Hungary, based on the local estates and the main seat of the family in Ilok (Croatia). Consequently, the significance of Várpalota was reduced and large-scale construction work began in Ilok. My present thesis aimed at contrasting this historical model with the material reality, that is, the results of archaeological and art historical investigations of the castle. Due to the historical background, the building activities at the castle also seemed an exemplary case for studying the ways and manifestations of architectural prestige representation.

Here I have been able to refine the architectural history of the fifteenth-century castle. Although some questions remain unanswered about the earlier building complex, the fundamental change in the 1440s, when the new castle was built, is clearly visible. Regarding the dating of this construction, I argue that – according to the recent historical research – the building activity probably started after 1439 and was completed by the end of 1445. Perhaps the most important result of my investigations was the identification of a later fifteenth-century building period which included the construction of the southern palace wing and as well as a storied vaulted courtyard corridor. Based on the preserved carved stone elements, I suggested that the latter was probably executed in the third quarter of the fifteenth century,

although this dating is not completely unquestionable. The recognition of this significant building period threw new light on the castle and Nicholas Újlaki's building activities, since no known historical data suggest its existence or seem to explain why it was built. In this way Várpalota Castle also serves as an example of the drawbacks of interpreting historical buildings or aristocratic architecture ignoring the standing remains or the results of archaeological research.

The thorough revision of the architectural history opened the door for examining the questions of prestige representation. By the contemporary elite residences and the similarities between Várpalota and Ilok Castle, a clear conclusion could be made that in the 1440s prestige and power were primarily displayed by the appropriate type of the new residence, the specific layout and the dimensions. According to the architectural details, one can conclude that the main direction of prestige representation was outwards; the "showing off" was chiefly achieved by the exterior of the residence.

In the light of the historical background, the question of architectural imitation was needed to be answered. The dimensions and the specific layout of Várpalota Castle resembled the late fourteenth- and early fifteenth-century architecture of the royal court. A comparative approach verified that despite of this apparent correspondence, Nicholas Újlaki's building activity cannot be considered as a direct manifestation of his oligarchial ambitions. However, the special castle type executed at Várpalota could have been regarded as a highly prestigious piece of contemporary secular architecture of the elite.

During the later construction work in the third quarter of the century, distinctly different characteristics were created. The outward appearance of the castle did not change significantly, nor did its ground plan arrangement. The new southern palace wing nicely fit into the layout concept of the former period. However, the elaborate courtyard corridor and some further carvings reflect high demands concerning minor architectural details and stone-

mason work. Features of prestige representation were primarily shown to guests and the inhabitants inside the residence. In a period when Várpalota presumably had already lost its outstanding significance, this spectacular building activity can also be interpreted as a means of power display. Although large-scale construction work was concurrently executed at Ilok, Nicholas Újlaki could afford seemingly purposeless building activities in further castles as well.

Naturally, the phenomena identified at Várpalota Castle also raise general questions of aristocratic architecture and prestige representation. Further research could investigate the extent to which the elaborate decoration of architectural details was a common requirement in the mid-fifteenth and in the second half of fifteenth century. Whether there was a change in its significance during the fifteenth century or whether the case of Várpalota Castle is rather unique could also be examined. Similarly, further case studies on the building activity of wealthy barons could improve the understanding of the question of concurrent castle reconstructions and castle enlargements by the same owner. Such studies could define more precisely the social level this phenomena was characteristic of besides the royal court.

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Abbreviations:

Forster Photo Archive	Photography Archive of Forster Gyula Nemzeti Örökséggazdálkodási és Szolgáltatási Központ, Budapest.
Forster Data Archive	Data Archive of Forster Gyula Nemzeti Örökséggazdálkodási és Szolgáltatási Központ, Budapest.
LDM Data Archive	Data Archive of the Dezső Laczkó Museum, Veszprém.
MRT 2	István Éri, Márta Kelemen, Péter Németh and István Torma, “A veszprémi járás” [The Veszprém district] Magyarország Régészeti Topográfiája 2. Veszprém megye régészeti topográfiája [Archaeological sites of Hungary 2: Archaeological sites in Veszprém county]. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1969.
Sándyné	Reconstruction plans of the “Újlaki-loggia”. (Kept in Forster Data Archive.)
Sándyné – Kisfaludy	Reconstruction plans of the western wing. (Kept in Forster Data Archive.)

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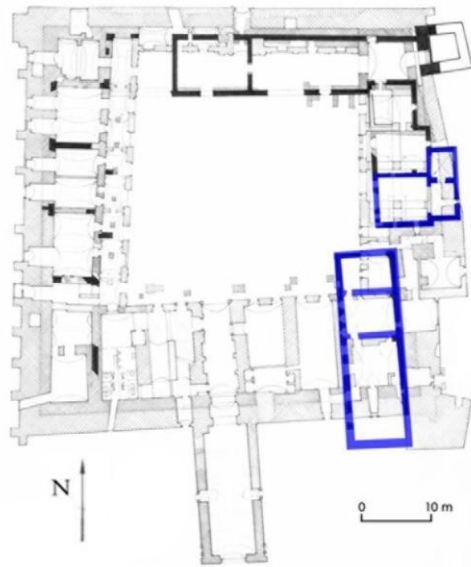
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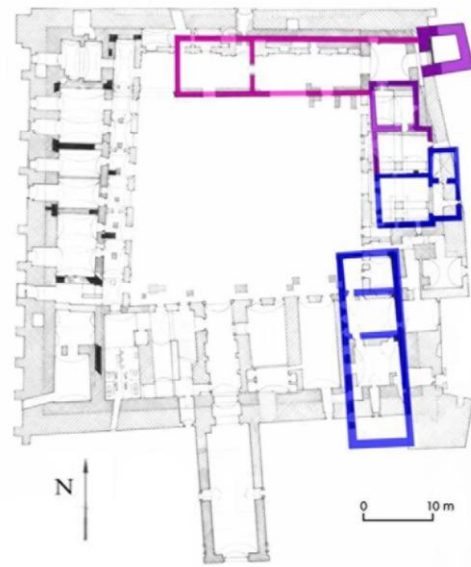
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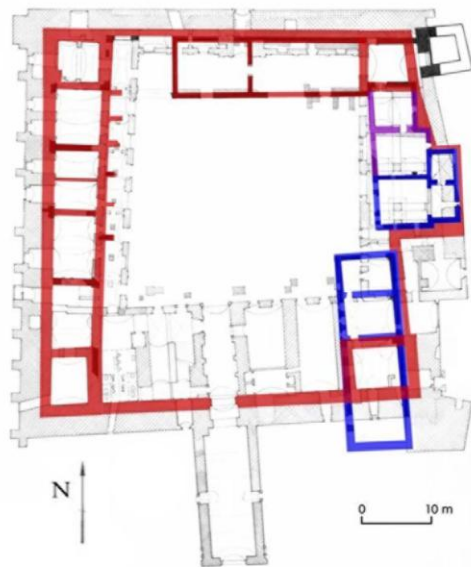
ILLUSTRATIONS



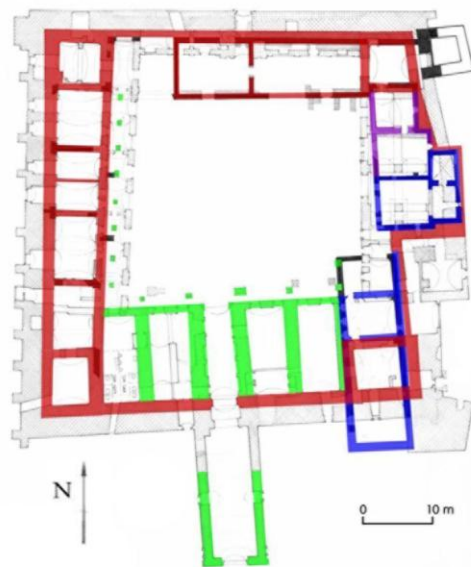
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2



