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Foreign merchants and the new trading route in the Hungarian Kingdom in the 14th century

On 6 January 1336, King Charles I of Hungary (1301–1342) specified the route into Hungary that was to be used by merchants carrying their wares from, or to, Bohemia and the neighbouring countries. He also set the amount to be paid at toll posts that, according to the burghers of Brno and Nagyszombat, had been in existence since the reign of King Béla IV.¹ In addition to a reduction in tariffs,² the ordinance provided exemption from specific tariffs at other toll posts on the route, as best expressed in a phrase written on the back of the surviving copy: “*in quibus locis non datur theolonium in Ungaria.*” On 5 May 1336, Charles I extended this privilege with the order that foreign merchants were liable only for their own affairs and no one should dare to harass them for transgressions committed, or debts accumulated, by others.³ Use of the reduced-tariff route was provided on equal terms to merchants of Bohemia and Hungary and to those from other countries.⁴ Consequently, when Archbishop Csanád of Esztergom set tariffs for the tolls of Nyárhida (today Nové Zámky, Slovakia), Udvard (today Dvory nad Žitavou, Slovakia), and Esztergom—all of which lay along this route—at reduced levels, but still higher

1 Boglárka Weisz (ed.). *Fontes ad rem mercatoriam regni Hungariae pertinentes II. De comesciis externis (1259–1437)* (Források a Magyar Királyság kereskedelemtörténetéhez II. Külkereskedelem (1259–1437)). [Sources for the Commercial History of the Kingdom of Hungary, vol. II: Foreign Trade (1259–1437)]. 2 vols. Budapest: BTK Történettudományi Intézet, 2021, 2:42–46. See also the original privilege of Charles I with its hanging seal about the reduced-tariff route, 6 January 1336, Archiv města Brna [Brno City Archives], Sbírka listin, mandátů a listů, A 1/1. no. 76.

2 On the background to the 1336 decree, see Renáta Skorka. A csökkentett vámtarifájú út kialakulása I. Károly uralkodása alatt. [The creation of the reduced-tariff route under Charles I]. *Történelmi Szemle* 55 (2013): 451–470.

3 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:46–47. See also the original privilege of Charles I to foreign merchants, 5 May 1336, Staatsarchiv Nürnberg (hereafter StA Nürnberg), Reichsstadt Nürnberg (RN), Urkunden Münchner 510.

4 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:45.

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than those of Charles I, in a diploma issued on 24 December 1337 at the request of the merchants of Mainz, Prague, Nuremberg, and Augsburg, he considered that they also applied to Bohemian, Swabian, Rhenish, and Flandrian merchants.⁵ His diploma has not survived in original form, but its text is known from a sixteenth/seventeenth-century copy book held in the Prague archives,⁶ and every town that requested the diploma must have had a copy of it. Subsequently, none of them ever asked for the Archbishop of Esztergom's diploma to be confirmed, no doubt because it contradicted the king's regulation and imposed higher tariffs, which were not in the merchants' interests to pay. The Archbishop's diploma is supremely informative in recording which merchants brought their wares to the kingdom of Hungary from Bohemia (*mercatores regnorum prescriptorum per viam regni Boemie mercimonia in regnum Hungarie deferentes*). We therefore know that Bohemian, Swabian, Rhenish, and Flandrian merchants came along the reduced-tariff route via Prague and Brno. Although the advantages of the reduced-tariff route were available to every Hungarian and foreign merchant, we can trace an emerging custom for every group of merchants to request a separate diploma confirming that the regulated tariffs on the route applied specifically to them. This article presents the history of this route from the perspective of the merchants (as the actors using the routes), discussing each merchant group and town separately. I will look at when and under what circumstances they applied for confirmation of their charter of privilege on this route, what routes they used to reach the kingdom of Hungary, how their road using and trading activity changed by the early fifteenth century, and what was behind this.

The study is closely linked to the “Via mercatoria” online map produced by the Medieval Hungarian Economic History Research Group.⁷ With the creation of this map, we are creating and developing an open database where everyone can find information related to medieval Hungarian settlements in their relation to trade. The settlements and roads indicated on the map will be complemented with tables offering the user data on the given topographical point. In addition to the status and privileges of each settlement, the tables will also contain important pieces of trade-related information: tolls collected from travellers and merchants engaged in foreign trade, staple rights, the market(s) and market tolls collected

⁵ Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:47–49.

⁶ Copy of Archbishop Csanád of Esztergom's diploma of 24 December 1337. In *Primus Liber vetustissimus Privilegiorum, Statutorum et Decretorum Veteris Urbis Pragensis necno[n] gloriose Auree[ue] memorie eiusdem perpetuo dignissimus*, 34–35, Archiv hlavního města Prahy (hereafter AMP) [Prague City Archives], Kniha pamětní [The book of memory], no. 993/1.

⁷ *Via mercatoria*, Boglárka Weisz, István Kádas (eds.) <http://viamercatoria.abtk.hu/> (26 September 2024).

there, which shops were established there, provisions connected to trading at the settlement, places of river-crossings, and whether its residents were exempt from certain customs duties. The user will also be provided with important information on the roads leading to these settlements, whether it was obligatory to use them, and what regulations were in force for the mandatory routes. The CoMOR project objective is the production of interactive historical maps (“Mapping Fairs”), but the investigation centres of the project are France, Germany, and Italy. Our map supplements the CoMOR map with medieval Hungarian data. In the long term, it will show how the Hungarian kingdom was integrated into the late medieval fair system that CoMOR is investigating and how the western road network continued into Hungary.

Merchants from Cologne, Huy, and elsewhere in the Rhineland

King Louis I of Hungary (1342–1382) made his first reference to the reduced-tariff route of 1336 in a diploma of 13 May 1344. Therein, he ordered the toll owners not to demand that merchants from Cologne, Huy, and elsewhere in the Rhineland pay higher tolls than those confirmed by the diploma (*secundum ordinationem litteris firmatam*) for the Bohemian and Moravian merchants.⁸ A document issued by the royal tavernicus Lawrence on 10 March 1345 proves that the 1336 route was indeed what Louis I had in mind. Lawrence was also a castellan of Sempte (present-day Šintava, Slovakia), which lay along the reduced-tariff route,⁹ and in this diploma, he ordered the toll collectors under his authority in Sempte and Farkashida (present-day Vlčkovce, Slovakia) not to collect higher tolls on the wares and horses brought for sale by merchants from Cologne, Huy, and elsewhere in the Rhineland. The order not to collect higher tolls applied only to the horses that were for sale and not to the merchants’ own horses or those of their men,¹⁰ which seems to imply that they could not collect tolls from the latter at all. According to the 1336 regulation, tolls had to be paid in Sempte and Farkashida only on large merchant coaches, commonly called ‘*rudas*’ (*currus mercimoniale, qui*

⁸ Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:50–51. See also the original privilege of Louis I concerning Cologne, Huy, and Rhineland merchants, 13 May 1344, Historisches Archiv der Stadt Köln (hereafter HASTK), Urkundliche Überlieferung, Haupturkundenarchiv (HUA) U 2. 1771.

⁹ See 6 January 1336, in Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:45.

¹⁰ Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:51–52. See also the original writ of royal tavernicus Lawrence to the toll collectors in Sempte and Farkashida, 10 March 1345, HASTK, HUA U 1. 1803.

vulgariter rudas dicitur) and small coaches called ‘*ajoncás*’ (*currus aynczas*), and tolls on horses are mentioned in Charles I’s regulation only for bridge tolls collected in Jablonca and the lands of Korlátkő Castle,¹¹ but the toll collectors may have extended this, quite arbitrarily, to their own toll posts.

On 10 August 1350, the merchants of Cologne, Huy, and the Rhineland presented to King Louis I’s brother, Stephen, Duke of Slavonia, Croatia, and Dalmatia, a diploma issued by Louis I that stated, *inter alia*, that the tariffs payable on their wares were the same as those paid by the merchants of Prague.¹² Stephen’s diploma quotes at length from a (now unknown) privilege that Charles I granted to the citizens of Prague. This corresponds to the provisions for the reduced-toll route that Charles I defined in his diploma of 6 January 1336, but quotes only the route, the tariff items, and the remark that, according to the Brno and Nagyszombat authorities, these toll posts had existed since the reign of Béla IV. It does not include the other parts and provisions of the diploma, notably the section that lists the toll owners. Stephen also prohibited the toll owners from collecting more than the tolls specified in Charles’ diploma. His grounds for doing all this were that in the absence of the king, he ruled the whole kingdom.¹³ Louis I is not known to have issued a diploma conferring toll payment privileges on Prague merchants, but we have no reason to doubt the text of Stephen’s diploma and so we may be reasonably sure that those from Cologne and Huy also held such a privilege. Either this predated Louis’s 13 May 1344 ordinance to the toll collectors, which therefore concerned only its implementation, or the king issued it subsequently to correct his previous ordinance and redress an injury to the merchants of Cologne. Whatever its status, the Cologne merchants never had this diploma confirmed.

After Louis I’s great seal was lost during the Bosnian campaign in 1363, he subsequently—sometime between 1364 and 1366—confirmed the diplomas issued

11 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:44.

12 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:56; the original diploma of Stephen, Duke of Slavonia, Croatia, and Dalmatia concerning Cologne, Huy, and Rhineland merchants, 10 August 1350, HASTK, HUA U 2. 1968.

