

Ilona Ferenczi

Poetry of Politics:

Queen Mary of Hungary in Lorenzo Monaci's *Carmen* (1387)

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Queen Mary of Hungary in Lorenzo Monaci's *Carmen* (1387)

By
Ilona Ferenczi
(Romania)

Thesis submitted to the Department of Medieval Studies,
Central European University, Budapest, in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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Accepted in conformance with the standards of the CEU

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I, the undersigned, **Ilona Ferenczi**, 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

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Ilona Ferenczi (Romania)

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L'Orientale

The *Carmen seu historia Carolo II cognomento Parvo Rege Hungariae* is a contemporary account about the political troubles under the reign of Queen Mary (1382-1395), the only queen who ever ruled Hungary in the Middle Ages. It is a 560-line Latin hexametric epic, written in 1388 by the Venetian poet, notary and chronicler, Lorenzo Monaci, who fulfilled diplomatic missions in Hungary on multiple occasions.

Both the poem and the dedicatory letter prefacing it have been extensively used by scholars as historical sources; no one, however, has ever analyzed it as a literary product. This thesis deals with Monaci's *Carmen* as a literary construction. As such, the image it conveys about Queen Mary as well as about late fourteenth-century Hungarian events needs to be contextualized and can be only be accepted with caution.

I explored three different contexts for a better reading of the poem: Lorenzo Monaci's Venetian bias; Hungarian-Venetian diplomatic and political relations; and the problems of female rule in Angevin Hungary. I deconstructed the contrastive images of Queen Mary and her rival, Charles of Durazzo and their different interpretations in the *Carmen*, an outstanding *Gesamtkunstwerk* of medieval historical literature.

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I. Introduction

This is the story of the first account about Queen Mary, the only queen who ever ruled medieval Hungary. It was told in hexametric epic by a secretary of the Venetian Republic,¹ Lorenzo Monaci in 1388, and it has survived to our days. Later chronicles took over the story and rewrote it, appropriating it to the purposes of their own age. Historians from the nineteenth century onwards examined Monaci's poem as a source *par excellence*, analyzed its affirmations and passed it on to schoolbooks to be read and learned by generations to come. The bare story, as we know it from Monaci, goes as follows:

In a time of wars and conflicting interests between the Italian cities on the peninsula, a time when Venice itself had been invaded by barbarous troops and humiliated into a disadvantageous peace treaty by the Hungarian king, a poet sings the sad fate of the two Hungarian queens.² The Kingdom of Hungary, a country freshly brought to a more developed state by its last king, Louis the Great, had to cope with the death of the king and the lack of a male heir. Louis managed to have his eldest, but still underage daughter, Mary, elected and crowned while her mother, Elizabeth, acted as regent. The favouritism of the elder queen shown towards the Palatine, Miklós Garai, and his league, however, turned public opinion against female rule and the country was riven by internal fights.

¹ Pál Engel, *The Realm of St. Stephen* (London: IB Tauris Publishers, 2001), 214 (hereafter: Engel, *The Realm*).

² Monaci begins the storytelling in Virgilean style:

Nam Reginarum Hungariae miserabile fatum

Cum lacrymis cantare paro; iuvat altius istud

Ordire, et longis animum satiare querelis. ("Laurentii de Monacis Veneti carmen seu historia Carolo II cognomento Parvo Rege Hungariae" (hereafter: Monaci, *Carmen*) or "Pia Descriptio miserabilis casus illustrium reginarum Hungariae," *Analecta Monumentorum Historicorum Literariorum*, Vol. 1, ed. Franciscus Toldy (Pest: Acad. Hung. Typographus, 1862) (hereafter: Toldy, *Analecta*), 27-29.

Charles of Durazzo, king of Naples, relative of Louis the Great of Hungary, greatly desired the Hungarian throne. Invited by a group of Hungarian barons opposing the queens' rule, Charles set sail to Hungary and assumed first the governance of the country, and then later seized the crown. He managed to overthrow the queens and have himself crowned. The queens, however, did not accept their fate. The regent, Queen Elizabeth and the palatine, Miklós Garai, concocted a murderous plot against Charles. They employed Balázs Forgács, who in a well-prepared moment wounded the king. Charles was transported to Visegrád castle where he was strangled and because he was under papal interdiction was left unburied. Charles stood as a negative example for all successive pretenders for centuries to come.

Lorenzo Monaci's *Carmen seu historia Carolo II cognomento Parvo Rege Hungariae*³ is a 560-line hexametric poem written in Latin.⁴ Monaci was the notary accompanying the Venetian ambassador, Pantaleone Barbo, on his mission to Hungary in 1386 to negotiate an alliance with the Hungarian queens. By the time Barbo arrived, the queens had been taken prisoner by a rebellious group of barons. Monaci was sent home to secure naval help from the Signoria for their rescue. Mission completed, Monaci claims to have personally met the young queen in 1387, who, in his testimony, commissioned him to write a history of Hungary, including the role of Venice in the Hungarian events. Instead of an account, Monaci wrote a poem;

³ The only surviving manuscript of the poem can be found under Vat. Lat. 11507 in Rome (Poppi, "Ricerche sulla vita e cultura del notaio e cronista veneziano Lorenzo de Monacis, cancelliere cretese, *"Studi veneziani"* 9 (1967): 170 (hereafter: Poppi, "Ricerche"). It was first published as "Laurentii de Monacis Veneti carmen seu historia Carolo II cognomento Parvo Rege Hungariae" in *Laurentii de Monacis Veneti carmen seu historia Carolo II cognomento Parvo Rege Hungariae*, ed. Flaminio Cornelius (Venice, 1758), 321-338; included in Toldy, *Analecta*, 112-132 and translated by Sándor Márki, "Monaci Lőrinc krónikája Kis Károlyról," (Lorenzo Monaci's chronicle about Charles the Little) *Középkori krónikások*, ed. Gombos Ferenc (Budapest: Albin, 1910) vol. 10, 131-153.

⁴ "Composto nella redazione definitiva verso il 1388, il carmen narra i fatti d'Ungheria, dalla chiamata a Buda di Carlo II al suo ferimento a morte a causa di una congiura," Poppi, "Ricerche," 169-170.

instead of summarizing the recent history of Hungary, the poet deals only with a short period, from 1382 to 1386, described above.

Our first-hand information about Queen Mary of Hungary is paradoxically a poem about King Charles of Durazzo. This is already highly idiosyncratic. Moreover, it was apparently Mary who commissioned Lorenzo Monaci to write it. Still, not everything is clear about this poem. Accordingly, the goal of this thesis is to answer the following questions: Is the *Carmen* history or literature? Who was Lorenzo Monaci, the author? Why would a Venetian public figure undertake the praise of a Hungarian ruler? What were the times like when they lived? What is the image the poet constructs about the queen and the rival king, and what factors explain these constructs?

Monaci's version of the events was taken over by later chronicles, such as the one written by Johannes Thuróczy,⁵ and the Renaissance Antonio Bonfini,⁶ chronicler of Matthias Corvinus (r.1458-1490), to mention only the two most prominent. The nineteenth century saw the publication of the only biography of Queen Mary by Márki Sándor,⁷ still relying heavily on Monaci as a historical source, and reconstructing the image of Mary and the events in a positivistic manner. Many historians followed on the Venetian's footsteps in the twentieth and twenty-first century, confirming or refuting his account and reconstructing the political events of the queens' rule. Among the most prolific scholars dealing with the period of the

⁵ Thuróczy's chronicle appeared in print in 1488 and contained the first Hungarian account about the period of the queens, rewriting Monaci in prose. Cf. *Chronicle of the Hungarians*. Tr. Frank Mantello, Foreword and Commentary by Pál Engel (Bloomington: Indiana University Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies, 1991) and Elemér Mályusz, *A Thuróczy-krónika és forrásai* (The Thuróczy Chronicle and its sources) (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1967).

⁶ Antonio Bonfini, *A magyar történelem tizedei* (The decades of Hungarian history) (Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, 1995).

⁷ Sándor Márki, *Mária Magyarország királynéja 1370-1395* (Mary, Queen of Hungary 1370-1395) (Budapest, 1885) (hereafter: Márki, *Mária*).

Angevins and medieval chronicles were: János Bak,⁸ the works of whom made important contributions to queenship and kingship studies, Iván Bertényi,⁹ Pál Engel,¹⁰ Erik Fügedi,¹¹ Bálint Hóman,¹² Gyula Kristó,¹³ Antal Pór,¹⁴ and Gusztáv Wenczel¹⁵ were historians dealing, among the many historians dealing with the rule of the Angevins in Hungary, the internal political situation after the death of Louis I, and the problems generated around the rule of Queen Mary. Finally, the year 2003 saw the publication of Szilárd Süttő's two-volume book, a comprehensive overview of the end of the Angevin rule with the restructuring of all the charters pertaining to the period.¹⁶

What nobody asked in connection with Queen Mary was the relationship between the image that was constructed of her, starting from her first assessment in the work of Monaci and the different contexts which influenced this construct, as well as whether a literary source with a clear polemical purpose can be considered history.

⁸ János M. Bak. *Königtum und Stände in Ungarn im 14-16. Jahrhundert* (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1973); "Queens as Scapegoats in Medieval Hungary" in *Queens and Queenship in Medieval Europe*, ed. Anne J. Duggan (Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK: The Boydell Press, 1997), 222- 233 (hereafter: Bak, "Queens as Scapegoats"); "Roles and Functions of Queens in Árpadian and Angevin Hungary" in *Medieval Queenship*, ed. John Carmi Parsons (Sutton Publishing, 1993), 13-23 (hereafter: Bak, "Roles and Functions")

⁹ Iván Bertényi, *Magyarország az Anjouk korában* (Hungary in the time of the Angevins) (Budapest: Gondolat 1987).

¹⁰ Pál Engel, "Foreword and Commentary" in János Thuróczy, *Chronicle of the Hungarians; The Realm*.

¹¹ Erik Fügedi. *Könyörülj, bánom, könyörülj* (Have mercy, my Baron, have mercy) (Helikon kiadó, 1986) (hereafter: Fügedi, *Könyörülj*).

¹² Bálint Hóman, *Gli Angioni di Napoli in Ungheria*, 1290-1403 (Rome: Reale Accademia d'Italia, 1938) (hereafter: *Gli Angioni*); *Magyar történet II* (Hungarian history II) (Budapest, 1936).

¹³ Gyula Kristó, *Középkori krónikák oklevelekben* (1002-1410) (Hungarian chronicles in charters) (Szeged: Szegedi Középkorász Műhely, 2000); Gyula Kristó, *Az Anjou-kor háborúi* (The wars of the Angevin period) (Budapest: Zrínyi, 1988).

¹⁴ Antal Pór and Gyula Schönherr "Az Anjou ház örökösei (1301-1439)" (The heirs of the Angevin House) in Sándor Szilágyi, *A magyar nemzet története*, vol. 5 (The history of the Hungarian nation) (Budapest: Athenaeum Irodalmi és Nyomdai Részvénytársulat); "Kis Károly és Erzsébet utolsó éveit" (Charles the Little and the last years of Elizabeth) in *Századok* 30 (1869), 129-147.

¹⁵ Gusztáv Wenczel, "I. Mária királynénknak Lajos orléansi herczeggel per procura véghez ment házasságáról" (About the *per procura* marriage between our Queen Mary I and Louis Duke of Orléans) *Magyar Académiai Értesítő* 1851-ről (1851): 119-120 (hereafter: Wenczel, *I Mária királynénknak*) 119-120.

¹⁶ Süttő, Szilárd, *Anjou Magyarország alkonya* (The Dusk of Angevin Hungary) (Szeged: Belvedere, 2003) (hereafter: Süttő, *Anjou Magyarország*).

What I will do in this study is to present the contexts of the creation of the *Carmen* and propose a different evaluation for it than a simple historical source. I will explore three separate contexts leading up to the creation of the image of Queen Mary by a Venetian: that of the author, the fourteenth-century Venetian-Hungarian relationships, as well as the Hungarian internal political situation. As a diplomat, Monaci knew the political situation of the time very well.

Queen Mary of Hungary is portrayed as a suitable ruler for the Hungarian throne and an ideal ruler from the point of view of the Serenissima's interests. Following the rule of Louis the Great, who threatened the interests of Venice, the republic welcomed the rule of a harmless young queen. Her weakness incited the Hungarian barons to rebellion, but the same factor secured Venice.¹⁷ The rule of Charles of Durazzo and a union between Hungary and Naples would have encircled Venice and ensured Hungarian dominion over the disputed territories of Dalmatia. The "Angevin Empire" would have threatened the maritime and commercial interests of the Serenissima.¹⁸ Monaci's tone is therefore clearly anti-Neapolitan, and in favour of Hungary to some extent.¹⁹ I will argue that the image Monaci constructed of Queen Mary was done in the shadow of the Venetian propaganda he pursued. His poem, however, cannot be seen only as a "historical source." It is a literary product that constructs an image of Queen Mary according to the ideals of the Venetian Republic.

The methodology I will use in this study is to explore the contexts of: Lorenzo Monaci, Venice and Hungary, and Hungarian power struggles as backgrounds for the

¹⁷ Magda Jászay, *Velence és Magyarország egy szomszédság küzdelmes története* (Venice and Hungary, the problematic story of two neighbouring countries) (Budapest: Gondolat, 1990), 82 (hereafter: Jászay, *Velence és Magyarország*).

¹⁸ Marianne Sággy, "Dynastic Devotion: The Pilgrimage of Queen Elizabeth Piast to Rome," unpublished paper presented at the Conference *Diplomacy in the Countries of the Angevin Dynasty in the Thirteenth-Fourteenth Centuries*, (Szeged: 13-16 September, 2007).

¹⁹ It mirrors fourteenth-century diplomatic relationships, Venice being the arch-enemy of Hungary; the two countries were constantly in alliances against each other. The only alliance Venice refused with the Hungarians was that proposed by Naples following the murder of Andrew, brother of Louis I in 1345.

constructs of the royal images, in the first three chapters. In the last chapter I will deconstruct these royal images from the point of view of history or literature, self-fashioning or propaganda, good and bad kingship, capturing the Venetian bias in all these. I support my arguments with historical evidence and by the quote or paraphrase of relevant passages of Monaci's *Dedication* and *Carmen*. The translations and the paraphrases of the fragments are mine. They are given in prose and the Latin equivalent is given with verse numbers in the footnotes, as well as in full version in the appendix of the thesis.

II. Lorenzo Monaci (1351-1428)

Lorenzo Monaci, in the observant and critical spirit of Venetian notaries, left an account of the contemporary Hungarian events. This Latin poem about the tragedies of King Charles and Queen Mary is only one among the many works of this illustrious Venetian.

1. Monaci the Writer

Lorenzo Monaci was a prolific man of letters. He was an exceptional writer, but unfortunately little has survived of his works. His poetry and historical writings were well-received and appreciated by his contemporaries as well as posterity. He wrote vernacular poetry and Latin poetry; he composed orations, epistles, and compiled a history of Venice. By the time of his encounter with Queen Mary of Hungary in 1387, Monaci had already distinguished himself in the literary circles of Italy.

In the fourteenth century, the Tuscan dialect became the literary language of the peninsula. Poets writing in the vernacular followed the trend set by Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio. Following in their footsteps, Monaci's poetic production in the vernacular was praised among many of his contemporaries, such as Antonio Loschi:²⁰ *Eloquii tuba celsa italic dignissime lauro / Laurenti...*²¹ Moreover, Monaci is listed among the best known early Renaissance poets of Venice: *Jacomel Gradenicho in questo stuolo / E noto cum Bernardo Foschareno / Et Laurentio di y Monaci hora solo*²² and in a catalogue of illustrious and famous Venetian writers.²³

²⁰ He was a famous humanist poet and diplomat of the time (1368-1441) (*Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*), (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 2007).

²¹ Poppi, "Ricerche", 159.

²² C. del Balzo, *Poesie di mille autori intorno a Dante Alighieri*, Vol. 2 (Rome, 1890), 416.

²³ *Catalogo breve de gl' illustri et famosi scrittori venetiani* (Bologna, 1605).

Fusing his artistic creation with Venetian public life, Monaci authored a number of orations and epistles, of which two each survive. His orations (*Oratio elegantissimo in laude et aedificatione alme civitatis Venetiarum*²⁴ and *Oratio de edificatione et incremento urbis Venete*²⁵) were written and delivered on important occasions in the Serenissima. His letters written to Carlo Zeno²⁶ and received from Francesco Barbaro and Antonio Loschi²⁷ betray a vivid epistolary contact with humanists and Renaissance public figures. Lorenzo Monaci seems to have been perhaps too progressive in style, which would account for the loss of his Italian poems.

Apart from the fame of his poems, his chronicle was preserved. The *Chronicon de rebus Venetis (ab U. C. usque ad 1354)*,²⁸ written between 1421-1428,²⁹ was praised in the same manner as his poetry. Monaci, then governor of Crete, used an extensive number of sources and brought two major innovations to history writing. First, he is argued to have been the first occidental writer to utilize accounts from Byzantine historiographical sources, breaking thus with the exclusive Venetian interpretation of the events, and reconstructing them from multiple perspectives. In the description of the Fourth Crusade he used Nicetas Choniates; Georgios Akropolites is used for the Latin Empire of Constantinople and the confrontations with John Vatatzes, and G. Pachymeres for the period of Michael VIII Paleologus.³⁰ According to Serban Marin, Monaci did not break with traditional Venetian

²⁴ Addressed to Doge Fr. Foscari and written for the jubilee of 1421 (Marc. Lat. XIV 255 (4576).

²⁵ Addressed to Doge T. Mocenigo in 1421 celebrating the political role of the Serenissima. (Poppi, "Ricerche," 184).

