

“Spurred on by the Fear of Death”: Refugees and Displaced Populations during the Mongol Invasion of Hungary

James Ross Sweeney

A contemporary witness to the military collapse and destruction of the kingdom of Hungary at the hands of the Mongols, the Dalmatian chronicler Archdeacon Thomas of Spalato, described the arrival of a disordered mass of refugees before the walls of Spalato in the following terms:

“Then at all the city gates there was a great throng of people fleeing behind the walls. They had left behind horses and animals, clothing and tools; not even waiting for their own sons, they ran for safer shelter, spurred on by the fear of death.”¹

Thomas of Spalato's *Historia pontificum Salonitanorum atque Spalatensium* (History of the Bishops of Salona and Spalato) contains extensive references to the plight of refugees in 1241 and 1242, when Batu Khan and his able lieutenants led several large Mongol armies through the Carpathian Mountains into the great Danubian plain. But Thomas is not our sole source. We possess several other equally valuable testimonies. The Italian-born Roger of Torre Maggiore, archdeacon of Nagyvárád in eastern Hungary, wrote a detailed account of the Mongols in Europe, known as the *Carmen miserabile super destructione regni Hungarie per Tartaros* (Song of Lamentation on the destruction of the kingdom of Hungary by the Tartars).² Like Thomas, Roger saw the Mongols first hand and had wide contacts with other well-informed observers, but equally important Roger was himself first a refugee from, and then a captive of, the Mongols. His *Carmen miserabile* is thus in part an autobiographical memoir of a thirteenth-century refugee. Beyond these two narratives our information is rounded out by epistolary evidence, royal charters, and monastic and urban records.

Sensitized by the grim headlines which daily announce the appalling plight of twentieth-century refugees in eastern Europe, I was motivated to investigate the behavior and conditions of medieval refugees fleeing the Mongols. In reviewing the sources I was struck by the abundance and vividness of the surviving evidence. My original plan was to study the Hungarian situation in comparison with similar experiences of

other peoples who had been invaded by the Mongols, then to follow this with a comparative treatment of Hungarian refugees with parallels elsewhere in medieval Europe. This had to be discarded when I learned that the presumed secondary literature on this topic was meager and peripheral. The systematic historical study of medieval refugees is yet to be written. The question of what were the experiences of medieval refugees appears seldom to have been raised and even less often answered.

Nonetheless, one of the most visible by-products of the expansion of the Mongol Empire in the thirteenth century was the displacement of vast numbers of people. Thousands of persons sought to escape enslavement or a brutal death as the Mongol frontiers pushed outward in all directions. Sometimes whole tribes migrated, or army contingents withdrew to more secure territory, or political leaders found asylum in neighboring regions where they formulated plans for their hoped-for return. Many examples could be cited, but for our purposes three geographically dispersed cases may serve as illustration.

The history of the Mongol conquest of the Khorezmian Empire in Transoxiana in 1220 is rich in illustrative detail of refugee rulers and soldiers. Mohammed Shah died a lonely and miserable death on an island in the Caspian Sea (1220). His son Jalal-ad-Din fled beyond the Indus and then to Azerbaijan whence he wreaked havoc on the Moslem world until his murder by a Kurdish peasant (1231). Thousands of leaderless Khorezmian troops found service in the armies of various Moslem rulers. In 1244, ten thousand Khorezmian soldiers hired by Sultan Aiyub of Egypt played a key role in the final capture of Jerusalem from the Christian Franks. Nearly two decades later Khorezmians in the employ of the Mamluks avenged the Mongol destruction of their empire by sharing in the victory over the Mongols at the battle of Ain Jalut (1260).³

The invasion of Kievan Russia, beginning with the battle of the Kalka River (1223) and attaining full force more than a decade later with Batu Khan's systematic reduction of the Russian principalities of Susdal, Ryazan and Vladimir, created a host of Russian refugees. Prince Michael of Chernigov and, later, his rival Daniel of Galicia found shelter in Poland at the court of Conrad of Masovia. Upon Daniel's arrival Michael left for Lower Silesia and the court of Duke Henry II in Breslau (Wrocław). This proved to be an unfortunate choice for in April 1241, a

Mongol army defeated the Silesian duke at the battle of Liegnitz. Thereafter, Russian and Polish refugees streamed into Saxony, Thuringia and Meisen.⁴