13 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:56–58. When Louis I departed on his second campaign April 1350, the queen mother Elizabeth and her brother Stephen, Duke of Slavonia, Croatia, and Dalmatia, deputised for him in managing the affairs of the kingdom of Hungary. See Eva B. Halász. Anjou István herceg (1332–1354) [Stephen of Anjou]. In *Hercegek és hercegségek a középkori Magyarországon* [Dukes and Duchies in Medieval Hungary], Zsoldos Attila (ed.). Székesfehérvár: Városi Levéltár és Kutatóintézet, 2016, 88; Norbert C. Tóth. *A Magyar Királyság nádora. A nádori és a helytartói intézmény története (1342–1562)* [Palatine of the kingdom of Hungary. The Institutions of Palatine and Governor (1342–1562)]. Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 2020, 175–176.

with his own seal and with those of his father's first two seals.¹⁴ On 5 July 1365, owing to the loss of the seal, at the request of Olf Pichman and his brother-in-law Matthias, citizens of Cologne,¹⁵ and the citizens of Huy, the king transcribed and confirmed the diploma he had issued on 13 May 1344,¹⁶ and the municipal authority of Cologne had an authenticated copy of it made on 23 June 1380.¹⁷ Later, they sought confirmation only of Louis I's 1365 confirmation: at the request of the Cologne citizens Gerhard Trotsfeld and Hermann Schrempe¹⁸ and the citizens of Huy, Queen Mary confirmed their diplomas on 30 March 1384 and 21 April 1384.¹⁹ King Sigismund (1387–1437), at the request of the Cologne citizens Gotschalk, Cristofor, and Cristan, transcribed the latter for the Cologne merchants alone on 29 June 1393.²⁰

Merchants coming to the kingdom of Hungary from Huy and Cologne mainly brought broadcloth, not exclusively the product of their hometowns. The land route from Huy first led through Aachen to Cologne, from where the merchants generally proceeded down the Rhine to Mainz, then through Nuremberg to Regensburg. From there, they sailed on the Danube to the Duchy of Austria²¹ and the kingdom of Hungary.²² On this route, however, Vienna's staple right impeded the Cologne merchants' direct trade with the kingdom of Hungary. The 1336 reduced-tariff route thus had the double benefit for Cologne merchants of freeing them from the constraints of Vienna's staple right and reducing the tolls they had to pay in the kingdom of Hungary. Upon reaching Nuremberg, they therefore

14 Albert Grün. I. Lajos király megerősítő záradéka [Louis I's confirmation clause]. *Turul* 19 (1901): 29–33.

15 Research has revealed the possibility that the said Matthias may be Matthias von der Bach, a cloth merchant of Cologne. See Franz Irsigler. *Die wirtschaftliche Stellung der Stadt Köln im 14. und 15. Jahrhundert. Stukturanalyse einer Spätmittelalterlichen Exportgewerbe- und Fernhandelsstadt*. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1979, 56; Klaus Militzer. Tuchhandel und Tuchhändler Kölns in Österreich und Ungarn um 1400. *Blätter für deutsche Landesgeschichte* 114 (1978): 270–271; István Draskóczy. Commercial Contacts of Buda along the Danube and beyond. In *Medieval Buda in Context*, Balázs Nagy, Martyn Rady, Katalin Szende, András Vadas (eds.). Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2016, 283.

16 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:88–89.

17 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:142.

18 Probably the Nuremberg cloth merchant Hermann Schremp. See Militzer, *Tuchhandel*, 287.

19 30 March 1384: Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:164–166; 21 April 1384: Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:166–167.

20 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:175–176.

21 The Cologne merchants may have reached Vienna from Prague via Budweis and Linz. See Militzer, *Tuchhandel*, 267.

22 Militzer, *Tuchhandel*, 266.

headed for Prague²³ and Brno,²⁴ a route that brought them to the Hungarian border at Újvár (present-day Holič, Slovakia). The surviving charters and some other charters mentioned in them but not known to the full extent, indicate that Cologne merchants began to take an interest in the journey to the kingdom of Hungary via Bohemian territory at the very start of Louis I's rule. In 1344, 1345, and 1350, either directly or via representatives, they submitted a relatively rapid succession of petitions to the king for charters concerning the route. In 1365, by requesting confirmation of the diploma they had previously received from Louis I, they demonstrated their knowledge in Hungarian affairs: they must have known it would be invalid otherwise, having been authenticated with king's first seal. Although the relatively low tariffs on the route and royal protection afforded to their journeys must have already been appealing for the Cologne merchants as it was, the main benefit to them was 'liberation' from the Vienna staple right. That was true even between 1340 and 1351 (and the charters are indeed concentrated in this period), when they were still able to proceed from Vienna to the kingdom of Hungary if they paid a penalty, but after 1351, they could continue only by forfeiting their goods.²⁵ These diplomas and confirmations, like those issued later in the century (1384 and 1393), were not transcriptions of the privilege as granted in Stephen's diploma, but only of the diplomas in which Louis I ordered the toll collectors not to demand higher tolls from them than were payable by mer-

23 The Prague authority specifically mentioned the Cologne merchants (and those from Regensburg and Eger) when regulating trade by foreigners on 19 May 1333 in harmony with Wenceslaus II's diploma of 23 May 1304. *Regesta diplomatica nec non epistolaria Bohemiae et Moraviae* (hereafter *RBM*). 8 vols. Lenka Blechová, Karel Jaromír Erben, Josef Emler, Helena Krmíčková, Milena Linhartová, Bendřich Mendl, Blažena Rynešová, Jirí Spěváček, Jana Zachová (eds.). Prague, 1855–2014, 3:777–779, 779–780. In 1304, Wenceslaus II granted Prague a five-day staple right, which also banned trade between foreigners. *Codex iuris municipalis regni Bohemiae* (hereafter *CIM*). 4 vols. Jaromír Celakovský, Gustav Friedrich, Antonín Haas (eds.). Prague, 1886–1961, 1:20–21. The Huy merchants acquired trading privileges in Bohemian territory from John of Bohemia in 1328. See André Joris. Documents concernant le Commerce de Huy avec la Bohême et la Haute-Meuse (XIII^e–XIV^e siècles). *Bulletin de la Commission royale d'Histoire* 137 (1971): 12; Hektor Ammann. Huy an der Maas in der mittelalterlichen Wirtschaft. In *Altständisches Bürgertum*, vol. II, Heinz Stob (ed.). Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1978, 236.

24 On 22 March 1348, Charles IV, King of Germany and Bohemia, prohibited merchants and travellers from Austria, Hungary, Poland, and elsewhere, on pain of forfeiting their goods, from approaching the country by any route that avoided Brno. *Codex diplomaticus et epistolaris Moraviae* (hereafter *CDM*). 15 vols. Berthold Bretholz, Anton Boczek, Vincenz Brandl, Peter Ritter von Chlumecky, Josef Chytil (eds.). Brünn, 1836–1903, 7:552–553.

25 Renáta Skorka. A bécsi lerakat Magyarországra vezető kiskapui [Ways to Hungary avoiding the Vienna staple right]. *Történelmi Szemle* 54 (2012): 7–8; Markus Gneiss. *Das Wiener Handwerksordnungsbuch (1364–1555). Edition und Kommentar*. Vienna: Böhlau, 2017, 19.

chants from Bohemia and Moravia. As we have seen, citizens of Huy did not appear among the petitioners in 1393, possibly because by the second half of the fourteenth century, the Huy textile industry was past its peak and Huy merchants appear significantly less often in the sources.²⁶ After 1393, there is not even a trace of Cologne citizens attempting to exercise their rights on the route or routes out of Bohemian lands. It is possible that for a long period after obtaining Sigismund's transcription of their diploma, they did not experience any harassment that necessitated further confirmation from the same king, and after the 1420s, their relations with Hungarian partners were not sufficiently intensive²⁷ to warrant such a petition. In the Sigismund era, the trading activities of Cologne merchants in Hungary was mainly—if not exclusively—confined to the western borders.²⁸ Their Viennese factors took some part in this.²⁹ Aiding this process was an ordinance made in Vienna on 30 August 1408 that if a foreigner swore that he wished to pass through the city and travel beyond the Duchy with the sole intention of collecting the debts owed to him, he may do so, and if he bought a horse for his return, he may return with it, but upon payment of the *hansgraf*³⁰—a

²⁶ See Amman, Huy an der Maas, 247–248.

²⁷ See Klaus Militzer. Kölner Kaufleute im Preßburg und im Donauraum im 14. und 15. Jahrhundert. In *Städte im Donauraum. Sammelband der Beiträge aus dem Symposium in Smolenice 30.9.–3.10. 1991, Bratislava–Pressburg 1291–1991*, Richard Marsina (ed.). Bratislava: Slovenská historická spoločnosť, 1993, 132–134; Katalin G. Szende. Kölni kereskedők a középkori Sopronban [Cologne merchants in Medieval Sopron]. In *Tanulmányok Csatkai Endre emlékére*, Attila Környei, Katalin G. Szende (eds.). Sopron: Soproni Múzeum Alapítvány, 1996, 66–67; Irsigler, Wirtschaftliche Stellung, 57.

²⁸ See Franz Kováts. Handelsverbindungen zwischen Köln und Pressburg (Pozsony) im Spätmittelalter. *Mitteilungen aus dem Stadtarchiv von Köln* 35 (1914): 11–18; Szende, Kölni kereskedők, 60–64.

²⁹ 23 April 1418: Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:237–241. The Köllnerhof in Vienna, where the Cologne and Rhineland merchants had their accommodation, stores, and trading houses, is first mentioned in the sources in 1394 (*Coloniensium curia*), although it was already in the possession of a merchant of undetermined origins in 1289. The building was taken on by Nuremberg and Regensburg merchants in the fifteenth century. See the entry for 29 October 1420 in *Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Wien. II. Regesten aus dem Archive der Stadt Wien*, vols. II/1–5, Karl Uhlirz (ed.). Vienna: Verlag und Eigenthum des Alterthums-Vereines zu Wien, 1898–1936, II/2., no. 2146; Josef Giesen. Die Kölner Hof in Wien. *Jahrbuch des Kölnischen Geschichtsvereins* 34–35 (1959/1960): 195–197; Richard Perger. *Strassen, Türme und Basteien: das Strassennetz der Wiener City in seiner Entwicklung und seinen Namen. Ein Handbuch*. Vienna: Franz Deuticke, 1991, 80.

³⁰ In Vienna, the duties of the *Hansgraf* were to supervise foreign merchants and the staple right, and he was also responsible for enforcing the rules of foreign trade. He was thus also required to prevent the importation of wine from the Kingdom of Hungary. See Gneiss, *Wiener Handwerksordnungsbuch*, 160; Felix Czeike. Hansgraf. In *Historisches Lexikon Wien III*, Felix Czeike (ed.). Vienna: Kremayr and Scheriau, 1994, 52.

specified amount for each horse, namely one *groschen*.³¹ A detailed examination of the activities of Cologne citizens with Hungarian merchants permits the conclusion that, as Ferenc Kováts has stressed, the actual exchange of goods took place in Vienna³² and the surviving sources record only commercial credit. These factors combined to render unnecessary the expensive recurring confirmation of the privilege of the land route, which had effectively fallen out of use. The vanishing of Cologne citizens from Brno following their lively presence in the town in the second half of the fourteenth century³³ similarly indicates the declining significance of the route through Bohemian lands. After the 1420s, there are increasingly rare mentions of Cologne merchants' dealing with Hungarian partners (although Cologne goods did not disappear from the Hungarian market). Katalin Szende has identified the increasing domination of trade along the Danube valley by south German cities—above all, Nuremberg—as the main factor in this process,³⁴ while Renáta Skorka emphasises the rise of cities along the Danube (of which Nuremberg was also one) and their role as intermediaries.³⁵ The decreasing intensity of contacts with Cologne was no doubt due to the displacement of its merchants from Vienna, where contact actually took place. The Cologne traders did not completely disappear, however, and the sources occasionally mention their appearance in Vienna and trade with Hungarian merchants, especially from Pressburg (present-day Bratislava, Slovakia).³⁶ Looking at the overall commercial activity of Cologne citizens after the 1420s, we see a significant decrease of activ-

31 Gneiss, *Wiener Handwerksordnungsbuch*, 378.

32 Ferenc Kováts. A magyar arany világtörténeti jelentősége és kereskedelmi összeköttetések a nyugattal [Hungarian gold in world history and its trade connections with the West]. *Történelmi Szemle* 11 (1922): 141. Katalin Szende reached a similar conclusion from the Sopron documents (Szende, *Kölni kereskedők*, 66), while Emma Lederer expressed doubts that the transactions were made in Vienna. See Emma Lederer. *A középkori pénzüzetek története Magyarországon, 1000–1458* [History of Medieval Financial Transactions in Hungary]. Budapest, 1932, 91–92.