3

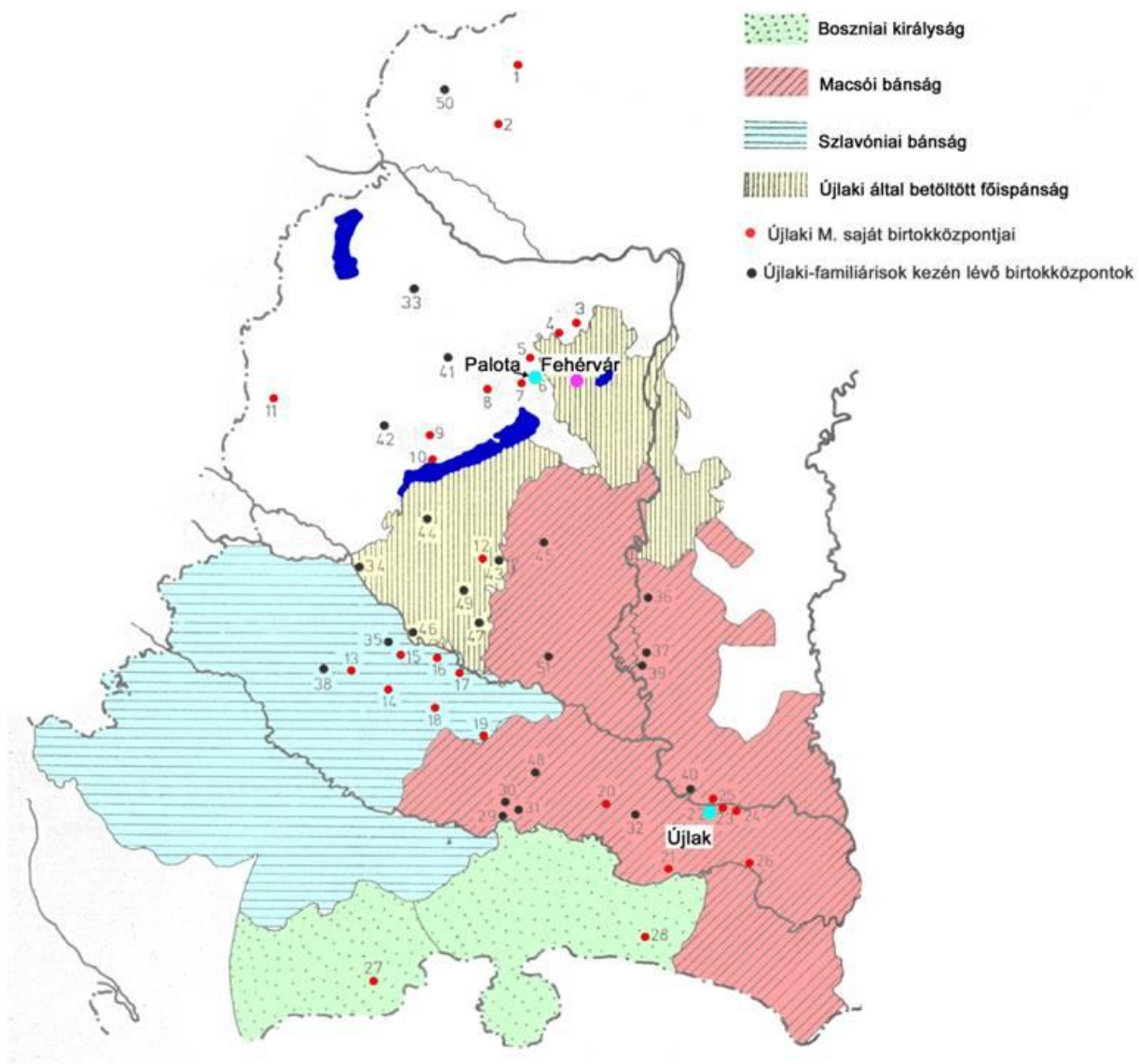


4

1

Presumed architectural history of the castle

1: Second half of the fourteenth century. 2: The turn of the fourteenth- and the first half of the fifteenth century. 3: 1439-1445. 4: Third quarter of the fifteenth century



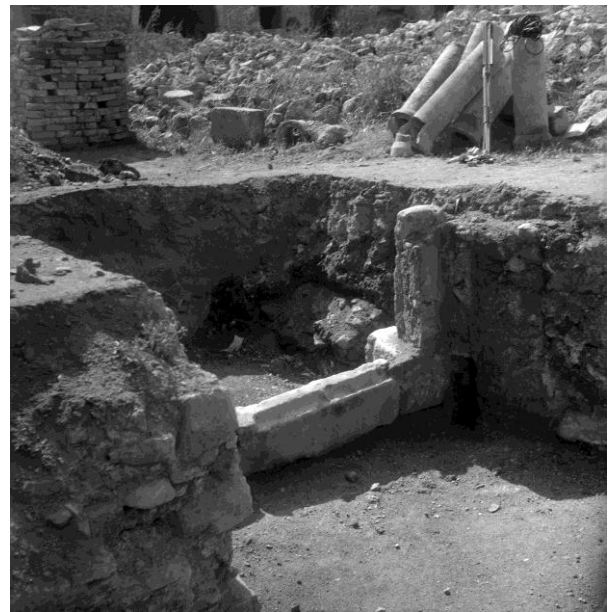
2

Nicholas Újlaki's sphere of interest in the second half of the fifteenth century
After Kubinyi, "A kaposújvári uradalom," 14 (map 3).



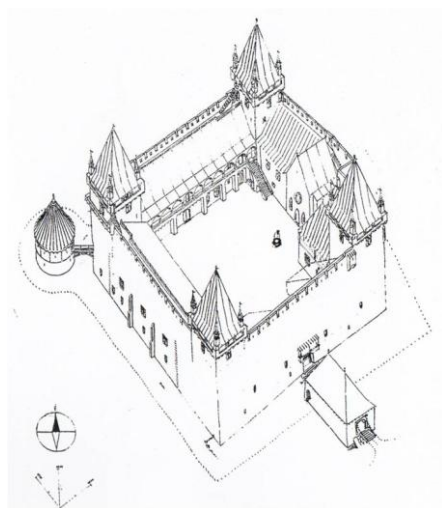
3

The impression of the story vaulting of the northern palace wing on the northeastern tower



4-5

Door frame consisting secondarily reused carvings at the southern entrance of the northern palace wing



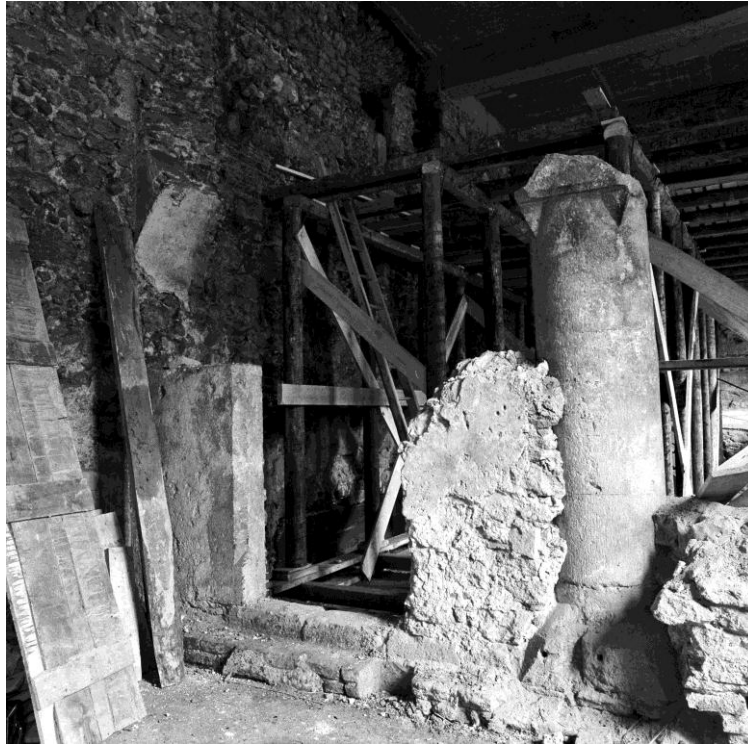
6

The castle in mid-fifteenth century, according to D. Várnai Várnai, “Várpalota várának építési korszakai,” 149 (fig 152)