²⁶ Vat. Lat. 5223, ff. 58.

²⁷ Poppi, "Ricerche," 166-167.

²⁸ The title was given by Flaminio Cornaro, the first editor of Monaci in 1758.

²⁹ Carile, *La cronachistica veneziana (secoli XIII-XIV) di fronte alla spartizione della Romania nel 1204* (Florence: L. S. Olschki, 1969), 181 (hereafter: Carile, *La cronachistica*).

³⁰ Pertusi, *Le fonti*, 201-204.

historiography, yet wrote a new history, and conferred literary dignity on it.³¹ Monaci's other innovation concerns the organization principle of *De rebus Venetiis*: shifting from traditional chronicles, Monaci was original in choosing a thematic structuring device rather than the chronological one.³² His chronicle was translated into Italian in the fifteenth century.³³

The chronicle dealing with events from the establishment of Venice until 1354 has been subjected to extensive research. A great number of classical and medieval sources have been discerned, which Monaci quoted.³⁴ Some of these were possibly taken over from the *Extensa* of Andrea Dandolo, which he does not mention but inarguably knew.³⁵ Monaci's reception in the following centuries is well attested. Giacomo Ragazzoni, when intending to write a history of Venice, was advised by Lodovico Foscari to continue where Monaci had left off.³⁶ Monaci was criticized by Flavio Biondo and Enea Silvio Piccolomini, but his chronicle remained a standard.³⁷

Monaci is further recorded to have been one of the first collectors of Greek codices³⁸ and an admirer of Greek culture. A copy of the Iliad is preserved which he

³¹ Marin, "Cronistica," 108.

³² Marin, "Cronistica," 104.

³³ In Venice, Marciana. M 2542 (12434) entitled *Cronaca di Venezia fino al 1354, traduzione italiana del Chronicon di Lorenzo de Monacio*. Serban Marin, "Cronistica si Mitologia Politica a Serenissimei. Mitul Originilor" (The Venetian Chronicles and the Serenissima's Political Mythology. The Myth of the Origins), (dissertation in progress), 96 (hereafter: Marin, "Cronistica").

³⁴ Among these are the works of Paul the Deacon, Goffredo di Viterbo, Riccobaldo Ferrarese, Hugue de St. Victor, Eginhard, Buoncompagno da Signa, Jacopo da Verrazze, Paolino, Martinus Polonus, Sigibert de Gembloux, Vincenzo Belluacense, Pietro da Chioggia, Marino Sanudo Torsello, St. Albertus Magnus, Anonimus, Boccaccio, Castellano da Bassano, Eginhard, Henric the Theologian, Goffredo de Viterbo, Jacopo da Verrazze, Martinus Polonus, pseudo-Petrarch, Paolino da Venezia, Riccobaldo da Ferrara. (Marin, "Cronistica," 101).

³⁵ Marin, "Cronistica," 104-105.

³⁶ Foscari, *Della Letteratura*, 247.

³⁷ Flavio Biondo wrote *Historiarum ab inclinatione Romanorum imperii decades* (Decades of History from the Deterioration of the Roman Empire) from 1439 to 1453, first published in 1483. Monaci's contribution to historiography is further mentioned in E.B Fryde, *Humanism and Renaissance Historiography* (London: 1983), 9; Bernardo Giustiniani's *History of the Origin of Venice*, mentioned in Edward Muir, *Civic Ritual in Renaissance Venice* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 25.

³⁸ Marin, "Cronistica," 102.

sent to Francesco Barbaro,³⁹ and he is argued to have had relations with the Greek scholars of Crete.

2. Monaci the Diplomat

The *oeuvre* of Lorenzo Monaci betrays a man of certain talents. Aspects of his life and political career came down to us from official documents related to his career as a notary, secretary of the Venetian Republic, and later governor of Crete. Born in Venice⁴⁰ and living in the district of the church of San Martino,⁴¹ Monaci came from a family of notaries and was educated in this tradition. As a boy, he participated in his father's work and slowly matured into the guild of notaries. He became member of the *avogadori di comun* in 1363, *notarius auditorum sententiarum* in 1371,⁴² *notarius Venetiarum* in 1376, and *notarius curiae maioris* in 1386 (composed of functionaries and the doge's counselors).⁴³ As a notary, Monaci participated at the annexation of Argos⁴⁴ and Nauplion⁴⁵ by the Republic of Venice in 1388. Foreign diplomacy took him to Hungary (in 1386-87, 1389, and 1390), also Germany and France. He worked as the governor of Crete for forty years. One was usually appointed to this office (*cancellarius Camerae Cretae*) by the doge to deal with the bureaucratic and administrative tasks of the island. During his governorship, Crete, an island of Greek

³⁹ It is preserved today in the Marciana with the inscription: *Ilias Homeri est Francisci Barbari petritii veneti, quem sibi dono dedit doctissimus vir Laurentius de Monachis Cancellarius Crete*. (Marin, "Cronistica," 103).

⁴⁰ Antonio Loschi in one of his metric epistles addresses Monaci with the words: "*fortunate, igitur, tali cui contigit ortus in patria...*" Marin, "Cronistica," 98.

⁴¹ A document of 17 December 1388 reads: "*presentibus ... ser Laurentio de Monacis quodam ser Monaci, ciue Venetiarum de contrata Sancti Martini*." Marin, "Cronistica," 98 apud Thomas, *Diplomatarium*, s. I, doc. IX, 214.

⁴² Poppi, "Ricerche," 159.

⁴³ Poppi, "Ricerche," 154.

⁴⁴ An ancient Greek city, in the Middle Ages fell to the Crusaders then became Venetian territory.

⁴⁵ Greek seaport occupied in 1212 by French Crusaders of the Principality of Achaea, then in 1388 sold to the Venetians.

population that had previously rebelled against Venetian rule,⁴⁶ knew a period of peace and prosperity.⁴⁷ Lorenzo Monaci's political career — notary, foreign ambassador, governor of Crete, and writer of a history of Venice — lacks only in the highest function filled by a Venetian, that of the doge.

On a personal level, the early loss of his father in 1372 prevented him from higher studies, but must have strengthened Lorenzo's character. He supported his family, providing for his sisters' dowry and participating in family events even during his governorship in Crete. His first wife was a De Trentis,⁴⁸ with whom Monaci had a son, Monaco, who chose an ecclesiastical career. After her loss, he and his second wife he had another son, Giacomo, who also became a notary.⁴⁹ The last act of Lorenzo Monaci as notary dates from 1428. The same year saw the death of the “sapiente et eloquentissimo ser Lorenzo de Monacis.”⁵⁰

Lorenzo Monaci was a Venetian, serving the interests of the Serenissima: his orations were for important, festive occasions; his chronicle is a new attempt of writing the history of Venice. Apart from personal humanistic self-fashioning, the same interests are served by his Latin poem too, dedicated to Queen Mary. In the light of fourteenth-century Venetian-Hungarian tensions over Dalmatia, it is questionable why a Venetian author would compose a vehicle of praise for a Hungarian ruler. Monaci's poem about Hungary was produced during the rule of the queens, at a time when Venetian-Hungarian relations were at their calmest after a century of animosity. As all epics, it was produced with consideration for the future, in an attempt to bury the past and secure a good cooperative relationship between the two countries.

⁴⁶ *Venezia e Creta. Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi Iraklion-Chania, 30 settembre – 5 ottobre 1997*, ed. Gherardo Ortalli (Venice: Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, 1998).

⁴⁷ Marin, “Cronistica,” 100.

⁴⁸ The sister of a notary Simon with whom Lorenzo participated in Pantaleone's mission to Hungary in 1386-1387.

⁴⁹ Marin, “Cronistica,” 156.

⁵⁰ Marin, “Cronistica,” 99.

III. Hungarian-Venetian Relations

Lorenzo Monaci first came to Hungary with a diplomatic company to conclude an alliance with the Hungarian queens. His poem about Queen Mary, was probably written with an eye to serve the interests of the Republic of Venice, which at the end of the fourteenth century included securing good relationships with the Kingdom of Hungary. Monaci was aware of the century-long tensions between the two states. As a skilled diplomat, he was conscious that relations between Hungary and Venice dated back to the earliest times. By the fourteenth century, the connections had become more frequent and tenser. The central problem in the relations of the two powers was the issue of dominion over Dalmatia and the Adriatic coast.⁵¹

The Republic of Venice was one of the wealthiest states in the Middle Ages, boasting with a wide international network. Due to her worldwide commercial activity, foreign diplomacy and wars of expansion, Venice was also the power broker among Christian states. Throughout her history, however, Venice was busy fighting Byzantium, other Italian city-states and all other powers which obstructed her commercial interests. Hungary was one of the kingdoms intruding in the policies of Venice along the Adriatic coast. The Adriatic shore and its cities were important for Venice from a strategic point of view, and the exploitation of its resources from an economic point of view.⁵² The pine forests of Dalmatia and its hinterland provided Venice with timber for her fleet, and its population furnished good crew. Hungary

⁵¹ Alvise Zorzi, *A City, a Republic, an Empire* (Woodstock, New York: The Overlook Press, Peter Mayer Publishers Inc, 2001) 9.

⁵² The evidence of Venetian interference in the Adriatic goes back to the ninth century. Following the campaign in 1000 which provided help to Dalmatians against Croatian (Slav) pirates, Doge Pietro Orseolo II took the honorary title of *Dux Dalmatiae*. Still, Dalmatia was not a Venetian territory, but under the suzerainty of Byzantium. By Doge Contarini's 1062 expedition in Dalmatia the situation had become complicated because of Venice's conflicting interests with Hungarians, Croats, and Byzantines. (John Julius Norwich, *A History of Venice* [London: Penguin Books, 2003]) (hereafter: Norwich, *A History of Venice*).

aspired to these territories too, for their richness and for the contact with Rome.⁵³ Furthermore, during the Neapolitan wars of Louis the Great, Dalmatia was considered an important link between a possible union of Hungary and Naples.

The end of the Árpáadian succession to the Hungarian throne, an era the last decades of which constituted a peaceful co-habitation of Venetians and Hungarians,⁵⁴ brought about a period of internal turmoil in the country. This gave Venice a break from confrontations over Dalmatia,⁵⁵ but not for long. From the strengthening of the position of the Angevins in Hungary, Venice fought in earnest for domination over the Adriatic territories.

Charles Robert (1308 -1342), the first Angevin ruler of Hungary sought to unite the kingdoms of Hungary and Naples. In 1331, Zara (Zadar, Iadera) forsook Venetian rule⁵⁶ and placed itself under Hungarian protection. Emphasizing in rhetorical clichés the good relationships and love that had always prevailed between Hungary and Venice, the Serenissima tried to divert Charles Robert from sending troops to the town, but the king supported Zara. The siege was finally concluded by peaceful negotiations, Zara re-entering Venetian suzerainty. Still, the Hungarian king did not want to break with Venice and rather sought diplomatic solutions. He protected Venetian merchants in Hungary, for which the doge Giovanni Soranzo promised to treat Hungarian traders similarly.⁵⁷ In 1322, the Dalmatian cities of Šibenik (Sebenico, Sebenik) Zara, Trau (Trogir), Spalato (Split) and Nona (Nin) acknowledged Venetian supremacy to avoid the domination of Croatian oligarchs.⁵⁸ The Dalmatian cities were playing manifold games between acknowledging

⁵³ József Köblös, *Magyar Békeszerződések 1000-1526* (Hungarian Peace Treaties 1000-1526) (Pápa: Jókai Mór Városi Könyvtár, 2000), 30 (hereafter: Köblös, *Magyar Békeszerződések*).

⁵⁴ Norwich, *A History of Venice*, 38.

⁵⁵ Gergely Bárándy, *Velence fénykora* (Székesfehérvár: Scolar Kiadó, 1999).

⁵⁶ Bárándy, Gergely. *Velence fénykora*. (The Golden Age of Venice) (Székesfehérvár: Scolar Kiadó, 1999), 92.

Byzantium, Venice, and Hungary, depending on their immediate interests, which created waves of tension in the Venetian-Hungarian relations.

In the later years of the fourteenth century Venice faced Hungarian expansion. Charles Robert and Louis the Great tried to expand their power over the Adriatic and Naples. The marriage between the son of Charles Robert and the granddaughter of Robert the Wise, king of Naples, bound the Angevin territories with family ties in 1344. Within this Angevin land lay the Dalmatian cities under Venetian rule. In 1342 the death of Charles Robert seemed to put an end to the Hungarian danger to Venice, but in reality the real confrontations were barely starting. The battle over Dalmatia during his reign had been a cold war, no real confrontations took place, but indirect schemes in which the Republic tried to secure its position and Hungary tried to gain ground. Charles Robert's hopes for Naples were dashed by Venice and by the papacy, which feared that Hungary might become the dominant Adriatic power.

Louis the Great (1326-1382) continued the policies of his father with even more zeal and determination, seeking domination over the disputed territories. Louis' strength in his expansionist politics was partly due to the position granted by his father's merits, partly due to the support of his prelates, barons, and nobles. The duplicity and ambiguity of the politics pursued in these years of insecurity left traces in contemporary accounts. Venice, on the one hand, helped the queen mother, Elizabeth⁵⁹ by transporting her to Naples to secure the coronation of her son, Andrew, in 1343; on the other hand, it was making hasty preparations to prevent Louis from

⁵⁷ Norwich, *A History of Venice*, 45.

⁵⁸ Köblös, *Magyar békeszerződések*, 125.

⁵⁹ Elizabeth Piast, wife of Charles Robert, mother to Louis the Great.

achieving domination over Dalmatia.⁶⁰ At the news of the murder of Prince Andrew in Apulia in 1345 Venice cordially paid her condolences to the Hungarian king and queen mother, while her ambassadors attempted to secure the domination of the Serenissima over Dalmatia. Venetian diplomats were constantly working to fulfill the Serenissima's goals, regardless of circumstances.

The relation of Louis with Venice was marked by three wars that ended in 1346, 1358, and 1381. In 1345, Zara again placed itself under Hungarian protection, forsaking thus Venetian suzerainty. Venice marched against the city. Preoccupied by the situation in Naples brought about by the murder of his brother,⁶¹ King Louis offered Venice the exchange of non-interference on Dalmatian territory for Venetian support of his Neapolitan campaign. To this Venice offered money instead of military help, referring to her peace policy in order to guarantee the safety of Venetian merchants in Naples. After Venice's attempt to bribe Louis, the king personally led his troops toward Zara in 1346. Concerning the battle some chronicles suspect treason by the Hungarian commanders; the young Angevin king had to interrupt the siege despite his superiority in numbers.⁶² In 1346 Zara was once again under Venetian rule while Louis busied himself looking for allies for his Neapolitan campaign; he avoided all the diplomatic offers of Venice. Venetian ambassadors were *personae non gratae*, and under the changed circumstances they would visit Hungary only under the threat of severe punishment by the government.

⁶⁰ It sent envoys to Nona, Sebenico, Spalato, and Zara to promise help against an eventual Hungarian campaign. In 1345, at the news of Louis arrival, however, the local lords hastened to swear loyalty to him. Dependence on Venice was gladly exchanged for the remoter suzerainty of Hungary, promising more independence, thus the city of Zara once again rebelled and was besieged by Venetian forces that year.

⁶¹ Stanislav A. Sroka, *A Magyar Anjouk családi története* (The family history of the Hungarian Angevins) (Cracow: Wydawnictwo Pit, 1998).

⁶² In his chronicle, Lorenzo Monaci gives a detailed report of the battle (Monaci, *Chronicon*, 109).

The Venetians saw the intrusion of Hungarian troops in Dalmatia as a sign of the Hungarian king being at war with them, but they chose to wait.⁶³ The Serenissima, according to the 1348 armistice concluded eight years before, did not impede Louis' procession towards Naples in any way,⁶⁴ and had previously refused an alliance with Joan of Naples. Louis' Neapolitan campaign was ended by an outbreak of plague in Italy in 1348.

From 1350 a new chapter opened in the Hungarian-Venetian conflicts. Hungary allied with Genoa against Venice. The Serenissima had another reason to fear for its dominion of the Adriatic shores. A cut-throat commercial rivalry between Venice and Genoa had marked the first decades of the fourteenth century and in 1352 a provisional treaty was signed between Hungary and Genoa against Venice, followed by an alliance between Genoa and the Visconti of Milan the following year. Hungary started its campaign against the republic in 1356 on two fronts: in Dalmatia and in the Veneto.

“In former times,” Norwich observes,

whenever the Hungarian Kingdom revived its perennial claim to the towns of Dalmatia, the Venetians could take the war straight across by sea to the enemy camp. Now all that was changed; and they first began to understand the full significance of that change when in 1356 King Lajos the Great of Hungary invaded the Friuli.⁶⁵

In 1357 it was already in possession of the main Dalmatian cities. With the mediation of the papacy and Francesco da Carrara, Venice begged for peace.⁶⁶ In the

⁶³ Venice asserted with rhetorical formulas to be at peace with Hungary (*Magyar diplomáciai emlékek az Anjou korból* (Hungarian diplomatic evidence from the Angevin period) (Budapest, 1784), Vol. 2, 232-233). (hereafter: *Magyar diplomáciai*).

⁶⁴ Köblös, *Magyar Békeszerződések*, 126.

⁶⁵ Norwich, *A History of Venice*, 231.