The third example drawn from the Mongol conquest of China in the second half of the thirteenth century offers a slightly different point of comparison. North China under the Chin dynasty was overrun by the Mongols under Ögedei Khan in 1234, but Sung China in the south proved more enduring. Not until 1276 did the young Sung emperor, Hsien, and his grandmother, the Empress Dowager, surrender their capital at Hangchow to the armies of Khubilai Khan. Thereupon Sung loyalists spirited the emperor's two half brothers to the south coastal region where one of them, Shih, was crowned emperor. Pursued by troops loyal to Khubilai, the ten-year-old emperor and his court boarded a ship which promptly sank in a sudden storm. The sickly emperor survived the accident only to die a few months later (8 May 1278). The remaining Sung prince, Ping, was next acclaimed emperor by his entourage. As Mongol pursuers came ever closer, the Sung court made preparations to flee to the kingdom of Champa (southern portion of Vietnam). But this last boy-emperor's death by drowning in a naval battle with the Mongols extinguished the Sung line. Nonetheless, Sung court officials pressed forward their plans to escape. They found refuge in Champa and neighboring Annam where for the next decade they fruitlessly nurtured plans for their return to China. Unlike the Khorezmian and Russian instances which modern scholars have treated only in passing, the Sung refugees have been the subject of a single, ten-page, article in a modern historical journal.⁵

The scholarly picture for the study of refugees in medieval Europe is barren. Military historians have little interest in these non-combatant groups. Social historians, insofar as I have been able to discover, rarely if ever consider refugees. At first this may seem surprising, but upon reflection we can find several reasons for this. Unlike women or guilds, prostitutes or gays, shepherds or roof thatchers, refugees were not perceived by contemporaries as constituting a persisting or enduring human grouping, association, status, or occupation; rather they were persons of all ranks and sorts who found themselves in a temporary condition. Modern scholarship appears to share this perspective. Although the Middle Ages were violent and warfare was endemic throughout, by the time of the Mongol invasion European society had become relatively orderly. The only other prior historical experiences of massive refugee-generating invasions had occurred centuries earlier

with the Germanic migrations of the fifth and sixth centuries, and with the Viking and Magyar invasions of the ninth and tenth centuries. Similar conditions were created in the later Middle Ages with the Ottoman invasion of the Balkans. Despite abundant documentation for refugee groups and movements in connection with these invasions, the phenomenon has been little studied.⁶ No one has to date articulated a methodology for analyzing the medieval refugee condition.

In light of these circumstances the aim of the present paper is to discover in the historical landscape those features which permit us to construct in outline the paradigm of the medieval refugee. Was the *fugitivus* the stranger, the foreigner and “bringer of the unknown and of disquiet” who was regarded with suspicion at best, and more often with rejection?⁷ Or was he the innocent victim of cruel fate? Was the *fugitivus*, therefore, the deserving object of Christian hospitality and charity? From the perspective of the *fugitivi*, what factors prompted them to leave their land, their “horses and animals, clothing and tools,” and even members of their close family? Where did they seek and when did they find shelter? Were pre-existing social distinctions preserved or erased during the refugee experience? Is it legitimate to identify the emergence of a refugee outlook or mentality? What violence and deprivation did the refugees experience? What were the sources for the provision of food and shelter? There can be little doubt that the historical evidence documents many shattered lives, but were the effects temporary or long-lasting in personal, social or material terms? How was the refugee condition brought to an end – by a return home (exactly the same place or a new location in the original homeland), or by taking up residence in the host location either retaining previous identity or assimilating to the host society? Answers to these questions (and many more which could be posed) may permit us better to understand the medieval Hungarian *fugitivus* in the mid-thirteenth century and more broadly the medieval refugee condition in general.

The following discussion is organized into four sections. The first examines the migration and settlement of several thousand Turkic nomads, the Cumans, in Hungary on the eve of the Mongol invasion. They provide an example of a people displaced by the Mongol advance who ultimately remained in Hungary and retained their ethnic identity. Second, we will document the different efforts of Hungarian refugees to search for safer shelter. In a country with few walled urban settlements and less than ten stone castles the task was especially arduous. Third, the king and the royal court in the course of the invasion

constituted a special category of refugee seeking shelter first in Austria, then in Zagreb and finally in Dalmatia. The royal family was not shielded by rank from the personal suffering and tragedy that marked the lives of refugees in general. Finally, we will look at how the refugees were treated once they arrived in Dalmatia in an effort to identify the providers of charity. The evidence suggests that after more than a year exposed to the danger of the Mongols and the rigors of flight some refugees in Dalmatia were psychologically wounded to the extent they spoke and behaved measurably differently from their hosts when the Mongols arrived on the shores of the Adriatic Sea.

