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Viktor KANÁSZ:

The Life and Work of the Abbot and Nuncio, Girolamo Martinengo in Hungary*

On the 17th December 1551 the mercenaries of Ferdinand I murdered one of the most influential politicians of the Kingdom of Hungary, Cardinal George Martinuzzi, the Archbishop of Esztergom and the Voivode of Transylvania in the castle of Alvinc.

This action created a huge scandal not only in Hungary but throughout the whole Christendom, leading to one of the most acute crises in the Habsburg-papal relations. According to canon law, those who were responsible for the crime became automatically excommunicated (only King Ferdinand I was dispensed temporarily by Julius III), and a long investigation began. The inquiry was led by Count Abbot Girolamo Martinengo, the nuncio to Ferdinand.

In this paper, I aim to discuss the significance and importance of Martinuzzi's figure in contemporary papal diplomacy. Among other elements, the followings will be elucidated: his origins and youth, his work as a nuncio in Poland, England and to Ferdinand I, and his activity in the Papal Curia.

Keywords: diplomacy, the papacy, Apostolic Nunciature, Habsburgs, Kingdom of Hungary, Transylvania, Brescia



The murder of George Martinuzzi (György Fráter / Georg Utiessenovicz) on the 17th of December 1551 was one of the biggest scandals of the era and shocked the entire *Orbis Christianus*, which was on the verge of falling apart. It is hardly surprising, considering the fact that he was proposed to be a cardinal by Pope Julius III himself, and it was the brother of Emperor Charles V, Ferdinand I, King of Italy, Bohemia and Hungary who ordered the murder

*The author is currently a PhD student at the University of Pécs, Institute of History, Department of Medieval and Early Modern History, and also a member of the Vilmos Fraknói Vatican Historical Research Group of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. This paper was completed within the framework and with support of the MTA TKI (MTA's Research Centers and Institutes). The study was based on the following article: KANÁSZ 2019c. I would like to thank Péter Tumor, Tamás Fedeles and Fanni Madarász for their beneficial comments on the topic during the completion of this work.

of the prelate, by the hands of his own Christian soldiers.¹ As a response to the crime, the Pope started an inquiry, which lasted for years. The main purpose of it was to determine the culpability or innocence of Martinuzzi, thus revealing the causes of his murder. The life of the cardinal, its dramatic ending and the following events have been investigated for a long time by generations of Hungarian historians, nevertheless the inquiry of the Holy See was observed only from the perspective of the Hungarian witness accounts.² However, other documents, which were preserved, are rich sources in the sense of the diplomatic relations of the Habsburg Court and the Holy See as well. Nonetheless, in order to reconstruct and comprehend the details, we need to take a closer look on the lives of the participants in order to understand their habits and the motives behind their actions. This is especially true in the case of the head of the inquiry, the abbot Girolamo Martinengo, who was assigned to be nuncio to King Ferdinand I. Therefore, I would like to take a closer look at the life and work of this important papal diplomat.³

Origins and Youth

The Martinengo family line can be traced back to the 10th century. It was a notable patrician family in the vicinity of Brescia and Bergamasco. The family was later split into more branches during the Middle Ages.⁴ Cesare Martinengo – also known as „il Magnifico” – was born in Brescia around 1477. He became one of the most notable members of the family in the 16th century. He served in the Venetian militia and earned a high-ranking position.⁵ In 1509, he was admitted to serve the King of France, who conquered Brescia from the Venetians and held it until 1520. King Louis XII granted the title of Count of Orzivecchi to the family as a reward for their services (1509) which provided a yearly income of 500 scudos. After the town was retaken by the Venetians, Martinengo returned to serve the city-state again. Making wise financial decisions, he further extended his family's

¹ KÁROLYI 1881. p. 266–288; FRAKNÓI 1903. p. 70; OBORNI 2017. p. 159–160; KANÁSZ 2018. p. 172.

² The most recent monograph on Fráter's life was written by Teréz Oborni and Adriano Papo. PAPO 2011; OBORNI 2017; NEMETH PAPO – PAPO 2017. On the inquiry conducted by the Holy See, further see: BARTA 1988; KANÁSZ 2017; KANÁSZ 2019a.

³ On the papal diplomacy: KOLLER 1998; FLETCHER 2015; TUSOR 2016a. p. 213 – 224; KALOUS 2017.

⁴ The family died out in the beginning of the 20th century. Their notable collection of artworks is displayed today at the Pinacoteca Tosio Martinengo located in Brescia. On the family, further see: GUERRINI 1922; GUERRINI 1927; GUERRINI 1930; TRECCANI 1963; FERRARO 1993. *passim*.

