

The Anatomy of a Lawsuit: The Conflict Between George Schwarz of Košice and the City of Bardejov Over a Vineyard (1486–1496)

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At the end of the Middle Ages, the city of Bardejov owned numerous vineyards in the Tokaj-Hegyalja region of Zemplén County. Their most valuable vineyard was purchased in early 1486 for 1,000 gold florins from the noble Kispalugyai family, originating from Liptov. However, later that same year, George Schwarz, who would subsequently become a member of the Košice city council, claimed preemption rights to the vineyard and challenged the city's ownership. This resulted in a decade-long legal battle before secular and ecclesiastical courts: the first phase of the dispute unfolded before the palatine, the second under the authority of Angelo Pecchinoli, a papal legate, and the final phase before papally delegated judges. During these years, the lawsuit became one of the most significant events in the history of Bardejov. As a result, an excellent collection of sources related to the case has been preserved in the Bardejov archives, comprising more than 80 charters and other documents that detail the developments of the matter. Among these sources of varied types, the expense ledger in which the city meticulously recorded its expenditures for the case is particularly notable. This study examines the history of the lawsuit and the contents of the expense ledger.

Keywords: Medieval urban history; Medieval Bardejov; Medieval Košice; History of viticulture; Medieval legal history; Medieval litigation costs; Medieval ecclesiastical jurisdiction; Medieval Tokaj-Hegyalja region.

Introduction and Antecedents of the Trial

On 10 January 1486, the delegates of the city of Bardejov purchased a vineyard in the Tokaj-Hegyalja region from the noble Martin Kispalugyai and his brother, Gaspar, before the Chapter of Spiš.¹ The acquisition of the vineyard offered by the sellers cost the city the substantial sum of 1,000 gold florins. While numerous vineyard purchase agreements are known from the late medieval Hegyalja region and its surroundings, no record exists of any more expensive transaction from the area during this period.²

Of the two parties involved in the sale, the city of Bardejov already owned several vineyards in the area, including estates in Tállya, Szántó, Újhely and Hejce. The production on these vineyards was managed by local vine-dressers employed by the

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¹ MNL OL DF 215201. Hungarian summaries of its content: IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2440; GULYÁS, *Ingatlanszerződések*, 19.

² Even the more expensive ones cost no more than a few hundred florins (MNL OL DL 11888, OL DF 214242, OL DF 270458, MNL OL DF 264539, MNL OL DF 215141, MNL OL DF 215343, MNL OL DL 19715, MNL OL DF 269936, MNL OL DF 229629. GULYÁS, *Egy szőlőtől a kánonjogig*, 81.

city.³ In contrast, the Kispalugyai brothers, who sold the vineyard, had not previously owned vineyards in Hegyalja. The noble family of Slavic origin hailed from the distant county of Liptov.⁴ Martin Kispalugyai, one of the sellers, had received permission to use a coat of arms from the king in 1476,⁵ and his properties and pledged estates are documented in Liptov and Nitra Counties.⁶ Martin died in Kispalugya in 1492 and his will confirms that his home was in Liptov County.⁷ Of his brother, Gaspar, very little is known.

The charter issued by the Chapter meticulously recorded the terms of the sale.⁸ According to the document, the property was located on Sátor Hill in the territory of the Nagytállya estate in Zemplén County, bordered by the vineyards of George Schwarz of Košice and John of Szántó. The sellers acknowledged receipt of the vineyard's purchase price of 1,000 florins. The transaction was reinforced with the usual legal clauses: the sellers provided guarantees for the property and pledged to refund the full purchase price should they fail to uphold the terms. The Chapter issued a charter sealed with a pendant seal to confirm the sale.

However, the history of the Tállya vineyard did not end with the sale. The transaction sparked a prolonged legal dispute lasting a decade.⁹ Approximately 80 documents of various types related to the case are preserved in the Bardejov archives. This abundance of sources owes to the citizens of Bardejov, who ensured that all documents generated during the litigation, or their copies, were acquired and safeguarded. In addition to letters and other documents sent to them, they preserved witness examination records, legal filings and summaries of the proceedings. Moreover, they compiled a detailed expense ledger related to the vineyard, which will be discussed later.

Although the case is not unknown to historical scholarship, it has yet to be thoroughly studied. It was first briefly mentioned in Hungarian historical literature by Menyhért Érdújhelyi at the end of the nineteenth century.¹⁰ Subsequently, Béla Obál provided a short overview of the events about a century ago,¹¹ and Lajos Gecsényi referred to the case in the 1970s.¹² More recently, Slovak, Czech and Polish researchers have shown interest in the matter, but their work has only touched upon the topic in passing.¹³

Returning to the story, the transaction occurred in early 1486. However, George Schwarz of Košice initiated a lawsuit shortly afterward, citing his familial and neighborly preemption rights to claim the property.¹⁴ Schwarz is well-documented in the late

3 GECSÉNYI, *Bártfa város*, 471–472; GECSÉNYI, *Városi és polgári*, 345–346; GULYÁS, *Mezővárosi önkormányzat*, 76; GULYÁS, *Csontos Éliás*.

4 MAJLÁTH, *Családtörténeti Tanulmányok*.

5 MAJLÁTH, *Családtörténeti Tanulmányok*, 29–30.

6 MNL OL DL 25264 (1484), MNL OL DL 59577 (1470), MNL OL DL 65347 (1480) MNL OL DL 45717 (1478), MNL OL DL 45718 (1478).

7 MNL OL DL 90448.

8 MNL OL DF 215201.

9 In connection with the lawsuit, see GULYÁS, *Egy szőlőtől a kánonjogig* and GULYÁS, *A Swarcz-ügy*.

10 ÉRDÚJHELYI, *A közjegyzőség*.

11 OBÁL, *Az egyház és a városok*, 41–44.

12 GECSÉNYI, *Városi és polgári*, 345.

13 KALOUS, *The legation*, LII–LIII; FEDORČÁKOVÁ, *Civitas nostra Bardfa*, 63; SROKA, *A középkori Bártfa*, 103, 520 footnote.

14 "tam ex consanguineitate, tam vinearum vicinitate" – MNL OL DF 215268.

medieval history of Košice. He was a wealthy citizen who participated in the wine trade with Polish territories.¹⁵ His wealth was built on this trade, as evidenced by his acquisition of several vineyards in Hegyalja during the 1480s. In 1483, he owned vineyards on Elő Hill in Liszka; in 1485, on Agyas Hill in Szántó; and in 1486, on Sátor Hill in Tállya.¹⁶

George Schwarz also played a significant role in Košice, where he was elected to the city council multiple times in the late fifteenth century. He served as an alderman from 1487 to 1489 and again in 1491 and 1492. Between 1493 and 1495, he led the city as its chief magistrate for three consecutive years.¹⁷ From 1505 onward, he once again held the titles of alderman and judge.¹⁸ Although Schwarz was not among the largest taxpayers in Košice, he possessed substantial wealth and influence in the settlement.¹⁹ His elevated social standing also brought connections to prominent families. It is certain that he was related to George Szatmári, a native of Košice and the future Archbishop of Esztergom, as Schwarz married Szatmári's sister, Anna.²⁰ According to Pál Tóth-Szabó, Schwarz might have also been connected to the influential Thurzo family, which wielded significant power in the late Middle Ages. Elek Thurzo, who served as treasurer, had a first wife named Anna, who was George Szatmári's niece. Tóth-Szabó suggested that Anna, Thurzo's wife, was the daughter of George Schwarz and Anna Szatmári.²¹ In addition to his daughter Anna, Schwarz had a son, Sebastian, and there is also evidence of an unnamed sister.²²

Schwarz's claim to the vineyard was based on both neighborly and familial preemption rights. The former had a valid legal basis, as his vineyard on Sátor Hill bordered that of the Kispalugyai family. But how can the familial relationship between Schwarz and the Kispalugyai nobles be verified? Martin and Gaspar Kispalugyai (II), the sellers of the vineyard, were sons of Gaspar Kispalugyai (I), who had five sons in total. The familial connection with the Schwarzes is likely through Paul, one of the brothers, who settled in Košice and married into a local bourgeois family by taking Barbara, the daughter of Peter Toth, as his wife. Their son, Gaspar (III), was born as a citizen of Košice.²³

Through Barbara, Paul became related to the Zipser family of Košice, with whom the Kispalugyai family was engaged in a long-standing legal dispute during the 1470s, resolved only in 1477. The dispute arose because Kelemen Zipser's wife, Benigna – likely Barbara's sister – had named the underage Gaspar Kispalugyai (III) as her heir in her will, which displeased her husband. By that time, Gaspar (III)'s father, Paul, had

15 KEREKES, *Kassa polgársága*, 57, 70, 76.

16 MNL OL DF 272257; MNL OL DF 215139; MNL OL DF 215201.

17 MAGDOŠKO, *Samospráva mesta*, 251–252.

18 TÓTH-SZABÓ, *Szatmári György*, 21–22; H. NÉMETH, *Kassa város*, 37–53.

19 GECSÉNYI, *Városi és polgári*, 345.

20 MNL OL DF 270932; TÓTH-SZABÓ, *Szatmári György*, 21, 43 footnote; FEDELES, *Szatmári György*, 2007. 9–13.

21 TÓTH-SZABÓ, *Szatmári György*, 21–25, 30; FÖGEL, *II. Lajos udvartartása*, 36; ERDÉLYI, *Egy kivételes karrier*, 121–122; GYÖNGYÖSSY, *II. Lajos legendás*, 623.

