

## ANDRÁS KUBINYI: A LIFE'S WORK AND AN AWARD

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The second half of the twentieth century was a key period of medieval studies in Hungary. Thanks to the endeavors undertaken and the groundbreaking results achieved by great scholars of the time, this was the period when medieval archaeology, in the modern sense of the term, was born in the country. One of the prominent figures in the historical and archaeological research of the Middle Ages was Professor András Kubinyi, whose work was facilitated mainly by two institutions, the Budapest History Museum and the Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE).<sup>1</sup> His internationally acknowledged contribution to urban history is perhaps the most important aspect of his life's work, but at the same time he produced outstanding scholarship on the period of King Matthias and the Jagiellonian Dynasty, and published quite a few studies on church and military history, as well as social and economic history.<sup>2</sup> A new type of call for applications, inviting leading scholars and reflecting the complexity and interdisciplinary character of Kubinyi's academic and educational achievements, was announced in 2005 by the Hungarian Scientific Research Fund. This call marked the launch of a research project led by Professor Kubinyi himself that aimed to produce a comprehensive study of economic history in medieval Hungary through the analysis of written and archaeological sources. The complexity of this agenda was by no means accidental. András Kubinyi started his scholarly career as an archivist, and he realized early on that the scarce written sources of Hungary must be supplemented by objects and visual representations, and that the combined analysis of these diverse sources facilitates a deeper understanding of past realities.<sup>3</sup> He was no archaeologist, although he studied the subject and worked with and among archaeologists in the Budapest History Museum, following with attention a number of large-scale excavations, such as the one in the Buda Castle. As a professor at the Institute of Archaeology of ELTE, and a founder of the Department of Medieval and Early Modern Archaeology, he promoted and taught a complex method of inquiry, which became a lingua franca of the 'Kubinyi school.' The outcome of the above mentioned project of economic history was a multi-authored monograph published first in Hungarian, then in English. Most chapters were written by Kubinyi's former pupils, representing various subdisciplines.<sup>4</sup> Professor Kubinyi, however, did not live to see these results: he passed away in 2007.



<sup>1</sup> He published a detailed essay on his own career: András Kubinyi, „Miért lettem a középkor kutatója” [Why I became a scholar of medieval studies], *Korall* 21–22 (2005), 218–244.

<sup>2</sup> For a bibliography of his works, see *Kubinyi András tudományos műveinek jegyzéke, 1953–2003* [The bibliography of the scholarly works of András Kubinyi], compiled by Márton Kálnoky Gyöngyössy. In: „Quasi liber et pictura.” *Tanulmányok Kubinyi András hetvenedik születésnapjára* [Studies in the honor of András Kubinyi's 70th birthday], ed. Gyöngyi Kovács, Budapest: BTM, 2004, 707–720. The most comprehensive list of his works, compiled by József Laszlovsky, was published as an attachment to an essay on his life's work: Miklós Szabó, „András Kubinyi (1929–2007),” *Acta Archaeologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 60 (2009/2), 445–460. After the publication of this bibliography, however, a number of posthumous articles were put out, some of which are referenced in the present paper.

<sup>3</sup> On his works and impact, see József Laszlovsky, „Kubinyi András (1929–2007),” *Urbs: magyar várostörténeti évkönyv* 3 (2008), 11–13; Katalin Szende, „Kubinyi András (1929–2007),” *Levéltári Szemle* 57 (2007), 93–94.

<sup>4</sup> In Hungarian: András Kubinyi, József Laszlovsky, and Péter Szabó (eds.), *Gazdaság és gazdálkodás a középkori Magyarországon. Gazdaságtörténet, anyagkultúra, régészet* (Budapest: Martin Opitz, 2008); in English: József Laszlovsky, Balázs Nagy, Péter Szabó, and András Vadas (eds.), *The Economy of Medieval Hungary* (Leiden: Brill, 2018; revised and extended edition).