33 Günther Hirschfelder. *Die Kölner Handelsbeziehungen im Spätmittelalter*. Cologne: Kölnisches Stadt Museum, 1994, 164.

34 For a review of previous explanations of the phenomenon, see Szende, *Kölni kereskedők*, 66–67.

35 Renáta Skorka. Pozsony gazdasági szerepe a 15. század első felében a zálogszerződések tükrében [The economic role of Pressburg in the first half of the 15th century through lien contracts]. *Századok* 138 (2004): 445. Günther Hirschfelder reached the conclusion that Regensburg and Nuremberg merchants dominated the Vienna market in the second third of the fifteenth century. Factors in the eclipse of the Cologne merchants were the Hussite wars, the Ottoman advances in the Balkans, and the flourishing of precious ore mining in Saxony and Tyrol (which reduced the demand for Hungarian gold), and, in general, Cologne goods usually finding buyers at the Frankfurt market. See Hirschfelder, *Kölner Handelsbeziehungen*, 131.

36 Militzer, *Kölner Kaufleute*, 132–133; Hirschfelder, *Kölner Handelsbeziehungen*, 131–135.

ity in the east (Vienna, Prague, and Breslau) and the central areas of Germany. There was an initial surge in north Germany, but after the middle of the fifteenth century, Cologne merchants did not venture across the Main, and although Cologne wares did not disappear from these regions, they came via the Frankfurt market in later times. By contrast, contacts with Italy and lands to the west became stronger and more intense.³⁷ All this indicates that Cologne merchants gradually switched their attention away from the regions that had been the focus of their interest during the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries towards places where they had previously been less active. The role of the Frankfurt fairs in transmitting Cologne wares to the eastern markets, that clearly emerges in the fifteenth century, could have started in the fourteenth century if the Cologne merchants had not been going east themselves at that time. One result of this change in destinations is that we only have sporadic records of Cologne merchants with interests in Vienna or Hungary in the late fifteenth century.

The Prague and Nuremberg merchants

In the diploma for the merchants of Cologne and Huy he issued on 10 August 1350, Stephen, Duke of Slavonia, Croatia, and Dalmatia, stated that they paid tolls in the same way as citizens of Prague. He then transcribed the ordinance for the reduced-tariff route from the diploma that Charles I had issued in 1336.³⁸ We do not know of any charter in which Charles I transcribed his 1336 diploma for the Prague merchants, although we have no reason to doubt its existence at the time. It may even have been the diploma Louis I was referring to when, on 13 May 1344, he permitted merchants from Cologne and Huy to pay tolls in the same way as the Bohemian and Moravian merchants.³⁹ The Prague merchants do not seem to have attached any subsequent importance to their own reduced-tariff-route diploma and chose another way of securing its advantages. On 6 July 1357, the Brno municipal leaders—the judge Jakob de Ror, the jurors, and the citizens⁴⁰—transcribed Charles I's diploma of 6 January 1336.⁴¹ The request for the transcription, however, almost certainly came from the Prague and Nuremberg merchants, because the original document (now

37 Hirschfelder, *Kölner Handelsbeziehungen*, 541–542.

38 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:56.

39 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:49–51.

40 Jakob de Ror was a judge in Brno between 1341 and 1364. See Berthold Bretholz. *Geschichte der Stadt Brunn*, vol. I. Brunn: Verlag des Vereins, 1911, 129.

41 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:64–65.

lost) was held in the Nuremberg archives,⁴² and at the end of the same month—July 1337—the merchants Nicolaus Scherf of Prague and Wolfram Stromer⁴³ of Nuremberg presented the transcript to Louis I with the request to confirm it for them. Louis I transcribed the document on 29 July and confirmed its provisions for the merchants of Prague and Nuremberg. Louis I noted in the diploma that it was not the custom to confirm diplomas of a foreign town, but he was doing so to retain these merchants in the privilege granted by his father; in addition, his mother Elizabeth had a precise memory of Charles I's ordinance and, by this, attested to the authenticity of his father's diploma. Louis I therefore confirmed with his duplex seal the diploma of Charles I that was incorporated into the document produced by the municipal authority of Brno, and the confirmation was to be regarded as equivalent to his father's original diploma. The diploma allowed the toll collectors to collect no more than the specified tolls from these merchants and prohibited them from demanding gifts (*munera aut honores aliquos*). The Prague and Nuremberg merchants were obliged to pay the same old, rightful thirtieth (*tricesima*),⁴⁴ as were the merchants of the kingdom.⁴⁵ There was no contradiction between the latter two provisions, and neither did they add anything to Charles I's diploma of 1336, which also prohibited demands on merchants beyond the specified tariffs and mentioned the obligation to pay the thirtieth.⁴⁶ Nonetheless, the provision concerning the demand for gifts—or, rather, their prohibition—is a reference to the era of Louis I, who gave several commands prohibiting the practice.⁴⁷ The diploma was issued in (at least) two copies—one for Nuremberg and the other for Prague. We can be sure of this, because after Louis I's seal was lost in 1363, the authorities of both Nuremberg and Prague had clauses of confirmation added to their own copies. The confirmation

42 Today, all that remains is its archive number. See StA Nürnberg, RN, Päpstliche und fürstliche Privilegien, Urkunden 48.

43 Wolfram Stromer (brother of Ulrich Stromer), a merchant of Nuremberg. See Wolfgang Stromer. Eine gesellige Versammlung der Nürnberger Rates in Ulrich Stromers Haus und der Aufenthalt Kaiser Karls IV. in Nürnberg im Jahre 1358. *Mitteilungen des Vereins für Geschichte der Stadt Nürnberg* 52 (1963/1964): 59; Peter Fleischmann. *Rat und Patriziat in Nürnberg. Die Herrschaft der Ratsgeschlechter vom 13. bis zum 18. Jahrhundert*, 3 vols. Nuremberg: Verein für Geschichte der Stadt Nürnberg, 1967, 2:947.

44 The foreign customs duty—the thirtieth, which was set at one-thirtieth of the value of the imported and, from the second part of the fourteenth century, of exported goods too—was collected in the interior of the country. This type of the duty had to be paid only once, even if a merchant passed through several thirtieth-stations on his journey.

45 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:65–68. See Wolfgang Stromer. *Oberdeutsche Hochfinanz, 1350–1450*. 3 vols. Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1970, 1:93–94.

46 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:48–49.

47 For example, 5 October 1364: Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:87; 22 March 1366: Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:95; 4 April 1378: Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:133; 28 April 1380: Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:141.

clause was added to the Nuremberg copy on 5 July 1364 at the request of Bertold Holzschuher⁴⁸ and Hans Ebner,⁴⁹ citizens and jurymen of Nuremberg.⁵⁰ It is not known who requested the Prague copy, which was added on 18 July and referred to Nuremberg and Prague citizens in general. This diploma with its confirmation clause has not survived, but the text is preserved in the seventeenth-century copy book *Primus Liber vetustissimus Privilegiorum, Statutorum et Decretorum Veteris Urbis Pragensis necno[n] gloriose Aureeq[ue] memorie eiusdem perpetuo dignissimus*.⁵¹

Despite the confirmation clauses, Lajos I transcribed the diploma of 29 July 1357 into a new diploma for the citizens of Nuremberg and Prague at the request of Bertold Holzschuher and Hans Ebner on 6 July 1364.⁵² On 29 July 1357, two

48 Bertold Holzschuher was a Nuremberg merchant and member of the Nuremberg council in 1354, 1356, and from 1357–1358 and 1360–1365 (Fleischmann, *Rat und Patriziat*, 3:1683). According to Wolfgang Stomer, Holzschuher was already engaged in trade in Buda in the period 1358–1360 (Stomer, *Oberdeutsche Hochfinanz*, 1:98). The Nuremberg municipal ordinance on which Stomer bases his claim, however, does not clearly prove that Holzschuher traded in Buda in any of these years, because it concerns credit that he extended to two German merchants in 1358, which they should have repaid in Mainz the same year, and since they did not do so, the oxen and other goods they had purchased in Buda were seized for Holzschuher (See 7 March 1360: Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:75–76). Our first certain source on his trading in Buda is thus the above diploma of 1364, and we also know that he proceeded similarly on behalf of the Nuremberg merchants before Louis I at Damásd in Hungary in 1370 (1 July 1370: Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:113–114), and so we may conclude that he was still actively trading in the country, but he died before 18 February 1371. On Holzschuher himself, see Johann Christoph Gatterer. *Historia Genealogica Dominorum Holzschuherorum Ab Aspach Et Harlach In Thalheim Cet. Patriciae Gentis Tum Apud Norimbergenses Tum In Exteris Etiam Regionibus Toga Sagoque Illustris Ex Incompactis Rerum Gestarum Monumentis Conquisita*. Nuremberg, 1755, 121–127; Fleischmann, *Rat und Patriziat*, 2:571.

49 Hans Ebner, merchant and member of Nuremberg Council (1367, 1369–1370, 1372–1377) traded Tournai broadcloth in Buda in the late fourteenth century. See Fleischmann, *Rat und Patriziat*, 3:1659; Stomer, *Oberdeutsche Hochfinanz*, 1:104–105.

50 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:65–66. Sebald, abbot of Saint Giles monastery in Nuremberg, transcribed Louis I's diploma on 7 November 1469 (StA Nürnberg, RN, Ratskanzlei, A-Laden, Urkunden 60 a). In turn, his transcription was later transcribed by Matthias I on 22 February 1470 (StA Nürnberg, RN, Päpstliche und fürstliche Privilegien, Urkunden 323) and by Wladislaus II on 27 June 1497 (StA Nürnberg, RN, Päpstliche und fürstliche Privilegien, Urkunden 404). At the same time, Wladislaus II also transcribed two diplomas of Louis I, both dated 29 July 1357, for the Prague merchants. One of these was the abovementioned privilege charter transcribing the document of 1336 (AMP, Pergamenové listiny [PGL] I. 26).