7

In situ door frame on the western facade of the southeastern tower



8

The walled of column of the great hall of the western palace wing,



9

The column and the corbel



10

The column, the partition wall and its door frame after the modern reconstruction



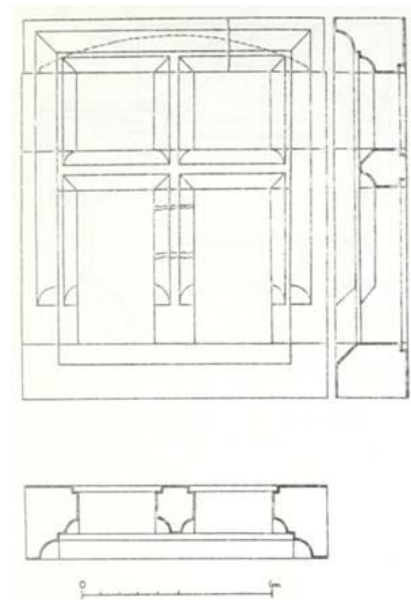
11-12

The capital of the column;
the mullioned window of the southwestern tower



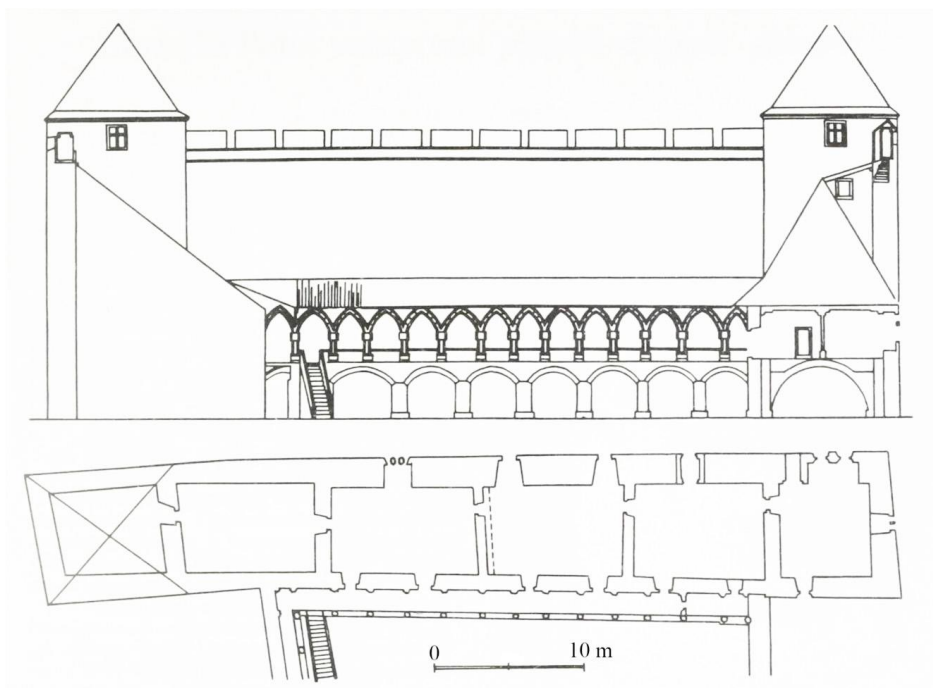
13

Reconstructed door frame in the western palace wing



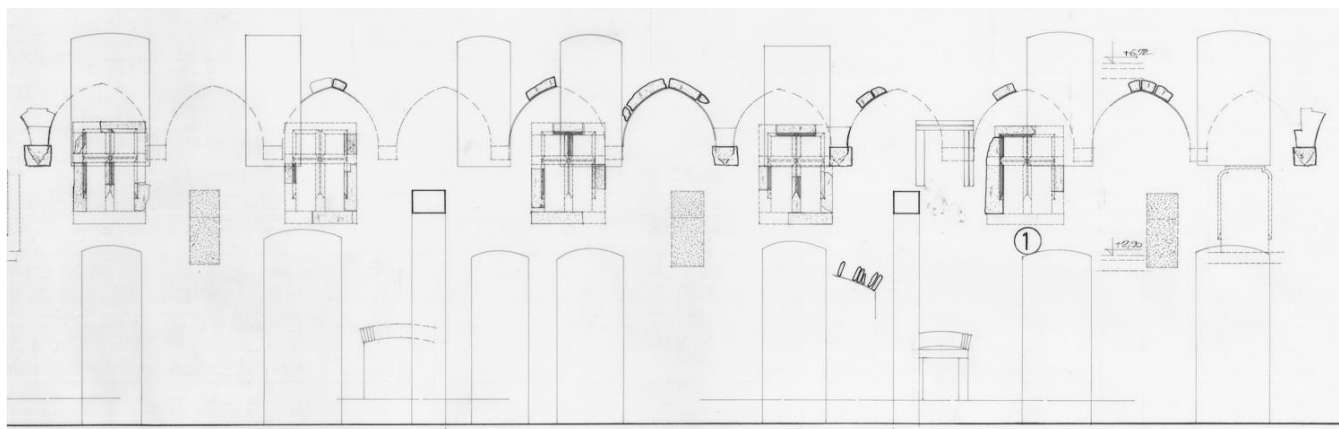
14

Mullioned window on the exterior facade of the western wing
After Gergelyffy, "Várpalota III."



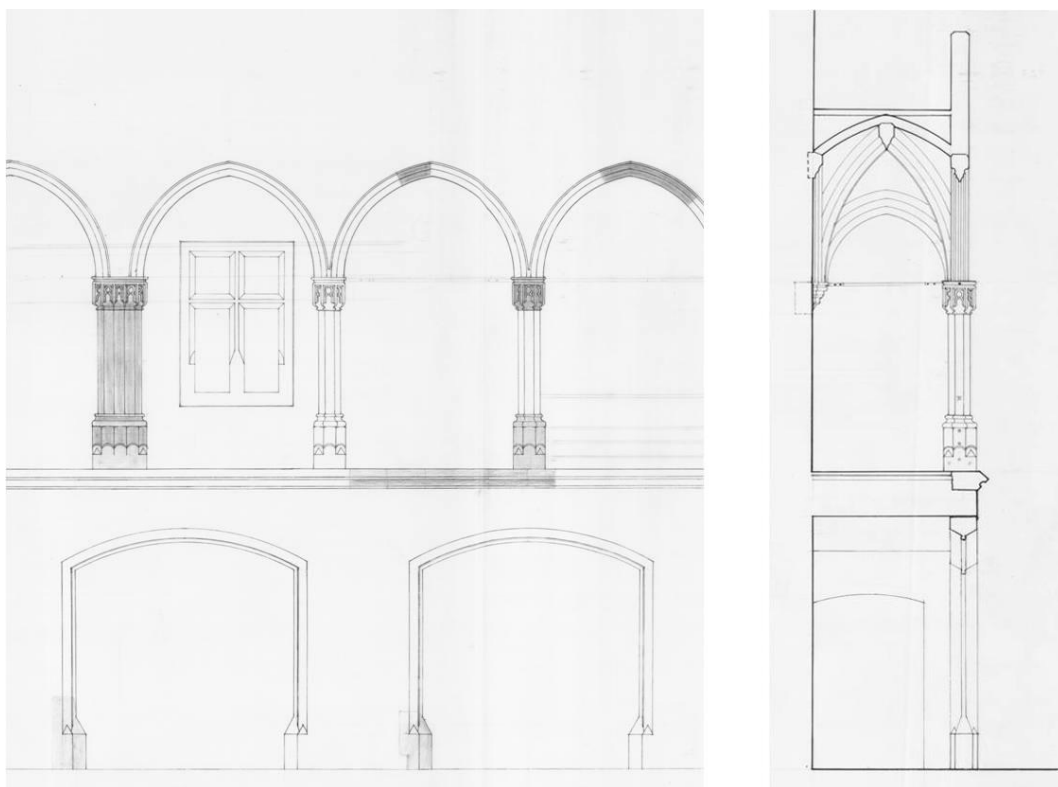
15

Reconstruction of the western wing and the courtyard corridor, according to D. Várnai Gergelyffy, "Várpalota III," 111 (fig. 18).