22 MNL OL DF 215331, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2568; MNL OL DF 215238, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2475.

23 MAJLÁTH, *Családtörténeti Tanulmányok*, 34.

already died, and his guardian and legal representative in the case was his uncle, Martin Kispalugyai. The court ultimately upheld Benigna's will as valid.²⁴

Gaspar and his uncle, Martin Kispalugyai, had a close relationship, as evidenced by Gaspar's decision in 1481 to donate half of his inherited estate to Martin, who had cared for him after his parents' deaths until he reached adulthood.²⁵ Among the donated properties was that vineyard, which Martin later sold to the citizens of Bardejov.

In summary, George Schwarz's claim of kinship is verifiable. It is almost certain that the Schwarz family had familial ties with the Toth family of Košice. This is further supported by the fact that when Gaspar Kispalugyai (III) died in 1510, George Schwarz attempted to acquire his house and other assets in Košice, undoubtedly invoking their familial connection once again.²⁶

The Lawsuit (1486–1496)

Following the purchase, the citizens of Bardejov began cultivating the vineyard, but George Schwarz laid claim to the property. It is known that the Kispalugyai brothers had publicly announced in Košice that they intended to sell their vineyard in Tállya,²⁷ whereupon Schwarz expressed his interest in purchasing it. However, the transaction did not take place, and the citizens of Bardejov acquired the vineyard for 1,000 gold florins. Later, as I wrote above, Schwarz invoked familial and neighborly preemption rights to reclaim the vineyard, summoning the city of Bardejov before the council of the market town of Tállya, where Bardejov's representatives duly appeared.²⁸

The council of Tállya examined the case and ruled that the vineyard belonged to George Schwarz.²⁹ Dissatisfied with this decision, the citizens of Bardejov brought the matter before Imre Szapolyai, the Palatine of Hungary. This move is surprising, as municipal disputes of this nature typically fell under the jurisdiction of the Master of the Treasury. The decision to involve Szapolyai can be explained by the fact that he had been the lord of the Tokaj estate, which included Tállya, since 1459.³⁰ Furthermore, the vineyard in Tállya was held under villein tenure rather than noble rights, making it taxable and thus subject to landlord's right.³¹

In the spring, the palatine summoned representatives of both parties to appear before him.³² The Bardejov council feared losing both the vineyard and the expenses they had incurred in its cultivation. They sought Szapolyai's confirmation of their ownership. Intense negotiations followed, with the city sending delegates multiple times throughout the year to both Szapolyai and the Kispalugyai family.³³

24 MAJLÁTH, *Családtörténeti Tanulmányok*, 31, MNL OL DL 45685, MNL OL DL 45686.

25 "per certos annos ipsum de infantia usque ad virilem etatem conservasset" – MNL OL DL 45905.

26 KERÉKES, *Kassa polgársága*, 56.

27 "quia vinea illa... publice Cassovie sunt proclamata" – MNL OL DF 215989.

28 George Mager, Michael Lang, Paul Zipser and Nicholas Stock appeared on behalf of Bardejov in the market town. MNL OL DF 215269; MNL OL DF 215199.

29 MNL OL DF 215268. "quidam iudices et iurati de dicta Thalya auditis causis... dictam vineam Georgio Schwarz adiudicaverunt". See also: MNL OL DF 215514, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2746; MNL OL DF 215989; MNL OL DF 216016; MNL OL DF 216021.

30 NÉMETH, *A tokaji uradalom*, 434; HORVÁTH, *Adatok a Szapolyaiak*, 101–102.

31 MNL OL DF 215269, GULYÁS, *A mezővárosi ingatlanforgalom*, 51.

32 MNL OL DF 215269.

33 MNL OL DF 215199.

In his letter dated 9 May 1486, Palatine Imre Szapolyai requested additional time from the city, citing his numerous responsibilities, and promised to make a decision as soon as possible.³⁴ However, no resolution was reached, as discussions about the timing of the palatine's decision continued into early June. Shortly thereafter, the feast of Saints Peter and Paul (June 29) was proposed as the decision date, with the location to be either Tállya or Szántó.³⁵ By early July, however, Szapolyai once again apologized for being unable to arrange the meeting.³⁶

Negotiations continued in July 1486. Bardejov sent a representative named Albert, a familiaris, to Spiš Castle, with whom the palatine sent a verbal message back to the city. A few weeks later, in August, the citizens of Košice also sent a delegate to Bardejov with a verbal message.³⁷ Thomas Göbel of Košice, George Schwarz's brother-in-law, wrote a letter to the Bardejov council, urging them to seek reconciliation.³⁸

On 6 August 1486, Szapolyai wrote that the newly proposed date of 12 August was also unworkable due to his many obligations.³⁹ On 7 September, he again excused himself, explaining that he could not address the matter.⁴⁰ Finally, on 29 September, he informed the citizens that he had received their latest letter and had intended to appoint a judge from the Košice council to resolve the case, but was unable to follow through with this plan. He also noted that, according to witnesses, the vineyard belonged to Schwarz by familial ties.⁴¹ Ultimately, no hearing or decision was organized in 1486.

The lawsuit continued before the palatine in the following year. A few days after the traditional start of vineyard cultivation (12 March), the Bardejov council sent a delegate to Imre Szapolyai. By the end of summer, their delegates had visited Martin Kispalugyai and George Schwarz on multiple occasions.⁴² On 13 June 1487, Benedict Borsvay, castellan of Buda, informed the citizens of Bardejov that their case would soon be addressed.⁴³ Finally, in his letter dated 23 August, Szapolyai informed the Kispalugyai brothers that the representatives of the royal cities of Košice, Levoča and Prešov, whom he had chosen as arbitrators, had ruled that the citizens of Bardejov had unlawfully acquired the vineyard, as it rightfully belonged to Schwarz due to neighborly and familial rights. Schwarz was therefore obligated to return the 1,000-florin purchase price by 30 August 1487, at Spiš Castle, where it was to be handed over to Bardejov's delegates.⁴⁴ However, this did not occur. On 1 September 1487, the palatine's notary, Ladislás Felfalusi, wrote a letter to the Bardejov council,

34 MNL OL DF 215219, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2458.

35 MNL OL DF 215227, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2465; MNL OL DF 215228, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2466.

36 MNL OL DF 215235, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2473.

37 MNL OL DF 215240, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2477; MNL OL DF 215242 IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2480.

38 MNL OL DF 215238, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2475.

39 MNL OL DF 214745. IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2568.

40 MNL OL DF 215243 IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2481.

41 MNL OL DF 215252, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2490.

42 MNL OL DF 215199.

43 MNL OL DF 215317, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2554.

44 MNL OL DF 215331, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2568; MNL OL DF 215514, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2746.

assuring them of his support in the lawsuit.⁴⁵ The following day, Imre Szapolyai passed away. News of his death was conveyed to the citizens of Bardejov in a letter from Paul Izsépi on 13 September.⁴⁶ The transfer of funds may have been prevented by Szapolyai's deteriorating health. His death further delayed the resolution of the case, allowing the city to retain control of the vineyard until the harvest of 1487.

Finally, in September 1488, the litigating parties met in Košice to resolve the matter.⁴⁷ Prior to this, they had agreed to appear at the Košice city hall and finalize the transfer before the Košice council. On the appointed date, the citizens of Bardejov designated three aldermen, Miclasko, Michael Lang and George Mager,⁴⁸ who traveled to Košice. George Schwarz also appeared with the 1,000 florins. Before accepting the money, the Bardejov delegates gave Schwarz one last opportunity to choose between the money and the vineyard. Schwarz chose the vineyard and handed over the payment to the aldermen.⁴⁹ Thus, the vineyard was transferred to George Schwarz. The citizens of Bardejov also demanded reimbursement of the 50 florins they had spent cultivating the vineyard, which Schwarz promised to pay.⁵⁰

Evidence for the transfer of the vineyard includes several records. First, the economic accounts of the vineyard maintained by the city of Bardejov concluded in 1487, indicating that the citizens ceased working there.⁵¹ Second, in 1491 the citizens of Bardejov sold their now-unnecessary house in Tállya, which they had purchased in 1485. And, during the 1490s, they reorganized their vineyard holdings in the surrounding areas, centralizing them in Szántó.⁵²

After 1488, the case temporarily disappeared from the sources but resurfaced in 1489. According to the records, George Schwarz opposed the previous decision, despite a letter from the Bardejov council urging him to accept it.⁵³ He summoned the citizens of Bardejov before Angelo Pecchinoli, the papal legate residing in Hungary between 1488 and 1490.⁵⁴ Schwarz argued that the citizens had not actually purchased the vineyard for 1,000 florins, as claimed, but for a lower amount, and that he had thus overpaid for the vineyard compared to its actual value. Initially, Schwarz alleged a loss of 200 florins due to the Bardejov citizens.⁵⁵ In the later stages of the lawsuit,

45 MNL OL DF 215334, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2571.

46 MNL OL DF 215336, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2573; C. TÓTH, *A magyar királyság nádora*, 94–95.

47 MNL OL DF 216207, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3414; MNL OL DF 215199; MNL OL DF 215535, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2767.

48 MNL OL DF 215535, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2767; MNL OL DF 215268.

49 "dantes ei liberum arbitrium et plenariam facultatem pecunias levare vel vineam obmittere, qui vineam eligens, pecunias tradidit Bartphensibus" – MNL OL DF 215268.

50 "Postea vero prefati tres cives de Bartpha aduc quinquaginta florenos a prefato Georgio quos ipse ad culturam dicte vinee exposuerunt rehabere petiverunt, qui... tales quinquaginta florenos solvere spondit." MNL OL DF 215535, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2767.