51 Confirmation clause of Louis I concerning Prague merchants, 18 July 1364. In *Primus Liber vetustissimus*, 23–26. Excerpts from the text of the confirmation clause relating to the transcription are published in Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:66–67.

52 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:81–82.

more merchants, Nicolaus Scherf of Prague and Wolfram Stromer of Nuremberg, asked for confirmation of another ordinance granted to merchants arriving from neighbouring lands, particularly Bohemia, by Louis I's father, Charles I. These were the provisions of the 5 May 1336 diploma prohibiting the arrest of merchants from these lands for the debts or offences of other merchants; all bore liability solely for themselves. Lajos I fulfilled this request, and although he noted that it was Charles I's ordinance and indeed quoted from his father's diploma almost word for word, it was not an actual transcription that he confirmed.⁵³ This diploma, too, was produced in two copies, one for Nuremberg⁵⁴ and the other for Prague,⁵⁵ and both survive today. The Nuremberg copy has a confirmation clause included at the request of the Nuremberg citizens and jurymen, Bertold Holzschuher and Hans Ebner, dated 5 July 1364, the same day as the diploma mentioned above, and bears Louis I's second hanging seal (although only a fragment survives), but there is no confirmation clause on the Prague copy.⁵⁶ Bertold Holzschuher and Hans Ebner wanted something more than a confirmation of the 1357 diploma, and the next day they had Louis I issue a new diploma for Nuremberg and Prague incorporating and confirming the old one.⁵⁷

On 1 July 1370, Nuremberg received another diploma unrelated to the reduced-tariff route or the other privileges granted by Charles I. The city was again represented by Bertold Holzschuher, who on this occasion did not undertake representation for Prague. The royal ordinance laid down the rules for trade between Nuremberg citizens and inhabitants of the kingdom. It effectively denied the option of commercial credit by ordering that payment be made upon sale, and it assigned jurisdiction over the merchants to the judge competent for the place where a sale was made. The ordinance also included a promise that six or seven weeks before going to war with a neighbouring country, he would warn the Nuremberg merchants and have them escorted, together with their wares, to

53 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:69–71. Louis I's diploma was transcribed by George, abbot of Saint Giles' monastery in Nuremberg, on 15 July 1460 (StA Nürnberg, Reichsstadt Nürnberg, Losungamt, 7-farbiges Alphabet, Urkunden 2352), and by Sebald, abbot of Saint Giles' monastery in Nuremberg on 7 November 1469 (StA Nürnberg, Reichsstadt Nürnberg, Ratskanzlei, A-Laden, Urkunden 60). Wladislaus II transcribed and confirmed this privilege charter at the request of the Prague merchants on 27 June 1497 (*Primus Liber vetustissimus*, 26).

54 The 27 June 1497 (*Primus Liber vetustissimus*, 26). The original privilege of King Louis I concerning Nuremberg merchants, 29 July 1357, StA Nürnberg, RN, Päpstliche und fürstliche Privilegien, Urkunden 50.

55 The original privilege of King Louis I concerning Prague merchants, 29 July 1357, AMP, PGL I. 10.

56 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:69.

57 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:83–84.

the border of the kingdom. The same Nuremberg merchants could leave the country with one servant and two horses of any value if they had paid the *tricesima* on the goods they had brought in (and could certify having done so). They had to pay tolls, where necessary, on the two horses.⁵⁸

Soon afterwards, Louis I wished to provide Nuremberg merchants with an escort when they came into the country as well as when they left. On 15 July 1371, he reassured merchants from Nuremberg and other imperial towns that despite his wars with the dukes of Bavaria and the Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV, they may come to the country unharmed, because at his command, the castellans of Újvár and Berencs (present-day Branč, Slovakia) would provide them with an escort to the middle of the country.⁵⁹ The mention of these two Nyitra-county castellans, particularly in the case of Újvár, indicates that Louis I was guaranteeing the journeys of merchants from Nuremberg, and indeed from other imperial towns, along the 1336 reduced-tariff route. Louis I presumably found it important to communicate the provision of an escort, because in the conflict over Brandenburg that had broken out between Charles IV and Stephen the Younger of Bavaria and his sons, he was supporting the latter, and in July he made preparations for a possible outbreak of armed hostilities. There was probably no major battle, and the opposing sides signed a truce on 16 October 1371.⁶⁰ Considering that fighting was in progress in Moravia, it is astonishing that Louis I was expecting the Nuremberg merchants to arrive from these same northern regions, as we may be quite sure was the case. What Louis I most probably had in mind was that the hostilities gave the Austrian dukes an additional reason alongside the Viennese staple right for preventing the Nuremberg merchants' entry into the kingdom of Hungary from any direction other than the northern route. The escort may have been a preparation for the spread of hostilities into Hungarian territory, but another factor may have been the merchants' fear of the Hungarian armies.

On 26 June 1383, the Nuremberg cloth merchant Ulrich Eisvogel,⁶¹ representing the Nuremberg and Prague merchants, went before Queen Mary to request a transcription of both the abovementioned diplomas of 6 July 1364 concerning the

⁵⁸ Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:113–114.

⁵⁹ Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:118–119.

⁶⁰ Truce of 1371, between King Louis I, Otto V, Duke of Bavaria, Pilgrim II, Prince-Archbishop of Salzburg and Charles IV, Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár Országos Levéltára (hereafter MNL OL) [Hungarian National Archives, State Archive], Diplomatikai Fényképgyűjtemény (DF) [Collection of Diplomatic Photographs] 258468.

⁶¹ Ulrich Eisvogel, cloth merchant of Nuremberg, Hans Stromer's son-in-law and his factor in Milan. See Stromer, *Eine gesellige Versammlung*, 59, footnote 29; Stromer, *Oberdeutsche Hochfinanz*, 1:103; Philippe Braunstein. *Wirtschaftliche Beziehungen zwischen Nürnberg und Italien im Spätmittelalter*. In *Beiträge zur Wirtschaftsgeschichte Nürnberg*, vol. I, Stadtarchiv Nürnberg

1336 route⁶² and the arrest of travellers,⁶³ as well as Louis I's diploma of 1 July 1370 regulating trade between merchants of Nuremberg and Hungary. The latter transcription, like the original, applied only to Nuremberg.⁶⁴ Three days later, on 29 June 1383, Mary duly issued a command to Hungarian collectors of thirtieths and tolls permitting them to demand only the customary tolls and taxes from the merchants of Nuremberg and Prague.⁶⁵ An entry into the Nuremberg municipal accounts book dated 8 July 1383 records the expenses of Ulrich Eisvogel's embassy and states that the purpose of his journey was to secure the freedom of the route, a privilege that did indeed feature in all three of the diplomas confirmed at his request. In addition to Eisvogel's travel and accommodation expenses, the city covered the costs relating to the diploma issued by the queen.⁶⁶ The same year, Eisvogel went to Prague to obtain trading concessions from King Wenceslaus and to negotiate the matter of a loan concerning the route to the kingdom of Hungary.⁶⁷ The latter probably arose because Eisvogel had been representing the merchants of both Prague and Nuremberg when he petitioned Mary to confirm the 1336 reduced-tariff route. No doubt the copy produced for Prague was paid for by Nuremberg, and this was the money he was attempting to recover when he visited Prague.

Another Nuremberg merchant, Leopold Schürstab the Younger,⁶⁸ was also paid by the city on 8 July 1383 for an attempt to obtain a privilege related to the route to the kingdom of Hungary.⁶⁹ Hungarian sources are silent about this embassy, and it is possible his mission to seek these privileges did not take him to the kingdom of Hungary at all, because one of the town's expenses entered in the accounts book on 23 September 1383 concerned the acquisition of a diploma from the Duke of Austria to enable Nuremberg merchants to reach the kingdom of Hungary.⁷⁰ The diploma issued by Leopold III of Austria is unknown, but a letter he sent on 16 October 1383 to his *Obersthofmeister*, Reinhard von Wehingen,

(ed.). Nuremberg: Selbstverlag des Stadtrats zu Nürnberg, 1967, 390, footnote 43; Fleischmann, *Rat und Patriziat*, 2:1101.

62 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:152–155.

63 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:155–157.

64 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:157–159. The diploma was transcribed by George, abbot of Saint Giles' monastery in Nuremberg, on 15 July 1460 (StA Nürnberg, RN, Losungamt, 7-farbiges Alphabet, Urkunden 2844).

65 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:159–160.

66 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:160. See Stromer, *Oberdeutsche Hochfinanz*, 1:99.

67 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:163.

68 See Fleischmann, *Rat und Patriziat*, 2:914.

69 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:161.

70 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:161.

states that citizens of Nuremberg had come to him with a complaint about land-owners at the Hungarian border demanding payment of extraordinary tolls when they were on their way to Hungary via Styria. The Duke asked Wehingen to mediate in the affair.⁷¹ This information clearly shows that the Nuremberg merchants in 1383 were seeking more than one route to Hungary that avoided Vienna's staple right. One of these was the reduced-tariff route, and another was a route through Styria.

There are no indications from the reign of King Sigismund (1387–1437) that Nuremberg merchants sought confirmation of their privilege concerning the reduced-tariff route, although when the privileges regarding payment of tolls and thirtieths enjoyed by the merchants of Prague and Nuremberg were conferred on the citizens and merchants of Eger (present-day Cheb, Poland) on 5 April 1396, Sigismund stated that he himself had granted these privileges.⁷² Sigismund provided similarly for the merchants of Breslau on 21 March 1420, although in that case he was confirming a privilege granted by Louis I.⁷³ The privilege granted by Louis I unambiguously applied to the reduced-tariff route, adding to evidence from other sources that it was indeed used by the Nuremberg merchants. The same cannot be said with certainty about Sigismund's charters. Although the Nuremberg merchants seem to have abandoned the northern reduced-tariff route in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, their commercial activity in Hungary, far from decreasing, became much more intense,⁷⁴ but increasingly involved a different route and different commercial techniques. For Prague merchants, such a change may be ruled out on purely geographical grounds. Given their weaker presence in the kingdom of Hungary and the loss of support from Nuremberg, they probably did not even try to obtain confirmation of their privilege to use the route, and there are certainly no signs that they did.

The Nuremberg merchants using the reduced-tariff route, like those from Cologne, journeyed via Prague and Brno and reached the Hungarian border at Újvár. The route was important to them and to merchants from Prague as soon as it opened, as indicated by a diploma relating to the reduced-tariff route issued by

71 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:162–163.

72 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:185–186.

73 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:247–248. See 29 November 1365: Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:89–91.