⁵ GOETZ 1965. VII. Many chose the military career in the family, e.g.: the known condottiere Marcantonio Martinengo of Brescia in 1510–1520. MALLETT – HALE 1984. p. 343. Many members of the family have fought in the wars against the Ottomans and in Hungary too, e.g.: GUERRINI 1930. p. 456; FAPPANI 1991. p. 335, 349. Girolamo's brother, Chiara (Sciarra) avenged their father and later he fought in French and Venetian service. He was also present at the battle of Lepanto. Like Chiara, Giovanni Martinengo played an important part in the wars against the Ottomans and died during the defence of Famagusta in the 1570s. His name was preserved there on a tower and can be seen today as well. SETTON 1984. p. 1037–1038; FAPPANI 1991. p. 317; BENZONI 2008. p. 156–157; MALCOLM 2015. p. 140–143.

lands and wealth. His contemporaries described him of a man with medium stature, being polite, kind and munificent.⁶ Besides these, he was also known as a patron of arts: he was a benefactor of the renaissance painters, Alessandro Moretto (Buonvicino) and Girolamo Romanino.⁷ He got engaged to Ippolita Gambara, the daughter of the condottiere Count Pietro Gambara on the 7th of August 1495, and married her on the 18th of April 1497; they had 20 children together.⁸ Cesare Martinengo was killed by a member of the rivalling Avogadro family on the 3rd of October 1527.⁹

Girolamo was born as the second son on the 19th April 1504, in Brescia.¹⁰ He earned his first office very early on. At the age of 13, on the 21st of December 1517, Pope Leo X gave him the benefices of the Church of Santa Maria in Oriano.¹¹ He was prepared for an ecclesiastical career studying theology and law at the University of Padova, ultimately finishing his studies in 1527.¹² Shortly after this, with the help of one of his relatives, Cardinal Agostino Trivulzio in 1529¹³ he was appointed as the *commendatore* of the Benedictine monastery in Leno, Brescia, which was founded by the Langobard king, Desiderius. He could obtain this position because Cardinal Antonio Maria Cocchi del Monte (†1533) had resigned in favour of him.¹⁴ Therefore, he was able to maintain a high standard of living with the help of his income of 2000 ducats a year, which was granted to him in spite of being a layman. Martinengo seized the monastery of the Republic of Venice without any permission, however, he was later forced to supplicate to Venice for admission – because of a dispute with the residents of Leno. The case was presented at court and after three years of legal battles, the dispute was settled with Martinengo bounding himself to provide an annuity for the Vetturi family for the *pensionarii* of Leno, with whom the renters of the

⁶ GOETZ 1965. p. VII.

⁷ He painted Romanino's image among many others as well. GUERRINI 1930. p. 416–417. (XXV.), GOMBOSI 1943; BOWD 2010. p. 61. 258. One of Moretto's more famous paintings depicts Girolamo's brother, Fortunato. BEGNI – REDONA 1988. p. 378–379. On the relation between the artist and the Martinengo family further see: RÜHL 2011.

⁸ They are as follows: Chiara, Giorgio, Laura, Girolamo, Camillo, Agostino, Francesca Lucrezia, Lodovico, Cassandra, Fortunato, Taddea, Massimiliano (Celso), Francesco, Brunoro, Cornelia, Annibale (Giovanni), Antonio, Lelio, Carlo and Vespasiano. GUERRINI, Paolo 1930. p. 415; FAPPANI, Antonio (ed.) 1991. p. 310. Ippolita died on 7th September 1551. GUERRINI 1930. p. 415. ⁹ FAPPANI 1991. p. 310. MALCOLM 2015. p. 140.

¹⁰ SQUICCIARINI 1998. p. 59; MOTTA 2008. p. 152. His name appears in many forms in the academic texts. In most cases, its Girolamo, Hyeronimo, Hieronimus, but László Szalay, Árpád Károlyi and Vilmos Fraknói refer to him on his Hungarian name as Jeromos Martinengo. SZALAY 1865. p. 299; KÁROLYI 1881. p. 271; FRAKNÓI 1903. p. 69.

¹¹ FAPPANI 1991. p. 314; WOJTYSKA 1994. p. 721.

¹² SQUICCIARINI 1998. p. 59. On his literacy: SELMI 2003. p. 311–320.

¹³ He died in Rome on the 30th March 1548. His father from Milan, Giovanni Trivulzio Borgomanero (†1508), was on good terms with the French and his wife was Agostino Martinengo's daughter with Agostino being Girolamo's uncle. GOETZ 1965. p. VIII.

¹⁴ LUCHI 1759. p. 40–41; GUERRINI 1930. 420. On the abbey see: ZACCARIA 1767; SUCCURRO 2015; BARONIO 2002.

monastery formed an alliance.¹⁵ His work as a *commendatore* was not limited to collecting fees, but Martinengo was also enthusiastic and successful in reviving the monastery, which will be discussed later. With the help of his talent and connections, he became a member of the Roman Curia in 1540 and became a papal chamberlain of Paul III in 1541. He also obtained the sacrament of ordination to priesthood on the 30th of October the same year, being consecrated by Pietro Lippomano, the bishop of Bergamo.¹⁶

Working as a Nuncio in Poland

The year of 1548 brought some significant changes in Martinengo's life. Sigismund I the Old of Poland died and was succeeded by Sigismund II Augustus. Therefore, it was timely to send a nuncio to Cracow, and according to the advice of Cardinal Marcello Cervini – the later pope Marcellus II – the person for this task became Martinengo. Consequently, he was appointed in February 1548 (*camerarium secretum et nuntium nostrum*).¹⁷ His letter of mandate was signed by the Cardinal Protector of Poland, Alessandro Farnese on 15th of July 1548.¹⁸ Martinengo made his journey through Venice to Vienna, where, on the 13th of August, during a hunt, he introduced himself to Ferdinand I and Prospero Santa Croce, who was a nuncio to Ferdinand from 1548 to 1550. He left Vienna on the 23rd of August and continued his voyage to Cracow.¹⁹