51 MNL OL DF 215269.

52 GECSÉNYI, *Bártfa város*, 472; GULYÁS, *Csontos Éliás*, 78.

53 MNL OL DF 215199.

54 KALOUS, *The legation*.

55 MNL OL DF 215514, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2746; MNL OL DF 216021; KALOUS, *The legation*, XXVII; MNL OL DF 215490 (1489); MNL OL DF 215531 (1490); MNL OL DF 215535, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2767.

his lawyer, John Ginorus, revised this claim to a purchase price of 650 florins, resulting in a supposed loss of 350 florins.⁵⁶

Schwarz's claim appears to have been false, as several factors contradict it. One such factor is that the deed of sale issued by the Chapter of Spiš is a clearly authentic document, not a forgery, and it is unlikely that such a significant chapter would have recorded false claims in an official charter. The high price of 1,000 florins for the vineyard may also seem suspicious, but the vineyard accounts prepared by the citizens of Bardejov reveal that the cultivation costs for the Tállya vineyard in 1486 amounted to 113 florins and 27 denars from the beginning of the season to the harvest.⁵⁷ Comparing this to the 1498 accounts for the city's extensive vineyards on seven hills in Szántó, where the costs from the start of the year to May totaled 52 florins and 60 denars,⁵⁸ it becomes clear that the Tállya property was immense, comparable in size to the vast Szántó vineyards acquired by Bardejov in the 1490s. Another argument is that the first hoeing of the Tállya vineyard in 1486 cost 4 florins and 80 denars, while the same work across the seven hills of Szántó cost a total of 8 florins and 13 denars.⁵⁹ These data strongly suggest that the Tállya vineyard's large size justified its high price, making it apparent that Schwarz was trying to extract money from Bardejov unjustly rather than the reverse.⁶⁰

Another question arises: why did George Schwarz turn to an ecclesiastical court for a case that was entirely secular? Schwarz's lawyer, John Ginorus, provides an answer in a legal brief written in 1490. The plaintiff claimed that the vineyard sold by the Kispalugyai brothers had previously been dedicated to ecclesiastical purposes as a charitable donation for the establishment of a mass.⁶¹ However, there is no evidence to support this claim beyond this single mention, and it was never raised again in subsequent sources.⁶²

The true reason Schwarz turned to the ecclesiastical court was that he doubted his chances of winning the case in a secular court. To justify his choice, he fabricated the story about the mass foundation. In medieval Europe, the jurisdiction of canon law was clearly defined, and secular courts were responsible for cases outside its bounds.⁶³ Angelo had previously already refused to adjudicate cases where secular courts were competent,⁶⁴ and this case likely would have ended the same way.

The second phase of the lawsuit is documented from autumn 1489. At Schwarz's request, Cardinal Angelo summoned the citizens' delegates to appear before him in Buda on 19 September.⁶⁵ The outcome of the initial hearing is unknown, but the citizens of Bardejov eventually appeared before Angelo and argued that none of them

56 MNL OL DF 215989, MNL OL DF 216016.

57 MNL OL DF 215269.

58 MNL OL DF 216211; GULYÁS, *Csontos Éliás*, 86.

59 MNL OL DF 215269; MNL OL DF 216211; GULYÁS, *Csontos Éliás*, 87.

60 GULYÁS, *Egy szőlőtől a kánonjogig*, 94–95.

61 "ad fundationem unius misse ex bonis cuiusdam mulieris ad id donatis vineam unam" – MNL OL DF 216021.

62 GULYÁS, *Egy szőlőtől a kánonjogig*, 95–96.

63 BÓNIS, *Szentszéki regeszták*, 640–641, 651–652; C. TÓTH – LAKATOS – MIKÓ, *A pozsonyi prépost*, 20–23.

64 KALOUS, *The legation*, LIII, MNL OL DL 56234 (1489).

65 MNL OL DF 215490, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, 2724; MNL OL DF 215199.

could be summoned to an ecclesiastical court.⁶⁶ On 8 January 1490, Schwarz's lawyer prepared a summary of the case for the cardinal, briefly outlining the events thus far.⁶⁷ Meanwhile, the citizens of Bardejov sought to have the case transferred to the Master of the Treasury's jurisdiction, sending a delegate with 8 florins' worth of fabric as a gift in February and March 1490.⁶⁸

On 23 February, the legate summoned the delegates of Bardejov to appear before him once more.⁶⁹ Angelo authorized John, the parish priest, and Gaspar, a preacher in Košice, to interrogate witnesses, which took place on 8 March. Testimony from eleven witnesses was reported on 10 March.⁷⁰ First to testify was George Ferber, the acting judge of Košice at the time of the money transfer,⁷¹ who recounted how the transaction had occurred and confirmed that Schwarz had expressed dissatisfaction with the price. Seven other witnesses corroborated Ferber's account, while three, not present at the transfer, could provide no information. On March 30, Angelo summoned the citizens of Bardejov to Buda again, 15 days after the summons.⁷²

The parish priests and preachers of Košice and Bardejov were subsequently tasked with interrogating the citizens of Bardejov. On 8 June 1490, the interrogators arrived in Bardejov, but the citizens protested the procedure, claiming the case affected the entire city, not just the delegates present at the money transfer. They refused to answer several questions and even declined to swear an oath. As a result, the ecclesiastical officials excommunicated the citizens of Bardejov, informing Angelo of their decision in letters dated 15 June and 21 June.⁷³

The citizens of Bardejov quickly responded by filing a protest,⁷⁴ writing to the legate to request the transfer of the case to the Master of the Treasury,⁷⁵ and instructing their delegates at the diet in Buda,⁷⁶ convened for the royal election, to act on the city's behalf.⁷⁷ These actions proved successful, as Angelo lifted the excommunication a few days later, on 12 June.⁷⁸ The case was ultimately suspended because Angelo left

66 "cives Bartphenses... allegantes, quod quia essent privilegiati per condam dominos Reges, quod nullus quispiam homines eos trahi debere ad forum spiritualem" – MNL OL DF 215268. BÓNIS, *Szentszéki regeszták*, no. 3538.

67 MNL OL DF 215514, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2746; Another summary of Ginorus: MNL OL DF 216021.

68 MNL OL DF 215199.

69 MNL OL DF 215531, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2763; MNL OL DF 215534, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2768.

70 MNL OL DF 215535, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2767.

71 MAGDOŠKO, *Samospráva mesta*, 251.

72 MNL OL DF 215541, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2775; MNL OL DF 215544, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2777.

73 "testes... minime de predictis fassione dare neque iuramentum prestare voluerunt... nos autem ut tenemur... eosdem... excommunicavimus" – MNL OL DF 215563, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2796; MNL OL DF 215566, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2798, MNL OL DF 215565, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2799.

74 "non solum illos predictos Michaellem Lanng et Georgium Mager tangetur, sed ipsos omnes iudicem iuratos et totam communitatem" – MNL OL DF 215559, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2792; ÉRDÚJHELYI, *A közjegyzőség*, 201–203.

75 MNL OL DL 46140, BÓNIS, *Szentszéki regeszták*, no. 3586.

76 MNL OL DF 215199.

77 MNL OL DF 215560, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2793.

78 MNL OL DF 215562, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2794.

Hungary in late September 1490, following the coronation of King Vladislaus II,⁷⁹ and could no longer address the matter.

But, after several years, George Schwarz decided to reopen the suspended case and took it directly to the papal curia.⁸⁰ He was able to do so because the case had previously been heard by the papal legate before being suspended in 1490. The first record of the lawsuit's reopening dates to late July 1493.⁸¹ On 5 September, Pope Alexander VI ordered Michael, Abbot of Széplak, and Ambrose, Abbot of Tapolca, as delegated papal judges,⁸² to hear witnesses and deliver a verdict in the case.⁸³ On 20 December 1493, the citizens of Bardejov issued a charter stating that the 1,000 florins had been received by Mager and Lang on behalf of the entire city, and that George Schwarz had acknowledged this.⁸⁴ Shortly thereafter, in early January 1494, they appointed a local citizen, Albert Nagy, as their lawyer. However, by the time the hearing took place, John, the parish priest of Richvald, was representing them instead.⁸⁵

The proceedings accelerated in late summer 1494. On 21 August, the appointed judges, the Abbot of Széplak and the Abbot of Tapolca (represented by Bereck, Archdeacon of Torna, in the latter's stead), ordered George Mager, who was then serving as the judge of Bardejov,⁸⁶ and Paul Zipser to appear before them.⁸⁷ On 11 September, three Bardejov citizens – Mager, Zipser and Jerome Paulhenzel – appeared for interrogation at the Dominican monastery in Košice. During the hearing, the judges read their papal commission, after which Schwarz presented his complaint orally. The trial closely resembled earlier proceedings from four years prior. Once again, the delegates from Bardejov refused to give testimony, leading to their excommunication. John Hirsch recorded the trial proceedings and the excommunication decree, which the judges also formalized in a separate charter.⁸⁸

The citizens of Bardejov immediately took countermeasures. On the same day, they had a notarial deed drawn up by John Rados, listing their objections to the judicial process. Their main points were that the plaintiff had failed to submit his complaint in writing prior to the trial and that the matter belonged to a secular court, which had already ruled on the case.⁸⁹

79 KALOUS, *The legation*, LXXV–LXXVI.

80 BÓNIS, *Szentszéki regeszták*, no. 3662, MNL OL DL 46278.

81 MNL OL DF 215880, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3106.

82 About delegated papal judges see BARABÁS, *A pápai kiküldött*, 175–176.

83 MNL OL DF 215828, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3055; MNL OL DF 215886, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3056; ÉRDÚJHELYI, *A közjegyzőség*, 141.