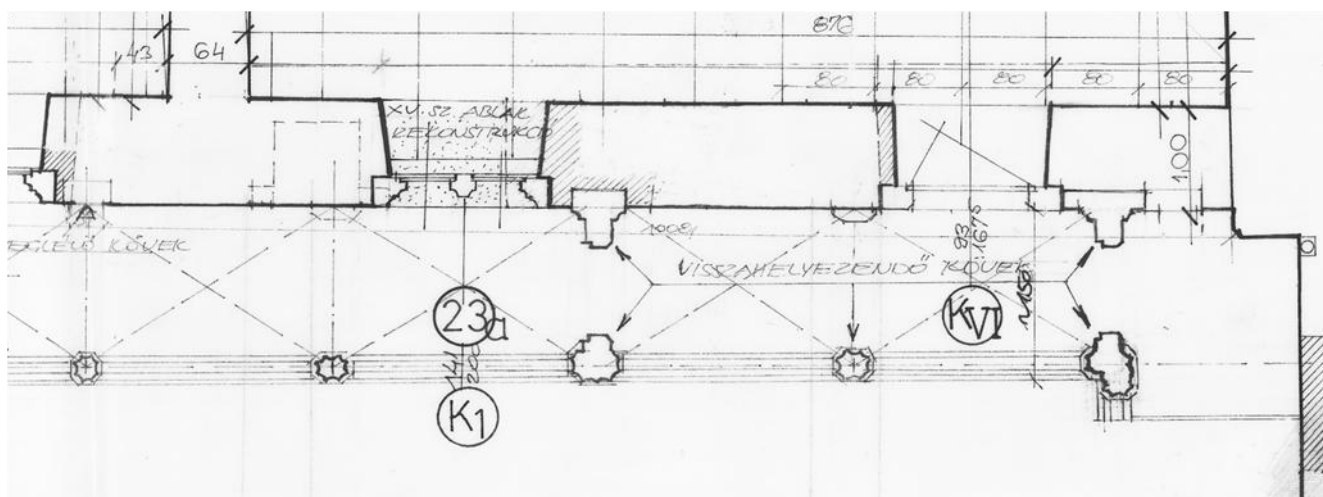
16

In situ remains of the vaulting of the corridor on the courtyard facade of the western wing
Reconstruction plans of the "Újlaki-loggia"



17

The reconstruction of the courtyard corridor, according to P. Sándy
Reconstruction plans of the “Újlaki-loggia”



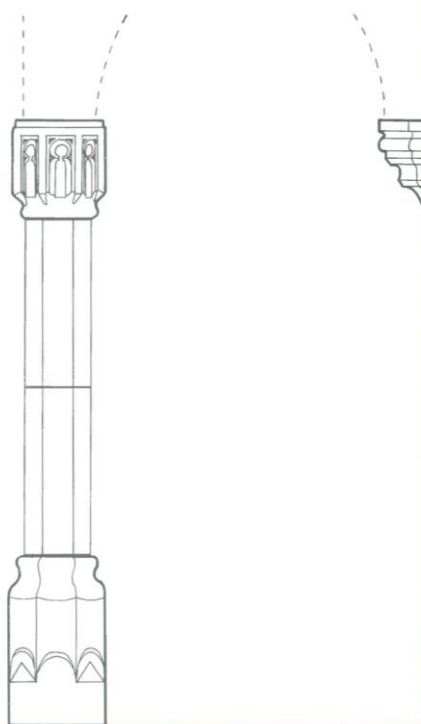
18

The reconstruction of the story corridor, according to P. Sándy
Reconstruction plans of the “Újlaki-loggia”



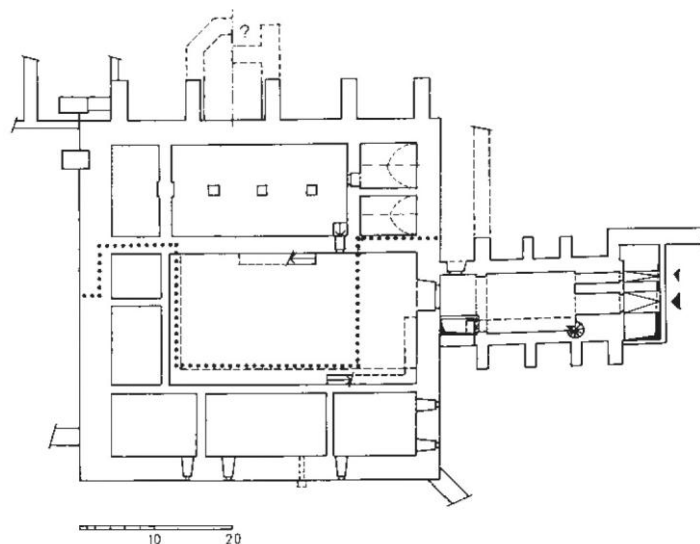
19

Selection from the carved stones of the courtyard corridor



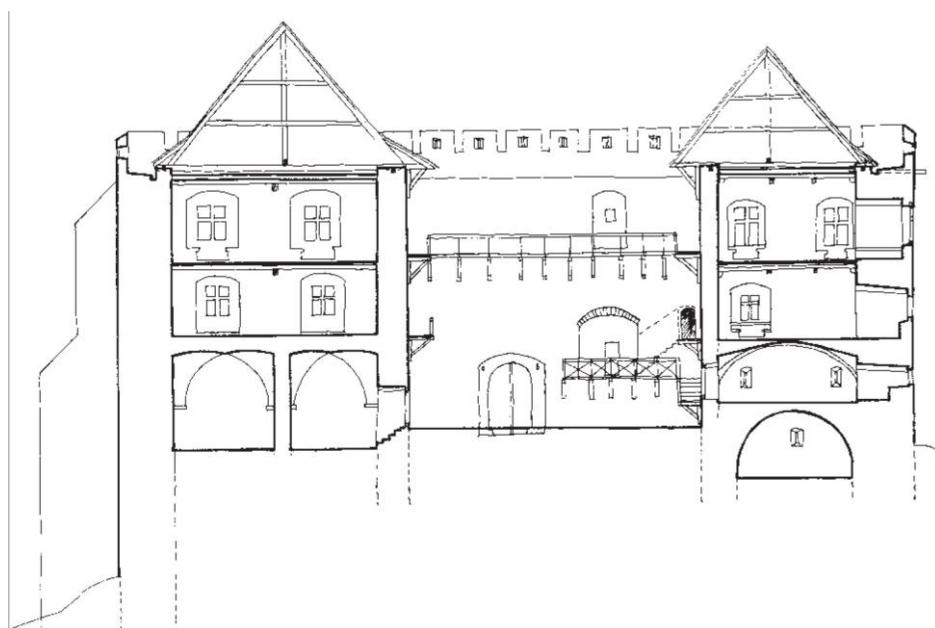
20

Reconstruction of the story of the courtyard corridor



21

Ground plan of Ilok Castle
Zorislav. "Stambeni prostori u burgovima," 44.



22

Section of Ilok Castle (reconstruction)
Zorislav. "Stambeni prostori u burgovima," 46.

CATALOGUE OF THE CARVED STONE MATERIAL

Legend

Catalogue number

- A Identification
- B Dating
- C Dimensions (height×width×thickness)
- D Provenience (if known)
- E Sources about the provenience
- F Inventory number of archival photos
- G Author of the drawing
- H Inventory numbers or other modern codes on the surface of the carving
- I Special observations (traces of plaster, painting, burning, etc.)