Martinengo was given many tasks on his Polish commission. First of all, he was to express the sympathies of the Pope to the new king for the passing of his father, and to communicate his well-wishes on new king's accession to the throne. Apart from these diplomatic missions, he received more prominent assignments as well. Poland and Hungary did not present themselves with bishops during the first section of the Council of Trent.²⁰ Thus, one of Martinengo's tasks was to convince the King of Poland to send a prelate or a representative to the second section of the assembly. His other duty was to manage the conflict between Sigismund and the bishop. One of these disagreements was the decree of 1540 issued by the Polish Sejm, which forbids the prelates from moving to Rome without the king's permission. Finally, he was commissioned to convince the Russians to re-join the Western Christendom, thus uniting Christianity.²¹

Martinengo found himself in a complicated situation in Cracow. The position of the Polish king in 1548 was not satisfactory, since there was a

¹⁵ GOETZ 1965. p. VIII.

¹⁶ FAPPANI 1991. p. 314; MARANI 1963. p. 229–232; GOETZ 1965. p. VIII.

¹⁷ WOJTYSKA 1994. p. XXXIV.

¹⁸ WOJTYSKA 1977. p. 54–56; FAPPANI 1991. p. 314.

¹⁹ WOJTYSKA 1994. p. XXVI; MOTTA 2008. p. 153.

²⁰ TÓTH 1999. p. 342. In the end, there was a Hungarian bishop present on the Council of Trent together with the bishop of Zagreb, Paulus Gregorianczy, they both joined the council on the orders of Ferdinand I in 1551. The monarch had previously sent Gregorianczy to negotiate in Rome in 1550 and then he represented the king in the case of George Martinuzzi's murder as well. JÁNOSI 1996. p. 70–74; VARGA 2010. p. 126.

²¹ GOETZ 1965. p. IX.

considerable discontent between the nobility around Sigismund's marriage, who took the Lithuanian Barbara Radziwiłł as wife in 1547.²² The gravity of this problem is well illustrated by the fact that the Queen Mother, Bona Sforza was openly against the match. The nuncio therefore was not greeted warmly in Cracow and the king received him only on the 5th September in Sandomierz. Although Sigismund expressed his loyalty to the Holy See, he did not want to actively take part in converting Moscow to Catholicism and neither did he give a reply in the matter of sending a delegate to the council. He further forbade Martinengo to speak up in the Polish Sejm. Due to the delicate nature of his assignment, the hardships raising from the above-mentioned political atmosphere and his personal status – an abbot not belonging to any religious orders was not convincing for the Polish clergy – Martinengo's mission became unsuccessful, wherefore he headed back to the Eternal City with his tasks unfulfilled.²³

The Pope's Nuncio in the Court of Ferdinand I

Despite his unsuccessful mission in Poland, he was chosen for an even greater duty, namely to be a nuncio to Ferdinand I. The emissary of Ferdinand I announced his appointment on the 20th February 1549.²⁴ During these events, Pope Paul III passed away on the 10th November and he was succeeded on the Papal Throne by Julius III (Giovanni Maria Ciochi del Monte) on the 7th February 1550. It was once again considered to send a diplomat to Poland, but ultimately the Pope decided to place Martinengo in the court of Ferdinand. On the 10th April 1550, Blosius Palladius, the Secretary of Briefs was commissioned to write a papal brief on Martinengo's appointment.²⁵

Martinengo's departure had to be postponed for two months due to the Pope's medical conditions. His predecessor, Santa Croce became more and more impatient to hold on and eventually, he did not wait for his successor to arrive and said his farewells to the king. After a long interval, Martinengo left the Eternal City on the 30th June 1550 to occupy his new post in Vienna.²⁶ He first arrived in Venice on the 9th June to meet Cardinal Santa Croce and to get familiar with the cases currently unfolding in Vienna.²⁷ He stayed in Venice in the company of Nuncio Ludovico Beccadelli until the 20th June and then travelled to Trent where he arrived on the 25th July. Here, he met Cardinal Cristoforo Madruzzo with whom he negotiated on the matter of Parma.²⁸ They met at Ferdinand's court on the 14th August in Augsburg,

²² WOJTYSKA 1977, p. 56.

²³ On his work in Poland further see: WOJTYSKA 1992, p. 377–416; WOJTYSKA 1994, p. 721–728.

²⁴ On the nunciature in Vienna: SQUICCIARINI 1998; SQUICCIARINI 2000.

²⁵ GOETZ 1965, p. X.

²⁶ PIEPER 1897, p. 66; GOETZ 1965, p. X.

²⁷ SQUICCIARINI 1998, p. 59.

²⁸ Following the murder of the Duke of Parma, Pier Luigi Farnese – who was also the son of Paul III – began an intricate struggle to obtain control over the Duchy of Parma, and in 1551, this

where they had been for a month already due to the ongoing Imperial Diet. Martinengo was introduced to King Ferdinand at this time. He had the chance to negotiate with the French delegate on the question of Parma and Piacenza. For the following eight months, he stayed in Augsburg, but we have no information regarding his views on the Imperial Diet, since his letters to Rome, which were written up to the 22nd April 1552, are presumably lost.