84 MNL OL DF 216207 IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3414.

85 MNL OL DF 215897 IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3120.

86 SROKA, *A középkori Bártfa*, 65.

87 MNL OL DF 215921, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3145; MNL OL DF 215886, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3056.

88 MNL OL DF 215924, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3150; ÉRDÚJHELYI, *A közjegyzőség*, 206–207; MNL OL DF 215926, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3149; MNL OL DF 215886, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3056.

89 "actorquoque prelectioni rescripti apostolici proposita sua actione verbo et non scripto nullo oblato libello" and "exceperunt declinationem, quod causa Georgii Schwartz esset profana et non concernens forum spirituale et antea in iudicio seculari est finaliter decisa" – MNL OL DF 215925, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3151; ÉRDÚJHELYI, *A közjegyzőség*, 213–214.

Further details of the trial are found in a notarial deed issued on 25 September 1494, by Peter Jordan of Prešov.⁹⁰ This document, presented by Bardejov's lawyer, John of Richvald, recounted the events of the trial and included an appeal to the papal curia. John argued that the trial had been conducted improperly,⁹¹ rendering the excommunication invalid. His arguments included the following: Angelo Pecchinoli, the former papal legate, had previously suspended the case because it did not fall under ecclesiastical jurisdiction; Schwarz had presented false complaints to the papal court; the appointed judges lacked legal expertise; the delegation of the judicial role from the Abbot of Tapolca to the Archdeacon of Torna was irregular; summons procedures were not followed; there was no formal complaint; the Bardejov citizens were not obligated to answer the questions; and they were obstructed from filing appeals.⁹²

The complexity of the case drew attention. The citizens of Bardejov appealed to the Bishop of Eger,⁹³ prompting Canon Benedict, the vicar of Eger, to summon them on 10 October to hear their grievances.⁹⁴ During this period, John, a chaplain of Košice, provided regular updates to the Bardejov citizens about the progress of their case.⁹⁵

The citizens also sent their municipal notary to the king,⁹⁶ who reported the developments to Vladislaus II. On 11 October, the king wrote to the two abbots, informing them that the citizens had requested the case be transferred to the Master of the Treasury, as the proceedings before the papal court violated their old privileges. While not wanting to undermine ecclesiastical rights, the king ordered that new judges be appointed to decide the matter at a new location and time, and that the excommunication be lifted.⁹⁷ However, this directive had no immediate effect. The following day, the Abbot of Széplak issued a charter forbidding anyone from providing food or drink to the excommunicated citizens of Bardejov. This decree was reiterated in multiple charters through February.⁹⁸

In response, the citizens of Bardejov took further measures. In mid-December 1494, they sent their lawyer, John of Richvald, accompanied by a servant, to Rome to appeal the excommunication. They returned only in mid-March next year.⁹⁹ In early December, Paul Zipser personally sought the palatine in Buda, while Mager and Paulhenzel traveled to Eger to meet with the bishop, where they stayed for two weeks.¹⁰⁰

In mid-January 1495, John Sóvári, a newly appointed lawyer for Bardejov, appeared before the Abbot of Széplak. On behalf of the city, he protested the injustices they had

90 MNL OL DL 46278, ÉRDÚJHELYI, *A közejegyzőség*, 207–209; BÓNIS, *Szentszéki regeszták*, no. 3662; MNL OL DF 215929, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3153. Mentioned also by JUHÁSZ, *A csanádi püspökség*, 92–93.

91 For the regular process see C. TÓTH – LAKATOS – MIKÓ, *A pozsonyi prépost*, 68–80.

92 MNL OL DF 216021.

93 MNL OL DF 215199.

94 MNL OL DF 215933, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3155; MNL OL DF 215199.

95 MNL OL DF 215936, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3150; MNL OL DF 215937, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3161; MNL OL DF 215952, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3174.

96 MNL OL DF 215199.

97 MNL OL DF 215930, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3154.

98 MNL OL DF 215931, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3150; MNL OL DF 215886, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, 3056; MNL OL DF 215938, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, 3162; MNL OL DF 215886, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3056; MNL OL DF 215941, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3165; MNL OL DF 215886, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3056; MNL OL DF 215958, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3180.

99 MNL OL DF 215199; MNL OL DF 215928, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3152.

100 MNL OL DF 215199.

faced and threatened to seek the king's protection. This protest was also formalized in a notarial deed.¹⁰¹

In the wake of the scandal, the Church withdrew the delegated judges' commissions in the spring of 1495. This decision was likely influenced by the efforts of John, Bardejov's lawyer, who had personally appeared in Rome and returned home around this time. By March 1495, under papal orders, new ecclesiastical judges – Gabriel of Olomouc and Matthew of Vári, both canons of Eger and doctors of canon law – were appointed to oversee the case. These judges acted swiftly.

In March, they summoned George Schwarz, Michael, the Abbot of Széplak, and Bereck, the Archdeacon of Torna (whose superior, Ambrose, Abbot of Tapolca, had passed away by this time).¹⁰² On 12 April, they formally revoked the excommunication of the three Bardejov witnesses.¹⁰³ The appointment of these new judges marked a significant turning point in the case.

The lawsuit was retried before the newly appointed judges. On 1 July 1495, the citizens of Bardejov met in Prešov at the house of alderman Peter Melczer and, in the presence of notary Peter Jordan, hired new lawyers.¹⁰⁴ They chose legally trained representatives to prepare for the final confrontation. By this time, the royal court was pressing for the resolution of the long-standing case. At the end of July, Palatine Stephen Szapolyai wrote to the citizens of Bardejov urging them to reconcile with the Abbot of Széplak, followed by a similar request from Paul Darholcz, the captain of Spiš, in early August.¹⁰⁵

A written plea by one of Schwarz's lawyers, summarizing the case from the plaintiff's perspective, survives and was likely prepared in the spring or summer of 1495, after the excommunications.¹⁰⁶ In response, the citizens of Bardejov drafted their own legal memorandum dated 3 September 1495, which summarized events from 1486 onward and was intended for presentation before the delegated judges.¹⁰⁷

In mid-1495, the delegated judges, Gabriel of Olomouc and Matthew of Vári, ordered parish priests from Prešov, Veľký Šariš and Malý Šariš to interrogate witnesses regarding the circumstances and legality of the excommunications. Among the 16 witnesses called were citizens and clerics of Bardejov, Levoča, Prešov and Košice, as well as the castellan of Makovica. The interrogations took place in Prešov between 25 June and 12 November 1495. The records of these testimonies were compiled into a formal report on the day of judgment.¹⁰⁸

On 2 February 1496, Pope Alexander VI issued a decree from Rome instructing the new judges to deliver a decision. The decree recounted the events of the case,

101 MNL OL DF 215951, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3173; ÉRDÚJHELYI, *A közjegyzőség*, 202–204.

102 MNL OL DF 215962, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3184.

103 MNL OL DF 215968, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3190.

104 MNL OL DF 215979, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3200; ÉRDÚJHELYI, *A közjegyzőség*, 198–200, 299–301.

105 MNL OL DF 215985, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3205; MNL OL DF 215987, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3207.

106 MNL OL DF 216016.

107 MNL OL DF 215989.

108 MNL OL DF 215199; MNL OL DF 216038, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3248.

emphasizing that Schwarz had acted fraudulently and that the two previous delegated judges had conducted irregular proceedings during the interrogations.¹⁰⁹

The trial's findings were finalized on 19 February 1496, when the records were formalized. The interrogations revealed numerous new and dramatic details about the case. All 16 witnesses were asked identical questions, focusing on the proclamation of the excommunications and the credentials of the judges. Clerics who had participated in declaring the excommunications justified their actions as official duties. Witnesses were also asked if they considered the excommunications unjust and what damages they had caused. Most witnesses agreed on the illegality of the excommunications and highlighted both financial losses and damage to reputations. Another question concerned whether the excommunicated citizens had been excluded from the settlement, which all witnesses confirmed. The excommunicated individuals reportedly lived in nearby villages and at Makovica Castle for weeks.

The most shocking revelation involved the excommunicated citizen Paul Zipser. After his excommunication, he traveled first to the palatine and then to Levoča, where he was denied entry to the church and left the city the next day. But, during the period of his excommunication, he died outside the walls of Bardejov in the Church of St Leonard. Due to his excommunicated status, his body could not be buried. Witnesses described how his body was hidden outside the walls, initially in the church, then in the leper house, a stable, a mill and finally in the cemetery. The incident was deemed scandalous (*scandalum*) by all who heard of it.¹¹⁰

Based on the testimonies, Gabriel of Olomouc and Matthew of Vári issued their judgment on 19 February 1496, in Eger. Their verdict was severe. They criticized the two previous delegated judges for conducting irregular proceedings in such a significant case, causing great suffering to the three excommunicated citizens of Bardejov. They declared the excommunications invalid and ordered Michael, the Abbot of Széplak, and Bereck, the Archdeacon of Torna, to pay 300 florins in compensation to Mager, Paulhenzel and the heirs of Paul Zipser. Additionally, 181.5 florins and 45 denars in court costs were to be paid, under penalty of excommunication.¹¹¹

Payments were slow, leading the judges to issue multiple payment demands in May 1496.¹¹² Separately, George Schwarz was summoned for his fraudulent actions during the trial. On 16 May 1496, he was ordered to pay compensation of 109 florins, with a deadline of four months.¹¹³ However, it seems unlikely that Schwarz made this payment, because in October 1496, the case reached a peaceful resolution in Košice through the mediation of Bishop Thomas Bakócz of Eger, Provost George Szatmári of Székesfehérvár, and Captain Paul Darholcz of Spiš. Unfortunately, the terms of this settlement are unknown.¹¹⁴ Nevertheless, it is clear that the case, which had spanned

109 MNL OL DF 216039, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3249; ÉRDÚJHELYI, *A közzjegyzőség*, 311–314.

110 MNL OL DF 216038, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3248.

111 MNL OL DF 216039 IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3249; ÉRDÚJHELYI, *A közzjegyzőség*, 311–317; MNL OL DF 216059, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3269; MNL OL DF 215538.