74 See, for example, András Kubinyi. Die Nürnberger Haller in Ofen. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Südosthandels im Spätmittelalter. *Mitteilungen des Vereins für Geschichte der Stadt Nürnberg* 52 (1963/1964), passim; Hans Schenk. *Nürnberg und Prag. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Handelsbeziehungen im 14. und 15. Jahrhundert*. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1969, 168–172; Ute Monika Schwob. *Kulturelle Beziehungen zwischen Nürnberg und den Deutschen im Südosten im 14. bis 16. Jahrhundert*. Munich: Oldenbourg, 1969, 4–16.

the Archbishop of Csanád on 24 December 1337. This document, by which the archbishop raised tolls at his own toll stations above the level set in the royal diploma, mentions by name one merchant each from Prague and Nuremberg.⁷⁵ The importance of the reduced-tariff route for the Nuremberg merchants must have stemmed in part from their increasing presence in Prague in the early fourteenth century,⁷⁶ which the Bohemian monarchs did their best to encourage by providing various privileges. On 10 July 1321, King John of Bohemia warned the citizens of Prague that citizens and merchants of Nuremberg enjoyed the same rights in Prague as citizens and merchants of Prague did in Nuremberg.⁷⁷ On 15 December 1326, he assured the Nuremberg merchants that they could travel without restriction in his kingdom on land and water for payment of the customary tolls, and if he was to withdraw this provision, he would inform them one month in advance.⁷⁸ Margrave Charles of Moravia confirmed this diploma on 14 June 1338 and, considering one month to be insufficient notice, he set the period at two months.⁷⁹ On 23 August 1339, King John prohibited the Prague authorities from demanding *Ungeld* (*nullum ungettum*) from merchants who brought broadcloth and other goods to Prague and did not open their bales but wished to proceed further.⁸⁰ On 2 November 1347, Charles IV ordered that Nuremberg citizens should have the same rights and freedoms as the citizens of Prague and other cities in Bohemia, Moravia, Poland, or the Duchy of Luxembourg, the cities where they and Prague citizens might freely trade with foreigners, and they were exempt from tolls, as Prague citizens were in Nuremberg.⁸¹ Although the ordinance does not specifically mention Nuremberg citizens, its provisions clearly applied to them, a view confirmed by the fact that the original of the diploma is still held in Nuremberg. The privileges granted to Nuremberg citizens by these various ordi-

75 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:47.

76 On the commercial links between Nuremberg and Prague, see Schenk, *Nürnberg und Prag*, 21–153.

77 Gerhard Hirschmann. Nürnbergs Handelsprivilegien, Zollfreiheiten und Zollverträge bis 1399. In *Beiträge zur Wirtschaftsgeschichte Nürnbergs*, Stadtarchiv Nürnberg (ed.), no. 28.

78 *RBM*, 3:485.

79 Margrave Charles of Moravia's diploma confirmation, 14 June 1338, StA Nürnberg, RN, Päpstliche und fürstliche Privilegien, Urkunden 24a.

80 King John of Bohemia's Ungeld prohibition, 23 August 1339, StA Nürnberg, RN, Päpstliche und fürstliche Privilegien, Urkunden 24b. On 28 January 1341 in Prague, John of Bohemia exempted the Nuremberg merchants from the payment of *Ungeld* for five years. See Hirschmann, *Nürnberg's Handelsprivilegien*, no. 52.

81 Proclamation of Charles IV concerning Nuremberg merchants, 2 November 1347, StA Nürnberg, RN, Kaiserl. Privilegien, Urkunden 58. The diploma was confirmed by Wenceslaus of Bohemia on 30 January 1379. See Hirschmann, *Nürnberg's Handelsprivilegien*, no. 121.

nances surpassed those applying to other foreign merchants, who—unlike those from Bohemian and Moravian towns—were not permitted to make purchases in Prague and could spend only five days in the city after they had offered their wares for sale. Since Nuremberg citizens enjoyed the same rights and privileges as those from Prague and other Bohemian and Moravian towns, they were exempt from these restrictions.⁸² These rights of Nuremberg citizens also allowed them to carry on trading beyond Prague after Charles IV had prohibited travel beyond Prague on 25 January 1359. He had done so because the kings had done something similar in Buda, Krakow, and Vienna, and he advised the Frankfurt authority to write to the rulers of these cities and ask them to lift the ban.⁸³ We may also reasonably infer that the ordinance was in effect for a limited time, but we cannot say how long it lasted. Charles IV, as King of Bohemia, certainly provided freedom of travel for Nuremberg merchants on 27 December 1360, promising to inform them six months in advance if he intended to make any change.⁸⁴

Like the Cologne merchants, those from Nuremberg certainly used the route to Regensburg, and from there took their wares down the Danube into the Duchy of Austria and the kingdom of Hungary, at least until Vienna's staple right was tightened in 1351.⁸⁵ From then on, they took up the opportunity of trading with Hungarian merchants who had access to commercial credit for the purchase of goods. This mainly meant trading with the citizens of Pressburg, Sopron, and their surroundings, just as the Cologne merchants did. Although sources on commercial credit surviving in the Pressburg *Protocollum Actionale* do not provide information on the exact location of sale,⁸⁶ all of the charters in the Sopron documents concerning commercial credit were written in Vienna,⁸⁷ as were several

82 On 23 May 1304, Wenceslaus II granted Prague a five-day staple right which also banned trade among foreigners (*CIM*, 1:20–21). In 1328 (*RBM*, 3:551–552) and on 19 May 1333 (*RBM*, 3:777–779, 779–780), the city of Prague also issued regulations for trading by foreigners in line with Wenceslaus II's diploma. A detailed study of the trading between Nuremberg and Prague merchants is Schenk, *Nürnberg und Prag*, passim.

83 Johann Friedrich Boehmer (ed.). *Codex diplomaticus Moenofrancofurtanus. Urkundenbuch der Reichstadt Frankfurt*. Frankfurt am Main, 1836, 661–662.

84 Hirschmann, *Nürnberg's Handelsprivilegien*, no. 87.

85 On 12 May 1366, Albert III of Austria granted Prague merchants the right to travel between the Kingdom of Bohemia and Venice via Vienna without being subject to that city's staple right for a period of four years. See Christian Lackner, Claudia Feller (eds.). *Regesta Habsburgica V. Die Regesten der Herzoge von Österreich aus dem Hause Habsburg V. Abteilung: Die Regesten der Herzoge von Österreich 1365–1395. 1. Teilband (1365–1370)*. Vienna, Munich: Böhlau, 2007, 115. There is no record of Nuremberg merchants receiving an exemption from Vienna's staple right.

86 For a detailed discussion, see Skorka, *Pozsony gazdasági szerepe*, 450–451, 453–454.

87 5 March 1426: *Sopron szabad királyi város története, I/1–II/6* [History of the Royal Free Town of Sopron]. Közli Házi Jenő. Sopron, 1921–1943. (*Sopr. tört.*), I/2:301; 1 March 1428: *Sopr. tört.*,

other surviving original documents recording Nuremberg merchants' trade with Pressburg citizens,⁸⁸ pointing to the conclusion that, like the Cologne merchants, they did most of their business in Vienna. As we have seen, a third option was the route through Styria, bringing merchants to the kingdom of Hungary via Regensburg, Passau, and Wiener Neustadt. The Bavarian dukes Stephen the Elder, Stephen the Younger, and Frederick facilitated the use of the Styrian route through a guarantee of safe travel against payment of tolls, granted on 8 June 1359.⁸⁹

A feature of trade between Nuremberg and the Hungarian lands is that every year from 1396 onwards, an *aufdinger* (*aufdinger gen Ungern*) was elected to inspect, in the Nuremberg customs house, the loading and unloading of goods intended for Hungary. Such municipal officials were first appointed to oversee trade with Hungary, Saxony, Swabia, and Frankia, and others were appointed for Bavarian lands in the early fifteenth century (although *aufdinger* were not elected for every destination in every year).⁹⁰ On 21 April 1400, four *aufdinger*s were elected for trade with Hungarian lands and two for Swabia. They were appointed for a period of approximately one year.⁹¹

The Regensburg merchants

On 27 March 1359, the Regensburg merchant Albert Taucher⁹² went before Louis I on behalf of his fellow merchants, requesting him to confirm to their benefit the

1/2:358–359; 25 December 1431: *Sopr. tört.*, I/3:37; 6 January 1432: *Sopr. tört.*, I/3:41; 2 April 1432: *Sopr. tört.*, I/3:45–46.

88 Pozsony council acknowledged their debt to Nuremberg's merchants on 3 March 1413, MNL OL DF 239333; Pozsony council acknowledged their debt to Nuremberg's merchants, 6 June 1414, MNL OL DF 239353; Letter of Purkhart Seebach, citizen of Nuremberg, to Pozsony council, 29 February 1416, MNL OL DF 243930; Leonard Horndl and Ludwig Königsfelder, citizens of Pozsony, acknowledged their debt to Nuremberg's citizens, MNL OL Diplomataikai Levéltár (DL) [Collection of Diplomatic] 44257.

89 Hirschmann, *Nürnberg's Handelsprivilegien*, no. 85.

90 Walter Bauernfeind. Güterbestätter. In *Stadtlexikon Nürnberg*. Michael Diefenbacher, Rudolf Endres (eds.). Nuremberg: Tümmel, 1999, 391. See also Alfred Bauch. Ein vergessener Schüler Albrecht Dürer's. In *Mitteilungen aus dem germanischen Nationalmuseum* (1896): 8.

91 Wilhelm Biebinger, Wilhelm Neukam (eds.). *Quellen zur Handelsgeschichte der Stadt Nürnberg seit 1400*. vol. I/1. Erlangen: Palm and Enke, 1934, 48.