The Cumans

Before the Mongols advanced into Central Europe they defeated and subjugated the nomadic peoples of the Eurasian plain, the Kipchak Turks, known usually as Cumans. John of Plano Carpini travelling through Cumania in 1245 described the country as "very large and long" which took eight days to cross, changing horses five to seven times a day and "riding hard."⁸ For John Cumania which begins at the eastern slopes of the Carpathians in the region north of the mouth of the Danube is "flat and contains four large rivers": the Dnieper, the Don, the Volga ("a very large river"), and the Ural.⁹ The Cumans were pagans who neither "cultivated the land, but lived off their animals, nor did they build houses but dwelt in tents."¹⁰ Since the early twelfth century the Cumans had replaced the Pechenegs (Patzinaks) in this region forming a loose political confederation led by several khans, and controlling the economically strategic trade routes between the Russian principalities to the north and the Black Sea, and between the Crimea and the Orient.¹¹ When Ghengis Khan sent a scouting expedition into Transcaucasia and the Crimea, the Cumans at the urging of the Khan Kötöny (Kotyán/ Kuthen), the father-in-law of the prince of Novgorod and Galicia, formed an alliance with the Russian princes of Kiev, Chernigov, and Volynia.¹² "Today the Tartars [i.e., Mongols] have seized our land," Khan Kötöny is reported to have told the princes, "Tomorrow they will take yours."¹³ In 1223, the Russo-Cuman army was roundly defeated at the battle of the Kalka River.

Despite the Cuman alliance with the enemies of Hungary, the Hungarians sought to bring them within a Hungarian orbit by converting them to Christianity. The preferred agents of evangelization were newly arrived Dominican friars. Six years after the organization of the Hungarian Dominican province in 1221, the provincial of the

Dominicans was chosen to be the first bishop of the Cumans. The newly erected see at Milkó (Milkov) on the eastern slopes of the Carpathians was placed under the jurisdiction of the Hungarian archbishop of Esztergom.¹⁴ In the next decade several groups of Dominicans were dispatched to the Eurasian plain to evangelize and collect information about the peoples living there including Cumans and Mongols. One of these, Brother Julian, traveled to the middle Volga region and returned in 1238 with alarming news that Mongols were subjugating the occupants of this region and had begun the conquest of the Russian principalities.¹⁵ Brother Julian reported that one of the three advancing Mongol armies fell upon the Cumans who retreated toward Hungary.¹⁶ He also transcribed the contents of a letter from Batu Khan to the Hungarian King Béla IV which he had carried back to Hungary. The letter, described as composed in the Tartar language but written in heathen script, is the first documented letter of a Mongol leader to a European prince. In it Batu said, in part, that he had learned that the Hungarian king had taken under his protection the Cumans who were Batu's "slaves" and he warned Béla not to retain them and not to make the Mongol leader an enemy.¹⁷ Thus the sheltering of these displaced Turkic nomads served as a justification for the Mongol invasion.

Since his coronation Béla IV had styled himself king of Cumania (*rex Cumanie*) among his many other titles,¹⁸ by which we understand the lands east of the Carpathians along the Sereth, the Prut and the Dniester. Here presumably was where Khan Kötöny and a portion of the Cuman people initially found refuge after the Mongol attack. But as the Mongols drew nearer the Cumans in 1239 appealed to the Hungarian king for permission to settle in Hungary proper and for instruction in the Christian faith. Roger of Torre Maggiore, who is our principal source for what follows, says that Béla was filled "with a great joy" at the prospect of winning so many souls for Jesus Christ. He promptly granted the Cumans' request and sent personal envoys and several Dominican friars to them.¹⁹ When later a reported forty thousand Cumans under the leadership of the aged Khan Kötöny took up residence in Hungary they were immediately plunged into a complex web of antagonisms.

The king granted the Cumans the right to settle along the banks of the middle Tisza and its tributaries (the Maros and the Körös), an area that was sparsely populated. Nonetheless, the nomadic Cumans who were said to have "herds of cattle beyond measure," were accused of

destroying Hungarian "meadows, gardens, fields, orchards and vineyards." The newcomers were clearly involved in a clash of cultures, nomadic versus sedentary, which fostered a hatred of them.²⁰ Furthermore, some Hungarian landowners claimed that they had unjustly been deprived of their property which the king gave to the Cumans. Still others, for the most part Hungarian magnates, complained that Khan Kötöny and other Cuman princes had ready access to the sessions of the royal council where they gave the king bad advice. Others again complained that when Hungarians brought suit in the court of the king's chancellor against Cumans, Hungarians were not compensated for the damage done by Cumans to their lands. Some Hungarians further held a grudge against the Cumans who two decades earlier had, as allies of the Russians, destroyed property and deprived Hungarians of lands held in Galicia. While some of these complaints may be legitimate grievances arising from the settlement of a displaced population of foreigners, the intensity of anti-Cuman feeling must be explained against the background of internal Hungarian politics. After his accession to the throne Béla IV had embarked on a recuperation policy intent upon restoring crown lands alienated to the magnates, barons and great prelates during the reign of his father. He removed from office the principal counsellors of his father and demanded the return of alienated property. The higher nobility, therefore, became the political opponents of the ruler. As the Cumans were the king's new allies, the campaign of vilification was in part politically motivated.