112 MNL OL DF 216051, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3261; MNL OL DF 216054, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3265; MNL OL DF 216060, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3267.

113 MNL OL DF 216052, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3262; MNL OL DF 216056, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3266; MNL OL DF 216057, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3267.

114 MNL OL DF 216075, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3285.

more than a decade, was concluded, as no further documents related to George Schwarz or the Tállya vineyard appear in the Bardejov archives.

The citizens of Bardejov demonstrated remarkable pragmatism and perseverance throughout this ordeal. While the Tállya vineyard could have significantly contributed to the city's wine production, they abandoned their plans when it became clear that it could not remain theirs. Instead, they established new vineyards centred around Szántó, consisting of seven vineyard hills. Detailed economic records from the 1490s document their vine-dresser's work on these estates.¹¹⁵

The Expense Registers of Bardejov

The lengthy lawsuit itself is not extraordinary, as medieval Hungary provides numerous examples of similar cases. What makes the Schwarz lawsuit particularly interesting is the extensive body of sources available to reconstruct the events. Typically, the surviving documents from medieval lawsuits are legal in nature, generated as part of official proceedings. Rarely do "internal-use" documents, such as notes, legal instructions or correspondence related to case management, survive. Such records were not generally preserved because they lacked legal relevances and were usually discarded over time.

Only a few well-documented ecclesiastical land disputes are exceptions to this lack of sources. Examples include the early-1420s dispute between the provost and Chapter of Bratislava,¹¹⁶ and the tithe lawsuit of the Esztergom Cathedral Chapter against the Abbey of Pécsvárad over the Sasad estate in the 1450s and 1460s.¹¹⁷ The Bardejov case is exceptional because an almost monumental quantity of source material is available. In addition to the usual lawsuit documents, numerous letters in Latin, and occasionally in German, related to case management, legal summaries and legal instructions, can also be utilized. Even more remarkably, an expense register detailing the costs incurred by the citizens of Bardejov for the case has survived in two versions in the Bardejov archives.¹¹⁸

One of them is an eight-page register recording the vineyard-related expenses for 1485–1487.¹¹⁹ Of the 16 pages, three (1v, 7v, 8v) are left blank. The register begins with the costs associated with the vineyard purchase at the end of 1485 and then lists the expenditures incurred during the subsequent lawsuit up to 1487. The document concludes with a brief summary under a separate heading of the gifts presented during the vineyard lawsuit. This register covers the expenses of the case during its first phase, before Palatine Imre Szapolyai. It also includes a detailed summary of the vineyard cultivation costs for 1486 and 1487.

The second document, lacking a cover page, consists of six. It also begins with the vineyard purchase costs at the end of 1485 and chronologically records expenditures up to 1496.¹²⁰ These two registers were created to enable the judges to reclaim expenses from the city's adversaries after Bardejov's legal victory. This practice was

115 GULYÁS, Csontos Éliás.

116 C. TÓTH – LAKATOS – MIKÓ, *A pozsonyi prépost*, 93–162.

117 BÓNIS, *A sasadi tizedper*, 103–113; C. TÓTH, *Az esztergomi székeskáptalan*.

118 GULYÁS, *A Swarcz-ügy*, 121–125.

119 MNL OL DF 215269. "Exposita et impense super labores et fatigas iuris super vineam magnam in metis Talya in anno Domini etc. octoagesimo sexto et septimo".

120 MNL OL DF 215199.

widespread in medieval Hungary, where rules regarding litigation costs and the financial responsibilities of the losing party had solidified by the fifteenth century.¹²¹ Litigation costs consisted of several elements, including fines paid by the losing party, various procedural fees, and the ninth and tenth fees paid to judges and authentic places (*loca credibilia*) from as early as the Árpád era.¹²² By the fifteenth century, these also included costs borne by the victorious party, directly related to the lawsuit.¹²³

Up to 1487, the two Bardejov records are almost entirely consistent in content. Both detail the expenses incurred up to the death of the palatine, listing largely identical amounts. The main difference is that the 1485–1487 register includes the vineyard accounts, which are omitted in the 1485–1496 document. The structure and data organization of both texts reflect the typical accounting practices of medieval Hungary.¹²⁴ Entries are grouped by theme and year, preceded by subheadings, with each entry introduced by “Item” and detailing recipients, destinations or the purpose of the expenses, along with the amounts paid in florins and denars, almost always recorded in Roman numerals. Dates of payment occasionally appear, but only consistently in entries from the 1490s.

The similarity between the two sources is one of content rather than verbatim transcription. The documents were not copied word for word from one another. Differences are evident in subheadings, and the earlier 1485–1487 register periodically summarizes expenses, a feature absent from the 1485–1496 register. Additionally, the phrasing of expense items sometimes varies between the two. For instance, the earlier register frequently uses the German terms “ort” (quarter) and “drittel” (third) when detailing florin amounts, while the later document does not. Minor discrepancies in the details of costs also appear, although the totals align.

The context of these documents and their relationship can be explained as follows: some costs were not specifically recorded because of the lawsuit. The expenses related to the vineyard purchase were documented following typical urban accounting practices to ensure accountability for city funds allocated to this purpose. The same applies to the vineyard cultivation costs. The vine-dressers employed by Bardejov for their vineyards in the Hegyalja region regularly accounted for the funds they received from the city in writing.¹²⁵

When the lawsuit began in the spring of 1486, the citizens of Bardejov started documenting the associated expenses, following contemporary practices. They hoped that, after the judges dismissed George Schwarz’s claims, they could recover their costs from him based on these records.

In the summer of 1487, before the city’s arbitration court convened, all economic records related to the vineyard – including expenses for cultivation and lawsuit costs – were compiled, edited and bound into a single booklet, complete with a cover page. This became the expense register for the period 1485–1487.¹²⁶ The intention was to present this document during the trial as evidence. However, when the arbitration court

121 KIRÁLY, *A szegénységjogtól*, 119–123.

122 KIRÁLY, *A szegénységjogtól*, 120–122; HAJNIK, *A magyar bírósági szervezet*, 442–450; HALÁSZ, *A decima et nona*.

123 KIRÁLY, *A szegénységjogtól*, 122–123.

124 FEJÉRPATAKY, *Magyarországi városok*, III–XIII; KUBINYI, *A mezőgazdaság történetéhez*, 371–380; NÓGRÁDY, *Kanizsai László*, 8–10.

125 As a summary: GULYÁS, *Csontos Éliás*.

126 MNL OL DF 215269.

ruled against them, the register was no longer needed for the case and was returned to the city archives, where it has survived to this day.

The creation of the second expense register, covering the years 1485–1496, is also well understood. Before the final decision in 1496, the citizens of Bardejov began compiling another expense register. For the years up to 1487, they reused the same notes included in the 1487 compilation, explaining why the two registers are identical for this period. For the subsequent years, they incorporated entries from a new register that had been maintained from 1489 onwards.

The manuscript held in the Bardejov archives is almost certainly a draft of the expense register presented to the delegated papal judges in February 1496. Evidence of this includes the unfinished state of the text, which contains numerous corrections and later additions. Furthermore, the document remains in the Bardejov archives, suggesting it was not the final document. The finalized and polished version was handed over by Bardejov's representatives during the trial in Eger, forming the basis for their awarded compensation. It is highly unlikely that the expense register presented to the judges in 1496 ever returned to the city.

Expenditures and Management of the Lawsuit

Based on the two cost registers, the expenditures made by the citizens of Bardejov for the lawsuit until its final resolution in the spring of 1496 can be summarized. These calculations exclude the purchase price of the vineyard (24 florins and 21 denars) and the cultivation costs (113 florins and 27 denars for the full year of 1486, and 49 florins and 93 denars up to August 15, 1487), which were also recorded in the cost ledger. Legal expenses alone amounted to a substantial sum of 607 florins and 7 denars over the 10-year period.¹²⁷

The ledger records logical amounts. In the first phase of the lawsuit, conducted before the palatine until the autumn of 1488, the citizens spent just over 106 florins, less than in the one-year period before Papal Legate Angelo, which cost approximately 112 florins. It is well known that trials before ecclesiastical judges were generally more expensive, and this case supports that observation.

In the phase conducted before the Roman Curia, less than three years saw the city compelled to spend over 389 florins, nearly twice as much as in the preceding phases combined. Expenditures in 1494 were particularly high, amounting to nearly 232 florins. This is unsurprising, as Bardejov's lawyer, John, traveled to Rome in the autumn of that year with an attendant. His journey and stay cost 89 florins, significantly raising the expenses for that year.¹²⁸ Costs were also increased by the frequent need to engage notaries during this period. In 1495, the most burdensome task for the city was organizing the witness hearings in Prešov in the latter half of the year. In line with contemporary practices, Bardejov financed the transportation of 16 witnesses to the location, which was also standard practice at the time.¹²⁹

Bardejov clearly had substantial cash reserves, as all unexpected or large expenses were handled promptly and efficiently. The total expenditure of over 600 florins in

¹²⁷ GULYÁS, *A Swarcz-ügy*, 126.