⁶⁶ This aspect is mentioned by Lorenzo Monaci in his *Carmen*: the one that was used to dominating was now learning how to be subordinate to other states:

*Venetorum sanguinis ardens
Procubuit solitus iuvenis mandare, iubetur
Nunc parere senex.* (Monaci, *Carmen*, 22-24).

peace treaty of 1358, signed at Zara, Venice renounced all claims to Dalmatia and the Adriatic islands, from the Gulf of Quarnero to Durazzo; the doge gave up the title "Duke of Dalmatia and Croatia" forever. Following the treaty, Venice wished to secure good relations with Hungary and as part of its diplomacy sent representatives to live in the Hungarian court and nurture these good relationships.⁶⁷

King Louis got more and more involved in Italian politics: he interfered with the Neapolitan succession, sent mercenaries in aid of the papal legate, and nurtured relationships with his allies: Genoa and Padua. Slowly, however, Louis turned his attention to the Ottoman threat. Once again his luck had changed and he needed Venetian support. In 1365, King Louis decided to lead a campaign against the Turks to support the Emperor of Constantinople. He bought ten ships from Provence, following which he ordered five more ships from Venice for the same purpose.⁶⁸ Venice once again used the pretext of its peace policy.

These conflicts diverted the attention of European rulers from the Ottoman threat, and Louis' promise to the papacy to lead a crusade was not honoured in 1372 because of another Hungarian-Venetian war. Hungary supported his ally, Francesco da Carrara, in battles between Padua and Venice. Louis played a double game: despite joining the pacification attempts of the papal legate and the lords of Ferrara, Florence and Pisa, Hungarian envoys succeeded one another in Padua to assure Carrara of Louis' support. The Hungarian king still sought to get back at Venice for obstructing trade in Dalmatia and its expansion of influence in the Balkans.

In 1372, the first Hungarian troops arrived to the Piave River and triumphed over Venetian troops. In 1373 another army plundered Treviso and Louis officially

⁶⁷ *Magyar Diplomácia*, Vol. 2, 523-24.

⁶⁸ The doge would gladly have fulfilled his request had Louis not changed his mind and sent word that the ships were now for a campaign against the Serbian and Bulgarian kings, and that he would even turn against the emperor if the latter obstructed him in his plans.

declared war on Venice.⁶⁹ One of the Hungarian chief commanders, Endre Lackfi, was captured by Venice, and Louis urged peace between Padua and the Serenissima. The truce did not last long. A new conflict between Venice and Genoa over the island of Tenedos, gateway to the Dardanelles, aligned the Italian cities on two sides. Genoa was helped by Francesco Carrara, lord of Padua, the Veronese Della Scalas, and the patriarch of Aquileia as well as Hungary; Venice was supported only by Bernabo Visconti, lord of Milan. The Italian confrontations were just concluded by the victory of Venice when the Hungarian declaration of war arrived in 1378. In vain had Venice tried to appease Louis by diplomatic means; the same year the Hungarian troops invaded at Treviso, joined forces with Carrara at Mestre, besieging the city and thus cutting Venice off from the mainland. The allies were closing in on Venice from the sea and mainland.

In this situation Venice again contacted the Hungarian king, trying to convince him to persuade his allies to conclude peace and withdraw. The Venetian envoys were not successful in their attempts; Louis did not wish to conclude peace separately, but together with his allies. Elizabeth, the queen mother, and Louis' queen Elizabeth Kotromanic, were approached by the Venetian envoys to secure peace, but their wish was suppressed by the promises of Padua and Genoa that Venice would be conquered.

Despite this, the parties gathered in the camp of Charles of Durazzo⁷⁰ in 1379 to reach some conclusion. The archbishop of Győr suggested that Venice acknowledge Hungary as its sovereign and they would protect the republic from total destruction. Other allies had other claims, and Venice refused to be subject to

⁶⁹ In his decree he asserted the divine right to break Venice and elevate the oppressed, and gave a general call for Venice to be attacked and destroyed (*Magyar Diplomácia*, Vol. 3, 50-51).

⁷⁰ Charles of Durazzo (1345-1386), about whom Lorenzo Monaci wrote his *Carmen*, was the son of Louis of Durazzo and Margherita of Sanseverino. After the execution of his father, he was first adopted by Joan I of Naples, then brought up by Louis I in Hungary and with his support became king of Naples.

Hungary and prey to the other Italian cities; the whole world, as the representatives reported to the Serenissima, would not be enough to meet the demands.⁷¹ After long negotiations in which Venice gained time, she refused the humiliating conditions and fought for independence.⁷²

Peace with Venice was concluded on more equal terms and separately with each ally in 1381, in Turin. In the peace with Hungary the parties forgave each other everything; Venice repeated the terms of the 1359 peace of Zara, giving up all Dalmatian territories from the gulf of Quarnero to Durazzo, but specified rule over the Venetian gulf. The merchants of the two countries received privileges on the territory of the other country. In contrast to the 1379 demands, the treaty of Torino was a peace treaty concluded between equal partners, which according to Caresini, the chronicler, if respected by the parties, was going to last forever. The terms of the treaty were met following the death of Louis I; during the reign of Queen Mary, the amount of 7000 ducats was paid yearly until 1400, but Dalmatia again came under Venetian rule in 1420.⁷³

Venice was shaken by the wars with the other Italian cities and Hungary, but recovered. She kept her independence and continued her expansion. Instead of the Dalmatian cities, she acquired the island of Corfu; Valona, Durazzo, Croia, Scutari on the Albanian coast, and Argos and Nauplion on the Greek coast.⁷⁴ Hungary was badly disrupted by the death of Louis I in 1382. The changed situation resulted in internal turmoil, and there was hardly any Venetian ambassador who would venture to

⁷¹ *Magyar Diplomácia*, Vol. 3, 294, 305.

⁷² In September 1379 a referendum called the population of Venice to common efforts and by mid-1380 Venice breathed more freely, having freed the city of Chioggia and captured a large number of Genoese ships it avoided complete destruction. The fight, however, continued on land and sea

⁷³ Péter Kovács E., "Mária királyné kiszabadítása, Magyar-velencei szövetség 1387-ben," *Századok* 140, No. 4 (2006), 925.

⁷⁴ At the receiving of these two territories Lorenzo Monaci was present in his role of notary.

transmit the Serenissima's congratulations to the new rulers, Queen Mary and Elizabeth, the queen mother.

Hungary's relations with Venice improved after the death of King Louis, during the reign of the queens. The 1381 Turin peace treaty was strengthened by Venice in 1383 during the reign of Mary,⁷⁵ and ratified again in 1387 by Sigismund and Mary jointly. At the turn of the century this agreement defined the relation of the two countries and changes only occurred in the 1400s.⁷⁶ In the queens' time Venice destroyed official records of the Hungarian-Venetian war,⁷⁷ sent and received envoys on friendly terms.

The question of Dalmatia came up once again, but this time the initiative lay with the Bosnian king, Tvrtko, who tried to expand towards the Adriatic Sea. A Dalmatian rebellion against the Hungarian queens was defeated at Vrana. In 1383, Queen Mary and the Queen Mother Elizabeth tried to appease the citizens of the disputed territories by their personal presence. In keeping these territories, ironically, they resorted to the help of Venice. Following her ever-menacing father, the harmless young queen and the queen mother renowned for her friendship towards Venice, were received with relief by the Venetian lords. It was precisely their weakness that kindled the dissatisfaction of their subjects that promised security to the trading city and became the assurance of peaceful cohabitation.⁷⁸ The importance of Hungarian dominion over Dalmatia and the kingdom's relationship with Venice were overshadowed by more burning tasks that the new situation in Hungary brought. After the consolidation of power and strong rule of the first two Angevin kings, the popularization of female rule based not on hereditary, customary law, but on the

⁷⁵ *Magyar Diplomácia*, Vol. 3, 504-511, 523-525.

⁷⁶ *Köblös, Magyar Békeszerződések*, 139.

⁷⁷ *Magyar Diplomácia*, Vol 3, 531.

⁷⁸ Jászay, *Velence és Magyarország*, 82.

prestige of the Angevin dynasty, was a real challenge for both nobles supporting the rule of the queen, and poets composing works in her defense.

IV. The Queen's Rule in Angevin Hungary

The fourteenth century has been called a century of calamities by historians.⁷⁹ Marked by famines and plagues, endemic warfare and peasant risings, the Hundred Years' War, the Avignon papacy and the Great Schism, it was also a period when royal authority was attacked by the power of the barons. But how did these affect Hungary, a country where Lorenzo Monaci arrived in 1386 as a Venetian notary of acute observation and global interests, and finally wrote a propaganda poem about the queens' rule?

Lorenzo Monaci's *Carmen* starts with the international scene, and gives an overview of the events of the century from the perspective of the Serenissima, betraying the audience it was, at least partially, intended for. The account mentions the Visconti of Milan; the Este family, rulers of Ferrara, Ancona, Modena and Reggio; Cangrande della Scalla, ruling Verona; the Lombard League; the alliance of the Hungarians with Padua, Verona, Genoa, and Naples against Venice, as well as the death of Charles of Durazzo.⁸⁰ Hungarians are only alluded to as a barbaric people

⁷⁹ Barbara W. Tuchman, *A Distant Mirror* (London: Macmillan, 1990).

⁸⁰ *Dum tu frena regis Cretae, clarissime miles,
Partibus Italiae, et gelidis Aquilonis in oris
Fortuna omnipotens in reges fulminat altos,
In dominos, mundique duces altissimus ille
Bernabos armipotens, stupor, et tuba magna per orbem
Imperium excelsum mutavit carcere tetro.
Circumventa sui furia rabieque popelli
Nutavit domus Estensis; duo maxima mundi
Regna tenens Carolus, qui iam concusserat omnem
Italiam terrore sui, stat cespite nudo
Frigidus extremo spoliatus honore sepulchri.
Austrius in bello iuvenis dum pugnat, acerbum
Incidit in vulnus; miserando vulnere vitam
Perdidit infelix, animam cum sanguine fundens.
Scaliger ille Canis, gestarum gloria rerum
Ceus fulgur quondam populis, est lapsus ab alto
Culmine, latratus ceciderunt ore superbi.
Nunc Verona canis morsu lacerata per aevum*

who wanted to destroy the Republic. Following the Italian scene, Monaci launches into the story of the queens, for which he found the praise of the Hungarian king Louis the Great indispensable. Despite Louis having been the champion of campaigns against Venice, Monaci dedicated a poem to his daughter, Queen Mary, in hopes of future amelioration of Venetian-Hungarian relations. After an overview of the connections between Hungary and Venice, proving the necessity of improved diplomacy and personal contacts, a summary of the internal situation of Hungary is necessary for the understanding of Mary's claims for succession used by Monaci, too, in his argumentation.

As early as the previously mentioned account of the Italian events, Monaci is judgmental about Mary's rival, Charles of Durazzo. He presents him as the king who, despite ruling two countries, was not buried in either. The name of Louis I does not come up in a negative light at this point, his merits are praised not in connection with his actions towards Venice but with reference to the improvements in Hungary. Monaci, before writing his poem and history of Venice, must have thoroughly acquainted himself with the most important milestones in Hungarian history, especially those leading up the rule of the Angevins.

Similarly to him, we now know that the Hungarian throne was inherited by the Angevins of Naples following the extinction of the Árpád dynasty in 1301. After the consolidation of their power, the Angevins turned Hungary from a divided country into one of the most powerful kingdoms in Europe.⁸¹ Some historians have termed

*Est vice fatorum anguinea dulcedine sparsa.
 Plaustrifer humana pinguescens caede tyrannus
 Nominis hostis atrox Itali; semperque lacessens
 Barbariem in Latium, Venetorum sanguinis ardens
 Procubuit solitus iuvenis mandare; iubetur
 Nunc parere senex. Patavumque reliquit, inerme
 Secum odium, vanamque ferens sine viribus iram.
 Horum parviloquo perstrinxi carmine sortes.* (Monaci, *Carmen*, 1-26)

⁸¹ Bálint Hóman, *Gli Angioni*.

this period the most beautiful chapter of Hungarian history, when the country experienced a flourishing of religion, science, and the arts never seen before and seldom after.⁸²

Charles Robert of Anjou was the great-grandson of the Árpadian king, Stephen V; grandson of Charles II of Naples and Mary of Hungary (and the son of Charles Martel of Anjou). Supported by the papacy, he fought with his rivals for the Hungarian throne, and after his coronation in 1310 continued combating oligarchic factions, the “petty kings” of the realm. Reestablishing royal authority, Charles Robert left a unified country and a strong throne to his son, Louis I.⁸³

Hungary flourished in the time of Louis I (1326-1382), called the Great, and was preserved from both internal division and threats from outside.⁸⁴ The court of Louis I became famous for chivalric ideals,⁸⁵ major construction projects of castles and palaces,⁸⁶ and the patronage of religion, education, music, and the arts. In his time translations were made, the *Illuminated Chronicle* was commissioned, and the first Hungarian university was founded in Pécs.⁸⁷ The personality of the king even attracted the attention of Petrarch, who expressed his admiration for the personal virtues of Louis the Great for being a mighty king of great humility.⁸⁸ With respect to the tension of military actions against Venice, Lorenzo Monaci too chose to praise

⁸² Antal Pór and Gyula Schonherr, “Az Anjou ház örökösei (1301-1439)” (The heirs of the Angevin House [1301-1439]) in Sándor Szilágyi, *A magyar nemzet története* (Budapest: Az Athenaeum Irodalmi és Nyomdai Részvénytársulat betűivel, 1895), 4 (hereafter: Pór and Schonherr, “Az Anjou ház”).

⁸³ Gyula Kristó, *Az Anjou-kor háborúi* (The Wars of the Angevin Period) (Budapest, 1988).

⁸⁴ *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, ed. Michael Jones (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

⁸⁵ Ágnes Kurcz, *Lovagi kultúra Magyarországon a 13-14. században* (Chivalric culture in Hungary in the 13-14th centuries) (Budapest: Akadémiai kiadó, 1988).

⁸⁶ József Sisa and Dóra Wiebenson, *Magyarország építészetének története* (The Architecture of Historic Hungary) (Budapest: Vincze kiadó, 1998).

⁸⁷ Louis I was the first Hungarian king to attempt the establishment of a university in 1371. Cf. Ferenc Somogyi, “The Medieval University of Pécs,” in S. B. Várdy et alii, *Louis the Great King of Hungary and Poland* (Boulder: East European Monographs, 1986), 221-236.

⁸⁸ Pór and Schonherr, “Az Anjou ház,” 342.

Louis for his civilizing achievements concerning the unruly population, and the enhancement of Hungary's fame by unspecified wars.⁸⁹

The turning point in the prosperous rule of the Angevins (beneficial for Hungary, threatening for Venice) was the death of Louis the Great on 16 September 1382 without a male heir. He was the last male descendant of the Hungarian branch of the Angevin House and left two young daughters: Mary, eleven at the time, and nine-year old Hedwig. Despite the fact that at the time of the king's death the problem of succession seemed settled,⁹⁰ on 17 September 1382 Mary was crowned king of Hungary (*Rex Hungariae*) under the regency of her mother, Elizabeth. For the first time in the history of Hungary, a queen was elected as ruler. Contemporary sources note the peculiarity that a woman had been crowned as a man, as king. In Paulus de Paulo we find: *domina Maria filia senior antedicti regis in civitate predicta coronata fuit in regem*, Caresini says that *quae quidem Maria appellabantur Maria rex Hungariae ...*, Conforto da Costoza writes that *cui successit et coronata fuit rex Maria eius primogenita*, and Peter Suschenwirt notes that *ein magt ... / Die wart ein chunig genennet*. On the pages of the *Österreichische Chronik von den 95 Herrschaften* the reader is told that *die elter tochter künig Ludweigs, die Maria, von gotes gnaden künigze Ungern*, and in the history written by Ebendorfer the chronicler says that

⁸⁹ *Pannonicos homines degentes more ferarum,
Barbariem imbellem, indocilem, et squalentibus olim
Brutorum indigenum vestitos pellibus, orbis
Sprevit, eos grandis Ludovicus: gloria regum
Hungariae, ad ritum humanum, ad civilia traxit,
Aptavitque operi Martis, fecitque tramendos
Gentibus externis, et sidera tangere fama.* (Monaci, *Carmen*, 30-36)

⁹⁰ Before his death, in the summer of 1382 Louis gathered the nobles and prelates of Poland and made them acknowledge Mary and Sigismund as their rulers (Szilárd Süttő, *Anjou Magyarország*, 66 quoting Czarnovski and Dlugosz) He might have wanted to do something similar in Hedwig and William of Valois' case, gathering the Hungarian nobles and prelates in Szombathely in September 1382. His death, however, cast a shadow over these intentions (Fügedi, *Könyörülj*).

*Maria vero senior filia sedens in regno titulo regis et in litteris et in nummismate utebatur.*⁹¹

Female rule was not a unique and isolated event in Europe. The closest example for Hungary, however, was Mary's relative, Joan of Naples (1328-1382), Robert of Anjou's⁹² granddaughter, who had been queen of Naples in that time.⁹³ Joan succeeded to the throne of Naples of her grandfather, and maintained her role of a ruling queen by refusing first to have her husband, Andrew (brother of Louis I) crowned, and later by having him killed. Her rule caused negative feelings in Hungarians. Monaci, in the light of the propaganda he pursued for the queens, assessed Joan of Naples in a different way. By drawing a parallel between the Neapolitan and Hungarian political situation he asserted through a wise old man that in the same way as the overthrow of Joan of Naples by Charles of Durazzo resulted in catastrophe, the Hungarians could expect the same if they did not respect the rule of Mary.⁹⁴ The end of Joan was tragic and to be avoided by wise diplomacy, (and with this Monaci justifies Queen Elizabeth's actions) but compared to the ungratefulness of Charles, whose life had been saved by Joan and his ambition because of which he was lying unburied, the figure of the Neapolitan queen is embellished to serve the argument of good female rule.

With all this Bak asserts that Mary's coronation must have been regarded as an event that was to be followed by the coronation of her husband, the future king as

⁹¹ Süttő, *Anjou Magyarország*, 20.