92 Several members of the Taucher merchant family of Regensburg had interests in east-west trade. Their trading links in the kingdom of Hungary were mainly confined to Pressburg. See Klaus Fischer. *Regensburger Hochfinanz. Die Krise einer europäischen Metropole an der Wende zur Neuzeit*. Regensburg: Universitätsverlag, 2003, 251–252.

diploma that Charles I issued on 6 January 1336 and the Brno city authority transcribed on 6 July 1357. Louis I confirmed the ordinance, repeating the text he used to confirm the diplomas of the Nuremberg and Prague merchants the same year. This covered the confirmation of the diplomas for foreign towns, the memory of his mother Elizabeth, the demand of gifts supplementary to toll collection, and the payment of the thirtieth. One new element was the requirement to pay a toll at the gate of Buda in accordance with the privilege of the Dominican nuns of Margaret Island.⁹³ This stipulation represented a substantial addition to the tolls paid by Regensburg merchants on the reduced-tariff route, because what the nuns collected at the castle gate were the Buda market tolls.⁹⁴ Louis I's ordinance was in fact a return to the state of affairs in the Árpáadian age: upon granting the tolls to the nuns on 25 July 1255, Béla IV ordered that everyone, even those otherwise exempted, must pay them.⁹⁵ Rather than this precedent, however, Louis I's decision most likely stemmed from an ordinance he made himself six years previously. On 1 April 1351, he required everyone, native or foreigner, to pay the full customary tolls at the toll stations of the Dominican nuns of Margaret Island, even if they had previously been granted exemption from payment.⁹⁶ This was the first confirmation of the reduced-tariff route to include a stipulation suspending the toll exemption in the case of the Buda gate toll held by the Dominican nuns of Margaret Island, although the ordinance it refers to predates the diploma Louis I issued to the Prague and Nuremberg merchants on 29 July 1357. Since Louis I first transcribed the diploma for the nuns on 27 February 1365,⁹⁷ the mention in 1359 cannot be based on Louis I having recently confirmed the nuns' privilege. The surviving sources offer no explanation as to why the stipulation concerning the Buda gate toll was applied to the Regensburg merchants but did not appear in the diploma for the merchants from Nuremberg and Prague, and neither do we know how—or indeed if—Regensburg obtained the transcription of the 1336 diploma for the reduced-tariff route made by the municipal authority of Brno 6 July 1357 (more on this below). After the loss of the royal seal in 1363, Louis I,

⁹³ Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:72–74. See also Stromer, *Oberdeutsche Hochfinanz*, 1:106.

⁹⁴ Boglárka Weisz. *A királyketteje és az ispán harmada. Vámok és vámszedés Magyarországon a középkor első felében* [The King's Second Part and the Ispán's Third: Tolls and Toll Collection in Hungary in the First Half of the Middle Ages]. Budapest: BTK Történettudományi Intézet, 2013, 11.

⁹⁵ Weisz, *A királyketteje*, 98.

⁹⁶ Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:74–76.

⁹⁷ Confirmation of King Louis I's diploma of 1 April 1351, 27 February 1365, MNL OL DL 5369.

at the request of the Regensburg merchants Nicolaus Spitzer⁹⁸ and Ulrich Kankaphar, transcribed and confirmed this diploma on 26 June 1369.⁹⁹

On 29 March 1371, Louis I issued a charter of privilege to the Regensburg merchants of almost the same content as the 1 July 1370 diploma for Nuremberg citizens discussed above, with the exception that he would inform the Regensburg merchants not six or seven weeks prior, but three months before an armed conflict.¹⁰⁰

Regensburg merchants reached the reduced-tariff route to Hungary via Prague¹⁰¹ and Brno. Another option was to make contact with Hungarian merchants along the Danube route through Vienna. After 1370, the Regensburg merchants made no effort to obtain privileges in the kingdom of Hungary or to have them confirmed. Although the city declined in economic significance in the second half of the fourteenth century, its wealthy merchants moved to Nuremberg and Augsburg,¹⁰² and at the turn of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, like those from Cologne and Nuremberg, they maintained active commercial relations with places in Hungary, primarily Pressburg,¹⁰³ but in such a way that the actual exchange of goods took place in Vienna.¹⁰⁴ After the 1440s, however, Regensburg merchants' trade with Hungary effectively ceased.¹⁰⁵

98 The commercial activity of the Spitzer family of Regensburg extended to the kingdom of Hungary, Venice, Bohemia, and Austria. See Fischer, *Regensburger Hochfinanz*, 272.

99 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:108–110. For the sixteenth-century copy and German translation of the diploma, see Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv, München (hereafter BayHStA), Reichsstadt Regensburg, Reichsstadt Regensburg Amtsbücher und Akten 6. (Rotes Privilegienbuch), 78v–78r.

100 Louis I's charter concerning Regensburg merchants, 29 March 1371, BayHStA, Rotes Privilegienbuch, fol. 76r.

101 The Prague authority specifically mentioned the Regensburg merchants (and those from Cologne and Eger) when regulating trade by foreigners on 19 May 1333 in harmony with Wenceslaus II's diploma of 23 May 1304 (*RBM*, 3:777–779, 779–780). In 1304, Wenceslaus II granted Prague a five-day staple right, which also banned trade between foreigners (*CIM*, 1:20–21).

102 Skorka, *Pozsony gazdasági szerepe*, 445.

103 Skorka, *Pozsony gazdasági szerepe*, 447–448, 452–453; Fischer, *Regensburger Hochfinanz*, 248–252.

104 See Fischer, *Regensburger Hochfinanz*, 251. For the Regensburg merchants' trade in Vienna, see Fischer, *Regensburger Hochfinanz*, 242–247. The Regensburg merchants' Vienna warehouse—the Regensburger Hof—appears in the sources in 1410. See Felix Czeike, *Regensburger Hof*. In *Historisches Lexikon Wien IV*, Felix Czeike (ed.). Vienna: Kremayr and Scheriau, 1995, 646.

105 Fischer, *Regensburger Hochfinanz*, 248.

Merchants of Breslau, Eger (Cheb), and Aachen

On 29 November 1365, Louis I, at the request of Charles IV, Holy Roman Emperor and King of Bohemia, permitted the citizens and merchants of Breslau and Eger, in separate diplomas, to bring their wares into the country along any route and enjoy the same freedoms as the merchants of Prague and Nuremberg—namely, that after payment of the rightful tolls and thirtieths, they could not be harassed by collectors of tolls and thirtieths on either their inward or outward journeys and could not be burdened with excessive tolls and thirtieths, but travelled under royal protection. The king called on the toll and thirtieth collectors to observe this ordinance.¹⁰⁶ For Breslau citizens, he made the same provision in the form of a patent on 30 November 1365,¹⁰⁷ and there is a high degree of congruence in the text of the two documents. The latter also records its place of issue—Pressburg—implying that the charters of privilege of the previous day were issued there too. Their issue was probably connected to the visit of Charles IV in autumn 1365. Charles IV was certainly in Buda between 20 and 23 November 1365,¹⁰⁸ but Louis I's itinerary does not tell us when he—or they—left Buda, or by which route the emperor left the kingdom. Louis I was in Pressburg on 29 November and issued a diploma there on 1 December,¹⁰⁹ but on 5 December he was in Győr,¹¹⁰ and a diploma he issued there suggests that he and Charles IV had discussed the possibility of Charles' son Wenceslaus marrying Elizabeth, daughter of Louis I's brother, Stephen.¹¹¹ The meeting was also a suitable occasion for the emperor to request charters of privilege for the merchants of the two cities, a request that Louis I, wishing to please him, readily fulfilled. Charles IV was in Kuttenberg on 17 December and in Prague on 23 December.¹¹² This suggests that Louis I might have escorted the emperor to Pressburg, and Charles IV was probably still there when the Hungarian king issued the diploma for the merchants. Their ways then

106 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:89–91 (Breslau); Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:91–93 (Eger). Matthias I transcribed and confirmed the Breslau merchants' diploma on 25 November 1484. See Archiwum Państwowe we Wrocławiu (APW) [State Archive in Wrocław], Akta miasta Wrocławia (AMW), 3893. fols. 7r–10r.

107 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:93–94.

108 20 November 1365: *Regesta Imperii VIII. Die Regesten des Kaisereichs unter Kaiser Karl IV. 1346–1378* (hereafter *RI VIII*), Johann Friedrich Böhmer (ed.). Innsbruck: Wagner, 1877, no. 4227; 22 November 1365: *RI VIII*, no. 4228; 23 November 1365: *RI VIII*, no. 4229.

109 *Sopr. tört.*, I/1:134.

110 Diploma issued in Győr by King Louis I in a succession case, 5 December 1365, MNL OL DL 62720.

111 *RI VIII*, no. 350. See 20 December 1365: *RI VIII*, no. 575; 24 December 1365: *RI VIII*, no. 4232.

112 *RI VIII*, no. 4230–4231.

parted, as the emperor went to Kuttenberg via Brno, possibly leaving the country through Stompfa and Malacka.

Louis I granted freedom of travel along any route in the diplomas for the Breslau and Eger merchants, but by referring to the privileges of the Prague and Nuremberg merchants, he directed attention to the reduced-tariff route, since all the diplomas we know of concerning both the towns mention the use of that route and the collection of tolls along it. The same route was also the best and easiest way for merchants from Breslau and Eger to come, via Brno, to Buda. We should bear in mind, however, that on 5 October 1365, Louis I opened a new route towards Breslau and the lands of Bohemia, along which Hungarian merchants, those from Kassa (present-day Košice, Slovakia) and Szepes (present-day Spišská Kapitula, Slovakia), and others who took part in setting up the route were obliged to pay tolls only in Liptó (present-day Liptovský Hrádok, Slovakia), Turóc (present-day Turiec, Slovakia), and Zsolna (present-day Žilina, Slovakia), namely four *garas* (*grossus*) for each heavy and large wagon, commonly called *mázszaszekér*, and were not exempt from payment of the thirtieth.¹¹³ Since this route was probably not passable in November and the associated toll concession applied only to certain Hungarian merchants, Louis I's diploma is much more likely to have concerned the reduced-tariff route. Sigismund confirmed Louis I's diploma for the Breslau merchants on 21 March 1420. He did not simply transcribe the original, however, although he did mention that it was Louis I who had granted them this privilege.¹¹⁴ Sigismund issued the diploma in Breslau, no doubt in return for generous hospitality. In this period, however, the Breslau merchants preferred to travel along a route for merchants from Bohemia that Louis I opened on 1 May 1373, starting in Újvár and going via Ór (present-day Šaštín-Stráže, Slovakia), Kukló (present-day Kuklov, Slovakia), Malacka (present-day Malacky, Slovakia), and Stomfa (present-day Stupava, Slovakia) to Pressburg. The customary tolls had to be paid along the way.¹¹⁵ The Breslau merchants maintained this route principally as a way to reach Venice,¹¹⁶ from which they

¹¹³ Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:86–87.

¹¹⁴ Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:247–248. On the Breslau merchants' trade in Hungary and Buda, see 14 March 1425: Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:259–260; Letter of John Lorzak to Breslau council, 8 May 1425, APW, AMW 1623.

¹¹⁵ Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:123.