¹²⁸ Litigation before the Holy See involved similar costs in other cases. As an example: C. TÓTH, *Az esztergomi székeskáptalan*, 33.

¹²⁹ C. TÓTH – LAKATOS – MIKÓ, *A pozsonyi prépost*, 101–102.

ten years is significant when compared to the city's budget.¹³⁰ In the 1470s, Bardejov typically paid royal taxes of 600–700 florins annually,¹³¹ decreasing to 400–700 florins in the early 1480s.¹³² Between 1487 and 1497, royal taxes varied significantly, ranging from 200 to 1,400 florins, and settled at 300–400 florins in the late 1490s. During this period, the city's revenues ranged between approximately 1,700 and 2,000 florins annually.¹³³ Over ten years, Bardejov spent an amount equivalent to an average year's royal taxes on the lawsuit. While this was not an excessive burden overall, it was at times unevenly distributed. For instance, the 231 florins spent on legal costs in 1494 were particularly high compared to the 550 florins paid in royal taxes that year.

The division of expenditures by type and purpose often cannot be completely separated, as some entries included multiple unspecified costs such as travel expenses combined with accommodation, food, gifts, administrative fees and document preparation costs. Clearly defined expenses, however, were mainly spent on missions carried out by city representatives. Rarely was it specified which settlement or individual the representatives visited. Usually, only the name of the settlement or the individual was recorded.¹³⁴

Košice was the most frequently visited destination during the decade, with 20 visits, mostly for negotiations with George Schwarz. After the vineyard was lost, Hegyalja ceased to be a destination. Buda was frequently visited during the second phase of the case to meet with the papal legate residing at court. Eger became the primary destination during the third phase of the lawsuit, with 17 visits, primarily to address the excommunication. Representatives of Bardejov, such as George Mager and Jerome Paulhenzel, spent extended periods in Eger, as recorded in the expense register. Other destinations included Levoča (three visits) and Prešov (five visits), as witnesses were interrogated there by the newly appointed delegated judges. The most distant destinations were Rome, Vienna, Buda, Trenčín, Kispalugya and Eger. If we look at the people visited, we see for example that Imre Szapolyai was seen a total of 13 times before his death in the first period of the trial, and Martin Kispalugyai 11 times. Legate Angelo Pecchinoli is reported to have been met at least four times. It is unclear exactly how far the citizens of Bardejov had to travel for the lawsuit over the decade, but it is evident that thousands of kilometres were covered – a significant burden and dangerous endeavor at the time. An estimated 130 trips were made during this period.

Little information is available about the mode of travel. Whether representatives traveled on horseback or by cart likely depended on factors such as distance, urgency and the representatives' social standing.¹³⁵ Carts were preferred for larger delegations or longer journeys, as they were more practical. For example, in August 1487, prominent citizens traveled to Košice for a court decision by cart.¹³⁶ In the summer of 1490,

130 SROKA, *A középkori Bártfa*, 66–69.

131 IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 1919, 1983, 2072.

132 IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2174, 2228, 2271, 2328.

133 NEUMANN, "Minden időben", 88.

134 GULYÁS, *A Swarcz-ügy*, 128–130.

135 Similar instances: C. TÓTH, *Az esztergomi székeskáptalan*, 58.

136 "Item Georgio Mager, Nicolao Stock etc. circa festum Assumptionis Marie iterum ad iudicium civitatum ad Talya sumptus fl X d XI. Eisdem pro media vase cerevisie et vecture ad Cassam fl I minus d VIII." MNL OL DF 215199.

Paulhenzel, Thomas Thanner and the parish priest also used a cart en route to Košice.¹³⁷ However, resource constraints sometimes necessitated horseback travel. In September 1494, following the second excommunication, Bardejov's lawyer, John of Richvald, traveled to Eger by cart,¹³⁸ but a month later, he and Martin Binder made the same journey on horseback. It is easy to assume that this was also a logistical issue: that not always was it possible to free up a suitable vehicle for the envoys, and that in such cases the only option was to ride.

During the latter half of 1495, when 16 witnesses were repeatedly transported to Prešov, carts were used again, likely to ensure the goodwill of the witnesses.¹³⁹ Even within this context, Bardejov occasionally economized on travel for its representatives. In July and August 1495, Paulhenzel and the city notary traveled to Eger twice on horseback.¹⁴⁰ Lower-ranking couriers, such as George Pusthinek, were similarly sent on horseback. In 1490, his three trips cost a total of 2 florins in wages.¹⁴¹

It is difficult to determine exactly how much travel expenses were for specific distances because the recorded payments most likely included more than just the fare. For longer journeys, expenses likely included accommodation and food costs.¹⁴² Considering only the lowest recorded expenditures for missions to various locations over the decade, assuming no additional costs, it becomes apparent that even distant destinations could be reached for just a few florins during this period. For example, the lowest recorded travel outlay included 66 denars to Kispalugya, 1 florin to Buda, 82 denars to Hegyalja, 25 denars to Eger, 60 denars to Levoča and 50 denars to Košice.¹⁴³

Having examined the destinations and costs, the purposes of these missions can now be explored. These purposes are not always entirely clear, as the cost ledger often uses generic formulations such as "regarding the lawsuit/vineyard".¹⁴⁴ These entries likely refer to negotiations and discussions related to the case.

In instances where the purpose is detailed, it becomes evident how foresighted and deliberate these journeys were. Most of the missions were tied to obligations arising from the case itself. The citizens of Bardejov traveled on numerous occasions in response to summonses, for verdict announcements, appeals or witness interrogations. The requirements of the case also explain the frequent delivery of letters or procurement of documents. To expedite the process, Bardejov's representatives often personally delivered summonses to other participants in the case to ensure smooth proceedings.¹⁴⁵

137 "Item eidem Sabbato ante Johannis Baptiste cum Thoma Thanner et plebano nostro iterum ad Cassam in cause relatorie fl III d LXV. Vectori earundem Martino Koller ort III." MNL OL DF 215199.

138 "Item plebano de Richwalt ad Agriam in causa huius litis Dominica Exaltationis Crucis fl III. Ad idem famulo vectori eiusdem d XII." MNL OL DF 215199.

139 For instance: "Item super expensis et vecturis executorum et testium de Cassa, Lewcza et Bartpha in civitatem Epperles convocatorum expositum fl XXV d LXXVII." MNL OL DF 215199.

140 "Item quarta ante Margarethe notario et Ieronimo cum fassionibus ad Agriam ad iudicium per 2 hebdomadam cum 5 equis d VIII c LXXVII." MNL OL DF 215199.

141 "Item Georgio Pusthinek do ratione eiusdem equi et 3bus itineribus personaliter factis dedimus in hoc causa fl II." MNL OL DF 215199.

142 C. TÓTH, *Az esztergomi székeskáptalan*, 58.

143 GULYÁS, *A Swarcz-ügy*, 133.

144 "Item Alberto iterum ad dominum comitem in causa vinee Vlta ante Oculi sumptus ort III" and so on. MNL OL DF 215199.

145 "Item Kelemann familiari nostro ad Martinum Paludi ut etiam veniat ad iudicium in Talya sumptus fl I." MNL OL DF 215199.

In the latter half of 1495, during witness hearings involving 16 individuals held multiple times in Prešov, the city organized and funded the transportation of witnesses at their own expense. These related expenses were recorded in a dedicated section of the cost ledger.¹⁴⁶

Occasionally, the ledger provides detailed accounts of the reasons for these trips, shedding light on the city's motivations and the mindset of its citizens. For instance, in the spring of 1487, Thomas Thanner traveled to Košice to meet George Schwarz and attempt to dissuade him from pursuing the lawsuit, albeit unsuccessfully.¹⁴⁷ In 1489, upon hearing that their opponent intended to bring the case before an ecclesiastical court, Albert, a city trustee, hastily traveled to Košice with a letter urging Schwarz not to approach the legate.¹⁴⁸ On 21 December 1489, Albert traveled to Buda to deliver a summons to the legate, emphasizing that the city wished to avoid appearing defiant.¹⁴⁹

In the autumn of 1488, before arranging the receipt of 1,000 florins from George Schwarz, the citizens visited Martin Kispalugyai in the suburbs of Košice to discuss preparations. On 8 February 1490, Jerome Paulhenzel and the notary traveled to the palatine in Buda with an 8-florin gift, requesting that he take over the case from the legate.

A journey to Kraków reveals the foresight of Bardejov's citizens. In mid-December 1494, the city decided to purchase two coats as honorary gifts for their lawyers in recognition of their efforts. The task was entrusted to Martin furrier, who was sent to the Polish capital for this purpose. Martin was allocated 23 florins for the coats, 1 florin and 50 denars for his own expenses and efforts, and 1 florin to pay the toll. After successfully obtaining the garments, he received an additional 25 denars for alterations.¹⁵⁰ The two cloaks were then delivered to the lawyers in Eger early the following year by Blaise, a city familiaris, at a cost of 1 florin and 90 denars.¹⁵¹

The expenditures also encompassed documentation-related costs. These included letters sent, legal documents transported for various purposes (e.g. appeals), fees paid for document issuance and sums spent on obtaining document copies. It is difficult to determine the exact amount spent on these due to overlapping expenses; many document-related costs were bundled with other expenditures. However, the minimum recorded amount spent on correspondence and documentation was 27 florins and 67 denars, accounting for almost 5% of the total litigation costs. Over time, this sum likely increased, and the actual amount devoted to documentation-related challenges may have been double this figure – potentially 10% of the total litigation costs – though such costs were often consolidated with others. Issuing a document typically cost between 50 denars and 1 florin.¹⁵²

146 "Exposita super productione testium." MNL OL DF 215199.