- - - - - Invisible existing or reconstructed details

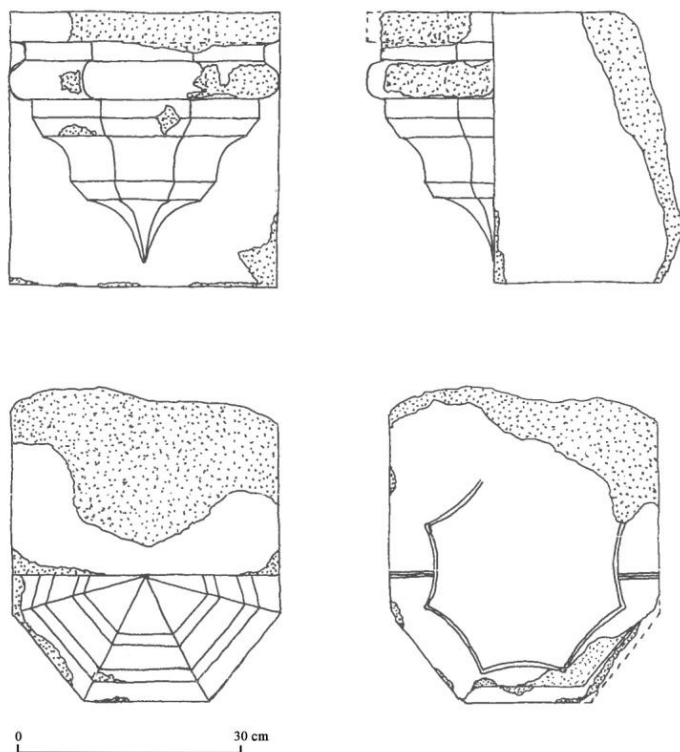


Damaged surface



Roughly carved surface

- 1
A Corbel
B Third quarter of the fifteenth century
C 36,5×36×42 cm.
D Found secondarily built into one of the walls of the castle.
E Reconstruction plans of the “Újlaki-loggia”, Forster Data Archive. Inventory number 16.008 (photos 12.b and 13.b).
F Reconstruction plans of the “Újlaki-loggia”, Forster Data Archive. Inventory number 16.008 (photos 12.b and 13.b).
G Szabolcs Balázs Nagy
H MVM 15
I Chiselled grooved octagonal on the top surface



2

A Corbel

B Third quarter of the fifteenth century

C 30,5×39×44 cm.

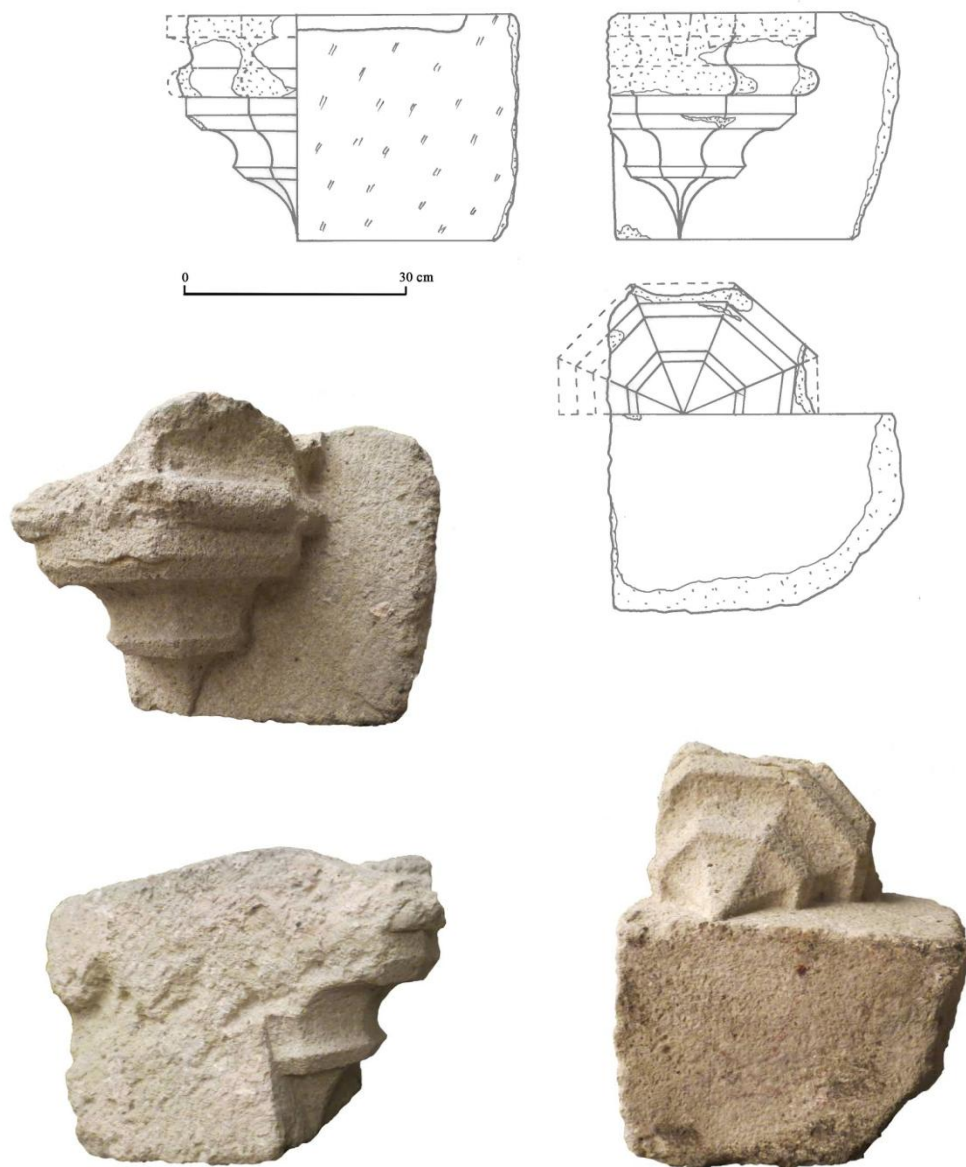
D Found secondarily built into a walled-up window, probably of the western palace wing

E Reconstruction plans of the “Újlaki-loggia”, Forster Data Archive. Inventory number 16.008 (photo 11.a).

F Reconstruction plans of the “Újlaki-loggia”, Forster Data Archive. Inventory number 16.008 (photos 11.a).

G Szabolcs Balázs Nagy

I The lower part of the carving’s side surface is secondarily chiselled.



3

A Pillar capital

B Third quarter of the fifteenth century

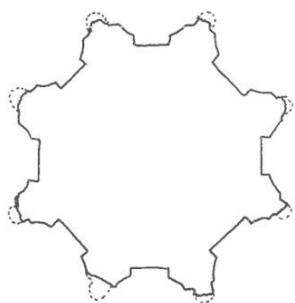
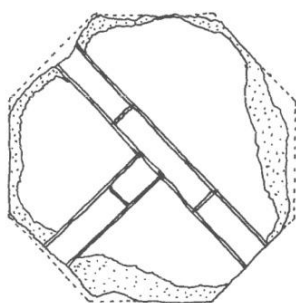
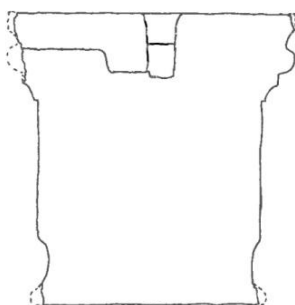
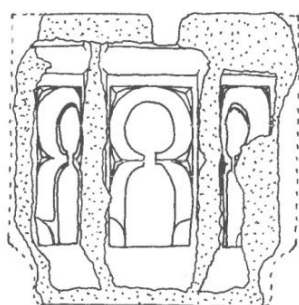
C 36,5×36,5×36,5 cm.