At first, he was working on matters concerning the Council of Trent, which was the main task at hand according to the commission of Julius III. He received 12 copies of the papal bull, *Cum Tollenda* on the 17th January 1551 and was obliged to send them to Friedrich Nausea, bishop of Vienna and to other German prelates. Besides, he was also instructed to convince the Hungarian prelates to join the council.²⁹ Despite the fact, that the Nuncio had never actually taken part in the council, he continued to work for its success. His *Instructio* contains an outlined plan on how to resolve, among others, the financial questions concerning the bishop of Zagreb, Paulus Gregorianczí's visit to Rome, the disputed cases in Aquileia, issues raised by the Imperial Diet and the circumstances in German lands. At last, he was instructed to write reports on a regular basis which duty he fulfilled conscientiously.³⁰

Following the departure of the king, he left Augsburg on the 10th March and arrived in Vienna on the 18th. He often went after the King, – this is the reason behind him being sometimes absent from Vienna – he was frequently present on the Imperial Diets and other assemblies, like the one, which was held in Prague and Bratislava (Pozsony, Pressburg) in 1552, and we also find him on the king's side during the Diets of Graz and Sopron in 1553.³¹ He kept himself informed on matters concerning the lands ruled by Ferdinand, maintaining an active correspondence with, among many others, George Martinuzzi (György Fráter).³²

In April 1552, he stayed in Linz, where he gained direct insight into imperial matters, namely the reasons behind the disagreements of Catholics and Protestants. Martinengo witnessed the revolt lead by Maurice of Saxony, and he was also present at the Emperor's escape to Innsbruck and the Peace of Passau. The hardships of the nuncio's work is well illustrated by an occasion when Charles V forbade Martinengo to take part in the peace negotiations at Passau (May-June 1552), for which he was crossed with the Emperor.³³ However, the relationship between the Curia and the court was

attempt culminated into an open war between Ottavio Farnese and Henry II of France and then between Pope Julius III and Charles V. CHIESI 1893. p. 216–226; SETTON 1984. p. 552; ÁLVAREZ – ALVARIÑO 2003. p. 343. Comprehensively: CANTÙ–VISCEGLIA 2003.

²⁹ GOETZ 1965. p. XII; SQUICCIARINI 1998. p. 59.

³⁰ GOETZ 1965. p. XII.

³¹ GOETZ 1965. p. XII.

³² In his letter issued on the 13th of August 1551, Martinengo greets Martinuzzi and tells him that he will bring his letter to the pope. KÁROLYI 1881. p. 271–272.

³³ KOLLER 2018. 116.

not undermined by this event, but rather by the murder of George Martinuzzi.³⁴

The Murder of George Martinuzzi and the Inquiry of the Holy See

On the stormy night of the 16th December 1551, the soldiers of Ferdinand I's commanders, governor general Marquis Giovanni Battista Castaldo and his deputy, Sforza Pallavicini, the chief sergeant brutally killed George Martinuzzi in his castle of Alvinc (Vințu de Jos).³⁵ Unfortunately, due to the space limitations, the reasons which led to the murder of the newly appointed cardinal, George Martinuzzi and the consequences of this event will not be discussed here, we only intend to examine Martinengo's role in these events.³⁶ Following the murder at the castle of Alvinc, Ferdinand's men did everything to soothe the Pope's anger, unsuccessfully. Despite all the efforts, which were made by Ferdinand's subjects in Rome, in accordance with canon law, Pope Julius III excommunicated the perpetrators, Castaldo and Sforza Pallavicini. Even Ferdinand himself obtained only a temporary absolution from the Holy Father.³⁷ This was particularly humiliating for the

³⁴ GOETZ 1965. p. XIII.

³⁵ Many accounts are known concerning the matter in hand. Marcantonio Ferrari was present at the scene and described the event in great details. According to his narration, Sforza Pallavicini and Captain Pedro d'Avila summoned armed people to the Monk's castle in Alvinc, and while there was a storm out there, they entered into the room of Fráter. *"The door opened in haste and the monk, who was leaning on the desk while reading, drew back to the wall when he saw what was happening and how we entered with such clamour. I thought it was time to finish that business [...]. I stabbed his neck twice [...]. He opened his arms and started to say, oh, oh, oh... as if he wanted to shout. [...] I stepped back, so I could better see what was happening inside. Sforza Pallavicini stabbed a knife in his body, from which he fell, and almost at the same time Captain Menino shot him with a matchlock, some state that he fell from this and not from the stab. God knows! Others slashed him after he fell [...]."* – NYÁRI 1877. p. 243–258. – Bernardo de Aldana recounted the events in a similar way: *"By arriving to the room of the friar, Marco Antonio knocked [...], the monk was already on his feet, he was praying from his Book of Hours; Marco Antonio handed the papers to him and when he started to read them, he drew a dagger and stabbed the monk many times, though, he was not seriously harmed. Then the monk cried for servants and stabbed his dagger into Marco Antonio with such power that he was knocked to the wall, backing two steps. To the cry of the monk, four Spanish riflemen appeared in the room; the monk was hiding behind the door with Sforza and Captain Andrés Lopez. Three of them immediately shot him [the cardinal] before he collapsed and prone on his bed and shouted: "Jesus Maria! Jesus Maria! Quare hoc mihi?" And while the monk was breathing his last breath, Sforza Pallavicini appeared there and with a follow-through, gave him a blow with his sword that almost cut half of his head off; it is said that Sforza and the other Spanish soldiers got carried away by their rage to such extent that they even dared to cut off more than one of his [the cardinal's] covered and uncovered body parts [...]."* – SZAKÁLY 1986. p. 187. Afterwards, in order to have a tangible proof of the murder, they cut the victim's ear off and presented it to Ferdinand. After the assassination, the corpse was kept unburied in a wooden casket for seventy days at the entrenchment of the castle, and then it was buried in Gyulafehérvár (Alba Iulia).