Hungarian public sentiment had thus turned against the Cumans, and indirectly against the king, just as the Mongols were about to breach the barricades constructed in Carpathian passes. The Hungarian animosity toward Cumans became more venomous as the Hungarians accused the Cumans of being Mongol spies who intended in the space of a year to learn the lay of the land, to acquire the Hungarian language, and upon news of a Mongol invasion to seize the person of the king.²¹ What gave credence to these false accusations was that some Cumans had been allies of the Mongols and others as a subject people were then in Mongol military service. Anti-Cuman fever was further inflamed by reports from the frontier that Cumans were fighting side by side with Mongols.²² Béla hurriedly convened an assembly of magnates and prelates outside of Pest in the hope of pacifying the opposition and organizing a consolidated front to resist the Mongols. The event was a disaster. No harmony was achieved. Then the news of the collapse of the frontier defenses created panic. The

Hungarians accused Khan Kötöny of being responsible for the defeat. A crowd chanted: "He must die, he must die! He it is who is responsible for the fall of Hungary."²³ Then they burst into the khan's residence and murdered him. The Cumans thus became scapegoats and victims in the midst of hysteria.

The dénouement of this episode was to compound the disaster. In revenge for their khan's murder the Cumans ravaged the countryside along the Tisza. They encountered and defeated an army raised by the bishop of Csanád to assist the king against the Mongols. Without meeting further resistance they moved south of the Danube plundering and burning numerous villages, eventually crossing over into Bulgaria.²⁴ In his discussion of the Cumans John of Plano Carpini travelling through former Cuman territory in 1245 commented: "The Tartars killed these Comans; some did in fact flee from before them and others were reduced to slavery. Most of those who fled however have come back to them."²⁵ Thus for some Cumans the refugee condition was brought to an end by a return home and an acceptance of Mongol hegemony. But for others the outcome was different. After the Mongol withdrawal in 1242, Béla IV invited the Cumans back. Some accepted the invitation and settled again in the middle Tisza region where they retained their political and legal identity at least until the sixteenth century or beyond.²⁶

To Defend "in the Italian Manner"

Five Mongol armies broke through the Hungarian frontier defenses in 1241. The ensuing slaughter of the population was brutal and massive in scale. News of the killing, plundering, raping and burning spread quickly, but our sources rarely identify the news bearers.²⁷ Eastern Hungary was especially vulnerable. Without strong fortifications or protecting garrisons Hungarians in this part of the country, according to Roger of Torre Maggiore, could only defend themselves "in the Italian manner" (*more italico*), that is, by fleeing.²⁸

The refugees of 1241-1242, were always in motion. To remain in a fixed location could expose a person to the danger of Mongol captivity or death. As the invading armies entered the country from the north and east, the direction of flight was toward the west and south. Occasionally, a source will tell us the route of flight as in the case of Archdeacon Roger who fled from Nagyvárád into the adjoining woods and then southward in the spring of 1241, apparently intending to reach the town of Csanád via Tamáshída (Thomasbrücke). As the German

settlers who controlled the bridge over the Black Körös river refused to permit access to the span, Roger and his companions were obliged to detour to find another crossing point. Ultimately they arrived at Csanád the day after that city fell, so they had little choice but to turn north to the Körös once more. Here in this region at harvest time the archdeacon fell into Mongol hands. A year later when the Mongols left the country Roger ceased to be a captive, but found himself again to be a refugee. Whereas before his captivity his flight was assisted by a horse, Roger's later migration was on foot. He reports of his second refugee experience:

“For us the bell towers of churches served as guideposts from place to place. They signified a route that for us was horrible enough. For the roads and ancient by-paths were totally overgrown with weeds and thornbushes.”²⁹

In such circumstances refugees were obliged to improvise a route from steeple to steeple.