⁹² Uncle of Charles Robert of Anjou. Cf: Emile G. Leonard, *Les Angevins de Naples* (Paris, 1954).

⁹³ Ciro Raia, *Giovanna I di Angio regina di Napoli* (Napoli: Tullio Pironti Editore s.r.l., 2000) (hereafter: Raia, *Giovanna I di Angio*).

⁹⁴ *Apuliae populos pacem, sortemque secundam
Inconstanti animo libertatemque ferentes,
Atque novarum avidos rerum inclinare superbo
Praedoni, et tantae dominae calcare ruinam
Non puduit; sua nunc tarde peccata fatentes
Mars et dira fames alterna peste flagellant.* (Monaci, *Carmen*, 267-272)

soon as Mary came of age.⁹⁵ Queen Mary, in the formulations of her charters and letter formulas asserted that she followed her father by birthright and ascended to the throne as if she were a son, but entitles herself “queen.” Elizabeth Kotromanic, who assumed the regency during the minority of her daughter, according to many contemporaries was “a forceful but ruthless politician.”⁹⁶ She was supported by a group of barons and this led to political turmoil and conflicts. The queen mother, acting as regent, together with the Count Palatine, Miklós Garai, and other magnates, made efforts to break up the engagement between Mary and Sigismund of Luxembourg,⁹⁷ and re-opened marriage negotiations with the French royal court. The result was a *per procuracionem* engagement of Mary to Louis of Orléans, the younger brother of Charles IV, king of France.⁹⁸ The consummation of the wedding was, however, prevented by Sigismund’s intervention.⁹⁹ Another faction of the barons, resenting female rule as well as the favoritism of the queen mother, rose in open revolt.

By 1384, the aristocracy was divided into two parties: one supporting, another opposing the queens. The second faction, in its turn, also split in two: one party urged the succession of Sigismund under the leadership of the Lackfis, and another, led by the Horváti group, supported the invitation of Charles of Durazzo from Naples, heir to the throne of Louis I on the grounds of customary law.¹⁰⁰

In June a Bohemian army, supported by either King Wenceslas, Sigismund’s brother, or his cousins, invaded northwestern Hungary to assert Sigismund’s rights. In

⁹⁵ Cf: Bak, *Königtum und Stände*.

⁹⁶ Bak, *Roles and Functions*, 16.

⁹⁷ Mary was engaged in 1379 to the Margrave of Brandenburg, Sigismund of Luxembourg (1368 - 1437), son of the Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV and younger brother of King Wenceslas, king of Bohemia. It had been initially arranged that Sigismund would ascend the Hungarian throne or that of Hungary and Poland as a consequence of his marriage to Mary.

⁹⁸ Wenczel, *I. Mária királynénknak*, 119-120.

⁹⁹ Márki, *Mária*, 60.

1385 he took over Pozsony (Bratislava) and appeared in Buda on 28 September 1385. Faced with internal and external threats, Elizabeth, the queen mother, was forced to yield. On 22 October Sigismund officially celebrated his wedding with the young queen and insisted on consummating it, following which the emperor's son started issuing charters and consolidating his power. This news prevented Louis of Orléans from coming to Hungary.

Meanwhile, representatives of the rebellious league as well as those disloyal to the queens reached important decisions. In 1385, the Horváti clan invited Charles of Durazzo to take the Hungarian throne. Charles was the next male offspring of the Angevin House on the Neapolitan branch, in line to succeed to the Hungarian throne. Sigismund fled to Bohemia at the news that Charles of Durazzo had landed in Dalmatia. The queens and their party were forced to submit to their distant Angevin relative. Charles was crowned king of Hungary on 31 December 1385. In a summary of the events “one of the three pretenders to the throne thus came at arm's length to his goal, another one gave up, and the third one just interfered in the struggle.”¹⁰¹

The thirty-nine-day-reign of Charles of Durazzo meant a “cohabitation” of the new king with the former queens in the castle of Buda. Was it a “double rule”? Debate over this problem¹⁰² has pointed out the insecure political situation: the chancellor would not specify the name of which king he was issuing charters in, and both the king and the queens signed donations. In this atmosphere a plot was

¹⁰⁰ In *The Dusk of Angevin Hungary* Szilárd Süttő gives a detailed analysis of the actions of the different baronial factions, supporting and opposing the queens.

¹⁰¹ Süttő, *Anjou Magyarország*, 101.

¹⁰² Iván Bertényi, “Beszélhetünk-e kettős uralomról hazánkban (II.) Kis Károly országlása idején?” (Can we talk about double rule in Hungary during the reign of Charles II?), *Studia professoris – Professor studiorum. Tanulmányok Érszegi Géza hatvanadik születésnapjára*, ed. Tibor Almási, István Draskóczy, Éva Jancsó (Budapest: Magyar Országos Levéltár, 2005); Szilárd Süttő, “Volt-e Kettős uralom Magyarországon Kis Károly országlása idején? Válasz Bertényi Ivánnak” (Was there a double rule in Hungary during the reign of Charles II? Reply to Bertényi Iván), *Aetas* 2-3 (2006), 232-246; Iván Bertényi, “Kettős hatalom hazánkban 1386 elején. Viszontválasz Süttő Szilárdnak,” (Double rule in our country at the beginning of 1386. Reply to Süttő Szilárd), *Aetas* 2-3, (2006).

organized by the queens' party against Charles of Durazzo which cost him his life. Balázs Forgács, hired by Palatine Garai and the queen mother, assaulted and mortally wounded King Charles on 7 February 1386. Historians still debate the circumstances of the murder and the weapon that the assailant used. It seems that under the pretext of his daughter's wedding Garai entered the castle with a small army. Queen Elizabeth called the king into her quarters pretending to consult about a letter received from Sigismund. Not understanding the language of the conversation, Charles' Italian escort left their lord. These circumstances proved favourable for the decisive move of the plotters to murder the king. Someone, however, must have warned Charles at the moment of the attack, historians argue, since the blow was not fatal; the king struggled back to his room, from where he was later removed and first kept prisoner in the castle, later transported to Visegrád. Charles died on 24 February 1386, possibly poisoned or strangled.

Elizabeth, the queen mother, and her party had to solve conflicts with Poland too. She had promised to send one of her daughters to be crowned queen of Poland but she solved the situation by sending Sigismund with an army. In the pressing situation in which the Polish lords demanded a queen who would live and rule from their country, an agreement was finally reached and Hedwig, the younger daughter of Louis I was sent to Poland. She was crowned king of Poland on 15 October 1385 and despite of her earlier engagement to William of Austria, two years after her coronation, married the last pagan ruler in Europe, Jogaila of Lithuania.¹⁰³ The queen mother herself could not be present at the coronation of her younger daughter because of rebellions that broke out following the murder of Charles of Durazzo. János

¹⁰³ William came to Poland to consummate the marriage and present the Polish magnates with a *fait accompli*. His plan failed and Jadwiga declared their marriage invalid. This marked the beginning of a long debate over the validity of the marriage between Jogaila and Jadwiga, involving even the papacy.

Horváti with his two brothers, László and Bishop Pál of Zagreb, leaders of the baronial opposition against the queens and the Count Palatine Garai, the chief promoter of King Charles of Durazzo, did not submit after the king's death. Considering Charles' young son, Ladislas, the next legitimate heir to the Hungarian throne,¹⁰⁴ they kindled rebellions in the south.

Elizabeth and Mary set off with the escort of their loyal followers towards the rebellious territories. The Horváti attacked the queens at Gara (Gorjani). All the queens' men were killed, including Palatine Miklós Garai and Balázs Forgács. Only the son of Miklós Garai escaped alive and the two queens were imprisoned. During the months of captivity in the fortress of Újvár (Novigrad), Ban János Horváti had Elizabeth strangled in front of Mary. The young queen was freed by joint troops of Sigismund and Venice. When she encountered Sigismund in Zengg (Senj), the latter, having accepted the conditions imposed by the barons, had already been crowned king of Hungary.

Queen Mary lived eight more years in the shadow of her husband. She did issue charters and make foundations, but she did not play an active political role. Mary was pregnant when she died at the age of twenty-five in a riding accident.¹⁰⁵ Her husband, Sigismund, kept the crown of Hungary. His rule marked the end of the Angevin period in Hungary but opened up another era of prosperity.

The political situation in Hungary at this time must have weighed heavily on the young queen, who wanted a record of the events. In the same manner, her commission must have preoccupied Lorenzo Monaci, who was attempting to balance previous Venetian-Hungarian tensions with a well-thought-out poem. In this poem he

Cf: Oscar Halecki, *Jadwiga of Poland. Anjou and the Rise of East Central Europe* (New York Columbia University Press, 1991) (hereafter: Halecki, *Jadwiga of Poland*).

¹⁰⁴ Pál Engel, "Foreword and Commentary" in János Thuróczy, *Chronicle of the Hungarians* Tr. Frank Mantello (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), 32, note 13.

strived to give a realistic and complex image of Queen Mary of Hungary and at the same time serve the cause of Venice.

¹⁰⁵ Halecki, *Jadwiga of Poland. Anjou*, 219-220.

V. Queen Mary in Venetian Eyes: A Literary Construct

1. The *Carmen* as epic: History or Literature?

The image that stood at the basis of all the later depictions of Queen Mary of Hungary can be discerned from a literary source in the form of a 560-line Latin hexametric poem by Lorenzo Monaci. The poem is actually an anti-heroic epic about the Neapolitan king, Charles of Durazzo, who seized the Hungarian crown in the time of the queens, Elizabeth and Mary. But can a literary work be a historical source in the way that Monaci was used and exploited by Hungarian historiography? What did Queen Mary commission him to write and how did the Venetian fulfill the queen's request? In the author's testimony, the queen commissioned him to write an account of the Hungarian events. By choosing the poetic epic form over a prose chronicle Monaci decided to present and, at the same time, assess the events and characters.¹⁰⁶

Epics were very much *en vogue* in the Middle Ages because they addressed many of the political and ideological concerns of the age, such as “the search, never fulfilled, for a final perfection; equilibrium amidst the instabilities of power; the difficulty in distinguishing between good and evil; and anxiety about the succession.”¹⁰⁷ The ancient Latin epics were central cultural and educational texts in the time of Monaci, and due to their universal concern with apocalyptic struggles between good and evil they readily offered themselves to adaptation by the Christian epic poets, too.¹⁰⁸ Epic poetry in the antiquity and the Middle Ages proved to be not only literature, but a form of historiography. It was regarded as “a representation, in

¹⁰⁶ We know this from his promise to write a longer history: *Latiorem historiam mihi a Tua Serenitate commissam, interim, Christo dante, soluto sermone conscribam* (Monaci, *Dedication*).

¹⁰⁷ Philip Hardie, *The Epic Successors of Virgil* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 1993) (hereafter: Hardie, *The Epic*), xi.

¹⁰⁸ Hardie, *The Epic*, 1.

mixed narration, of significant events in the past of a community.”¹⁰⁹ As Aristotle alleged in his *Poetics*, poetry was something more scientific and serious than history, because poetry gave general truths while history gave particular facts.¹¹⁰

The epic connected to the past was always aiming at a future purpose. “History,” Page Dubois asserts,

a man’s reading of the past, is part of poetry especially in the epic, and ... its use in poetry is part of the attempt to control the present and shape the future of the human community. Epic poetry, in the great tradition from Homer [through Virgil and Dante] to Spenser, helped to shape man’s understanding of the past and to project a future for the poet’s patron and audience.”¹¹¹

And this is exactly what Monaci did: he not only narrated historical facts, but he pronounced universal truths about them. The chosen genre allowed the author to make his position (as a Venetian) clear and allowed him to pass value judgments. Undertaking the open detraction of the Neapolitan king, Charles of Durazzo in an epic poem, Monaci did make value judgments. He presented Charles as the representative of the universal image of the bad king, and Mary as the image of the good ruler.

The value judgments the author made in his *Carmen* are numerous. In order to elevate Queen Mary, Monaci chose to judge the Hungarian people; the barons supporting and opposing the queens; but the first and foremost villain was King Charles of Durazzo. He used Queen Margaret, Charles’ wife, to call the Hungarians treacherous, double-tongued and plotting.¹¹² “Sweetest husband, “Margaret addresses

¹⁰⁹ Page Dubois, *History, Rhetorical Description and the Epic* (New Jersey: D.S.Brewer, 1982) (hereafter: Dubois, *History*), 1-

¹¹¹ Dubois, *History*, 3

¹¹² *Discordem gravidamque dolis, odiisque malignis
Ardentem Hungariam mitte, o dulcissime coniux
Novimus in medio sceleratae gentis adulti
Perfidiam ipsorum, heu genti ne crede bilingui
Reliquias regum Apuliae, et miserere tuorum
Suspecto insidias tibi pars inimica vocantur
Semper sollicita, atque indignans tendet, in illos*

the king, “give up the thought of going to Hungary. We know the Hungarians since we grew up among them; they are treacherous, you shouldn’t believe these double-tongued people, do not go there because I suspect plotting against you. They rather bark than speak,¹¹³ and first support Charles,¹¹⁴ but later, at his coronation, commiserate with the Queens and want to murder Charles. At the coronation there was no festive joy, and the promoters of the coronation were filled with remorse, while the crowd pitied the queens. Some loyal people would have liked to kill the king in revenge and spot the church with his blood.¹¹⁵ Monaci paints Palatine Miklós Garai, the ally of the Queens and the treacherous barons opposing the queens in equally dark colours. Nobles from the queens’ party are said to be supporting them from personal interests or to please Mary’s husband.¹¹⁶ The palatine is termed the main source of all evil;¹¹⁷ the nobles are ambitious, tyrannical and treacherous. The Horváti brothers (Ladislaus, Paulus, Stephanus, Johannes) despite of having been raised to power by King Louis the Great, support Charles; and Pál Horváti, Bishop of Zagreb, is worse than all of them, so he too receives the epithet of head of all evil.¹¹⁸

Monaci assesses Charles of Durazzo on two levels: in the contemporary political situation he is unfit as king of Naples, which he manages disastrously, and

Collectum virus in te conflabit. (Monaci, *Carmen*, 129-136)

¹¹³ *Dum talia vulgus*

Praecept, pene ruens, ad celsa palatia latrat ... (Monaci, *Carmen*, 257-258)

¹¹⁴ *Ut visum succedere votis*

Vulgares aures, Budam stipatus iniquis

Regnicolis properat. (Monaci, *Carmen*, 220-222)

¹¹⁵ *Non laeti strepidus, non murmura festa sequuntur,*

Et scelerum auctores introrsum spiritus angit;

Et Reginarum miseret iam mobile vulgus.

Insolita est rerum facies, paucique fideles

Serpere per gladios ardent, iugulare tyrannum,

Et sanctum ingrato templum foedare cruore. (Monaci, *Carmen*, 406-411)

¹¹⁶ *Cum tendant alii votis discordibus esto*

Ad regis natam, et pugnent de coniuge solo. (Monaci, *Carmen*, 95-96)

¹¹⁷ *Prima palatinus labes et causa malorum*

Editus urbe Gara. (Monaci, *Carmen*, 54-55)

¹¹⁸ *Zagrabiae praesul, caput incentorque malorum*

Tantorum, ad facinus quodcumque paratior ipsis. (Monaci, *Carmen*, 103-104)

not suitable to the Hungarian throne, kingdom which he comes to exploit. On the level of the universal Charles is a representative of the prototype of the bad king. In Monaci's judgment Charles sets off to restore the disastrous condition of Naples with Hungarian wealth,¹¹⁹ but he only discloses this to his wife. After listing all the external threats for his kingdom Charles says: I will not even talk about the poverty, if I attain the Hungarian crown, I will help Naples to its feet too. Publicly, however, he declares that he came to restore the unity and peace in the kingdom of Mary.¹²⁰

Concerning Charles' decision the author assesses that in his judgment to come to Hungary reason fell prey to his desire.¹²¹ The mass welcomes his arrival as the end of the internal political turmoil, but the scale of the political fights diminishes in comparison to the universal disturbance of natural order that the coronation of the usurper unleashes. It is in Ovid's descriptions in the *Tristia* that one finds such storms tearing off the roofs of houses and uprooting trees from the ground. Following the coronation scene a tornado brings a storm never before experienced by even the oldest people, destroying houses and de-roofing palaces. All these are accompanied by the maddening noise made by the quarrel of crows bickering and fighting until they bleed. The image of the world about to succumb to chaos is very powerful, foretelling the bloody events to follow and the tragic end of Charles.

Besides the value judgments typical for antique epics, as well as their two levels of interpretation, Monaci's *Carmen* presents another specifically medieval feature: the fusion of antique mythological elements with Christian factors. The events in the poem are determined both by fate and God; the two rulers are at the

¹¹⁹ *Pauperiem taceo; Hungariae si gentis habenas
Attigero, Hungaricis supplebo viribus haustum
Apuliae regnum.* (Monaci, *Carmen*, 124-126)

¹²⁰ *Hungariam venio componere fractam,
Discorder unire duces, et regna sorori
Pacificare meae.* (Monaci, *Carmen*, 218-220)

same time epic heroes and Christian monarchs. Although invited by the party of barons opposing the queens's rule, it is fate that brings Charles to occupy the throne of Hungary,¹²² and fate terrifies him after the recognition of ill-omens that warn of his tragic end.¹²³ Despite the premonition of his wife who tries to dissuade him with all kinds of rhetoric (with wise arguments reminding of the Greeks, and violent outburst in the Asian style) the Neapolitan king, similarly to Aeneas driving Dido into despair, sets off by sea to deprive the Hungarian queens of their crown.¹²⁴ He is hailed by the masses as a male king overthrowing the rule of the queens, but at the same time as a saviour sent from heaven,¹²⁵ only to be later almost killed by the mob who had acclaimed him.¹²⁶ When Charles was wounded, his soldiers might still have saved him, but in Monaci's interpretation of the events God punishes him by preventing help reaching him.¹²⁷ According to Monaci, measured by either antique Greek and Roman, or Christian standards, Charles is the bad king and an anti-hero, bringing destruction to Hungary and universal disorder.