³⁶ KANÁSZ 2019b. The figure of Martinuzzi was researched with great interest in later centuries as well. KANÁSZ 2018. This controversial act was not unprecedented in the history of the contemporary Europe. The murder of Hans Katzianer serves a good example. VARGA 2016. p. 130–134.

³⁷ On relevant parts of the Canon Law see: SZUROMI 2010. p. 120–122. On other similar events in this time period further see: PLATZHOFF 1906. On the relations of the Holy See and Hungary at

king. In 1552, he ordered a committee of cardinals to be organised for the investigation of the incident.³⁸ This was the beginning of a protracted, many times halted, thorough and complicated investigating process. The articles constituted the core of the proceedings, which were compiled by the jurists of the Pope and Ferdinand. The main purpose was to resolve the question of the friar's treason and thus to decide about the murder's justifiability.³⁹

Amid the brittle diplomatic relations and atmosphere, the inquiry was led by the abbot, Martinengo who himself favoured the incardination of Martinuzzi.⁴⁰ During the inquiry, he mostly operated in the Hereditary Lands, mainly in Vienna and Graz, and in Hungary. His primary task was to summon those witnesses, who could be linked to Martinuzzi. These persons were gathered by Ferdinand's men to be interrogated, to have their accounts recorded and to prepare authentic copies and translations of their testimonies if necessary.⁴¹ The witnesses came from many different segments of the Hungarian society: we can find representatives of the nobility (Caspar Péchy,⁴² John Pethő⁴³ and John Kemény⁴⁴), town commoners (Farcasius Schreiber,⁴⁵ Petrus Pálczán⁴⁶), physician (Giorgio Biandrata⁴⁷), bishops (Paulus Abstemius,⁴⁸ Franciscus Újlaki,⁴⁹ Antonius Verantius⁵⁰ or Nicolaus Olahus/Miklós Oláh⁵¹), secular high officials (Thomas Nádasdy, the later Palatine of Hungary⁵²) and foreigners (Corradus Vall De Aurach⁵³ or Nicolaus Mieszkouwski⁵⁴).

For this enormous undertaking, Martinengo was also provided with extended personnel, mostly consisting of lawyers, secretaries and councillors appointed by Ferdinand. One of them was Lorenzo Maggio, Martinengo's

this time see: ÓVÁRY 1879. Recently: TUSOR 2016b. p. 185–206; NEMES 2016; TUSOR 2018. p. 258–262. On the subject of international relations see: SETTON 1984. p. 566–580.

³⁸ The members of the committee were: Juan Álvarez de Toledo, Pedro Pacheco de Villena, Fabio Mignanelli, Jacques de Puit (Giacomo Puteo/Jacques Dupuy) then and Giovanni Battista Cicala, who obtained his position at that time.

³⁹ UJTJEŠINOVIĆ 1881. (Urkundenbuch) n. XVI, p. 62–73, BESSENYEI 2002. p. 210–233. and: ASV Arch. Arcis, Arm. I–XVIII, n. 1711, fol. 46r–52v, ASV Misc., Arm. II, vol. 61, fol. 26r–33r.

⁴⁰ In his letter issued on the 31st July 1551, Martinengo mentioned things such as Martinuzzi's age – he was more than 70 years old – and that the Pope had little authority in Transylvania and the Holy See would not suffer any financial losses if they were about to make Martinuzzi a cardinal. THEINER 1875. p. 16; FRANKÓI 1903. p. 70.

⁴¹ On the question of summoning further see: ASV Arch. Arcis, Arm. I–XVIII, n. 1711, fol. 56r–56v.

⁴² ASV Misc., Arm. II, vol. 61, fol. 132r–137v.

⁴³ ASV Misc., Arm. II, vol. 61, fol. 137v–142r.

⁴⁴ ASV Misc., Arm. II, vol. 61, fol. 167v–172r.

⁴⁵ ASV Misc., Arm. II, vol. 61, fol. 84r–88v.

⁴⁶ ASV Misc., Arm. II, vol. 61, fol. 147r–149v.

⁴⁷ ASV Misc., Arm. II, vol. 61, fol. 108v–116r.

⁴⁸ ASV Misc., Arm. II, vol. 61, fol. 99r–105r.

⁴⁹ ASV Misc., Arm. II, vol. 61, fol. 159v–161v.

⁵⁰ ASV Misc., Arm. II, vol. 61, fol. 152v–159v.

⁵¹ KANÁSZ 2019a.

⁵² ASV Misc., Arm. II, vol. 61, fol. 176r–183r.

⁵³ ASV Misc., Arm. II, vol. 61, fol. 125v–131v.

