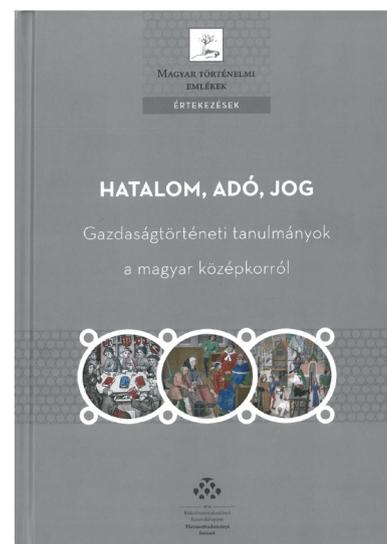


MEDIAEVAL ECONOMIC HISTORY – MEDIAEVAL ARCHAEOLOGY

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The period between the 1950's and the 1970's was one of the most important in the study of mediaeval economic history in Hungary. After that, this field of research was largely relegated to the background, and scientific interest in it was only revived at the beginning of the 2000's, by which time it had become clear that the available domestic sources and the history of research meant that 'economic history' in the modern sense could only be written using an interdisciplinary approach, with archaeology, archaeozoology and environmental history playing roles equal in importance to traditional historical research based

on written sources. The first example of such work was the summation of the research programme in which representatives of various scientific disciplines under the leadership of András Kubinyi, integrated the sources available on Hungarian economic history, the prevailing state of affairs and the opportunities for further research.¹ This approach was also adopted by a new research group led by Boglárka Weisz and supported by the *Lendület* [momentum] Programme of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. It is a good indication of their progress that they have rapidly published two collections of papers based essentially on new research. They include a number of studies in which archaeology on the mediaeval period is applied in cooperation with partner disciplines.² In the publication entitled *PéNZ, POSZTÓ, PIAC*³ [money, cloth, market] Csaba Tóth and the late György Székely (archaeologist and numismatist) present a plan to complete a catalogue of coins from the period 1000 to 1437/1440 AD, including a detailed explanation of research history and methodological issues. In addition, they present a few case studies to demonstrate the kinds of problems associated with the exploration of historical sources. Another group of papers on archaeology explore the history of mediaeval markets and fairs: Zsolt Nyárádi analyses the archaeological traces of the Székelyudvarhely Fair, while Judit Benda studies the record of cattle trading and meat markets in Buda, Pest and Óbuda, including some analysis of archaeological excavations. Another study also deals with the role that Árpád-Age Óbuda played in trade; in that paper, Bence Péterfi elaborates on a careful study of the graphite ware that has been discussed extensively in the archaeological literature. Maxim Mordovin examines an increasingly important group of objects from the archaeological record of mediaeval exchanges of goods in relation to the issues surrounding the exportation of cloth from Silesia. The spread of the use of metal detectors for archaeological research has resulted in the number of lead cloth seals on record increasing by several orders of magnitude, which has allowed identification of the places of origin of textiles that were



¹ Kubinyi, András – Laszlovszky, József – Szabó, Péter (eds.): *Gazdaság és gazdálkodás a középkori Magyarországon: gazdaságtörténet, anyagi kultúra, régészet*. [Economy and Business in Mediaeval Hungary: Economic history, material culture, archaeology] Martin Opitz Publishers, Budapest, 2008.

² Our review is limited to those papers, but the volumes also include work that is important for the research results of a number of other scientific disciplines, which all enrich the literature of economic history.

³ Weisz, Boglárka (ed.): *Money, Cloth, Market: Studies in the economic history of mediaeval Hungary*. Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Research Centre for the Humanities, Institute of History, Budapest, 2016.

previously all but invisible in the archaeological record. At first glance, the study in which Boglárka Weisz and Pál Lővei produced a catalogue of sepulchral monuments to the executives of mediaeval economic and financial institutions which appears to show convergence between the history of financial management and the history of art. In actual fact, their research is also important from the perspective of historic heraldry and, as a significant proportion of the objects discussed were found during archaeological excavations, they are also essential for archaeology on the mediaeval period. The significance of the topic is attested to by the fact that the second volume published by the research group also features another, similar publication: Pál Lővei's paper on research into 'dragon knights' in the book entitled *Hatalom, adó, jog* [Power, tax, law],⁴ which examines the sepulchral monuments and other works from the workshop of an entrepreneurial sculptor in Buda. That topic of research is exceptionally important from an archaeological perspective, too, since it may lead to an understanding of the most significant assembly of mediaeval objects, the so called Buda assembly of statues. A number of other analyses illustrate the multifaceted application of the methodology and research results of archaeology on the mediaeval period. Be they about the structure of mediaeval urban spaces (Széchenyi Square in Győr) or Árpád-Age scales in the archaeological record, archaeological data and phenomena, they are always integral to research into trading and markets. A paper by Ágnes Kolláth and Gábor Tomka explores the former subject, while Szabolcs Rosta's publication concerning the latter subject proves the point based on archaeological finds from the Pétermonostora site. The remaining papers in the two volumes are also excellent evidence for the claim that modern economic historiography is only possible with support from other partner disciplines and research approaches. Amongst others, the history of law, the analysis of taxation, the study of the religious life of the period or the study of pictorial representations of mediaeval merchant's stores all play a role in that sense. These two volumes of studies, compiled and edited in an exemplary fashion, are therefore important not only to those interested in archaeology on the mediaeval period, but also to researchers in all the fields listed above.

⁴ Kádas, Tibor – Weisz, Boglárka (eds.): *Hatalom, adó, jog. Gazdaságtörténeti tanulmányok a magyar középkorról*. [Power, Tax, Law. Studies in the economic history of mediaeval Hungary] Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Research Centre for the Humanities, Institute of History, Budapest, 2017.