147 "Item Thome Thanner ad Cassam ad Georgium Schwarcz hortando ut desisteret ab impetitione sumptus fl I." MNL OL DF 215199.

148 "ne Georgius Schwarcz contra libertates nostras permittant nos trahere ad ius ecclesiasticum." MNL OL DF 215199.

149 "ne contumates videremur" MNL OL DF 215199.

150 "Item secundum post Lucie ad Cracoviam Martinum pellificem pro duobus schubis wlgö Schonwerck quas ambas dominis procuratoriis et advocatis nostris pro fatigis eorum dedimus valore fl XXIII. De tricesima eorumdem fl I. Sumptus eiusdem pellificis et pro fatigis suis fl II. Item pellifici de reformationem quadam duarum schubarum ort I." MNL OL DF 215199.

151 "Item Blasio cum supradictis duabus schubis ad Agriam sumptus fl II minus d X." MNL OL DF 215199.

152 GULYÁS, A Swarcz-ügy, 135–136.

The citizens of Bardejov systematically collected documentation related to the lawsuit.¹⁵³ Besides acquiring original documents and letters addressed to others, a significant volume of material related to the case was preserved as copies in the city archive.¹⁵⁴ Some documents even exist in multiple specimens, involving the work of several individuals.¹⁵⁵ The expense records reveal that funds were specifically allocated for making these copies, with servants dispatched to various locations to facilitate this.¹⁵⁶ Košice was a major hub for this copying activity. One prominent figure in these efforts was John Hirsch, a Košice altar director and notary who, by the lawsuit's final phase, was serving as both apostolic and imperial notary.¹⁵⁷ He was responsible for producing most of the copies. Several collections of unofficial document specimens, containing multiple texts bearing Hirsch's signature, are housed in the Bardejov archive.¹⁵⁸

The citizens of Bardejov maintained a broad information network for the obtaining of updates on the lawsuit, relying not only on written communication but also on verbal messages delivered by their emissaries.¹⁵⁹ Their network included connections with the king, the Košice council, Thomas Göbel of Košice, Benedict Borsvay (the castellan of Buda), and allies such as Ladislav Felfalusi (notary to the palatine) and Paul Izsépi. They also negotiated with Stephen Szapolyai, the palatine, and Paul Darholcz, the Spiš captain.¹⁶⁰

The wages paid to those serving the city during the lawsuit are difficult to ascertain due to similar challenges in separating these costs from others. Occasionally, specific amounts are recorded, such as 50 denars paid to a synodal notary in August 1495.¹⁶¹ It is possible that some key figures involved in the lawsuit received perks rather than wages. For instance, George Mager's tax exemption in 1488 may have been granted as compensation for his efforts on behalf of the city during the early phase of the lawsuit.¹⁶²

More detailed information is available about the wages of notaries and lawyers. Sometimes, these payments were explicitly listed in the expense records, such as 1 florin and 50 denars paid to notary Nicholas Liszkai in January 1495. The most active notary for Bardejov was Peter Jordan, who received 2 florins and 10 denars for services rendered in Košice in 1494, an additional 25 denars later that year, 25 denars in early 1495, and 50 denars in March of the same year, along with clothing worth 1 florin and 75 denars. In August 1495, he received half a florin from one of Bardejov's lawyers. In

153 GULYÁS, *A Swarcz-ügy*, 136–137.

154 The most important copies related to the lawsuit: MNL OL DF 215535, MNL OL DF 216021, MNL OL DF 215534, MNL OL DF 215565, MNL OL DF 215828, MNL OL DF 215924.

155 Writers of them were for instance Thomas Liszkai public notary (MNL OL DF 215338) and John Ginorus (MNL OL DF 215531; MNL OL DF 215940).

156 "Item per cives qui missi fuerant ad electioni novi regis pro redemptione certorum copiarum a domino legato..." and "Item pro copia fassionum per eosdem d LX." MNL OL DF 215199.

157 ÉRDÚJHELYI, *A közjegyzőség* 141.

158 MNL OL DF 215886; MNL OL DF 215921; MNL OL DF 215926.

159 MNL OL DF 215240; MNL OL DF 215242.

160 MNL OL DF 215930; MNL OL DF 215880; MNL OL DF 215238; MNL OL DF 215317; MNL OL DF 215334; MNL OL DF 215336; MNL OL DF 215985; MNL OL DF 215987.

161 "Item per eosdem notario consistorialis fl i." MNL OL DF 215199.

162 NEUMANN, *"Minden időkbén"*, 91.

total, his known earnings from Bardejov in 1494–1495 amounted to at least 5 florins and 35 denars.

Regarding lawyers,¹⁶³ more information is available from the lawsuit's final phase, although it is clear that legal representation was retained earlier as well. On 7 January 1494, the city initially appointed a local citizen, Albert Nagy, as its lawyer in the case.¹⁶⁴ He may have been the same Albert who, as a city familiaris, was tasked with various assignments. By autumn 1494, cleric John of Richvald was representing the city, his expertise in canon law making him better suited than his predecessor. He filed an appeal to the papal curia on behalf of Bardejov following their excommunication on 25 September 1494.¹⁶⁵ From this point onward, according to the expense records, he became a permanent fixture in the case. When the city decided to send a representative to Rome for an appeal, they selected John, who departed with an assistant at the end of 1494. (He was still in Eger on 7 December but had left by 13 December.) Meanwhile, the council sought a replacement lawyer, initially reaching out to another John, a priest from Homonna, in a letter dated 20 September, to take over the legal role.¹⁶⁶ Ultimately, however, John Sívári, a scholastic, took his place. By January 1495, Sívári had protested against the excommunication and procedural irregularities on Bardejov's behalf in a notarial document.¹⁶⁷

After the appointment of the new papal delegate judges, the city of Bardejov, on 1 July 1495, commissioned several lawyers before the notary Peter Jordan in Prešov. All of them appeared to be learned individuals well-versed in law. In addition to the returning parish priest of Richvald and the aforementioned Sívári deacon, the city named as their advocates: Lawrence, a presbyter; Demeter, a literatus; Thomas, a presbyter from Liszka; Benedict of Somogyvár, a literatus; John Schopper of Illosva; Anthony of Militwicz; and Policarp of Kosztolány.¹⁶⁸

The payment of these lawyers is only documented for the last phase of the trial, which took place before the Roman Curia. Even here, their compensation was in many instances merged with other expenses. For instance, unnamed "lawyers" were paid 60 denars in gifts for their services in 1494. John of Richvald received 4 florins in the same year, likely as remuneration for his arduous journey to Rome. Two coats purchased in Krakow at the end of that year were handed over to John Sívári, the scholastic active in Eger, and another unnamed lawyer as gifts from the city.

After his return, John Richvald earned 2 florins, then another 6 florins and 30 denars in Eger, and 1 florin in April 1495. He was likely awarded a 9-florin fox-fur coat as a premium for his successful trip to Rome. During the second half of 1495, unnamed lawyers received 4 florins' worth of cloth from the city. Among them, Lawrence

163 Generally for lawyers see HAJNIK, *A magyar bírósági szervezet*, 174–182.

164 MNL OL DF 215897, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3120.

165 MNL OL DL 46278, ÉRDÚJHELYI, *A közigyűzőség*, 207–209; BÓNIS, *Szentszéki regeszták*, no. 3662; MNL OL DF 215929, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3153; JUHÁSZ, *A csanádi püspökség*, 92–93.

166 MNL OL DF 215928, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3152.

167 MNL OL DF 215951, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3173; ÉRDÚJHELYI, *A közigyűzőség*, 202–204.

168 "Item scientificos Laurentium presbyterum ad sanctum Michaellem, Demetrium litteratum, Thomam presbyterum de Lyska, Johannem plebanum de Rychwald, alterum Johannem scolasticum de Sowar Agriensis. Item Benedictum litteratum de Somogwar, Johannem Schopper de Ilswa, Anthonium de Militwicz, Polycarpum de Costolan, Strigonisensis." MNL OL DF 215979, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3200; ÉRDÚJHELYI, *A közigyűzőség*, 198–200, 299–301.

presbyter earned 33 denars in August, while both the notary and an unnamed lawyer received 2 florins' worth of cloth in the latter half of the year.

Summing up these expenses reveals that, during the trial's final phase alone, the city of Bardejov spent a considerable amount – cautiously estimated at nearly one-tenth of the total litigation costs – on legal fees, amounting to exactly 54 florins and 46 denars. Of this, John of Richvald earned the most, pocketing 22 florins and 30 denars in cash and gifts.¹⁶⁹

Another significant category of expenses listed in the cost ledger can be termed "representation costs". Throughout the trial, the city dealt with various individuals, often of high status, and they never arrived empty-handed. The number of gifts grew year by year as the case progressed, ultimately totaling over a tenth of the litigation costs, at 67 florins and 77 denars.

The most common gifts were various quantities of cloth (accounting for nearly 68% of the total value of gifts), which naturally reflected the city's economic activities.¹⁷⁰ Occasionally, fish (approximately 4%), clothing (around 9%) and silver items (roughly 19%) also served as gifts. A closer examination of recipients and the value and type of gifts reveals an interesting pattern.