¹¹⁶ See 21 June 1430: Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:275–276; Bence Péterfi. Széll szemből. Boroszlói kísérletek Buda lerakatjogának kikerülésére a 15–16. század fordulóján [Against the Wind. Attempts by Breslau to avoid the Buda staple right at the turn of the 15th and 16th centuries]. In *Márvány, tárház, adomány. Gazdaságtörténeti tanulmányok a magyar középkorról*, Kádas István, Skorka Renáta, Weisz Boglárka (eds.). Budapest: BTK Történettudományi Intézet, 2019, 388.

had been prohibited since 1412, and it was only on 25 April 1421 that Sigismund lifted the prohibition.¹¹⁷

On 5 April 1396, at the request of his brother Wenceslaus IV, Holy Roman Emperor and King of Bohemia, Sigismund granted the privileges defined in Louis I's diploma to the town of Eger. As well as making the same provisions, Sigismund made a similar reference to a charter for the citizens of Nuremberg and Prague, although it was one he had himself granted.¹¹⁸ No such charter has survived, but Queen Mary's diploma of 29 June 1383 ordered the collectors of tolls and thirtieths not to harass the citizens of Nuremberg or Prague or to collect from them anything except the lawful tolls and the thirtieth.¹¹⁹ This diploma was issued the same day as the confirmation of the 1336 reduced-tariff route and so may be connected to it, which again confirms that the generally worded diploma for Breslau and Eger was primarily based on the rules for travel along the reduced-tariff route. Sigismund issued the 1396 diploma while he was in Prague on a visit where he and Wenceslaus, among other things, made a mutual inheritance agreement in the case of death without issue, and Wenceslaus appointed Sigismund vicar-general of the Holy Roman Empire. When Sigismund confirmed the rights and privileges of the city of Eger as Holy Roman Emperor on 25 January 1437, he also, as King of Hungary, confirmed the privileges that his predecessors, particularly Louis I, had granted to Eger, and those he had granted himself in respect of tolls, thirtieths, and anything else.¹²⁰ Buda was probably the chief destination for merchants of Breslau during our period, and probably also for those of Eger,¹²¹ although the charter of privilege discussed here is the only known record of Eger citizens' commercial activity in the kingdom of Hungary.

As he had done for the merchants of Breslau and Eger, Louis I, on 2 March 1369, granted Aachen merchants the same freedoms from harassment by toll collectors as those enjoyed by the merchants of Nuremberg and Prague on their journeys to and from the kingdom of Hungary. This was a gesture of gratitude to Aachen, the city

117 Wilhelm Stieda. *Hansisch-Venetianische Handelsbeziehungen im 15. Jahrhundert*. Rostock: Universtäts-Buchdruckerei, 1894, 139–142; 1412: *Regesta Imperii XI. Urkunden Kaiser Sigmunds (1410–1437)* (hereafter *RI XI*), Wilhelm Altmann (ed.). Innsbruck, 1896–1900, XI/1, no. 3244a; 25 April 1421: *RI XI*/1, no. 4520.

118 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:185–186.

119 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:159–160.

120 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:308.

121 For the routes from Breslau to the Kingdom of Hungary, see Grzegorz Myśliwski. A Silesian Town and the Hungarian Monarchy: Economic Contacts between Wrocław and Hungary, ca. 1250–1500. In *The Medieval Networks in East Central Europe: Commerce, Contacts, Communication*. Balázs Nagy, Felicitas Schmieder, András Vadas (eds.). London, New York: Routledge, 2019, 238–239.

that had helped him to build a chapel in its basilica and to acquire lands in the city and its hinterland so that he could donate them to the chapel.¹²² The chapel was certainly completed in 1367, when Louis I and Abbot Henry of Pilis donated to it relics of the Hungarian Saints, Saint Stephen, Saint Ladislaus, and Saint Emeric.¹²³ On 2 January 1370, Louis transferred maintenance of the chapel to the city, reserving the right to appoint two Hungarian chaplains.¹²⁴ The privilege granted to the citizens of Aachen was one of a series of charters related to the chapel, and whether it was indeed important to them or was no more than a gesture by the king cannot now be established.

The Bamberg merchants

On 21 July 1366, Konrad von Geisenheim, provost of Bamberg, approached Louis I to request that he confirm to the benefit of the merchants of Bamberg Charles I's diploma relating to the 1336 reduced-tariff route, as the king had already done for the merchants of Cologne, Nuremberg, and some other merchants. Louis I fulfilled the request with the stipulation that tolls were also to be paid to the Dominican nuns of Margaret Island at the Buda city gate and river tolls to the Poor Clares nunnery on the Danube at Óbuda, as his predecessors had ordered and as he had ordered merchants and others to pay, but the merchants could not be required to pay any further tolls or make any gifts. The Bamberg merchants also had to pay the thirtieth, as other merchants had.¹²⁵ According to the king's charter, Geisenheim presented a patent sealed with Charles I's third and last seal. Charles I used his third great seal between 1331 and 1342, and although no copy of the 1336 diploma in patent form is known of, the king's third seal is preserved in the Brno archives in the form of an intact hanging seal on a charter of privilege. The Brno municipal authority also stated that Charles I's charter was a patent, and Louis I noted the same when transcribing the document transcribed by the Brno authority, and so it seems certain that Charles I's diploma also had a patent copy. The remark about Charles I's seal is conclusive evidence that what

122 Rudolf Arthur Peltzer. Ein Handelsprivileg des Königs Ludwig I. von Ungarn für Aachen, 1369. März 2. *Zeitschrift des Aachener Geschichtsvereins* 28 (1906): 452–454.

123 Copy of donation of King Louis I and Abbot Henry of Pilis to the Hungarian chapel in Aachen, 27 October 1367, MNL OL DL 36460.

124 Copy of diploma in which King Louis I transferred the maintenance of the Hungarian chapel to Aachen, 2 January 1370, MNL OL DL 36460. See Edith Tömöry. *Az aacheni magyar kápolna története* [The History of the Hungarian Chapel in Aachen]. Budapest: Németh József, 1931, 7–9.

125 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:100–102.

Geisenheim presented to Louis I was not the diploma transcribed by the Brno municipal authority. How the Bamberg provost obtained the diploma cannot now be ascertained. Louis was in Lippa (present-day Lipova, Romania) when he issued it,¹²⁶ and Geisenheim may have visited him when he was in Transylvania, most likely when the king was in Gyulafehérvár (present-day Alba Iulia, Romania).¹²⁷ In this case, Louis I gave Geisenheim something similar to the document he gave János Szentgyörgyi in Görgény (present-day Gurghiu, Romania) on 16 June 1366, asking his chancellor, Archbishop Nicholas of Esztergom, to transcribe with royal approval the charter which Szentgyörgyi presented for confirmation and to transcribe and confirm it in the customary form with his new great seal.¹²⁸ That is, if Geisenheim visited Louis I at all.

Geisenheim appears in the sources after 1360 as Charles IV's *secretarius*,¹²⁹ and we know that on 15 June 1366, Charles IV wrote a letter from Vienna informing the city of Augsburg that he was preparing to go to Pressburg, where he would meet with the Hungarian queen.¹³⁰ There, he may have held talks on the marriage between Charles IV's son Wenceslaus and Elizabeth, daughter of Louis I's brother Stephen. We may suspect that Queen Elizabeth was indeed in Pressburg at the time, because on 24 June 1366, the river tolls payable by those arriving by ship from Vienna were regulated in Pressburg on behalf of Louis I,¹³¹ essentially repeating the provisions of Louis I's order of 22 March 1366,¹³² and Louis I transcribed the latter in Pressburg on 27 June at the request of the Pressburg judge Jakab.¹³³ By this time, Louis I was, as we have seen, in Transylvania. He was in Görgény on 16 June and still there on 20 June,¹³⁴ but on 24 and 26 June, he issued

126 See Donation of King Louis I issued in Lippa, 19 July 1366, MNL OL DL 34108; Wit of King Louis I to towns and villages issued in Lippa, 20 July 1366, MNL OL DF 285833. For 24 July 1366, see *Monumenta spectantia historiam Slavorum meridionalium. Listine o odnošajih između južnoga Slavenstva i mletačke republike* (hereafter *MSHS*). 9 vols. Sime Ljubić (ed.). Zagreb: Academia Scientiarum et Artium Slavorum Meridionalium, 1868–1891, 4:87.

127 Arrest prohibition of King Louis I, issued in Gyulafehérvár, 6 July 1366, MNL OL DF 277368; Writ of King Louis I to chapter of Transylvania issued in Gyulafehérvár, 14 July 1366, MNL OL DL 30393.

128 Writ of King Louis I to Archbishop Nicholas of Esztergom, 16 June 1366, MNL OL DL 61219.

129 *Hamburgs Gedächtnis—die Threse des Hamburger Rates: Die Regesten der Urkunden im Staatsarchiv der Freien und Hansestadt Hamburg*. 2 vols. Jeanine Marquard, Nico Nolden, Jürgen Sarnowsky (eds.). Hamburg: Hamburg University Press, 2014–2021, 1:182, footnote 92.

130 *RI VIII*, no. 7208.

131 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:96–98.

132 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:94–96.

133 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:99.

134 *MSHS*, 4:86–87.

charters in Székelyvásárhely (present-day Târgu Mureș, Romania).¹³⁵ Although the *relator* of the diploma issued in Pressburg on 24 June was the palatine, Miklós Kont, we may reasonably surmise that Queen Elizabeth gave permission for its issuance. It is quite possible, if not verifiable, that Konrad von Geisenheim came to the kingdom of Hungary with Charles IV and stayed after the emperor departed and held talks in Hungary on the emperor's behalf, giving him the chance to proceed in the interests of the merchants of the city of the bishop of Bamberg.

Bamberg merchants went to Prague via Nuremberg, and from there through Brno to the Hungarian border, thus arriving in Buda along the reduced-tariff route. It was therefore important for them to obtain this privilege. The Bamberg merchants learned of the commercial opportunities in the kingdom of Hungary through their active contacts with Nuremberg, and since they knew of the privilege enjoyed by the Nuremberg merchants, they made some effort to obtain it for themselves. What is missing is any evidence that they exercised their privilege or ever actually went to Hungary.¹³⁶

One of the two stipulations in the diploma issued to the Bamberg merchants for the use of the reduced-tariff route in 1366—payment of the Buda gate toll to the Dominican nuns of Margaret Island—has already been discussed in detail in connection with the Regensburg merchants. The document also ordered payment of another toll on the route—the water toll collected at Óbuda by the Poor Clares nunnery of Óbuda. On 29 March 1366, Louis I gave his consent for his mother Elizabeth to give the Poor Clares of Óbuda the queen's water toll in Óbuda in return for the nuns' toll in Szentjakabfalva, which was thus transferred to the queen's possession and attached to Óbuda Castle.¹³⁷ Since the provision that anyone was exempt from paying the tolls due to the nuns of the Poor Clares nunnery of Óbuda had been withdrawn from all of Louis I's toll-exemption diplomas on 20 May 1365, from which time everyone was obliged to pay these tolls,¹³⁸ the appearance of the stipulation in the Bamberg merchants' diploma is hardly surprising. Shortly after the Dominican nuns' privilege of 1351 was confirmed on 27 February 1365, the same privilege was granted to the Óbuda nuns.¹³⁹ The obligation to pay the Óbuda nuns' toll very strongly arouses the suspicion that it was Queen

135 *Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der Deutschen in Siebenbürgen*. 7 vols. Gustav Gündisch, Herta Gündisch, Konrad G. Gündisch, Georg Müller, Gernot Nussbächer, Carl Werner, Franz Zimmermann (eds.). Hermannstadt, Bucharest, 1892–1991, 2:254–256, 380–381.