F Reconstruction plans of the “Újlaki-loggia”, Forster Data Archive. Inventory number 16.008 (photos 12.a, 14); Forster Photo Archive 083.063.c. ND.

G Szabolcs Balázs Nagy

H MVM 22

I Spots of white plaster



0 30 cm



4

A Pillar capital

B Third quarter of the fifteenth century

C 37×36×36 cm.

D Found in 1961 or earlier

E See I. Éri's excavation records from 1961 (kept in the Forster Data Archive) about the modern identity codes

F Reconstruction plans of the "Újlaki-loggia", Forster Data Archive. Inventory number 16.008 (photo 12.a); Forster Photo Archive 083.063.b. ND.

H MVM 6, N.15...

I Spots of white plaster



5

A Pillar capital

B Third quarter of the fifteenth century

C (35)×(30,5)×(32,5) cm.

D Found secondarily built into the walls of the first floor of the castle

E See I. Éri's excavation records from 1961 (kept in the Forster Data Archive) about the modern identity codes

F Forster Photo Archive 083.056.c. ND.

H B.3

I Spots of white plaster



6

- A Pillar capital (belonging to the door frame inserted in the corridor)
- B Third quarter of the fifteenth century
- C 37,5×(54)×(32) cm.
- D Found secondarily built into the baroque stairway of the southern palace wing
- E Forster Photo Archive 079.801. ND
- F Forster Photo Archive 079.801. ND
- H MVM 17
- I Spots of white and pale foxy layers of plaster



7

A Pillar base

B Third quarter of the fifteenth century

C (36,5)×36×(29) cm.

D Probably found secondarily built into the walls of the ground floor of the castle.

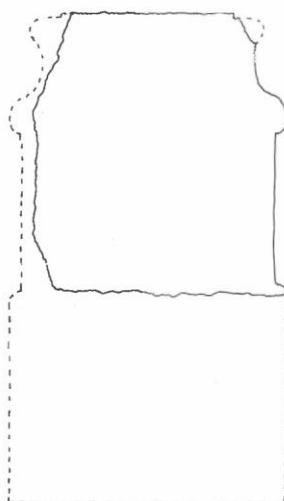
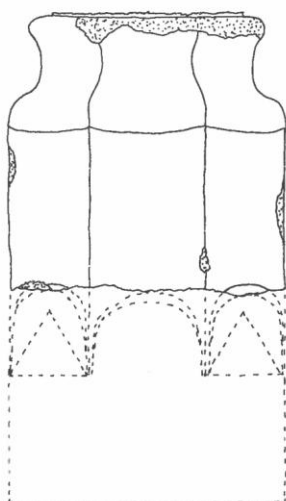
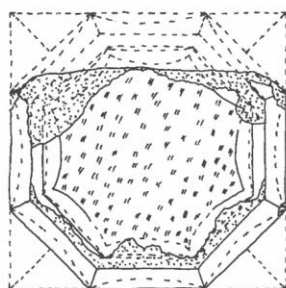
E See I. Éri's excavation records from 1961 (kept in the Forster Data Archive) about the modern identity codes.

F Forster Photo Archive 083.071.b. ND

G Szabolcs Balázs Nagy

H MVM 29, A.I.161

I Spots of white. Raised grooved octagonal detail on the top surface.



0 30 cm



8

A Pillar base

B Third quarter of the fifteenth century

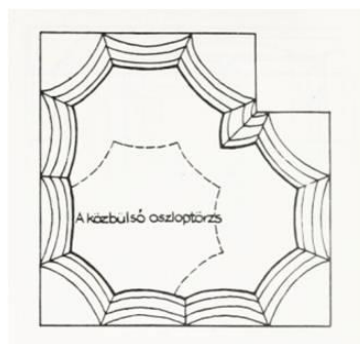
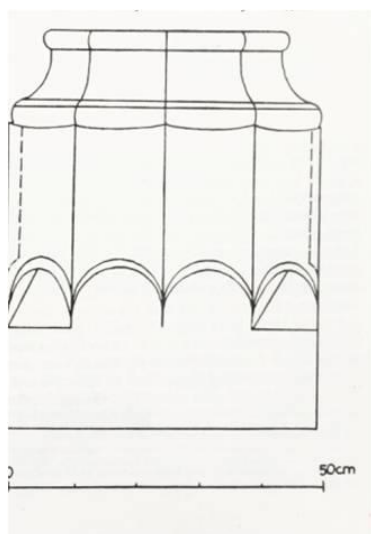
C 62,5×47×47 cm.

F Reconstruction plans of the “Újlaki-loggia”, Forster Data Archive. Inventory number 16.008 (photos 12.a, 15); Forster Photo Archive 083.043.a, 083.043.b. ND.

G Gergelyffy, András. “A várpalotai vár építési korszakai III” [Building periods of Várpalota Castle III.] *Veszprém Megyei Múzeumok Közleményei* 13 (1978): 110 (fig. 17).

H MVM 16, 66.83.1

I Spots of white and pale foxy layers of plaster



9

A Pillar base

B Third quarter of the fifteenth century

C 64×48×50 cm.

D Probably found secondarily built into the nineteenth-century stable attached to the northern castle wall.

E See LDM Data Archive, document with inventory number 13392.

H MVM 23

I Spots of white plaster and two tiny spots of red paint



10

A Pillar base

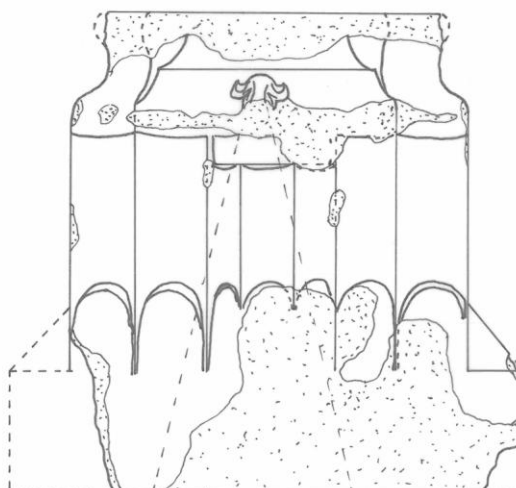
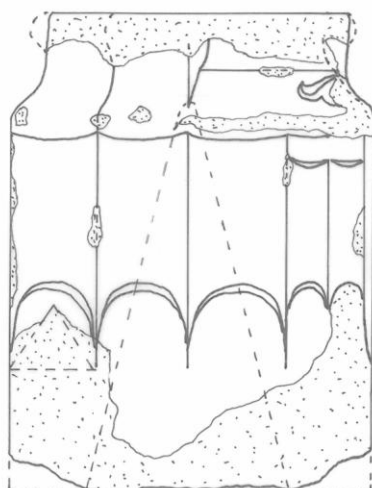
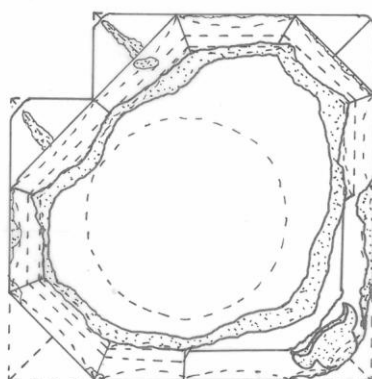
B Third quarter of the fifteenth century

C 63×48×48 cm.

F Reconstruction plans of the “Újlaki-loggia”, Forster Data Archive. Inventory number 16.008 (photos 12.a, 14).