The perils of flight were numerous. Foremost was the chance that the invader would capture a place of refuge. Roger's capture was emblematic of the quick and complete conquest of all of eastern Hungary in only a matter of weeks (March-April 1241). No doubt Thomas of Spalato exaggerates, but only somewhat, when he reports:

“[T]he Tartar army ... depopulated all of Transylvania by killing and putting to flight the Hungarians from the areas beyond the Danube.”³⁰

If a refugee succeeded in evading the Mongols his most serious problem was a lack of food. Roger describes the powerful, gnawing hunger that tortured him when hiding in the woods. He begged his companions for food: “Those to whom I had given much, granted me scarcely any charity.”³¹ He was compelled in the dead of night to enter a settlement that had recently been destroyed by the Mongols to pick over the corpses of the inhabitants in search of concealed “flour and meat or anything else edible.”³² In the fall of 1241, the Mongols had permitted the peasants to gather in the harvest, then took all they required for themselves and their horses, and burned the rest. Hunger was pervasive.

In the spring of 1242 after the Mongols left, Roger despaired that he and his companions could “neither eat the forest plants nor drink their sap as animals do.”³³ What little food they finally found came from peasant garden plots: “leeks, purslane, onions, and garlic.” This meager

diet so characteristic of the “hungry gap” – that interval of rural time between the end of the winter’s stores and the first crops of spring – was augmented, as Roger reports, by eating “mallows, houseleeks and hemlock roots.”³⁴ Somewhat later when Roger was warmly received by a community of refugees in Transylvania, all they could offer him to eat was some black bread made from flour and crushed acorn shells.³⁵

Refugees often sought and found shelter in settlements, villages and towns, monasteries or temporarily fortified sites which we will examine in detail below, but shelter while on the road also called for some improvisation. “I hurried together with my servant into the dense forest,” wrote Roger, “and sought shelter in a stream bed under twigs and leaves.”³⁶ Later he says: “No rest was given to the exhausted, because we had no roof, no ceiling with which to cover our head when we slept at night.”³⁷ The dangers of the road were exacerbated by frequent instances of extortion and robbery. Those German settlers who denied Roger access to the bridge had demanded that he and his companions assist them in fortifying their village (Tamáshída/Thomasbrücke), but the refugees wanted to put as much distance as possible between them and the Mongols. So they did not yield to these extortionate demands. Two members of Roger’s household, after their failure to find safety in Csanád, stole Roger’s horse, money and clothes. It is with some satisfaction that he reports they were later discovered by the Mongols and slain.³⁸ Since in more orderly times the highways were frequented by robbers who concealed themselves in the woods, in the crisis and panic of 1241-1242 Roger’s experience with robbery must have been common.

In flight the refugee sought to turn to his use whatever feature of the landscape could offer an advantage. We have already noted how several times Roger resorted to the woods as a place of shelter. But the woods were not a place to find food. Hunger repeatedly drove the refugees from the woods. Mountain tops, especially those that could be fortified — as we shall see later — were favorable refuges. But in the great Danubian plain they were non-existent. Rather water and land adjacent to water afforded — or was thought to afford — protection. The advance of the Mongols was halted at the Danube in the fall of 1241. While the Hungarians may have taken some comfort in the river’s supposed protection, we know from the earlier history of the Mongols that they had little difficulty crossing such great rivers as the Volga or the Don.³⁹ As it happened, however, the winter of 1241-1242 was so cold the Danube froze and the Mongols rode across on horseback.⁴⁰

The fortified bridgehead over the Black Körös (Tamáshída/Thomasbrücke) was easily overrun by the Mongols. Nearby a temporary settlement built and fortified on an unnamed island in the river's flood plain was also no match for the Mongol arrows and siege engines. The turreted gate constructed on the island was easily overrun.⁴¹ But islands in the Adriatic Sea were more secure. The town of Traù (Trogir) was protected by a narrow canal and even more by a saltwater marsh on the mainland side of the canal. The Mongol commander (Qadan) reportedly thought an attack on Traù to be too difficult "owing to the superabundance of mud."⁴² In another case the citadel at Székesfehérvár successfully withstood Mongol attack, although the city itself was destroyed, because attack on the citadel was made difficult by the surrounding swamps.⁴³ Swamps and some islands, then, offered the hope of security.