After his death, his wife Ilona Valter launched a foundation with the ambition to support young scholars of medieval studies, in accordance with András Kubinyi's life's work and his above mentioned last endeavor.<sup>5</sup> The members of the foundation's advisory board, led by academician László Solymosi, are Gergely Buzás, Norbert C. Tóth, Enikő Csukovics, Péter E. Kovács, Beatrix F. Romhányi, András Grynaeus, József Laszlovszky, Katalin Szende, István Tringli, and András Végh – all students of Professor Kubinyi. They belong to different generations, work in different institutes and represent different subdisciplines within medieval studies. The launch of the foundation in 2010 found support from István Hiller, then Minister of Education and Culture, as well as from the Budapest History Museum, and the Pázmány Péter Catholic University (PPCU); the Institute of Archaeology of ELTE and the Budapest City Archives joined the list of supporting organizations later. The wide range of supporters is due to the complexity of professor Kubinyi's work: in addition to his two main workplaces, he taught at various universities (PPCU, University of Miskolc), where new students learned his methods of medieval research; besides, he came into contact with a number of other institutions during his scholarly inquiries and educational activities. Thanks to these efforts, the award was handed out for the first time in January, 2010, on the birthday of professor Kubinyi; the medal was made by sculptor Gábor Gáti, while the diploma of merit was prepared by artist Imre Molnár. In January, 2019, we celebrated the tenth anniversary of giving out the award. Every year, the ceremonial announcement of the winners and handing out the medal and diploma takes place in the Gothic hall of the Budapest History Museum, a space with a medieval atmosphere. As this is one of the most significant, regularly presented award today that is specifically designed for medievalists, it is worth to give here a short list of awardees and their connection with medieval archaeology.

The circle of applicants has always been varied. In addition to historians and archaeologists, art historians and literary historians have also applied. The awardees come from different organizations, from academic institutions and universities, from museums and high schools, from Budapest as well as from the Hungarian countryside and the neighboring countries. Among the eleven awardees, Tibor Neumann, Boglárka Weisz and Dániel Bácsatyai work in the Institute of History of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, while Orsolya Mészáros and Maxim Mordovin are associates of the Institute of Archaeology of ELTE. Antonín Kalous teaches at the Palacky University in Olomouc; András K. Németh is archaeologist in the Wosinszky Mór Museum in Szekszárd; Elek Szaszko teaches in the Karinthy Frigyes High School; István Botár is archaeologist in the Szekler Museum of Ciuc, Ágnes Máté is researcher in the Institute of Literature of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, and Hajnalka Kuffart is member of the Vestigia Research Team, and now an employee of the Government Office of Pest County.

Applicants of all age have been present, and so in 2011 the advisory board decided to launch an additional Junior Award for the young scholars who are still busy with their university studies or have just received their first degree. The Junior Award was given so far to Éva Szakálos (PPCU), Judit Gál (ELTE), András Vadas (ELTE), Zsuzsa Pető (CEU), Anna Herbst (Ferenczy Museum Center), Veronika Rudolf (ELTE) and József Csermelyi (Lutheran Central Archive).

Hundreds of applications have been submitted to the advisory board in the past few years, among them published works and completed manuscripts, monographs and studies alike. Half of these deal with the late medieval period, which was also in the main focus of András Kubinyi's interest and scholarly agenda. In terms of their topic, submissions included works on political and diplomatic history, economic, urban, and church history, as well as philological studies on historical sources. There were years when competition was particularly strong, and we decided to hand out additional certificates of merit, altogether thirteen in the past ten years. Without mentioning those who were later recipients of the main award itself, such certificates of merit were given to historians László Szabolcs Gulyás, Richárd Horváth, Noémi Gyöngyvér Szabó, Károly Goda, Kristóf Keglevich, Gábor Nemes, Judit Csákó, and Tibor Szöcs; art historian Gábor Erdődi; archaeologist Erwin Gáll; and archaeozoologist Kyra Lyublyanovics. In 2019, on the 90<sup>th</sup> birthday

<sup>5</sup> On Ilona Valter's research and its significance, see József Laszlovszky, "Review: Pásztó in the Middle Ages [book in Hungarian] (Ilona Valter)," *Hungarian Archaeology*, Winter 2018, 1-3. [http://www.hungarianarchaeology.hu/?page\\_id=3661#post-7847](http://www.hungarianarchaeology.hu/?page_id=3661#post-7847) (Last accessed 23.03.2019).

of Professor Kubinyi, two main awards were handed out. This year, the atmosphere was a bit different: most of the audience were young scholars, many of them awardees themselves.