G Szabolcs Balázs Nagy

H MVM 20, 68.83.1

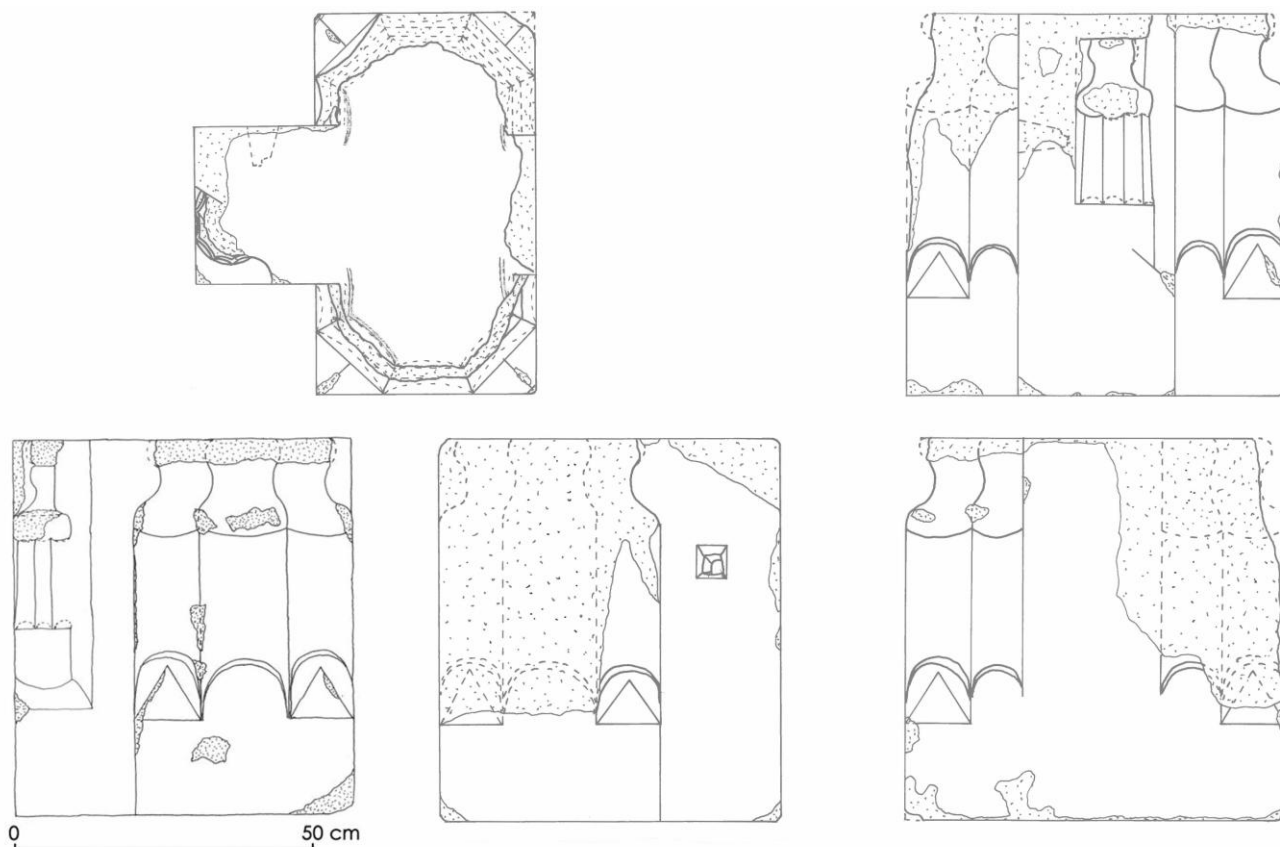


0 30 cm



11

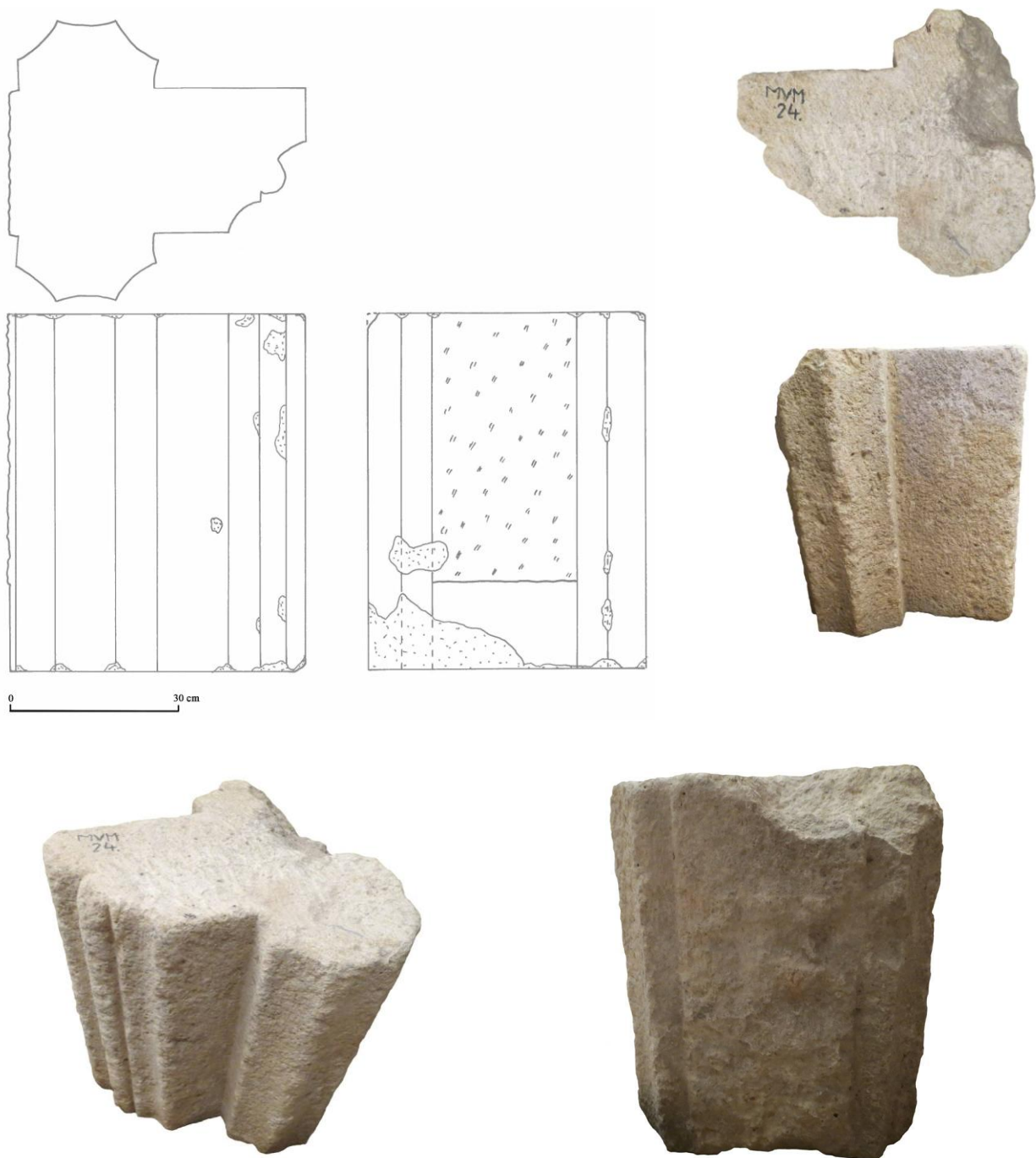
- A Base element of the door frame inserted in the corridor
- B Third quarter of the fifteenth century
- C 63×56,5×63 cm.
- F Reconstruction plans of the “Újlaki-loggia”, Forster Data Archive. Inventory number 16.008 (photos 12.b, 13.b, 16).
- G Szabolcs Balázs Nagy
- H MVM 19
- I Details of chiselled grooved octagonals