In the *Carmen* as an epic Monaci fused the levels of past, present and future; specific and universal; antique and Christian; very tightly in a typically medieval fashion, thus it is erroneous to believe that parts of it are pure history and others pure

¹²¹ *Victa cadit ratio superata cupidine regni.* (Monaci, *Carmen*, 94)

¹²² *Illyricum fato ducente galea
Sulcat ...* (Monaci, *Carmen*, 200-201).

¹²³ *In triste augurium feralis turbinis iram,
Murmura nigrarum, funestaque bella volucrum
Rex vertit, sendit scelus, et sensisse veretur,
Ac metuens trepidare timet minitania fata.* (Monaci, *Carmen*, 454-457).

¹²⁴ *Impatiens Caroli deliberat ergo
Ambitus heu terram fatalem intrare, dolisque
Virginem spoliare caput ...* (Monaci, *Carmen*, 111-113).

¹²⁵ *Hunc Carolum Omnipotens nobis demisit ab alto.* (Monaci, *Carmen*, 256)

¹²⁶ *Non laeti strepidus, non murmura festa sequuntur,
Et scelerum auctores introrsum spiritus angit;
Et Reginarum miseret iam mobile vulgus.
Insolita est rerum facies, paucique fideles
Serpere per gladios ardent, iugulare tyrannum,
Et sanctum ingrato templum foedare cruore.* (Monaci, *Carmen*, 406-411).

¹²⁷ *Illa tremenda Deum sententia vertit ab illo*

fiction. Modern historiography should bear in mind that for the medieval mind the elements of this construct were complementary and inseparable.

2. The Audience: Propaganda or Self-Fashioning?

Being built on the perfect fusion of the specific political situation and its universal projection; antique parallels and Christian symbols, the *Carmen* argues the case of the bad king versus the good queen, while displaying Monaci's skills as a poet. Other dualities present in the *Carmen* (some of which are formal) betray Monaci's audience, and thus speak about his agenda: he aims to create a work which will fulfill his promise to the Hungarian queen and secure her position; an *oeuvre* which will enhance his own fame at home; and a poem which will contribute to the building of good relations between Hungary and Venice.

The poem has two titles, suggesting two different main focuses: *Carmen seu historia Carolo II cognomento Parvo Rege Hungariae*, fixing Charles in the centre of events; and *De miserabilis casus Reginarum Hungariae*, defining the two queens as the most important characters of the plot.¹²⁸ Apart from the double title, the work has two dedications:¹²⁹ Lorenzo Monaci addresses the dedicatory letter to Queen Mary, but dedicates the poem to Peter Aimo,¹³⁰ approaching him in a friendly tone.¹³¹

*Auxilium frustrata hominum; nam pondere magno
Praecipitant caedente Deo sua crimina.* (Monaci, *Carmen*, 514-516)

¹²⁸ "Carmen seu historia Carolo II cognomento Parvo Rege Hungariae" in *Laurentii de Monacis Veneti Cretae Cancellarii Chronicon de Rebus Venetis etc.*, ed. Flaminius Cornelius, (hereafter: Monaci, *Carmen*) and "Pia Descriptio miserabilis casus illustrium reginarum Hungariae" in *Analecta Monumentorum*; the two titles are based on two manuscripts Cornaro mentions in his first edition of Monaci's works.

¹²⁹ "Ad Serenissimam Dominam Mariam Hungariae Reginam" before the *Dedication*, and "Ad Egregium Strenuum Militem Dominum Petrum Aimo Insulae Cretensis Capitaneum" before the *Carmen* itself.

¹³⁰ Captain of Crete in 1385-1386, first ambassador to be sent by Venice after the queens' ascension in Hungary (*Dizionario Biografico Degli Italiani*).

¹³¹ *Dum tu frena Regis Create, clarissime miles...* Monaci, *Carmen*, 1.

Monaci himself confesses in the dedication to the queen that not all the praise is hers, necessity takes a part, and friends and subjects share it with her.¹³² In this respect, I argue that the poem was aimed at Mary and the Italian public opinion at the same time. Marianne Sághy may well be right in asserting that the poet-notary was mainly concerned with Italian public opinion and not a truthful account of Hungarian history:

Monaci was above all concerned with Italian public opinion and not with the description of events in Hungary as Mary had asked. Mary probably wanted him to record the tragic incidents of the past months – her kidnapping, the murder of her mother, and finally her release – as well as to exonerate her mother from the charge of murder. Instead, Monaci chose to focus on the story of Charles because this interested the Italian public and allowed him to display his anti-Neapolitan bias. He composed a propaganda piece of Venetian political traditions and explained Charles' tragedy in terms of a Greek drama: a tale of human hybris punished by the gods.¹³³

The double agenda Monaci pursues for the benefit of Mary and in the service of Venice as well as his own career is foreshadowed not only by the titles and the double dedication of the poem, but by his argument for the motive for writing as well. On the one hand, he praises the queen for her wisdom and manly concerns in commissioning him to write a history of Hungary:

In the city of Zengg [Senj] you asked me, fairest Ruler, the most beautiful ornament of queens, the shiniest star of Hungary, while I fulfilled the mandate of the Venetian Republic and you discharged me, to pass on by writing what had happened in the modern times there at home and abroad. I was astonished that at such a young age, that is at the age of sixteen, (you had) such manly thoughts, sublime concepts (and) I realized that you are the proof of an ancient and glorious blood in such greatness of a soul.¹³⁴

¹³² *Non omnes tamen istae tuae sunt laudes; detrahit partem necessitas, amici et fideles tecum communicant.* Monaci, *Dedication*.

¹³³ Marianne Sághy, "Aspects of Female Rulership in Late Medieval Literature: The Queen's Reign in Angevin Hungary," *East Central Europe* 20-23, No. 1 (1993-1996): 69-86.

¹³⁴ *In urbe Zencana iniunxisti mihi, Serenissima Princeps, reginarum decus inclitum, et tuae praeclarum sidus Hungariae, dum me Venetorum Reip. Functum mandatis, expeditumque remitters, ut quae ibi domi forisque temporibus sunt gesta modernis, ad secula ventura scribendo transferrem. Obstupui in tali aetatula, sextum enim et decimum agebas annum, tam virilem curam, et sublimem*

On the other hand he presents his *oeuvre* as a chivalrous initiative of a Venetian public figure to defend the Hungarian queen against Italian gossip:

Surely your Majesty is not unfamiliar with what was being widely spoken in Italy and especially between the Tuscans, that Charles, king of Apulia, was the furthest from the ambition of the Hungarian throne, who thought no such thing, was invited by you and your fairest mother to the sceptre and urged, though innocent, and betrayed by the cause had been surrounded by your trickeries and was deprived from the light of his life. (...) Thus I send this to your majesty, to defend you and your innocent mother, if it can from the disgraceful sin and the insolent teeth of the mass throughout the centuries.¹³⁵

With this turn Monaci casts himself in the role of the chivalrous poet rushing to the defense of the virtuous, virgin queen. It is humanist self-fashioning and building the image of the queen as the prototype of a gentle and frail lady in need of the protection of strong men and the alliance of strong states. Yet, some historians take this allusion, as other topoi of the poem, at face value, seeing the Italian comments as the main fuel of Monaci's motivation. According to Mario Poppi, for example, Monaci wrote the *Carmen* on his return to Italy to silence the bad rumours concerning queens Mary and Elizabeth.¹³⁶ No historian, however, acknowledges the following lines, that the poem turned many opponents of the queens to tears,¹³⁷ although these affirmations too were conceived in unity by Monaci.

The audience of the poem was the Hungarian court and the queen's entourage, as well as the Italian literate public. As an important piece of historical literature for both Hungary and Venice the *Carmen* was preserved in the former country in the reworking of later Hungarian chronicles, but we find the only surviving manuscript

conceptum, specimenquetam vetusti et gloriosi sanguinis in tanta animi magnitudine recognovi. (Monaci, Dedication).

¹³⁵ *Sane Maiestatem Tuam non lateat, quod in Italia, et praesertim apud Etruscos, late ferebantur, Carolum Regem Apuliae, ab ambitione Pannonici culminis remotionissimum, nil tale meditantem, ad sceptrum Hungariae per Te, et serenissimam genitricem tuam sponte vocatum, et sollicitatum, insontem, et proditum ab re, vestris fuisse circumventum insidiis, et vitali lumine spoliatum. (...) Transmitto igitur illud Maiestati Tuae, Te, et innocentissimam genitricem, si quid potest, ab infami culpa et procacis vulgi dentibus per secula defensurum.* (Monaci, Dedication).

and the first edition on the peninsula. Concerning the two countries for which it was produced, the *Carmen* offers itself as a piece of poetry to elevate Monaci's personal fame while serving the mutual interests of Venice and Hungary.

3. Contrastive Constructs: Charles and the Queens

The tale of Charles and the Hungarian queens, with regard to its double audience, is set first in contemporary Italy mentioning the downfall of all the enemies of Venice; then moves to end fourteenth-century Hungary. As previously shown, it can also be seen as a Greek tragedy of human hybris, the fake quest of a medieval Aeneas, or the story of the Christian penance of an excommunicated usurper. According to Monaci, Charles of Durazzo is the usurper, the unlawful ruler, without a well-founded claim to the Hungarian throne, thus by conclusion Mary is the rightful ruler.

Queen Mary's actual political power was probably little known at the time of her reign, so Monaci chose a traditional rhetorical method for the *mise en valeur* of her qualities: working with contrasts. Mary's performance is not meant to be the main part in the piece. The author holds up to his audience a negative mirror of Charles of Durazzo, the proud, ambitious and deceitful king. In his shadow and in the turmoil of the events Mary almost has to be lured out from behind her mother's skirt to reinforce the idea of the good ruler. But why do we get this faint image about the first Queen of Hungary?

¹³⁶ "Tornato a Venezia, per far tacere le critiche rivolte all'operato delle regine Maria ed Elisabetta d'Ungheria, accusate d'aver fatto uccidere a tradimento il re Carlo II di Napoli, scrisse il carne in esametri Pia descriptio miserabilis casus illustrium reginarum Hungariae, dedicandolo al duca di Creta Pietro Emo" (Poppi, "Ricerche," 169-170).

¹³⁷ *Hoc tanti successus hactenus extitit carmen, ut nonullos eruditissimos viros, Regis eiusdem Caroli zelatores, in contrarium repente mutatis affectibus, in lacrymas pias, tui olim acerbi casus miseratione, compulerit.* Monaci, *Dedication*.

Popularizing unprecedented female rule in patriarchal Hungary could not have been an easy task. The few attributes that characterize Mary (*generosa Maria, Altera natarum, / solium regale parentis*),¹³⁸ her few short monologues and actions, are used by Lorenzo Monaci to draw an image of a gentle virgin, crowned king of Hungary; a submissive woman with the manly qualities of a ruler. As a virgin, Mary's gender is hidden in her role;¹³⁹ she is portrayed as a woman, whose gentle rule dissatisfies the barons.¹⁴⁰ She is, however, the legitimate ruler of Hungary, based on royal lineage and noble blood. So she steps as a king into the lineage of rightful royal ancestors, two of whom are mentioned: King Saint Stephen, who converted Hungarians to Christianity, is mentioned in connection with the coronation church, which was sanctified by his body lying there¹⁴¹ as well as following the coronation scene of Charles when the holy emblem belonging to him, which had been used for centuries at coronations, broke, not wanting to give the royal prerogative to the usurper.¹⁴² King Louis the Great is the other ancestor mentioned, who brought the people to a more civilized and cultured way of life. The sight of his tomb preceding the coronation of Charles reminds the queens of their previous position as rulers and the deprivation of

¹³⁸ Monaci, *Carmen*, 45-46

¹³⁹ *Scandit inaequali auspicio generosa Maria,
Altera natarum, solium regale parentis,
Virgineumque caput sacrum diadema coronat.
Hanc regem appellant animis concordibus omnes
Regnicolae, illustrant hoc regis nomine sexum.* (Monaci, *Carmen*, 45-49)

¹⁴⁰ ... sic pestibus implent
*Regnum virginei spreto moderamine sceptri;
Postquam animus procerum insolita dulcedine captos
Imperii blandi affectus tenuere superbi.* (Monaci, *Carmen*, 78-81)

¹⁴¹ *In medio templum surgit de marmore; Sancti
Hoc Stephani illustrat regis venerabile corpus,
Qui sacrae ad fidei convertit lumina gentem
Hungaricam, extinguens veterum simulacra deorum.* (Monaci, *Carmen*, 371-374)

¹⁴² *Stephanique insignia sancti
Regia procedunt, iam tot servata per annos
Religione pia venturis Regibus illud
Missile vexilli, quo freta est auspice dudum
Prima dies regni, tactum testudine valvae
Frangitur in partes, dedignatumque tyrannum
Et Regum auspicio, et sacrus regalibus uti.* (Monaci, *Carmen*, 419-424)

their rightful position. Monaci mentions the most prominent Árpadian ancestor and the closest Angevin relative in the service of elevating the rule of the queens.

Without mentioning the royal lineage of Charles and customary law on which he could base his royal claims, Monaci characterizes Charles with ambition, pride and deceitfulness. He is torn with desire for the Hungarian throne and fights with himself because he recognizes Louis' achievements, the help he received from the queens, and Mary's right to rule,¹⁴³ but still decides to follow his ambition. His ambition corrupts his judgment, so reason is silenced and he cannot listen neither to his own thoughts, nor to his wife's warning.¹⁴⁴

Apart from being a king, Mary is a queen, set in the *Carmen* in the company of powerful women rulers, like her mother, Elizabeth Kotromanic, who assumed the regency during her reign; Joan of Naples, the scandalous but successful Neapolitan queen, loved by her people;¹⁴⁵ and Margaret, wife of Charles, the wise, prophesying queen, whom history proved right in her warning. As a royal child Mary is submissive to the queen regent and her advisors. Contrary to her will of not giving up the throne she abides to the instructions of the queen mother, although this in Monaci's assessment affects her deeply: while the mother complains, the child does not retaliate but accepts the situation with tears.¹⁴⁶ In Elizabeth's argumentation the loss of power is not as bad as if they would meet the end of Joan of Naples: God forbid, she says,

¹⁴³ *Interea Carolum ambitio saevissima carpit
Culminis Hungarici; at mentem premit acre duellum.
Hinc merita ante oculos Ludovici ingentia Regis,
Auxiliumque recens dominarum, et sanguis, et haeres,
Et diadema datum; trux ambitus aestuat inde.* (Monaci, *Carmen*, 89-93)

¹⁴⁴ *Coniugis haud motus sermonibus, efferat aures
Ambitio internis haerens scelerata medullis.* (Monaci, *Carmen*, 147-148)

¹⁴⁵ Raia, *Giovanna I di Angio*.

¹⁴⁶ *Dum tantas rumpit genitrix miseranda querelas,
Filia nil contra; lacrymarum flumina fundunt
Lumina; multiplicat gemitus rude pectus amarus,
Et crebri intorsum singultus verba vocabant.*
(Monaci, *Carmen*, 322-325)

that we have the violent death of Joan.¹⁴⁷ Monaci uses the topos of the wise old oracle, representative of the collective memory to warn the people not to forsake the rule of the queens. The old man depicts the end of Joan's reign and the results of the mid-fourteenth century famine on the peninsula as a punishment for the Neapolitans for having forsaken their queen and awaiting the Hungarians too if they disrespect the memory of Louis the Great and thus the reign of his daughter.¹⁴⁸

Margaret, the Neapolitan queen present in the poem is the example of the good wife, pleading with Charles not to leave; but so is Mary. She is deserted by her husband,¹⁴⁹ but as a wife she stays loyal to him, asking to be allowed to follow him. Not being able to hide her pain, the crying child eloquently declares: "I will not give up the crown of my father which is rightfully mine, allow me to leave Hungary and follow my husband into exile."¹⁵⁰

Mary's features are constructed on the one hand through her roles as a virgin ruler, a royal child and a wife, on the other hand, in contrast with those possessed by Charles: her humility is in contrast with his pride; her renunciation in contrast to his ambition; her clarity and directness of speech define her as an eloquent ruler and are juxtaposed to the lies and deceitfulness of the Neapolitan. Charles, as previously mentioned, lies to the queens about his reason for coming,¹⁵¹ asserting that he came to

¹⁴⁷ ... *quod absit*,

Restat ut aesquemus violenta morte Johannam. (Monaci, *Carmen*, 320-321)

¹⁴⁸ *Apuliae populos pacem, sortemque secundam*

Inconstanti animo libertatemque ferentes,

Atque novarum avidos rerum inclinare superbo

Praedoni, et tantae dominae calcare ruinam

Non puduit. (Monaci, *Carmen*, 267-271)

¹⁴⁹ ... *insidias speculatus ab omni*

Parte Sigismundus deserta coniuge fugit. (Monaci, *Carmen*, 211-212)

¹⁵⁰ *Viscera redentem lacrymosa puella, dolorem*

Dissimulare nequit, sic apta voce locuta :

Nolo, refutare, ingeminat, diadema paternum

Et mihi iure datum. Hungariam, permittite, linguam,

Exul ad expulsum coniux properabo maritum. (Monaci, *Carmen*, 301-305).