Man-made shelters were preferred to life in the woods or on the road. The sources provide us with six different types of man-made refuge. We have already noted that in fleeing the provincial town of Nagyvárád, Archdeacon Roger sought to reach the more southerly provincial town of Csanád. Neither of these towns, despite last-minute efforts to strengthen their fortifications, had the capacity to resist. Thomas of Spalato recounts the efforts of the residents of Pest and a "great number of common people who had assembled there from at home and abroad" to fortify the town and mount resistance.⁴⁴ The Hungarian army had earlier suffered a massive defeat at the battle of Muhi (11 April 1241) and the king's brother, who had fought in the battle, fell back to Pest where he cautioned the people against resistance. Instead "he advised them to disperse to other places of shelter and to seek their own protection."⁴⁵ When Pest ignored his warning, the king's brother withdrew southward beyond the river Drava. Meanwhile the townspeople and refugees busily fortified the city "by digging a ditch, constructing ramparts, [and] surrounding it with wooden palisades."⁴⁶ Like Nagyvárád and Csanád, Pest fell amid bloody fighting. Archdeacon Thomas, who could never resist a pun, tells us "total pestilence settled down upon Pest" ("*in Pestio tota se pestis immersit*").⁴⁷ Refugees flocked to other Hungarian towns but none of them was capable of effective resistance.⁴⁸

County castles were no more successful. By the late twelfth century Hungary was divided into 72 administrative regions or counties with a royally appointed governor, the count, as administrator. Each county

possessed an administrative center, a county castle (*oppidum*). These were almost all earthenwork constructions using wooden palisades and wattle ramparts — what one nineteenth-century Hungarian medievalist called “mudpies that used to be called castles.”⁴⁹ Unless the county castle had some additional natural advantage, it was no match for Mongol siege warfare.

Other pre-existing structures served as refugee shelters — especially fortified monasteries. The Cistercian abbey at Egres in the diocese of Csanád was fortified and provided shelter for a large number of soldiers and noblewomen, but the Mongol siege engines knocked down the walls thereby opening the way for a great slaughter and numerous atrocities.⁵⁰ On the occasion of the fall of Pest after the Mongols breached the ramparts, families of the town fled to the Dominican convent hoping to be protected by its walls only to be burned to death in a great conflagration.⁵¹ But at least one or more fortified monasteries provided a safe haven. It is known that the venerable Benedictine abbey dedicated to St. Martin at Pannonhalma (Martinsburg) owed its survival to the fact that it is built atop a volcanic cone dramatically dominating the surrounding plain.⁵²

Perhaps because these three pre-existing forms of man-made shelter — towns, county castles, and fortified monasteries — were so insecure, refugees concentrated in three other types of refuge. The late Erik Fügedi of Budapest has analyzed the implications of a letter from the Hungarian bishops addressed to the new pope written in 1242 which gives a list of the most important castles then still in Hungarian hands. Among these seventeen, a handful can be identified as a new type of stone castle sited on high ground usually guarding trade routes. Other documents permitted Professor Fügedi to estimate that prior to 1241 fewer than ten such structures existed in Hungary, most of them situated along the Austrian and Bohemian frontiers. None of these including the lone stone castle in Transylvania is known to have fallen into Mongol hands. When the Hungarian queen fled to Dalmatia, despite the numerous entreaties of the citizens of the walled city of Spalato, she preferred to reside in the stone castle high on a mountain fastness in the interior at Klis.

The Mongol invasion prompted the creation of new habitations formed from the combination of villages in the countryside. Two are specifically cited in the *Carmen miserabile* but others may well have been organized at the same time. The first was that refugee community

made up of residents of several villages along the Black Körös river established on the unnamed island mentioned earlier. It is clear from the source that most of this refugee community were country folk. Their leader appears to have been a local military captain (*waidam/vajda*) from one of the villages. What sort of internal administration the community possessed is difficult to determine, but the existence of such organization is clear. The refugees erected three turreted gates and surrounded the island with a wooden abatis. Moreover, we are informed that they had a regulation – devised by what authority we are not told – that they would receive anyone who first requested admission, but would deny entrance to a person who left and then returned.⁵³ At about the same time residents of a reported seventy villages gathered at a site north of the town of Csanád. Here at Pereg (Kaszapereg),⁵⁴ the refugees fortified the settlement. We know that they dug a ditch, but what other defenses they constructed are not mentioned. When the Mongols surrounded Pereg, they besieged it day and night for a week and filled in the ditch. So the defenses they built must have been extensive.⁵⁵ There are few clues to the leadership of the refugee community at Pereg. Roger says that after the Mongols captured it they led out onto a field first many warriors and noblewomen (*milites et dominas*) and then all the peasants (*rusticos*) in order to rob, torture and kill them. Presumably then, fortification and defense were directed by a group of local nobles.