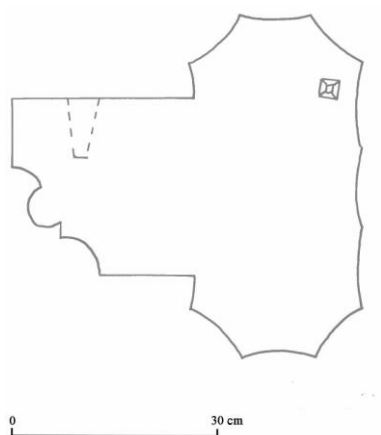
12

- A Element of the door frame inserted in the corridor
- B Third quarter of the fifteenth century
- C 63×49,5× 52,5 cm.
- D Found secondarily built into the baroque stairway of the southern palace wing.
- E Forster Photo Archive 079.801. ND
- F Forster Photo Archive 082.907. ND
- G Szabolcs Balázs Nagy
- H MVM 24
- I Spots of white and pale foxy layers of plaster



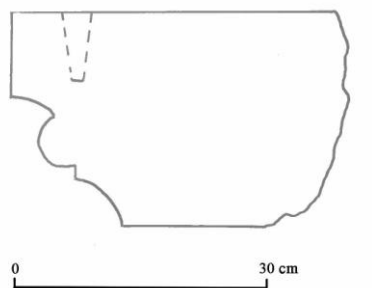
13

- A Element of the door frame inserted in the corridor
- B Third quarter of the fifteenth century
- C 63×49,5× 50,5 cm.
- D Found secondarily built into the baroque stairway of the southern palace wing.
- E Forster Photo Archive 082.907. ND
- F Reconstruction plans of the “Újlaki-loggia”, Forster Data Archive. Inventory number 16.008 (photos 13.b, 16);.Forster Photo Archive 082.907. ND.
- G Szabolcs Balázs Nagy
- H MVM 18
- I Spots of white plaster and a tiny, unsure spot of red paint



14

- A Element of the door frame inserted in the corridor
- B Third quarter of the fifteenth century
- C 63,5×40× 25 cm.
- D Found secondarily built into the baroque stairway of the southern palace wing.
- E Forster Photo Archive 082.907. ND
- F Reconstruction plans of the “Újlaki-loggia”, Forster Data Archive. Inventory number 16.008 (photos 13.b, 16, 17);.Forster Photo Archive 082.907. ND.
- G Szabolcs Balázs Nagy



15

A Base element of a stairway railing(?)

B Fifteenth century

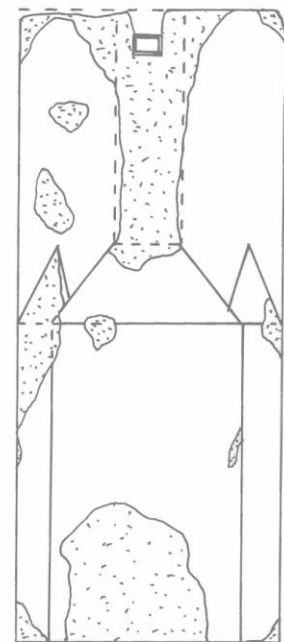
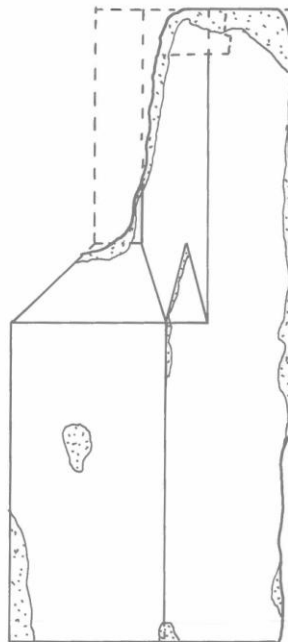
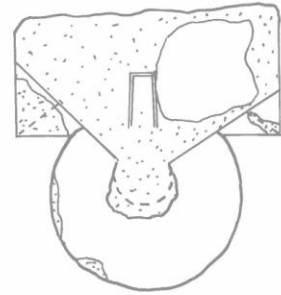
C 75,5×31,5× 34 cm.

D Found secondarily built into the baroque stairway of the eastern palace wing.

E Forster Data Archive, "Várpalota – Kőleltára"

G Szabolcs Balázs Nagy

H 206



0 30 cm

16

A Base element of a stairway railing(?)

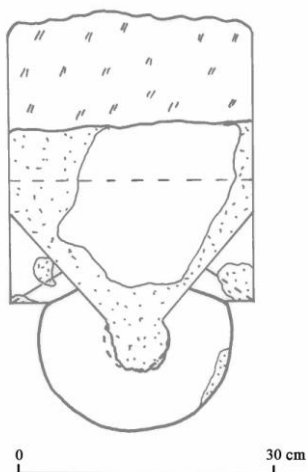
B Fifteenth century

C 84,5×28,5× 49 cm.

F Reconstruction plans of the “Újlaki-loggia”, Forster Data Archive. Inventory number 16.008 (photos 13.a, 18)

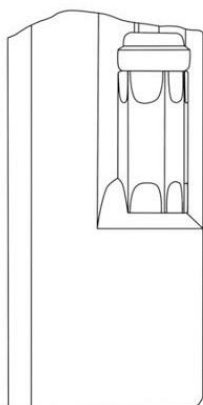
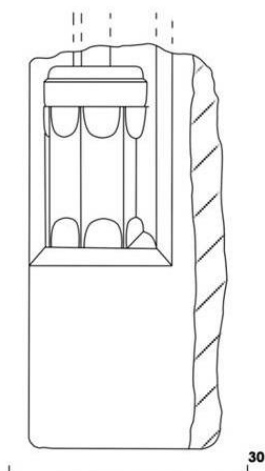
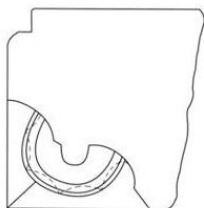
G Szabolcs Balázs Nagy

H MVM 25



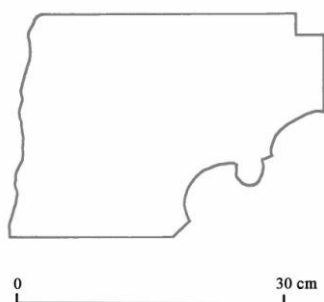
17

- A Base element of a window frame
- B Fifteenth century
- C (51)×24,5× 25 cm.
- D Found secondarily built into the first floor of the southern gate house
- E Forster Photo Archive 082.798.a. ND
- F Forster Photo Archive 082.798.a. ND
- G Szabolcs Balázs Nagy
- I Traces of heavy burning



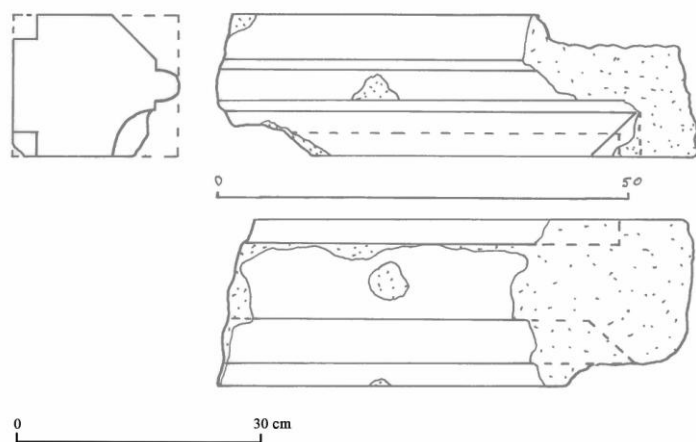
18

- A Element of a window frame
- B Fifteenth century
- C 49×35× 25 cm.
- D Found secondarily built into the first floor of the southern gate house
- E Forster Photo Archive 082.800. ND, 67.242
- F Forster Photo Archive 082.800. ND, 67.242
- G Mónika Lucza(?)
- H MVM 21



19

- A Mullion fragment of a window frame
B Fifteenth century
C 17,5×53,5× 20,5 cm.
G Szabolcs Balázs Nagy
I Traces of heavy burning



20

- A Base element of a door frame
- B Fifteenth century
- C 89×52,5× 59,5 cm.
- D Found secondarily built into the walls of the southern barbican.
- E Forster Data Archive, tracing-paper documents' collection
- G Dezső Várnai(?), Szabolcs Balázs Nagy