⁵⁴ ASV Misc., Arm. II, vol. 61, fol. 172r–176r.

nephew and secretary.⁵⁵ Since Martinengo had no intention to visit the distant Transylvania, which was ravaged by dangerous wars, he sent his substitute (*subdelegatus*) Martin Bondenarius, a provost from Vienna.⁵⁶ Queen Isabella stayed in Poland from 1552. As she was one of the „key witnesses”, the nuncio himself visited her to be questioned. It was also planned that Bondenarius would pay a call on her, but this remained to be a proposal only.⁵⁷ During the investigation, 139 witness accounts were recorded and countless letters were attached, parts of them as evidences. A major proportion of these documents were preserved by the Secret Archives of the Vatican and the Haus-, Hof-, and Staatsarchiv in Vienna.⁵⁸ The process was finally concluded by Martinengo’s successor, the nuncio Zaccaria Delfino (Dolfin), who sent all these documents to Rome on the 13th July 1554.⁵⁹ Based on the witness accounts and the attached letters, which were organised together, those readers who were not familiar with the situation in Hungary could easily find Martinuzzi guilty in the charges against him.⁶⁰ Due to these circumstances, the Pope made his decision and issued a bull on the 4th February 1555, in which king Ferdinand and his soldiers were permanently absolved from excommunication.

The nuncio’s other activities

In Martinengo’s correspondence generated during his time in Vienna, he often stressed the importance of the fight against the Ottoman Empire and the shortage of priests and young students in the Church.⁶¹ He took a closer look at the relationship between state and Church, and he concluded that even though Charles V considered himself to be the first and most committed defender of the Roman Church, he could not prevent the spread of the new interpretations of faith. Perhaps, that is the reason why he developed an interest in the Jesuit Order, since he considered its members to be the ones who could potentially curb this process.⁶²

Martinengo, therefore, took the order’s fate seriously. He proved his affection on many occasions. One example was when he supported the plans

⁵⁵ ASV Arch. Arcis, Arm. I–XVIII, n. 1711, fol. 133r–133v, Misc. Arm. II, vol. 55, fol. 296r–296v, ASV Misc. Arm. II, vol. 61, fol. 21r. By him worked Johann Albert Widmanstetter as a second secretary. About him: MÉRCZ 2019.

⁵⁶ FRAKNÓI 1903. p. 82; KANÁSZ 2017. p. 174–175.

⁵⁷ ASV Misc., Arm. II, vol. 61, fol. 33v–34r; BARTA 1988. p. 83–84.

⁵⁸ KANÁSZ, 2017. p. 177–180; Bayerische Staatsbibliothek (München), Oefeleana 246. fol. 1–142. I would like to thank András Mércz.

⁵⁹ BARTA 1988. p. 84.

⁶⁰ On the letters and excerpts of letters see: UTJEŠINOVIĆ 1881. (Urkundenbuch) n. XVII, p. 73–75; BARTA 1988. p. 194; ASV Misc. Arm. II, vol. 55, fol. 303v–304v, ASV Arch. Arcis, Arm. I–XVIII, n. 1711, fol. 132r.

⁶¹ ZOMBORI 2004; FODOR 2015. p. 56–133; BORN – JAGODZINSKI 2014.

⁶² The relationship between the nuncio and the order could be an interesting topic to investigate in the future.

of founding a college for Jesuits in Vienna.⁶³ He also encouraged the Jesuit, Petrus Canisius to be the new bishop of Vienna, however Ignatius of Loyola had objections based on the order's regulations. He expressed his concerns in a letter written by him personally, although he was grateful for the nuncio's support. His relationship with the Jesuits became even stronger, especially in his home in Brescia.⁶⁴ It was not just Martinengo who was connected to the order in many ways, but his associates as well. The best example for this is his secretary and nephew, Lorenzo Maggio who made a successful career in the Jesuit Order.⁶⁵

Martinengo did not enjoy his position as a nuncio. In 1552, he already tried to procure to be called back to Rome, but he was refused. Afterwards, he regularly asked for his mission to be suspended.⁶⁶ Presumably, he was not tired of his work as a nuncio, but rather was discontented with Ferdinand's court and its convoluted problems. Probably, he would prefer to be transferred to Spain, to the court of the Emperor. Finally, on the 17th October 1553, a new person, Zaccaria Delfino was appointed to replace him.⁶⁷ Martinengo could not wait for the arrival of his successor – just like his predecessor before him – and sent, in advance, the „*suum familiarem et magistrum domus Joannem Petrum Januarium*” with three people and more horses to Rome. His journey had to be postponed due to Delfino's delay. In the end, he said his farewells to the king and left with Ferdinand's approval in the end of January, or the beginning of February 1554. On the 7th February 1554, he met Delfino, informed him about the current cases, and two days later, left for Vienna, travelled through Porcia and Brescia, and around the 8th May 1554, arrived back in Rome.⁶⁸ On the 7th July, he presented the collected documents and witness accounts to the Pope. These were later supplemented with further documents brought to Rome by Bondenarius on the 14th August.⁶⁹

⁶³ GOETZ 1965. p. XV–XVI.

⁶⁴ ROSE 1891. p. 459; GUERRINI 1922. p. 377; GOETZ 1965. p. XVI.