In his discussion of castles and castle-building in Hungary Professor Fügedi drew attention to another sort of temporary manmade shelter created by the invasion, namely the mountain refuge-fort. The *Carmen miserabile* reports the existence of such a retreat in the mountains of Transylvania built on the summit of “a marvelously tall mountain with an awful rock on its top. A great many men and women fled there,” Archdeacon Roger reports.⁵⁶ From later royal documents Fügedi was able to identify two more refuge-forts constructed on mountains. By comparison with the refugee communities on the plain — those on the island and at Pereg, for example — mountain refuge-forts successfully survived the invasion. For this reason later generations would maintain and extend them.⁵⁷

Flight of the Royal Court

After the disaster at the battle of Muhi (11 April 1241), King Béla IV himself became a refugee. The king, royal family and court fled before

the advancing Mongols from one uncertain shelter to another. The experiences of the royal court in flight thus paralleled to some degree those already described, while certain other events pertaining to the royal family must also have been shared by other refugees. Prior to the battle, the king had sent his Byzantine queen, Maria Lascaris, and their children to the greater safety of the western provinces along the Austrian frontier.⁵⁸ This policy of separately sending the queen and royal children, especially Stephen the heir to the throne, to regions thought more secure, would be consistently followed throughout 1241 and 1242. When later the king withdrew southward to Zagreb, the queen and her entourage were sent further to the south to Spalato on the Dalmatian coast. Since Queen Maria avoided the city, however, she came to reside at the fortress of Klis perched high on a spur of the Dinaric Alps. When King Béla later arrived on the Adriatic coast, he and the queen removed to the island of Bua (Čiovo) beyond Traù. And when the Mongols arrived at Traù, the queen and her party were put aboard ships which set sail for an unspecified destination.⁵⁹

On the eve of the Mongol invasion, King Béla had requested aid from his cousin the Babenberg duke of Austria, Frederick II, who in person came briefly to Hungary with a small contingent of troops. But Duke Frederick returned home before the full force of the Mongol onslaught was felt. After Muhi, Béla in the company of a small group of supporters took shelter in the woods. Then intending to join with the queen at the Austrian border, the king's party traveled through Upper Hungary (Slovakia) until they reached Pozsony (Pressburg/Bratislava) on the Danube. At the invitation of Duke Frederick the king crossed into Austrian territory taking up residence most likely at the massive Austrian fortress at Hainburg.⁶⁰ Once in Austria, however, Béla learned Duke Frederick's intentions. The duke took the king and his party into custody and refused them liberty until the king paid a ransom. It is no wonder that this Babenberg, who fought with all his neighbors, earned the sobriquet "Friedrich der Streitbarer," Frederick the Quarrelsome. The ransom was paid in money and territory. Frederick received half of the 2,000 marks he demanded in coin and the other half in gold and silver vessels and jewels. Possibly as many as five western counties of Hungary were ceded to him, but because of popular uprisings Frederick was able to retain only three.⁶¹

Once King Béla was free he raced back to Hungary where he joined the queen. Then together they moved southeast to Segesd, in county

Somogy, where the king's brother Kálmán earlier had taken refuge after Muhi.⁶² Here the royal court remained only a short time, preferring to withdraw to Zagreb where Thomas of Spalato says:

“Everyone who had been able to flee from the sword of the Tartars gathered around him [Béla], and there [in Zagreb] they stayed throughout the summer, awaiting the outcome of events.”⁶³

In Zagreb the king's thoughts were concentrated more on the need of even further flight rather than on the organization of military resistance.⁶⁴ Béla dispatched lieutenants to the coronation city of Székesfehérvár to retrieve the sacred relics of the founder of the kingdom, St. Stephen, and to gather up the treasures of the local churches.⁶⁵ In preserving these relics and treasures, the king proved more fortunate than many of his fleeing subjects who, as the *Carmen miserabile* reports, tried to take with them gold and silver utensils, silk cloth and luxury goods of all sorts only subsequently to strew them over field and forest “without their ever finding a new owner.”⁶⁶ Once his treasure was in hand, the king entrusted it to the queen and sent her to Dalmatia.

At Zagreb the royal family lost to death the first of several of its members. The king's brother Kálmán, whose physical constitution had never been robust, died and was buried in the neighboring Dominican convent at Csázma. But in order to avoid possible later detection by the Mongols who had a reputation for desecrating princely graves, the friars interred him “in a concealed tomb.”⁶⁷ During the following spring when the royal family was in Dalmatia, two daughters of King Béla and Queen Maria died and were buried in the mausoleum of Diocletian which centuries earlier had been converted to use as the cathedral church of St. Domnius at Spalato.⁶⁸ The loss of children and close family members must have been common among refugees of all social classes. Burial in unfamiliar territory was an additional bitter necessity.