136 See Wilhelm Georg Neukam. *Wege und Organisation des Bamberger Handels vor 1400. Jahrbuch für fränkische Landesforschung* 14 (1954): 121, 124.

137 Permission of King Louis I to his mother Elizabeth, 29 March 1366, MNL OL DL 5445.

138 Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 1:142–144.

139 Confirmation of King Louis I's privilege of 1 April 1351, 27 February 1365, MNL OL DL 5369.

Elizabeth, the main sponsor of the Poor Clares nunnery, rather than Louis I, who was behind the issue of the diploma (and it is thus possible that the Bamberg provost did not visit the king, but stayed close to the queen). This is because the provision made little sense. The reduced-tariff route had no bearing on the Óbuda water toll, but it did affect the Szentjakabfalva toll recently withdrawn from the Óbuda nuns. When the 1336 diploma was issued, the latter toll still belonged to Óbuda Castle,¹⁴⁰ but on 9 January 1351, Louis I gave Queen Elizabeth his consent to donate it to the Poor Clares nunnery of Óbuda.¹⁴¹ This means that if the exchange of tolls had not taken place, then the nuns would, in accordance with their royal diploma of 1365, have been due the full tolls from Szentjakabfalva on the reduced-tariff route. That explains the appearance of a toll that did not affect the Bamberg merchants in the diploma issued to them. Not surprisingly, this stipulation did not subsequently appear in the diploma for the Amberg merchants, as we will see.

The Amberg merchants

Louis I transcribed and confirmed the 1336 reduced-tariff route privilege charter for the Amberg merchants at the request of Rupert, Count Palatine of the Rhine, on 14 September 1369. Rupert asked the king of Hungary to permit the citizens of Amberg to exercise the rights and freedoms in respect of toll and thirtieth payment already enjoyed by the merchants of Regensburg and Nuremberg. Charles I had granted this privilege to the citizens of Brno,¹⁴² and Louis I transcribed it for them and for the merchants of Regensburg and Nuremberg, taking the text word for word from the register of royal transcripts (*de registro nostro transsumpturum*). The diploma that Louis I subsequently issued to the Amberg merchants was also a word-for-word transcription of Charles I's 1336 charter but was based on the Brno municipal authority's transcript of 26 July 1357.¹⁴³

Another interesting aspect of the procedure employed for the Amberg merchants' diploma is that the transcription was made in Pressburg, even though there is good reason to believe that the registers were held in the chancellery in

¹⁴⁰ Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:44.

¹⁴¹ Permission of King Louis I to his mother Elizabeth, 9 January 1351, MNL OL DL 4168. See also donation of Queen Elizabeth to the Poor Clares nunnery of Óbuda, 20 January 1351, MNL OL DL 4170; 27 November 1352: Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 1:81–83.

¹⁴² In the most recent publication of the diploma, *Brunna* was mistakenly identified as Breslau. See Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:111, footnote 5.

¹⁴³ Weisz (ed.), *Fontes*, 2:111–112.

Visegrád. Louis I was in Pressburg between 13 and 15 September 1369, and on the former date, he entered into an alliance with Philip, titular emperor of Constantinople, Charles, Duke of Durazzo, Albert, Count Palatine of the Rhine, and Rupert, Count Palatine of the Rhine and his sons.¹⁴⁴ This explains why the King of Hungary was willing to fulfil the request of the Count Palatine for confirmation of Charles I's 1336 privilege charter for the Amberg merchants. It is also conceivable that if the Chancellor and the keeper of the register—the Vice-Chancellor—was escorting him, they took the registers with them in case they were needed during the talks, and we have seen that there was such a need. For the Amberg merchants who made their way to Prague via Pilsen, it may have been important to obtain such a privilege, although there is no trace of them ever having it confirmed, and their commercial activity in Hungary remains obscure.

Conclusion

The privilege for the reduced-tariff route granted to Hungarian and foreign merchants by Charles I in 1336 was the subject of foreign towns' requests for transcription and confirmation even before the end of Charles' reign. The first such town was Prague (1336–1342). Most confirmations, however, were granted during the reign of Louis I, who fulfilled requests for confirmation of merchants from Cologne and Huy (around 1344), Prague and Nuremberg (1357), Regensburg (1359), Bamberg (1366), Amberg (1369), and, at an unknown date, Brno. Louis I based the confirmations of the diploma for Prague, Nuremberg, Regensburg, and Amberg on a transcription of Charles I's diploma made by the Brno municipal authority in 1357. The town of Amberg was demonstrably not in possession of the Brno transcription, and the diploma issued for its merchants was based on a copy of the Regensburg merchants' transcription in the royal register of transcriptions. The transcription by the Brno authority was almost certainly produced at the request of the Nuremberg and Prague merchants, and the high degree of congruence between the Regensburg and Nuremberg diplomas suggests that it was not presented to Louis I by the Regensburg merchants either. Instead, their diploma was also based on the text entered into Louis I's register. Although the diplomas issued to the merchants of Breslau (1365), Eger (1365), and Aachen (1369) do not contain the text of Charles I's 1336 diploma, the inclusion of a privilege identical to that received by the Prague and Nuremberg merchants implies that they had the same meaning. The merchants of Cologne and Huy, and those of Nuremberg and

144 *RI VIII*, no. 500.

Prague, asked Mary to confirm Louis I's diploma, and the Cologne merchants and those of Breslau and Eger asked Sigismund for the same. The main reason that merchants from beyond the kingdom of Bohemia attached importance to the reduced-tariff route—a longer and more expensive alternative to routes involving the Danube waterway—was that it avoided the obstacle of Vienna's staple right. Trade between Hungarian and foreign merchants in Vienna, which had long been a significant activity, grew considerably after 1408, when the authorities gave foreigners permission to travel beyond the city for the purpose of collecting debts. Foreign merchants also began to disregard the rule that they were not allowed to do business with each other except for the period of the annual fair,¹⁴⁵ frequently arousing the ire of Viennese merchants.¹⁴⁶ This was one of the reasons why little effort was put into confirming the privilege for use of the northern route under Sigismund's successor Albert, although the Hussite-related conflicts were also a factor. The following period of chaos did not favour trade, and the reduced-tariff route reappeared only under Matthias I and Wladislaus II. By then, however, only the Nuremberg and Prague merchants were interested in having it confirmed. Many foreign merchants acquired citizenship in one of the cities of the kingdom of Hungary (primarily Buda), considerably extending their rights to carry on commercial activity in the country. Several of them, indeed, built careers in the management of royal finances.

145 Ferdinand Opll. *Jahrmarkt oder Messe? Überlegungen zur spätmittelalterlichen Handelsgeschichte Wiens*. In *Europäische Messen und Märktesysteme in Mittelalter und Neuzeit*, Peter Johannek, Heinz Stoob (eds.). Cologne, Weimar, Vienna: Böhlau, 1996, 195–198.

146 Theodor Mayer. *Der auswärtige Handel des Herzogtums Österreich im Mittelalter*. Innsbruck: Verlag der Wagner'schen Universitäts-Buchhandlung, 1909, 74–78. Archduke Maximilian I of Austria suspended Vienna's staple right in 1506, providing free trade for foreign merchants, and although the Viennese authority reasserted their old privilege for a while, pressure from the South German trading houses finally led to its abolition in 1515. See Peter Csendes. *Vom späten 14. Jahrhundert bis zur Ersten Wiener Türkenbelagerung (1529)*. In *Wien. Geschichte einer Stadt*, vol. I. Peter Csendes, Ferdinand Opll (eds.). Vienna: Böhlau, 2001, 179; Richard Perger. *Wandlungen Wiens am Ende des Mittelalters*. In *Wien*, Csendes, Opll (eds.), 241.

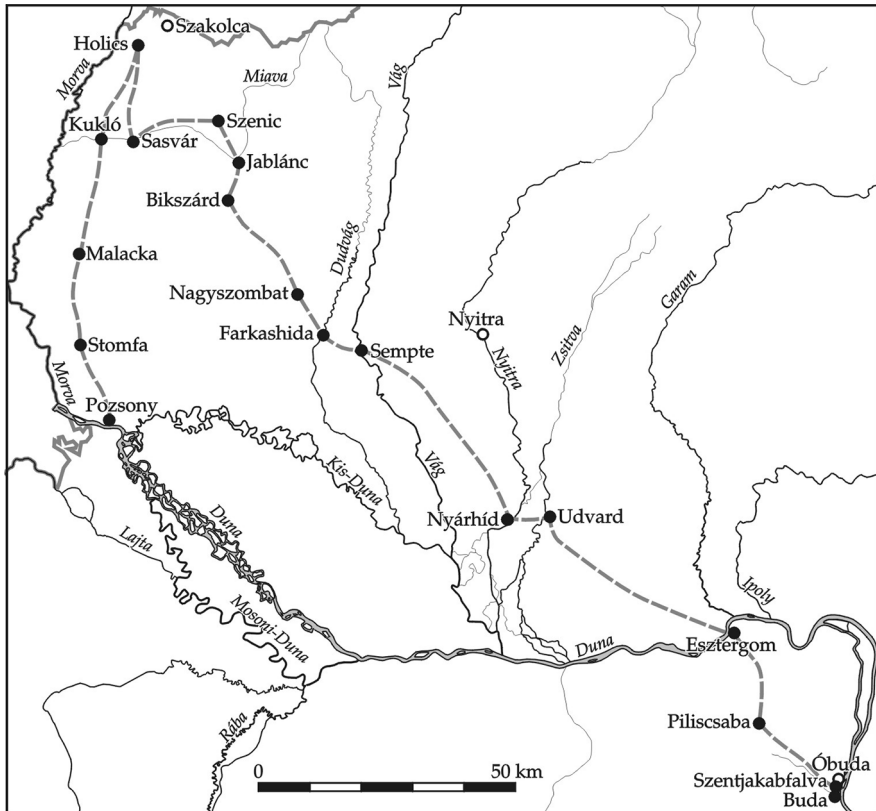


Fig. 1: Route between Újvár (Holics) and Buda/Újvár (Holics) and Pozsony. (map prepared by the author and Béla Nagy).

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