During the trial's first phase, gifts consisted exclusively of cloth, valued at about 20 florins, delivered on four occasions by prominent city citizens to the palatine. In the second phase, the papal legate was the main recipient of gifts, receiving cloth worth 5 florins and 20 denars in total, as well as an 8-florin silver chalice in 1490. These were delivered by prominent citizens and council members. Generosity extended to the Master of the Treasury, who received 8 florins' worth of cloth. The provost of Spiš received fish valued at 50 denars, while those conducting hearings in Košice, including the parish priest and preachers, were given fish worth 60 denars.

In 1494, Thomas, a familiaris, delivered four silver spoons worth 5 florins and cloth worth 1 florin and 75 denars to Košice. In November of the same year, while trying to assert their interests in Eger, Matthew Kunschner, a furrier, brought four hats from Poland valued at 6 florins for gifts, though the recipients remain unknown. On multiple occasions, they delivered cloth worth 6 florins and 25 denars to Eger and sent fish valued at 1.05 florins in July 1495. Paul Darholcz, the Spiš captain, received unspecified gifts worth 0.36 florins; the Kispalugyai brothers received cloth worth 0.57 florins; those conducting hearings in Prešov received fish worth 0.60 florins. Shortly before his death under ecclesiastical censure, Paul Zipser negotiated with the palatine in Trenčín, offering a gift of cloth worth 3 florins and 50 denars to advance the case.¹⁷¹

An intriguing question concerns the identity and social background of Bardejov's emissaries. The expense records mention a total of 40 individuals (excluding the servants accompanying them, who were often unnamed). Analysis of the ledger reveals a logical relationship between the importance of the tasks and the social status of those entrusted with them. The individuals who carried out missions ranged from council members and ordinary citizens to craftsmen, coachmen, servants and city retainers, representing a wide spectrum of Bardejov's social hierarchy. Among the most frequently tasked individuals were Jerome Paulhenzel (15 missions), Albert familiaris (15), Paul Zipser (13), Kelemen familiaris (12) and John of Richvald (11).

169 GULYÁS, *A Swarcz-ügy*, 138–140.

170 SROKA, *A középkori Bártfa*, 72–75.

171 GULYÁS, *A Swarcz-ügy*, 140–141.

Some of those tasked with missions were from Bardejov's leadership. For example, George Mager, a central figure in the case, served as a juror in the 1470s and held the title of city judge on several occasions during the 1480s and 1490s. His annual tax payments significantly exceeded the city average.¹⁷² Michael Lang, involved during the first phase of the trial, also held the judge's title in the late 1480s, with taxes twice as high as Mager's.¹⁷³ Both were members of the Confraternity of Our Lady of Mercy.¹⁷⁴ Michael Sthenczel, who negotiated with the Kispalugyai brothers on multiple occasions, was related to George Sthenczel, who served also as a judge numerous times in the fifteenth century.¹⁷⁵ John Pan was similarly among the major taxpayers.¹⁷⁶ Nicholas Sthock, active during the first phase of the trial, held significant assignments outside the case, particularly in representing the city in Hegyalja real-estate matters. His considerable wealth is evidenced by a property donation to the local Augustinian monastery in 1488.¹⁷⁷ Martin Weitlannt, who participated in Hegyalja missions and served as a city judge in 1502, played a key role in the witness hearings in Prešov in late 1495.¹⁷⁸ He was certainly involved in trade.¹⁷⁹ Martin Binder, a council member, assisted with collecting cloth taxes in 1496, served as a juror in negotiations with the Palatine the following year and held the juryman title in 1500.¹⁸⁰ Jerome Paulhenzel, related to the Sthock family through his father, Paul Henzel, was similarly a juror in 1496 and the following year.¹⁸¹ Paul Zipser, who died under ecclesiastical censure, served as a city judge in 1491.¹⁸²

During the trial, the city's leadership appeared at the most significant events and locations. In 1486, Mager, Stock, Lang and Zipser attended the judgment before the council in Tállya; subsequently, Zipser and Thanner approached the palatine to seek justice. Mager and Stock were present at the city's arbitration court in Tállya. Lang and Mager received the payment from George Schwarcz in Košice in the summer of 1488. Mager, Zipser and Paulhenzel negotiated with the papal legate in Buda in 1490. Following the second excommunication in 1494, Mager and Paulhenzel traveled to Eger. Based on the registry entries, these journeys were always important and costly. It appears that the council only dispatched wealthy citizens and council members in justified cases, but when they were sent, the travel arrangements always matched their prestige.

For tasks of less significance, individuals of lower status were usually entrusted. If it involved simple administration, delivering a letter or obtaining a document, the city typically mobilized its familiars or sent someone from among its employees.

172 IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 1917; SROKA, *A középkori Bártfa*, 65; NEUMANN, "Minden időben", 90–91.

173 SROKA, *A középkori Bártfa*, 65; NEUMANN, "Minden időben", 91.

174 SROKA, *A középkori Bártfa*, 169–170.

175 SROKA, *A középkori Bártfa*, 64–65. On family background of the Sthenczels see FEDORČÁKOVÁ, *Predstaviteľia mestských elit v Bardejove*, 253–259.

176 NEUMANN, "Minden időben", 91.

177 MNL OL DF 215139; MNL OL DF 215140; SROKA, *A középkori Bártfa*, 192.

178 MNL OL DF 215141; MNL OL DF 216531; MNL OL DF 216809.

179 IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2298, 3305, 3456.

180 IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3293, 3298, 3495, 3516.

181 IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2468, 3274, 3298.

182 MNL OL DF 215778. IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 2890, 2997. By another name, Paul "Aramish" – SROKA, *A középkori Bártfa*, 65.

The city's servants were heavily involved in such activities. Albert, Kelemen, Blaise and Thomas were more frequently tasked, while Stanislaw, Kassiczky and Paul Izsépi were less often involved over the decade-long trial. They were often employed as messengers dispatched to various locations, though they were occasionally entrusted with significant negotiations. Familiars were also sent to personally summon individuals for hearings. In smaller matters, the notary or, in the trial's final phase, the lawyers could also be assigned, some of whom stayed at important locations for weeks (e.g., Eger).

Additionally, mention must be made of the city employees. A soldier named Drzka was sent to Kispalugya in 1486 at a cost of 66 denars. A coachman was tasked with delivering a letter to the palatine at the same time. Another coachman was sent to Košice in 1494 to obtain a copy of a document. Furriers were dispatched to procure gifts in Poland. Overall, during the 10 years of the trial, the city employed a considerable personnel apparatus to handle the various tasks.¹⁸³

The Final Balance

If we aim to summarize the lessons learned from the trial, it is noteworthy that the Bardejov city council proceeded with great systematic precision in handling a matter of such importance over a decade. They put forth significant effort, meticulously planned everything and spared no resources – whether time, energy or money – to secure victory. However, this victory ultimately came at a high cost. This remains true even if the realism of the 607 florins and 7 denars recorded in the expense ledger is questionable. It is plausible that, following the practices of the era, costs were often overpriced, and questions arise about whether various expenses (such as gifts) could justifiably be included as trial costs. Nevertheless, the decade-long litigation incurred enormous expenses, and it is almost certain that the city's council ultimately concluded the case at a financial loss.

According to the judgment passed on 19 February 1496, of the 481 florins and 95 denars to be paid by the improperly acting delegated papal judges, 300 florins were awarded as compensation for damages suffered by the three excommunicated citizens (and the family of the deceased Paul Zipser), logically amounting to 100 florins each, though this is not explicitly stated in the sources. Thus, Bardejov, representing its three citizens in the trial, only received 181 florins and 95 denars from the former delegated judges as reimbursement for costs.¹⁸⁴ On 16 May 1496, the ecclesiastical court condemned George Schwarcz to pay 109 florins, of which 100 florins were allocated to the city, with 9 florins covering the costs of document issuance.¹⁸⁵ Based on the expense ledger presented, the judges determined the compensation payable to Bardejov, totaling 281 florins and 95 denars. This amount was less than half of what the council had claimed.

It is likely that expenses related to earlier phases of the trial were not considered by the judges during their ruling, nor were certain "suspicious" or difficult-to-justify expense items. This likely explains the significant discrepancy between the sum

183 GULYÁS, *A Swarcz-ügy*, 142–144.

184 MNL OL DF 216039, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3249; ÉRDÚJHELYI, *A közjegyzőség*, 311–317; MNL OL DF 216059, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3269; MNL OL DF 215538; MNL OL DF 216051, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3261; MNL OL DF 216054, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3265.

185 MNL OL DF 216052, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3262; MNL OL DF 216056, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3266; MNL OL DF 216057, IVÁNYI, *Bártfa szabad királyi*, no. 3267.

recorded in the expense ledger and the amount actually awarded. Nevertheless, the city could not have been entirely dissatisfied, as despite the probable losses, they may have fared better financially in this outcome than they would have if they had returned 350 florins of the 1,000-florins purchase price that Schwarcz demanded. Furthermore, their losses might have been mitigated by the income from wine production in 1486 and 1487.

The documentary material of the Schwarcz trial provides a rare and particularly detailed insight into the organization and costs of property lawsuits in the medieval Kingdom of Hungary, making it a highly significant group of sources for historical research. We cannot be grateful enough to the diligent citizens of Bardejov for preserving these documents, as they have greatly contributed to the study of legal, economic, ecclesiastical and informational history, as well as to a deeper understanding of medieval viticulture.

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