⁶⁵ Lorenzo was born in Brescia on the 10th August 1531. He entered the Jesuit Order on the 7th March 1555. Following his work as a secretary of the nuncio, he made a successful career. At first, he was the rector of the Collegium Germanicum (1557–1561), then a rector in Naples (1561–1562), then returned to Vienna where he became the rector and then the Provincial Superior of the order. He held many important positions until his death on the 26th October 1605. LUKÁCS 1978. 724; SCADUTO 1974. p. 742–748. I'm grateful to Zsófia Kádár and Bálint Lakatos for this valuable information.

⁶⁶ E.g. GOETZ 1965. p. 243–244.

⁶⁷ Delfino was born to an aristocratic family of Venice in 1527. He was a student of philosophy and theology at the University of Padua, and after that, he worked at the Curia Romana. In 1553, he became the bishop of Lesina. At first, he occupied this office until July 1555, however later this year, he was appointed for the second time to be nuncio, but only for a half year term. On his work and later activities in Hungary see: GOETZ 1970. p. VII–XV; NEMES 2010.

⁶⁸ GOETZ 1965. p. XVI.

⁶⁹ FRAKNÓI 1903. p. 88.

Martinengo's return to Italy and the consequent events

After Martinengo's return on the 3rd August 1554, he was appointed to be the head of the Apostolic Camera, and he probably did not leave the Eternal City in the following years.⁷⁰ He temporarily worked as the secretary of Pope Paul IV and also returned to the managing of the affairs of the abbey in Leno, such as gathering and copying the abbey's privileges. He also oversaw some major architectural projects, like the construction of the abbey's palace in front of the church, the residence of the *commendatore* and of those chambers of the abbey which were designed for the visitors.⁷¹

Due to his experiences gained at the court of Ferdinand and in the matters of the council of Trent, the Pope gave him an important mission. In November 1560, Pope Pius IV announced the third section of the Council of Trent to be held on the following Easter, and asked for as many participants as possible, including representatives from those regions, which were already alienated from the Holy See to some extent. A prominent example for this was the case of England. The Pope wanted to send a bull of invitation to Queen Elizabeth I. There were many possible political motives behind this act, one is that Elizabeth's favourite, Robert Dudley hoped to gain the support of Catholic Spain in order to secure the Queen's hand in marriage for himself.⁷² Martinengo was appointed as the nuncio, who delivers the bull.

He received his instructions on the 9th March 1561, and the next day he left Rome. He reached Cologne on the 8th April, and continued his journey to Brussels in the middle of April.⁷³ His hopes were shadowed by his experiences from the previous years. Before issuing the bull, the Pope had already dispatched Vincenzo Pargaglia, the abbot of San Solutore to England in 1560, but this attempt failed before he could set foot on the island. Primarily, it was believed that this was due to the actions of Philip II, but the main reason behind was that the Pope was short of the appropriate connections in the English elite, therefore he was not fully aware of the complexity of internal affairs and rivalry between Dudley and his opponents and the obstacles this situation carried within.⁷⁴ The King of Spain tried to prevent Martinengo's mission as well, but his letter of safe-conduct was not released due to other reasons: an English priest, John Coxe's capture and this act was used as a base for a popish conspiracy charge, consequently, Martinengo's visit was denied, which was approved by the Privy Council on the 1st May 1561. Spain's emissary, Alvarez de Quadra explained this with the presumably subversive presence of Martinengo on the island and thus was held back in Brussels. In reality, he was waiting for the Pope's instructions in Antwerp according to which he had to return to Italy through Lorraine and

⁷⁰ GOETZ 1965. p. XVII.

⁷¹ MOTTA 2008. p. 153.

⁷² DORAN 1994. p. 10–22; DORAN 1996. p. 47–51; QUESTIER 2019. p. 31–33.

⁷³ GOETZ 1965. p. XVII. Bayne and Questier both states that the nuncio left Rome later, on the 14th March. BAYNE 1913. p. 78; QUESTIER 2019. p. 31.

⁷⁴ MCCOOG 1996. p. 50; EDWARDS 2014. p. 263–264.

the Western German lands.⁷⁵ In his home in Brescia, he was greeted with a speech by his nephew and on the first days of November arrived in Rome.⁷⁶

Afterwards, he spent most of his time in Rome and Leno. Many members of the Martinengo family lines have turned to Protestantism. The most notable one was his brother, Celso (Massimiliano), who was a student in Venice and Ferrara and became a teacher of Greek literature. He was also a member of the canons of Lateran, but eventually he became the leader of the Italians who fled to Geneva.⁷⁷ In spite of these events, he remained loyal to the Catholic Church and was the first *camerarius assistens* and *referendarius* to Pope Pius IV between 1562 and 1564, which duties engaged his interest completely.⁷⁸

The newly elected Pope Pius V appointed him to be a nuncio at Naples in 1566, but he turned this mission down, and consequently it was given to Cipriano Pallavicino.⁷⁹ The next year he resigned of his benefices at Leno in favour of his brother's son, Ascanio (*resignatio in favorem*) who supervised the abbey until 1548.⁸⁰

Because of his talent and skills, Martinengo was considered by many a promising diplomat. He wished to be a cardinal, but this did not happen for him. He passed away on the 10th November 1569 in Rome and was buried in the Sant'Apollinare church. The inscription on his grave was ordered to be made by his brothers and nephew.⁸¹