¹⁵¹ ... *at ille*

Pectoreum gratae pietatis imagine falsa

pacify the kingdom, but the queens know that he speaks dishonestly and was driven by the desire to rule.¹⁵² Charles alleges to respect the memory of Louis the Great,¹⁵³ but cunningly prepares the takeover of power, by gathering people for election.¹⁵⁴

The young queen speaks on three occasions in the poem: at the first meeting with Charles she bluntly and straightforwardly asks his obedience, referring to the merit of her father.¹⁵⁵ At the demand of Charles' envoy for her abdication she refuses, and requires to be allowed to follow her husband into exile. The third time she asserts that she would rather give up her life than the crown of Hungary, grown to her being.¹⁵⁶ In historical context, Mary's three verbal manifestations summarize the essence of her position: she is the daughter of Louis the Great; wife of the brother of the Holy Roman Emperor; and consecrated ruler of Hungary. Her monologues in the function of the rightful ruler are characterized by courage. The acts of courage make her, according to the medieval interpretation, less like a woman (less weak) and more like a man (more virile).¹⁵⁷ In her humility Mary is strong. Similarly to Richard III,

Conatus velare nefas. (Monaci, *Carmen*, 214-215)

¹⁵² ... *falso licet ore locutum*

Reginae credant regni cupidine tractum. (Monaci, *Carmen*, 222-223)

¹⁵³ ... *Parens reverenda, soror carissima, reddit,*

Dum calidus nostros agitabit spiritus artus

Magnanimi patris, et meritorum haerebit imago.

(Monaci, *Carmen*, 239-241)

¹⁵⁴ (...) *rerumque invadit habenas,*

Moxque velut pacem sancturus, grande sub astu

Colloquium edicens, vulgorum seditiosa

Colluvie complet Budam. (Monaci, *Carmen*, 245-248)

¹⁵⁵ ... *ergo propinquant Caroli solemniter ambae*

Occurunt, curru aurato, pompaque superba,

Et medium accipiunt, meritorum filia patris

Prima memento mei. (Monaci, *Carmen*, 230-233).

¹⁵⁶ *Hei mihi, cara parens, ego regis filia vitam*

Cum regnis ingressa, inter fastigia adulta

Regia, praeferens tanto splendore meorum,

Iamque coronata, et solio venerata paterno

Sic vitae annexum sine luce relinquere sceptrum

Non potero : haec rauca, et confusa voce puella,

Veste simul lacrymis undantia lumina siccans. (Monaci, *Carmen*, 346-352).

¹⁵⁷ Nancy Black about Esther and Judith in *Medieval Narratives of Accused Queens* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003).

she refuses to “un-king”¹⁵⁸ herself in order for another king to be consecrated, and would rather accept martyrdom by death or exile than forsake the sacral legitimacy of her royal blood and lineage.

By refusing to give up the crown Mary emphasizes the indelible character of consecrated kingship. The deposition is not valid because the unction cannot be annulled by words; the coronation of a female ruler is as valid as that of a male king. Monaci presents her as a gentle virgin queen, silent and moved to tears by the loss of the throne,¹⁵⁹ and a responsible ruler, defining her position by political speech. Monaci depicts her as the rightful queen for Hungary and the universally accepted ideal of a good ruler. She is the real hero of the poem and already in the *Dedication* characterized by wisdom, eloquence of speech,¹⁶⁰ manly concern for history, nobility and invincibility of the soul of an elderly person, strength and endurance of character, as well as gratitude to the Venetians. This last attribute of the queen, her gratefulness to the Venetians, stands out from the *Dedication* as the one that will pass her from *tempus* to *aevum*, from the present to immortality. Monaci writes:

It is of noble and truly immortal soul to extend life's cares beyond human space. Age is the destroyer of everything; no thing has such greatness which doesn't collapse at the beginning of eternity, unless it is taken under the protection of the pen.

You added with elevated speech: do not forget to insert in the history that I was set free by the help of the Venetians, and among the Venetians I found again from hopelessness the lost and mourned freedom among my people, what is more, with their armed fleet first,

¹⁵⁸ Ernst Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: a study in mediaval political theology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957).

¹⁵⁹ *Dum tantas rumpit genitrix miseranda querelas,
Filia nil contra; lacrymarum flumina fundunt
Lumina; multiplicat gemitus rude pectus amarus,
Et crebri introrsum singultus verba vocabant.
Corde puellari, mirum, tantum potuisse*

Iacturam regni, et tantum licuisse dolori. (Monaci, *Carmen*, 322-327).

¹⁶⁰ *Adiecisti insuper in supremo colloquio...* [Besides you added with elevated speech] (Monaci, *Dedication*).

completely wiping out all fear I got back a strong hope for the great fortune of mine after every remnant of my misfortune disappeared.¹⁶¹

Showing traces of the Christian stereotype of suffering martyr princesses, Mary awakens sympathy by both her virtue and her suffering. Her humility becomes gratitude for having been saved. Her gratitude in Monaci's account, however, does not transcend the human sphere, but is oriented towards a very earthly power, namely, Venice.¹⁶² Immortality is not conceived by Monaci neither as a result of the religious career pursued by royal princesses, nor by the ambitious conquests of proud kings, but in a typically humanistic way: immortality through the written word, fame preserved by the pen of the humanist writer.

Monaci uses the rhetorical device of directly addressing both rulers: he addresses Mary to tell her that her fame will live forever, and addresses Charles to tell him that the news his disgrace will last for eternity. "Flee to Naples," Monaci warns Charles before his murder, and continues: "Think about what the sign on your ship says: that you will be shipwrecked and will not be interred. Desiring a kingdom without any right, you will die and lie unburied."¹⁶³ Then, he closes the poem by concluding: "Neither the great wealth, your kingdoms, nor depriving the queens were worth anything. The all-powerful fate denied you even the grave. You will be the

¹⁶¹ *Generosi et vere immortalis est animi magnitudine trans humanum spatium vitae curas extendere. Vastatrix est omnium vetustas ; nulla est tantarum rerum magnificentia, quae, nisi in calami protectionem suscepta, aevo promi non corruat. Adiecisti insuper in supremo colloquio: et non omittas insere historiae, me Venetorum auxilio captivitatis iugo subductam, libertatem inter meos perditam et iam deploratam, ex insperato inter Venetos invenisse, superque ipsorum armata classe primum, omni funditus eradicata formidine, spem firmam concepisse tantarum fortunarum mearum, reliquiis omnibus praeteritae calamitatis abiectis ...* (Monaci, *Dedication*).

¹⁶² The letter from the papacy instructs Mary, following her release, to consider her saving as the result of the prayers of the Church, which she should help strengthen.

¹⁶³ *Effuge in Apuliam, et letalem desere terram.*

Contemplare tuae signum fatale carinae,

Quam tu armamentis spoliata pectore gestas.

Quid nisi naufragium pertenditur absque sepulcro?

Ardua regna petens sie vi, sine iure parentas.

Sulcantem sine remigio, e temone profundum,

Qui tandem in media perit insepultus arena. (Monaci, *Carmen*, 447-453)

subject of a sad poem and will stand as a negative example for kings for centuries to come.”¹⁶⁴

On the chessboard on which the queen wins because the king is annihilated, Lorenzo Monaci records with sharp accuracy the movements of the other players too. Elizabeth, the queen mother, is the most dynamic character of the *Carmen*, supported by one group of barons and opposed by another. She controls, instructs, diplomatises, pleads and plots. Her dramatic presence is extremely powerful and she writes her own history. Despite the fact that in the *Dedication* Lorenzo Monaci sets out to defend the reputation of both queens,¹⁶⁵ the poem leaves Elizabeth with the stain of the murder of Charles of Durazzo and the image of the “scheming woman.”¹⁶⁶ In Monaci’s construct, Elizabeth is the powerful queen regent, defined by her political actions and their justification; she is the one who abdicates in the name of her daughter, and the one who regains the throne of Hungary by concocting the murder of Charles.

Elizabeth is nowhere around at the time of the commission of Monaci’s poem, having been killed by the rebellious barons, so she can be sacrificed as a scapegoat¹⁶⁷ on the Venetian altar. The constructs about her and the other characters of the poem were made by Monaci in the knowledge of the *status quo* of events in 1387: Elizabeth and her advisor, Miklós Garai, dead, carry the blame of the murder of the rival king; Mary ruling Sigismund’s side, becomes the model of an exemplary wife and

¹⁶⁴ *Nunc quid opes, quid regna tibi, quid profuit altas
Reginas sceptris spoliare potentibus! Ecce
Heu dolor, heu levis ad dandum tam grandia regna
Urbibus ex tantis, eadem nunc illa sepulcrum
Omnipotens fortuna negat, per secula magnum
Exemplum aerumnae humanae, et miserabile carmen*

Certe eris, ac speculum et documentum Regibus ingens. (Monaci, *Carmen*, 554-560)

¹⁶⁵ *Transmitto igitur illud Maiestati Tuae, Te, et innocentissimam genitricem, si quid potest, ab infami culpa et procacis vulgi dentibus per secula defensurum.* (Monaci, *Dedication*).

¹⁶⁶ For more on the topos of the sceming woman see: Michelle Bolduc, *The Medieval Poetics of Contraries* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2006).

Venetian-friendly queen. Her image survives as a literary construct of the Venetian poet-notary from amongst the debris at the end fourteenth-century Hungarian internal turmoil, as well as the larger Mediterranean political landscape.

¹⁶⁷ Bak, *Queens as Scapegoats*, 222- 233.

VI. Conclusion

This thesis has shown that Lorenzo Monaci's *Carmen*, an epic poem extensively quoted in historiography as a historical source, is in fact a literary construct. Scholars have never subjected the *Carmen* to a literary analysis. Instead, they treated parts of the text as history, while rejected other parts as fiction. The *Carmen* is, however, a literary product obeying to the rules of epic tradition: it has two levels of interpretation; it abounds in classical and Christian symbolism; respects the traditions of the genre and uses various devices.

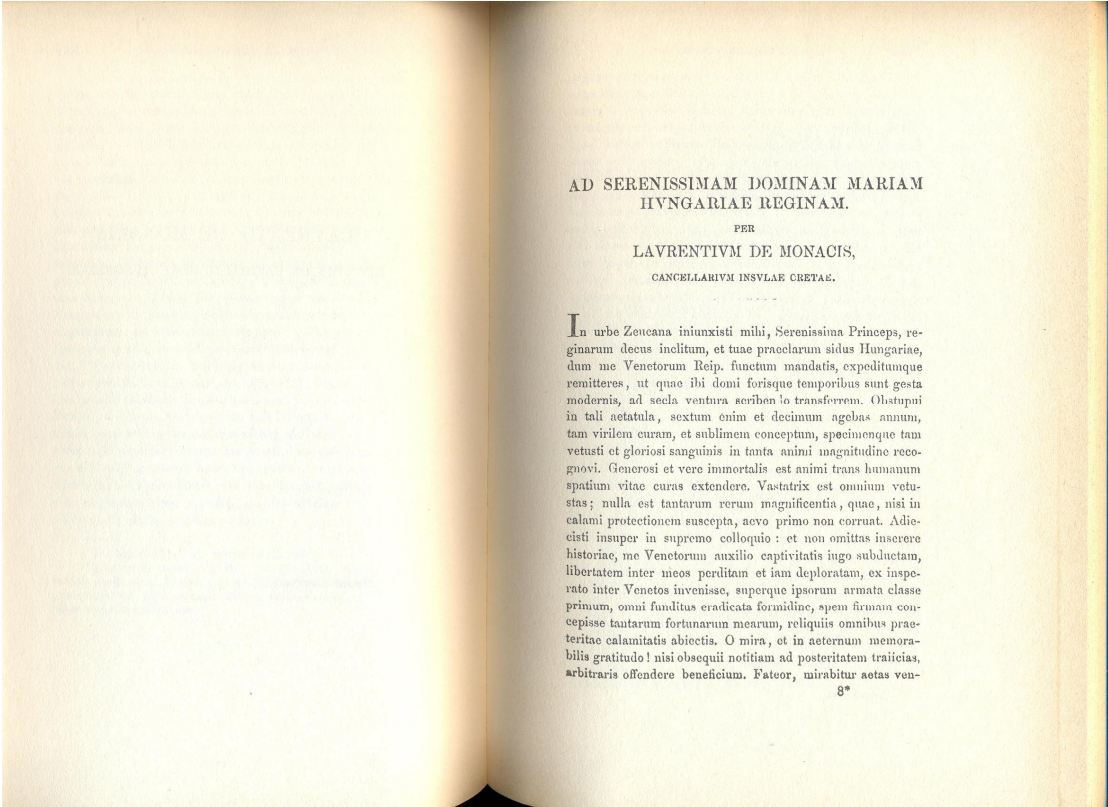
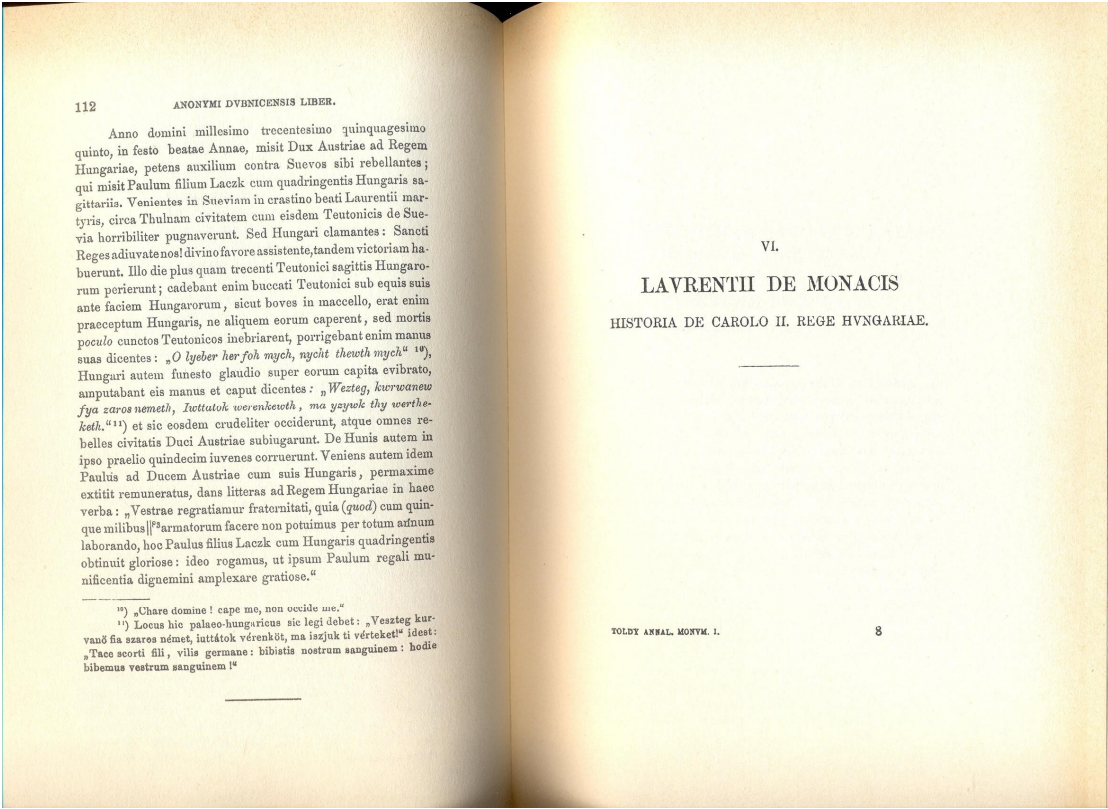
Concerning the image of Queen Mary, the first female ruler of Hungary, I argue that Monaci's work is a *Gesamtkunstwerk*. Synthesizing the best poetic principles, best rhetoric devices, ancient models and Christian symbols, it attempts to gather firsthand information and present the most convincing version of the Hungarian events, while exhibiting strong national consciousness and humanist pride in an artfully subtle way. This thesis tried to do justice to the poetic values of the *Carmen* and argues that the claims and the constructs of the poem cannot be accepted as history only with the knowledge of three important contexts and their implications. These contexts, which have extensively been dealt with in the chapters leading up to my literary analysis are: the Venetian viewpoint of the author: poet, chronicler and diplomat; the precedents of the change in end fourteenth-century Venetian-Hungarian relations; as well as the connection between internal tensions in Hungary and the difficulties in building the royal image.

These aspects have influenced my analysis. It is possible that they will continue to influence any analysis in the future: historic, literary, linguistic, etc.

Without the indispensable contextualization, that I have done for the first time, results risk remaining descriptive, and one-sided.

Lorenzo Monaci's *Carmen* functions as an artfully constructed window through which late fourteenth-century Hungarian events and the image of the first queen of Hungary are shown to us by a Venetian poet-notary. Its literary constructs presented themselves for deeper analysis and disclosed the author's bias, larger international political issues as well as universal concerns of the time.