Irrespective of their background and generation, those who have received this recognition were all able to transgress the limitations of their own subdisciplines, and knowing their primary sources inside and out, they came up with innovative, new approaches and methodologies to academic research questions. The awarded historians focused on well-known or less studied primary sources, and placed them in a new context. Among the archaeologists, Orsolya Mészáros, András K. Németh, and István Botár submitted works on settlement history, using written and archaeological sources equally, and thus produced ground-breaking new results. Orsolya Mészáros studied charters on medieval Visegrád and the urban archaeology of the town, while both István K. Németh and István Botár undertook the topographic analysis of a region, exploring its church institutions and settlement structure. Maxim Mordovin's research on medieval and early modern cloth seals brought a so far neglected group of material evidence into focus, thus making a major contribution to our understanding of the period's economic history.

There are various possible ways to commemorate a pioneering scholar: by putting on display photos in his former working place, unveiling a memorial plaque on his dwelling house, or referencing his works in publications. The most condign way, however, is to recognize and support young scholars, who may not have known professor Kubinyi personally, but who still use his methodology in their own research, and reflect on his fields of study. It is our hope that after these first ten years, brilliant applications for this award will continue to be submitted in the decades to come, the necessary financial background will be provided, and the Kubinyi Award will remain an acknowledged annual recognition of younger and older medievalists alike.

#### WORKS PRESENTED WITH THE ANDRÁS KUBINYI AWARD (2010–2019)

##### 2010:

TIBOR NEUMANN.

II. Ulászló koronázása és első rendeletei: Egy ismeretlen országgyűlésről és koronázási dekrétumról [The coronation and first decrees of Vladislaus II: On an unknown diet and coronation decree], *Századok* 142 (2008), 315–337.

##### 2011:

ORSOLYA MÉSZÁROS.

*A késő középkori Visegrád város története és helyrajza* [The history and topography of late medieval Visegrád]. Visegrád, 2009.

##### 2012:

ANTONÍN KALOUS.

*Plenitudo potestatis in partibus? Papežští legáti a nunciové střední Evropy na konci středověku (1450–1526)* [Papal legates and nuncios in Central Europe at the end of the Middle Ages]. Brno, 2010.

##### 2013:

ANDRÁS K. NÉMETH.

*Tolna megye középkori templomai* [The medieval churches of Tolna County]. Pécs, 2011.

##### 2014:

BOGLÁRKA WEISZ.

*A királyketteje és az ispán harmada. Vámok és vámszedés Magyarországon a középkor első felében* [The king's second part and the ispán's third: tolls and toll collection in Hungary in the first half of the Middle Ages]. Budapest, 2013.

**2015:**

ELEK SZASZKÓ.

*A Szeri Pósaftak. Egy alföldi előkelő család története a 14-15. században [The Pósaft family of Szer. The history of an aristocratic family from the Great Plain in the 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> century].* PhD dissertation, PPCU, 2014.

**2016:**

ISTVÁN BOTÁR.

*A Csiki-medence középkori településtörténete [The medieval settlement history of the Ciucului Basin].* PhD dissertation, ELTE, 2015.

**2017:**

DÁNIEL BÁCSATYAI.

*A magyar kalandozó hadjáratok latin nyelvű kútfői [Latin sources of the Hungarian invasions of Europe].* PhD dissertation, PPCU, 2016.

**2018:**

ÁGNES MÁTÉ.

Szent Istvántól Báthory Istvánig: Grizelda története saluzzói, lengyel és magyar mellékalakokkal [From St Stephen to Stephen Báthory: Griselda's story with Saluzzan, Polish and Hungarian figures]. *Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények* 121 (2017), 3–22.

**2019:**

HAJNALKA KUFFART.

*Modenában őrzött esztergomi számadáskönyvek és az esztergomi érsekség udvartartása [Account books of Esztergom kept in Modena, and the household of the Esztergom Archbishopry].* PhD dissertation, PPCU, 2018.

MAXIM MORDOVIN.

*Textilvégek védjegyei – A textilkereskedelem régészeti emlékei a Magyar Királyság területén [Trademarks of cloth seals: Archaeological evidence of textile trade in the Kingdom of Hungary].* Budapest, 2018.