Today, there is only one depiction that can be linked directly to the diplomat with little doubts: it is in the hundred-piece collection of engravings by Andrea de Abbiatis, in which all items represent a famous member of the family. Among them, there is Martinengo as an abbot.⁸² It is also worth mentioning that Alessandro Moretto painted many pieces which are not identified, but probably one of them is depicting Girolamo.⁸³ Finally, it was David Podavinius, who published a Latin work in Brescia, in which he praised Martinengo and he also mentioned the nuncio's work in Hungary.⁸⁴

⁷⁵ BROWN–BENTINCK 1890. p. 310–336; MOTTA 2008. p. 153; McCOOG, 1996. p. 51.

⁷⁶ ZAMBONI, Baldassarre 1778. p. 137; GUERRINI 1930. p. 421; GOETZ 1965. p. XVIII.

⁷⁷ RATH 1896. p. 275; MOTTA 2008. p. 154; RONCHI 2008; FAPPANI 1991. p. 294.

⁷⁸ SQUICCIARINI 1998. p. 60; MOTTA 2008. p. 154.

⁷⁹ GOETZ 1965. p. XVIII.

⁸⁰ MOTTA 2008. p. 154.

⁸¹ ZAMBONI 1778. p. 90; GUERRINI 1930. p. 421–422; FAPPANI 1991. p. 314; MOTTA 2008. p. 154; GOETZ 1965. p. XIX. On the tombs of the family: CAVALLERI 2017. p. 117. 138.

⁸² RIZZINI 1896. p. 36; GUERRINI 1930. p. 480–481. (XXIX.)

⁸³ Out of these paintings, the one that is best known as Federico Martinengo's depiction, dated to around 1546, deserves more attention, because the first mention of this painting dates back to the establishment of the gallery of the Festicis family and there are some doubts about whether the figure depicted is Federico or not. REDONA – VIRGLIO 1988. p. 334–335. 408–409. 448–449; ROSSI 1994. p. 342; RÜHL 2011. p. 146.

⁸⁴ PODAVINIUS 1583.

Summary

With Martinengo, an unusually talented, experienced and devoted papal diplomat entered the court of Ferdinand I. His personality was a guarantee for an adequate representation of the Pope in the difficult diplomatic situations, which the first half of the 1550s created. From these complex cases the inquiry conducted by the Holy See stands out, which Martinengo supervised conscientiously according to the sources. Thus, the thoroughness of this process did not reflect his negative attitude towards Ferdinand, but rather his overall work-ethic and habit. He came from a family with notable French connections, but this did not have an influence on his work in the Habsburg monarch's court. Although he did not receive any assignments related to Hungarian affairs at the Curia, like his successor, the nuncio Zaccaria Delfino, he remained active on the field of European politics. Observing his walk of life, it does not only delineate the image of the career of an exceptional papal diplomat, but it also brings us closer to a prominent actor in the diplomatic relations between Ferdinand I and the Holy See.

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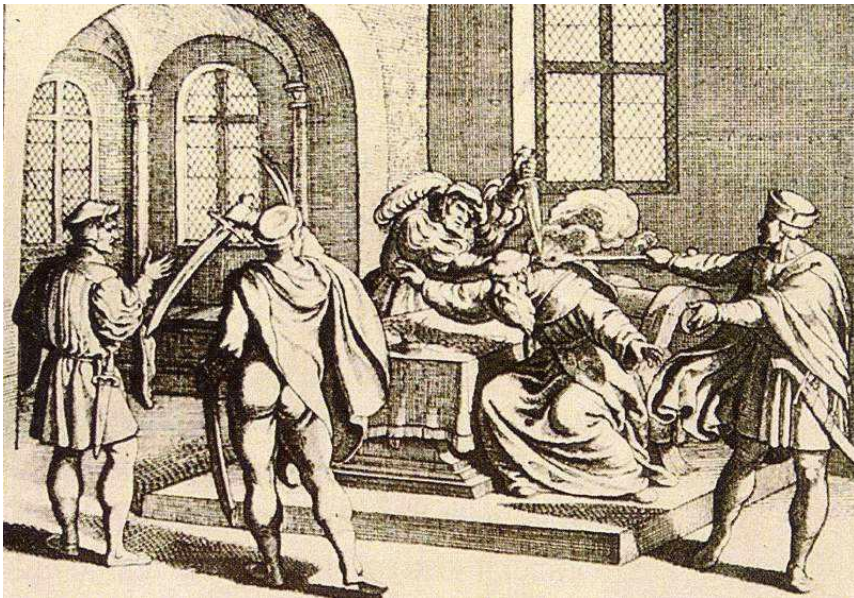
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PICTURES



1. Pope Julius III creates George Martinuzzi a cardinal. The painting can be found on the porch of the monastery of Czestochowa. (17th century), photo by Adam Pátkai (with the author's licence)



2. The assassination of George Martinuzzi, copper engraving by Matthäus Merian (17th century), <https://mek.oszk.hu/01900/01911/html/index165.html>



3. Andrea de Abbiatis: The portrait of Girolamo Martinengo (17th century), GUERRINI 1930. p. 480–481. (XXIX.)

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