Appendix 1



tura, te regiam virginem in tanto natam et veneratam fastigio, in adhuc crescentibus annis sinistrae et indigne sortis acerbitate senili et invicto animo tolerasse; interque tot aestus civiles, bellorum strepitus, clandestinas insidias, simulatas latentes, odia aperta, insolentissimos mores, rerumque discrimina, saevientis malignitatem superasse fortunae. Non omnes tamen istae tuae sunt laudes; detrahit partem necessitas, amici et fideles tecum communicant. Ast illum tuum supra aetatem et excelsum, et gloriosum conceptum, et hanc insigne et admirabilem gratitudinem, quae duo a solius animi tui stupenda virtute proveniunt, ampliori laude omnis aevi memoria celebrabit. Sane Maiestatem Tuam non lateat, quod in Italia, et praesertim apud Etruscos, late ferebatur, Carolum Regem Apuliae, ab ambitione Pannonici culminis remotissimum, nil tale meditantem, ad sceptrum Hungariae per Te, et serenissimam genitricem tuam sponte vocatum, et sollicitatum, innotentem, et proditum ab re, vestris fuisse circumventum insidiis, et vitali lumine spoliatum. Ego autem in Hungaria residens pro mea republica, tempore quo te sacrilegis hostilium servorum manibus intercepta, regnum tuum cruentis regnicularum disceptationibus flagrabat bellorum incendiis, oppositum inveni, dum rei veritatem a fide dignis de industria curiosissime inquisissem. Aegre igitur patiens, in tam dissona et iniqua huius reciprocatatione negotii, excusari iniuriam, et innocentiam criminari, dum ad salutem Tui de mandato Veneto saepe repatrior et revertor, invasionem regni Tui et mortem Caroli metrico sermone contexui. Hoc tanti successus hactenus extitit carmen, ut nonnullis eruditissimos viros, Regis eiusdem Caroli zelatores, in contrarium repente mutatis affectibus, in lacrymas pias, tui olim acerbi casus miseratione, compulerit. Transmitto igitur illud Maiestati Tuae, Te, et innocentissimam genitricem, si quid potest, ab infami culpa et prociacis vulgi dentibus per secula defensurum. Latiorum historiam mihi a Tua Serenitate commissam, interim, Christo dante, soluto sermone conscribam.

Datum etc.

PIA DESCRIPTIO

MISERABILIS CASVS ILLVSTRIVM REGINARVM H.
PER LAVR. DE MONACIS VENETVM.

AD REGIVM STRENTVM MILITEM DOMINVM PETRVM AIMO INSVLAT CRETENSIS
CAPITANEVM.

DVM tu frena regis Cretae, clarissime miles,
Partibus Italiae, et golidis Aquilonis in oris
Fortuna omnipotens in reges fulminat altos,
In dominos, mundique duces altissimus ille
Bernabos arripotens, stupor, et tuba magna per orbem 5
Imperium excelsum mutavit carcere toto.
Circumventa sui furia rabieque popelli
Nutavit domus Estensis; duo maxima mundi
Regna tenens Carolus, qui iam concusserat omnem
Italiam terrore sui, stat cespite nudo 10
Frigidus extremo spoliatus honore sepulcri.
Austrius in bello iuvenis dum pugnat, acerbum
Incidit in vulnus; miserando vulnere vitam
Perdidit infelix, animam cum sanguine fundens.
Scaliger ille Canis, gestarum gloria rerum 15
Ceu fulgur quondam populis, est lapsus ab alto
Culmine, latratus ceciderunt ore superbi.
Nunc Verona canis morsu lacerata per aevum
Est vice fatorum anginea dulcedine sparsa.
Plaustrifer humana pinguescens caede tyrannus 20
Nominis hostis atrox Itali; semperque lacessens
Barbariem in Latium, Venetorum sanguinis ardens
Procubuit solitus iuvenis mandare; iubetur

Nunc parere senex. Patavumque reliquit, inermem
Secum odium, vanamque ferens sine viribus iram. 25
Horum parviloquo perstrinxit carmine sortes.
Nam Reginarum Hungariae miserabile fatum
Cum lacrymis cantare paro; iuvat altius istud
Ortiri, et longis animum satiare querelis.
Pannonicos homines degentes more ferarum, 30
Barbarum imbellem, indocilem, et squalentibus olim
Brutorum indigenum vestitus pellibus, orbis
Sprevit, eos grandis Ludovicus: gloria regum
Hungariae, ad ritum humanum, ad civilia traxit,
Aptavitque operi Martia, fecitque tremendos 35
Gentibus extornis, et sidera tangere fama.
Regnicolas humiles hic fugere fecit in altum.
Ille casus inopes ad grandia tecta colonos
Transtulit, arbitrium dans sanguinis, ille propinquos
Viribus excelsis ad regia sceptrum levavit. 40
Extulit et dominos terrarum ex faucibus hostis.
In summo tandem sua liquens culmine regna
Migrat ab humanis, geminas stirpisque virilis
Linqvit inops natas ingratis gentibus heros.
Scandit inaequali auspicio generosa Maria, 45
Altera natarum, solum regale parentis,
Virgineumque caput sacrum diadema coronat.
Hanc regem appellant animis concordibus omnes
Regnicolae, illustant hoc regis nomine sexum.
Elisabeth Regina parens clarissima natae 50
Iungitur, et magnas regui moderatur habenas.
Sic transire placet dum nubilis impleat annos
Virgo thori; et Regem faciat Regina maritum.
Prima palatinus latus et causa malorum
Editus urbe Gara, pingui tellure locata, 55
Qua Sava multifido citra praeterfluit alveo
Altius unda Dravi, rapido qui gurgite currens
Hungariam illyricis scindens confinibus omnes
Saepe tollit aquas, Histrumque potentior intrat.
Post Regis fatum in te to sublimis honore 60

Hic remanens, mira totum se dedicat arte
Reginae obsequiis, pietatis imagine quadam.
Sexum ubi credentem, et facilem in sua vota retraxit,
Ad libitum exercebat extorta licentia sceptrum 65
In grandem invidiam atque odium crudele Gareensem
Elisabethque iacit; proceresque tyrannidis ambos
Dum culpant, parere negant, fiuntque tyranni.
Spernitur interea dum regis sexus ab ipsa
Primorum puritate, gravis discordia surgit 70
Ambitione truci; nam dum petit ille ducatum,
Hic vult esse comes; hic banus; anhelat ad altos
Nec defert sibi quisque gradus; clam livida serpit
Invidia; haec parit acre odium; metus inde barones
Dividit: in partes plebs scinditur ipsa malignas, 75
Et regni totis in viscera viribus itur.
Sanguinolenta novos generat Bellona tyrannos;
Phaetontis veluti sprete levitate favillis
Ignipedes implere solum: sic pestibus implent
Regnum virginei spreto moderamine sceptri; 80
Postquam animus procerum insolita dulcedine captos
Imperii blandi affectus tenuere superbi,
Inveniunt sceleri causas, armisque nefandis,
Proque Sigismundo hi vulgant pugnare marito
Reginae. Hungariam negat hic parere Bohemo, 85
Francigenamque vocat, se spondet utrique puella:
Tanta potest procerum discordia sacra suorum,
Sic laniant regnum pugnantem nomine regis
Incerti, et terras extorquent Marte rebeli.
Interea Carolum ambitio saevissima carpit 90
Culminis Hungarici; at mentem premit aere duellum.
Hinc merita ante oculos Ludovici ingentia Regis,
Auxiliumque recens dominarum, et sanguis, et haerens,
Et diadema datum; trux ambitus aestuat inde.
Victa cadit ratio superata cupidine regni. 95
Cum tendant alii votis discordibus esto
Ad Regis natam, et pugnent de coniuge solo,
Ladislau, Paulus, Stephanus, banusque Johannes

Ad proceres medio quos Rex de sanguine fratres
 Extulit, et celsis donavit honoribus altas
 Committunt a patre datas in pignora vires
 Pro rege Apuliae: superat crudelia fratrum
 Arma trium immani Paulus feritate togatus.
 Zagrabiae praesul, caput inceptorque malorum
 Tantorum, ad facinus quodcumque parator ipse.
 Hi sceleri adiciunt quem Rex Ludovicus agresti
 De tuguro, partem vulgi, tenchrisque iacentem
 Sustulit; et magno Auranae praefecit honori.
 Et Stephanum Segie; postquam unio perfida facta est,
 Pergit in Apuliam truculentus Episcopus, atque
 Ardentem inflammat Regem, cupidumque fatigat
 Ad scelus. Impatiens Caroli deliberat ergo
 Ambitus heu terram fatalem intrare, dolisque
 Virgineum spoliare caput: mox talibus aures
 Reginae aggreditur castris in penetralibus urbis:
 Pannonicum icircio in Regnum carissima coniux
 Decretum est iri, et communem ducere natum,
 Cui dabo compositis rebus diadema, potensque
 Italiam repetam; huic regno spes altera nulla est.
 Pertulimus duos hac tempestate labores,
 Perferimusque soror, sed adhuc graviora morantur:
 Hinc Severina domus, hinc summi fulminat ira
 Pontificis populos inopes, urbesque rebelles,
 Gallorumque minas, et, quae contraria bellis,
 Pauperiem taceo; Hungariae si gentis habenas
 Attigero, Hungaricis supplebo viribus haustum
 Apuliae regnum; neutrum vel utrumque paratur.
 Falluit in verbis tristitia Regina mariti,
 Nec tenuit lacrymas, et sic turbata profatur:
 Discordem gravidamque dolis, odiisque malignis
 Ardentem Hungariam mitte, o dulcissime coniux.
 Novimus in medio scleratae gentis adulti
 Perfidiam ipsorum, heu genti ne crede bilingui,
 Reliquias regum Apuliae, et miserere tuorum.
 Suspecto insidias tibi pars inimica vocantur

Semper sollicita, atque indignans tendet, in illos
 Collectum virus in te conflabit; omitto
 Reginae dominas; alienam ne pete sortem.
 Hic tibi debetur sceptrum, cum magna Tonantis
 Signa doceant, hostem Ottonem qui milite multo
 Fidentem stravit; qui totam armisque virisque
 Calcantem Ausoniam, populis, opibusque superbum
 Te regnis, animaque tua spoliare volentem
 Percussit sine Marte duces; qui solus ab alto
 Innumeros variis dispersit cladibus hostes.
 Ipse viam Deus inveniens miserabitur ultro.
 Interea duos tolerando vince labores.
 Coniugis haud motus sermonibus, efferat aures
 Ambitio internis haecrens sclerata medullis.
 Dumque iterum tentat lacrymans revocare maritum;
 Foemineis, inquit, non spernam fletibus altam
 Fortunam, quae sponte venit, nec culmine natum
 Praudabo Hungarico; iam nos manet uncta galea.
 Ibinus. Haec fatus vestigia flectit ad urbem.
 Tunc lacrymae versae in iram, precibusque relictis
 Menadis in morem, aut Timbreae virginis, amens
 Insequitur Regina virum clamoribus alis:
 Quo trahis ad mortem natum saevissime patrum?
 I solus, si te fati vicinia tangit;
 Hunc solum moestae solatia linque parenti.
 Auxilium populi miserandis vocibus ipsa
 Implorabo genis laceris, sparsisque capillis.
 Talia vociferans mediam ruitura per urbem
 Saepe repulsa sui, et manibus pulsata mariti
 Venerat ad portam castris. Rex mandat ab urbe
 Arceri Reginam, et pontem ad moenia transit.
 Illa ignita genas tremulas, oculisque favillans,
 Labraque concutiens, et toto corpore praecipens
 Instat ad egressum; vix tanto indagine clausus
 Impeto trux aper in lucos evadere apertos
 Aestuat, et capiti exclamat, scleratae satellas,
 Te faciam pelagi fundum cervicis tenere,

Cum sceptrum attigero, et sceptrum mihi crede propinquat,
 Ni sinis: et postquam multum frustra minata
 Indignata redit sua per vestigia tandem.
 Mox Carolus iusti stimulus agitatur amoris.
 Accipit hinc fletus, hinc iras viscere toto
 Coniugis; ante oculos habitu deserta furenti
 Pervolat, et variae iactant suspiria curae.
 Conatu in tanto gravis est absentia nati
 Et miseratur amans; tandem succumbit amori,
 Linquere pollicitus natum, ducique parenti
 Imperat; ereptum veluti de fauce baratri
 Hunc licet excipiat, tamen angitur, atque mariti
 Aegra vicem sortemque dolet, cunctisque paratis
 Digressu extremo dum Rex solatur anhelam
 Dulciter, et patrio commendat pectore natos,
 Sic imo ducens suspiria corde locuta est:
 Ad caedem heu surda ruis irrevocabilis auro
 Illicet ut portus linques, altumque tenebris
 Infatis velis, habitum regalis amictus
 Deponam, vestesque nigras viduanda parabo;
 Morte tua, expectans pavidas quod vulneret auras
 Nuncius, et moestas terroribus impleat urbes.
 Regum verba volant; referet mea fama per orbem
 Uxoris querulae monitis testata fideles.
 Ibis: et hic clauso genuit Regina palato.
 Coniuge Caesarea dotata sanguine natus
 Hungarico interea potitur; nec sparsa iugalis
 Fama thori suspendit iter, minuitque malignam
 Spem Caroli. Illyricum fato ducente galea
 Sulcat, et ut ventum Segnanae ad moenia rupis
 Nauta iacit ferrum, proramque retorquet ad aequor.
 Inde ibi principibus sceleris convictus, ad urbem
 Zagrabiam pergit, placuitque hac sistere terra,
 Donec fama sui Hungariam diffusa per omnem
 Ex verbis vulgi, populorum motibus, alti
 Tentati eventum praedictet; undique trans
 Interea ambages in regem spargere mittit

Foemineum; interea procerum plerosque subornat,
 Pollicitisque onerat; dumque haec sclerata sequestris
 Complicibus parat, insidias speculatus ab omni
 Parte Sigismundus deserta coniuge fugit.
 Reginae per legatos an venerit hospes
 An hostis, causamque vae scitantur; at ille
 Pectoreum gratae pietatis imagine falsa
 Conatus velare nefas, his inquit in imis
 Visceribus vigilant Ludovici ingentia patris
 Obsequia. Hungariam venio componere fractam,
 Discordes unire duces, et regna sorori
 Pacificare meae. Ut visum succedere votis
 Vulgares aures, Budam stipatus iniquis
 Regnicolis properat; falso licet ore locutum
 Reginae credant regni cupidine tractum;
 Tanta tamen meritis fiducia pendet ab alis,
 Ut cogat sperare aliquid, septumque rebelli
 Praesidio, et nimium gratum popularibus illum,
 Quando vi nequeant arcere, admittere sponte
 Tutius esse putant; et ficta fronte dolores
 Dissimulando graves, adventum ferre tyranni.
 Ergo propinquant Caroli solemniter ambae
 Occurrunt, curru aurato, pompaque superba,
 Et medium accipiunt, meritum filia patris
 Prima memento mei. Elisabeth: Carissime fili
 Dulce tuum humanum grata, et pietate refertum.
 Tu linquens regnum et soliolem, sedare tumultus
 Venisti Hungaricos, nostrosque levare labores.
 Non ego mercedi merita nec laudibus altis
 Sufficio. Omnipotens pro me tibi talia penset.
 Ille: Parens reverenda, soror carissima, reddit,
 Dum calidus nostros agitabit spiritus artus
 Magnanimiti patris, et meritum laerelut imago.
 Ut Bula intrata est, tectis regalibus ille
 Abstiniuit, tempusque dolis, causamque manebat.
 Arte gubernator sit regni; hoc nomine castrum
 Regale ingreditur; rerumque invalidi habenas,

Moxque velut pacem sancturns, grande sub astu
Colloquium edicens, vulgorum seditiosa
Colluvie complet Budam : novitatis amatrix
Garrula gens, et complicitibus seducta per urbem
Lubrica latratu iactat : Quonam usque feremus 250
Foemineum regem, cuius levitate fruentes,
Masculoque humilem ludentes nomine plebem
Pestiferi calcant popularia colla tyranni !
Vidimus hoc regnum respersum sanguine nostro
Affatim, et late vastatas ignibus urbes. 255
Hunc Carolum Omnipotens nobis demisit ab alto ;
Huncque marem volumus regem. Dum talia vulgus
Praecepis, pene ruens, ad celsa palatia latrat,
Indignans rabiem plebis, fraudemque tyranni,
Sic ait a vulgo senior venerandus abhorrens : 260
Ah quantum ingrato pinguescet sanguine vestro
Hungaria ; obliiti meritorum Regis, in altum
Creta sub imperio genitoris cornua tuto
Tollitis in natam nimia pinguedine. Vobis
Dum pax, ubertas, et opes fastidia gignunt,
Mars ferus, atra fames, et egestas moesta propinquant. 265
Apuliae populos pacem, sortemque secundam
Inconstanti animo libertatemque ferentes,
Atque novarum avidos rerum inclinare superbo
Praedoni, et tantae dominae calcare ruinas
Non puduit ; sua nunc tarde peccata fitentes
Mars et dira fames alterna peste flagellant.
Destruit hic urbes, haurit cum sanguine censum,
Et steriles agros dominorum caede cruentat ; 275
Illa hominum venas, et inania viscera torquet.
Millia per lucos desertis urbibus errant,
Et quaerunt avidis silvestres faucibus escas ;
Vepribus exutis, et quercubus, atque rubetis
Confecti macie veluti simulacra vagantur. 280
Lucidus est pallor, sunt lumina concava, fauces
Admotae, lacrymae mille, vox languida, prostant
Ceu portentifico cantati carmine. Passim

Morte cadunt pueri, vulgus miserabile coram
Patribus ; infantes penes ubera sicca recentes
Exhalant animas in primo limine vitae. 285
Aguina languentum turbarum littora complent.
Parsque peregrinis vendunt sua pignora nautis
Fragmento panis ; pars se cum coniuge, natis,
Et laribus totis, patriosque famelica campos
Deserit, et discit timidis servire patronis. 290
Vos miseri graviora manent ; sic increpat audax,
Magnanimusque senex. At dum populare calescit
Flagitium, invadit Carolus, firmatque latino
Praesidio portam castris ; proceresque repente
Congregat ; hi raptim Hungaricum sibi tradere sceptrum 295
Fautorum spondent suggestu, ipsique fideles
Assensere motu. Attonitas discrimine tanto
Exemplo aggreditur Reginas nuntius acer
Impia iussa ferens, ut cedat nata coronae.
Annuit ore parens formidine faucis mortis ; 300
Viscera rodentem lacrymosa puella, dolorem
Dissimulare nequit, sic apta voce locuta :
Nolo refutare, ingeminat, diadema paternum
Et mihi jure datum. Hungariam, permittite, linquam,
Exul ad expulsam coniux properabo maritum. 305
Ast iram exhalat senior Regina remotis
Testibus ; omnipotens cur non festinat ab alto
Vindictam in caput ingrati praedonis, et hostis
Foeminei : ille sui reginas sanguinis, altis
Ut matres meritis venerandas, culmine sacro 310
Legitimas, solis didicit depellere a vitis.
Ante oculos fatum indignum, et miscranda Johanna
Reginae fortuna venit, quae ex faucibus illum
Infantem fati eripuit, dum membra tenelli
Obsidis ad mortem, santis pro crimine patris 315
Vir suus iratus peteret ; pro talibus illi
Abstulit heu meritis regnum cum lumine primo ;
Ossaque sacra vetuit consistere terra.
Omnia confundens, ius, fas, rectum et pietatem ;

Nunc sceleri seclis accumulat ; solumque, quod absit, 320
Restat ut aequum violenta morte Iohannam.
Dum tantas rumpit genitrix miseranda querelas,
Filia nil contra ; lacrymarum flumina fundunt
Lumina ; multiplicat genitus rude pectus amarus,
Et crebri intorsum singultus verba vocabant. 325
Corde puellari, mirum, tantum potuisse
lacturam regni, et tantum licuisse dolori.
Ut sopita fuit materni flamma doloris
Questibus, illa animo vindictae in imagine toto
Alloquitur flentem sedato pectore natam : 330
Filia, iam regnum praedo tenet unguibus iste
Perfidus ecce tuum, vulgique favore superbus
Iam poscit diadema palam, mortemque minatur.
Si semel ira tepens trahat ad regalia vulgus
Tecta, simul dulci linquamus lumine regnum ; 335
Altera in alterius ingulatae, nata, cruore.
Nata, furor vulgi transcendit fulminis iram,
Et rabiem spumantis apri, pelagique patentem
Saevitiam ; ingentem dat stragem tempore parvo. 340
Aetas, sexus, honor veniam non invenit ullam.
Fert humili service iugum gens ista superbum
Turpiter, aut laniant calcatis legibus urbes.
Cede malis venientibus. In discrimine tanto
Sufficiat servare animas ; ad perditu regna 345
Vita redire potest ; cum spe rapit omnia letum.
Hei mihi, cara parens, ego regis filia vitam
Cum regnis ingressa, inter fastigia adulta
Regia, praefulgens tanto splendore moorum,
Iamque coronata, et solio venerata paterno 350
Sic vitae annexum sine luce relinquere sceptrum
Non potero : haec rauca, et confusa voce puella,
Vesto simul lacrymis undantia lumina siccana.
Tunc iterum simul emittens suspiria mater :
Regna, potestates, et opes, quae talia iuris 355
Non sunt humani, ad libitum fortuna ministrat
Exilium, carcer, paupertas, vincula, luctus,

Innumerae mortis species, et mille labores
Humanae sortis sunt dotes : omnibus istis
Te exiis exposui ; vacat expectare parato, 360
Et forti tolerare animo quaecumque minatur.
Vitae ; glorificent animos adversa potentes ;
Iis saepe interea fortuna revertitur alta.
Haec ubi fata, petit Carolum ; et sermone benigno
Est orsa : Hungariam, fili, frenare superbam
Foemineum nequit imperium ; cape regna tuorum ; 365
In te scepra cadunt. Extemplo falsa per urbem
Fama volat, patriae natam cessisse coronae.
Moenia planities humilis iacet alta sub auras,
Regalem appellant Albam ; natura tuetur
Limosisque vadis calanisque palustribus illam. 370
In medio templum surgit de marmore ; Sancti
Hoc Stephani illustrat regis venerabile corpus,
Qui sacrae ad fidei convertit lumina gentem
Hungaricam, extinguens veterum simulacra deorum.
Regum habet hoc templum tumulos, patriaeque coronae 375
Auspiciam ; Hungaricos extollit semper in illo
Primus honor reges, et pompa novissima templo.
Hanc coetu procerum, et turbis popularibus Albam
Regalem, et templum hoc Carolus fataliter intrat
Letalem infausta rapturus fraude coronam : 380
Non quali veteres intrabant agmine reges
Pacificis, faustisque togis, sed tristibus armis.
Reginae simul ad spectacula dura vocatae
Hoc subeunt, patrisque petunt altaria circum
Saeta sepulcralem Ludovici in fine capellam. 385
Hic dum marmoreae dant oscula moesta figurae,
Cor, dulcis fastus, et maiestatis abactae
Tristis imago subit ; mensuram culminis alti
Tunc miserae agnoscunt cum se videre incales.
Non aliter quam si lapsae de vertice montis 390
Suspiciant altum collem de valle profunda.
Aggreditur vultus depulso sanguine pallor,
Languescunt vires, genua intremere, dique

Haceserunt gelido lacrymantia lumina saxo.
 Ut tandem ultrices animus se vertit in iras
 Illae odio revocant vires; mox lumina siccant;
 Corde tenent gemitus, suspiria pectore claudunt.
 Dissimulant altos simulata fronte dolores,
 Et fanum sublime petunt, ubi veste sacra
 Stat Carolus, quali cantant per templa Levitae
 Verba Dei; hic proceres summus de more sacerdos
 Strigoni, plebemque rogat, ter voce levata
 Si Carolus placet in Regem, et ter voce secuta
 Fautorum, in Regem cantatis laudibus illum
 Ungit, et auspicio tradit diadema sinistro.
 Non laeti strepitus, non murmura festa sequuntur,
 Et scelerum auctores intorsum spiritus angit;
 Et Reginarum miseret iam mobile vulgus.
 Insolita est rerum facies, paucique fideles
 Serpere per gladios ardent, iugulare tyrannum,
 Et sanctum ingrato templum foedare cruore;
 Ac simul interitu pulcro per vulnera mille
 Ultrices efflare animas in sanguine Regis.
 Ecce autem infaustum Regi mox panditur omen.
 Nam de more sacrae dum post sollemnia missae
 Regali in pompa procerum comitante caterva
 Rex templum egreditur, ostroque, auroque micantem
 Ascensurus equum; Stephanique insignia sancti
 Regia procedunt, iam tot servata per annos
 Religione pia venturis Regibus illud
 Missile vexilli, quo freta est auspice dudum
 Prima dies regni, lactum testudine valvae
 Frangitur in partes, dedignatumque tyrannum
 Et Regum auspicio, et sacris regalibus uti.
 Et dum securus Budae male paria teneret
 Successu infausto fatalis fraudis evanescit
 Ex alto omnipotens ostentis territat atris.
 Turbine terribili, rapidoque volumine ventus
 Horrifer emergit, quantum per secula nulli
 Hungariae meminere senes, turresque superbas,

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Elatasque domos Budae vi flaminis acris
 Concitans tremulare facit, vertitque per auras
 Culmina ceu volucrum plumas; stridoribus altis
 Tectorum structura gemit; vix impete tanto
 In Chaos aeternum rediturum quis putet orbem,
 Aut siccos, densosque solum quassare vapores
 Inventum interno telluris ventre solutos.
 Iam penes occasum pompae, vitaeque ruinam
 Per triduum, dictu horrendum, numerosa caterva
 Corvorum scandit Regis sublime cubilis
 Culmen, et horrisso crocitamine sidera, et aures
 Attonat humanas, versisque in vulnera rostris
 Mutuas, depulsum altornis icibus artus,
 Purpureoque nigrae rubuerunt sanguine pennae.
 Heu regni miserere tui, miserere tuarum.
 Fata patent, te signa monent, ostenta minantur.
 Effuge in Apuliam, et letalem desere terram.
 Contemplantur tunc signum fatale carinae,
 Quam tu armamentis spoliata pectore gestas.
 Quid nisi naufragium pertenditur absque sepulcro?
 Ardua regna petens sine vi, sine iure parentas.
 Suleautem sine remigio, et temone profundum,
 Qui tandem in media perit insepultus arena.
 In triste augurium foralis turbinis iram,
 Murmura nigrarum, funestaque bella volucrum
 Rex vertit, sentit scelus, et sensisse veretur,
 Ac metuens trepidare timet minitantia fata.
 Interea Elisabeth tanti do vertice fastus
 Deiecta ultrici dudum succensa furore,
 Et maiestatis veteris dulcedine tacta,
 Atque palatini suggestu impulsa potenti
 In caedem Caroli coniurati, fraudibus ablata
 Insidiis revocare parans; mox Ugo Garenensis
 Seu Reginarum captus pietate suarum,
 Seu dulci imperio, blandaque tyrannide fretus
 Ad prisicum aspiret tempus, postquam impulsit altum
 Reginam ad facinus, suprema callidis arte

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TOLTI ANAT. MONTU. I.

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Instruit insidias; et habet, qui tempore Regem
 Invadat ferro. Hospitium sol piscis habebat,
 Quando palatium famulis stipatus, et armis
 Eminus ad natae celebrandum pergere vulgans
 Convivia, ingreditur castrum regale; recessu
 Ceu volit extremo Regi inclinare; sub unum
 Miserat Elisabeth qui scripta recentia Regi
 A genero sumpsisse ferat, qui pandat habere
 Secreta. Infelix Carolus caligine tetra
 Peccati obsessus thalamo descendit ab alto,
 Atque ubi perveniens illum regina manebat,
 Et coniurati, sub veste latentibus armis
 Infernis, penetrare subit, comitatus et ipse
 Regnicolis, comite Albrico, turbisque latinis.
 Consilio Hungarico Italici cedentibus ultro
 Rex iuxta Elisabeth fabricantem verba sub astu
 Intentus sedet; occasum iam sole tenente
 Respicit obliquo Garenensis lumine Blasium
 Astantem, tantum qui rem susceperat audax.
 Ille dato signo rutilantem fulminat ense
 In Regem incautum; ferri splendore citatus
 Reclinat tergum, et resupinus vultibus ictum
 Sicut erat refugit, qua fronti tempus adhaeret,
 Atque supercilium cum lumine vulnere magno
 Lamina trux penetrat; siluit, virtute dolorem
 Ille premens alta; repetentem vulnera banus
 Sed clamore ingenti, et nudo intercepti ense.
 Effluit interea Carolus, solitumque cubile
 Aeger adit, longo vestigia sanguine signans.
 Hunc paulo ante diem, mirum, dictique tremendum,
 Torserat a latio sublimi pastor in illum
 Fulmen Apostolicum, suspensum tempore longo.
 Rex postquam elapsus nullo discrimine vitae.
 Iurati timbante gradu formidiae caeca
 Perculsi diversa petunt, et habere sequaces
 Ansonios in terga putant. Regina revertens
 Deficit, in mediisque cadit penetralibus amens.

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Extra autem Italici sub divo tecta manentes
 Ut circumventum fuso iam sanguine Regem
 Insidiis hausere suum, seseque sine armis
 Hostibus in mediis; vicina nocte recedunt
 Extemplo, ut redeant armis animisque potentes.
 Facta hominum, et rerum momenta in cardine parvo
 Vertuntur; paulum Italici cum fronte moratis
 Rex fato ereptus solio mansisset in alto,
 Et coniurati poenas tunc forte dedissent.
 Illa tremenda Deum sententia vertit ab illo
 Auxilium frustrata hominum; nam pondere magno
 Praecipitant cadente Deo sua crumina; quemque
 Illicet ultores egressis sponte Latinis
 Invadunt acres, reparantque satellite castrum
 Hungarico. Carolus sublato poste cubilis
 Tollitur, et turri servandus traditur aita.
 De genere humano heu quantis fortuna triumphat
 Ludibriis; Regem nunc turris carcerat, in qua
 Execubias nuper vigilantes tantus habebat.
 Albricus rediens septus Latialibus armis
 Ut vidit captas arces, castrumque corona
 Vallatum Hungariae; Caroli sub nomine Regis
 Esperio totam decurrit milite Budam.
 Ut nullos videt extra, clam sub nocte profunda
 Effugit indigenis comitantibus atque Latinis,
 Factores qui Regis erant; nec segnius ante
 Lucem finitinis Reginae gentibus implent
 Castrum: ut contractae vires, et Delius umbras
 Aureas lumentes pepulit, clamoribus altis
 Ultiores implent Budam, regnare Mariam;
 Irrumpuntque domos Italum, praedaeque latina
 Vindictam inficiunt. Sors aspera lincea secum
 Lumina fert semper. Carolus quem merserat olim
 Blanda secundarum rerum caligine bifrons
 Rebus in adversis emergit; qualis ab alto
 Executitur somno, quem ludunt somnia, pauper.
 Nuncque potentatus umbras videt esse fugaces,

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Atque superba loco fastigia stare trementi.
 Et stupet obductum se nube a tanta fuisse.
 Rex Visingardi celsas servandus ad arces
 Mittitur; hic vulnus dum curat, iamque salutem 545
 Aspicit, heu trepidam, moestamque relinquere vitam
 Faucibus elisis, et respiramine clauso
 Cogitur infelix; inhumata sub aethæris axe
 Membra tenent, prohibentque locum contingere sacrum 550
 Qualemque licet tumulo: felicior illo
 Apulina Regina fuit; sunt ossa Iohannae
 Iam patrii cineres. Caroli sed funus olentem
 Exhalans tabem peregrinas inficit auras.
 Nunc quid opes, quid regna tibi, quid profuit alta
 Reginas sceptris spoliare potentibus! Ecce 555
 Hor' dolor, heu levis ad dandum tam grandia regna
 Urbibus ex tantis, eadem nunc illa sepulcrum
 Omnipotens fortuna negat, per secula magnum
 Exemplum acriminae humanae, et miserabile carmen
 Certe eris, ac speculum, et documentum Regibus ingens. 560
 Deo gratias Amen.

VII.

MARTINI ARCHIDIAC. DE ZAGRAB.

IVDICIVM DE COMETA A. M. CCCC. LXVIII.

Appendix 2

Dedication:

To the Fairest Lady, Mary, Queen of Hungary

By Lorenzo Monaci, Chancellor of the Island of Crete

In the city of Zengg you required me, fairest *Ruler*, illustrious jewel among queens, the shiniest star of your [beloved] Hungary, as you discharged me after I had fulfilled the mandate of the Venetian Republic, to pass on to the ages to come in writing what had happened there in recent times both at home and abroad. I was astonished [to see] at such a young age, (for you were only sixteen [at the time] [you had] such manly concerns and such sublime thoughts and I recognized in such greatness of soul the proof of an ancient and glorious blood-lineage.

It is characteristic of a noble and truly immortal mind/character to extend beyond a human life's time-span the concerns of one's life. Old age destroys everything; no thing has such greatness that should not decay [even] in one's youth, unless it is taken under the protection of the written word. In addition [to this], you also said during our last talk: do not forget to insert in the history that I was set free from the yoke of slavery by the help of the Venetians, and among the Venetians I found again, quite unexpectedly, the freedom I had lost and of which I had almost despaired among my own people, and, what is more, that after their armed fleet completely wiped out all [reasons for] fear, I was able to feel once more a firm hope concerning my great fortune, once all remnants of my past misfortune had disappeared.

O, wonderful and forever memorable gratitude! Unless you pass on to posterity the notice of the service [accomplished], it will be thought of you that you have committed an offence against the benefaction [received]. I declare, the coming age will admire you, the royal virgin who were born and venerated in such a high standing for having born, all throughout your tender age, with a mature and unvanquished courage the cruelty of an adverse and undignified fate and for having overcome the meanness of a cruel fate amidst all those civil conflicts, the rumble of wars, the secret conspiracies, the hidden rivalries, the open hatred, the most impudent behavior, and the moments of crisis.

However, not all my praises are yours; by necessity a part is reserved for your friends and those loyal to you, who share (it) with you. Yet the memory of all the ages [to come] will celebrate with even greater praise your dignified and glorious intention, [so much] above your years, and this excellent and admirable gratitude of yours; these both spring from the wonderful virtue of your own character.

Your Majesty is certainly not unaware of what was being widely said in Italy and especially among the Tuscans, namely, that Charles, the king of Apulia, who was quite innocent of any ambition to the Hungarian throne, having no such thought, was called and invited by you and your most excellent mother to [hold] the scepter of Hungary and [then] without any fault, betrayed in your own interest, was surrounded by your trickeries and deprived of the light of his life. But while I was staying in Hungary for the sake of my republic, at the time when you were being held prisoner by the sacrilegious hands of hostile servants and your kingdom was burning in the fires of war because of the bloody quarrels of your subjects, I found quite the opposite after I inquired about the truth of the [whole] thing from trustworthy people, with most accurate care.

So I bore with displeasure that injustice should be excused and innocence condemned through such an inaccurate and ill-intentioned account of this [whole] affair while, on my Venetian orders, I have often come and gone in the interest of your freedom I have related the invasion of your country and the death of Charles in a metric narrative. Until now, my poem has achieved such great success that it compelled some very educated people, enemies of the same King Charles, to the opposite side, changing all of a sudden their feelings, and moved them to pious tears by filling them with pity for your cruel misfortunes in the past. Therefore, I send this to Your Majesty, to defend you and your most innocent mother, if it can, from the disgraceful calumny and the insolent teeth of the mass throughout the centuries. I will, meanwhile, with the help of Christ, write a more detailed history in prose, as Your Serenity has required... Date, etc.

Appendix 3



Figure 1: Hungary and Naples in the fourteenth century¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁸ *L'Europe des Anjou. Aventure des princes Angevins du XIIIe au XIVe siècle*. Paris: Somogy Éditions d'Art, 2001. 18-19

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