Dalmatia

Upon learning the news that the Mongols had crossed the Danube and were besieging Esztergom and Székesfehérvár, King Béla fled to Dalmatia. The royal entourage was only one, albeit an honored one, of many refugee groups that flooded the Adriatic shore. How many refugees in all fled from the Mongols is difficult to estimate. Conceivably they could have numbered as many as half a million persons, but not all of these would have reached Dalmatia.⁶⁹ According

to Archdeacon Thomas, "in all the maritime cities, whichever seemed the nearer, all manner of people fleeing in every direction sought refuge and were scattered."⁷⁰ Thus men and women, laymen and clerics, nobles and peasants crowded into Dalmatian cities chosen on the basis of proximity. In scattering into these towns bands of refugees formed earlier in flight on the roads or in the woods now broke up seemingly randomly. While our source tells us that "all" the coastal towns took in the refugees, and there is no reason to doubt that, apart from the special case of the fortress at Klis, we have specific evidence for four Dalmatian towns: Zara, Nona, Traù and Spalato.

Probably sometime in early 1242, Zara admitted five Hungarian Dominican nuns from the convent of St. Catherine in Veszprém: the noblewoman Sister Egizia, along with Sisters Christina, Helena, Margarita and Maristella. They received the protection of the Dominican brothers in Zara. Later in the year, presumably with the brothers' assistance, the sisters established two new communities for women, one in Zara and the other in nearby Nona.⁷¹ As the two new foundations can be dated to October and November 1242, hence after the withdrawal of the Mongols, this evidence not only documents Zara and Nona as places of refuge, it also records how in one instance the refugee condition could be terminated. At the time when the five sisters became founders and residents of new mendicant communities, they ceased their flight. They had taken up a new life in a new land.

When the king and his entourage arrived on the coast, the towns competed to serve as royal residence. At the approach of the royal party to the gates of Spalato, so Thomas reports:

"all the clergy and people came out in procession to receive him, dutifully rendering their highest respect and extending to him their hospitality within the walls for however many he wished."⁷²

The podestà and citizens entreated the king to stay with them, but he preferred to move to Traù. Thomas explains the king's decision as the result of royal anger at Spalato for refusing to place a galley at the king's disposal to facilitate his possible further flight by sea.⁷³ A modern historian has plausibly suggested that, in addition, Traù's island location and access to even more distant Adriatic islands gave it an advantage over mainland Spalato.⁷⁴ Therefore, from March to May 1242, the king and numerous other refugees crowded into Traù where the king installed his treasure and recalled his wife from Klis. In actual fact while most refugees resided within the walls of Traù, the king and court settled on

the more seaward island of Bua (Čiovo) separated from Traù by a narrow strait. While our sources report details of the military stand-off between Mongols and Hungarians at Traù, no information is provided about the conditions for refugees there.⁷⁵

We are, therefore, fortunate to have Archdeacon Thomas's vivid narrative of events in Spalato to which he was an eyewitness. We learn from him that Spalato received refugees in three waves. First, Queen Maria arrived with the royal children. She had with her "many noblewomen who had been widowed by the Tartars [Mongols]."⁷⁶ As we observed earlier, despite the supplications of Spalatans and their "numerous gifts and offerings," the queen preferred the fortress of Klis. The second wave was marked by the arrival of the royal party several weeks later. The king's entourage was made up of some church leaders "and even more great magnates and lords" who arrived at Spalato "all with their families and households."⁷⁷ While the king and the court moved to Traù some lesser magnates must have remained at Spalato. At the same time during this second wave, Thomas relates that "the peasant refugees of both sexes and all ages were almost innumerable."⁷⁸ The third wave arrived at the city gates when the Mongols descended from the mountains onto the narrow coastal plain around the city. These were the refugees who had abandoned their animals, tools and even their children seeking a "safer shelter, spurred on by the fear of death."

This mass of uprooted people were received in Spalato with great kindness and charity, according to Archdeacon Thomas:

"The Spalatans, in fact, showed them considerable human kindness, extended hospitality toward them, and, insofar as they could, eased their want. But there was so great a multitude of refugees that they could not be lodged in the houses of the citizens, but stayed in the streets and alleys. Even noble matrons lay down in the open air around the seven churches [of the city]. Some hid themselves in the darkness of the bake-ovens; others, once the filth was removed, in passageways and underground vaults; still others, when they could, lived together in tents."⁷⁹

This informative passage relating how refugees were treated deserves careful examination. By extending human kindness and hospitality, and by easing wants, the Spalatans may be interpreted to have showed a charitable demeanor, and to have provided shelter, food and clothing. Shelter, the passage tells us, took many forms. Some refugees were taken in by citizens of the town, but private houses were inadequate for the large number in need. Presumably noblewomen would have been

accorded the better accommodations but these were in short supply, hence the presence of noble matrons obliged to sleep out of doors on the streets.⁸⁰ The reference to the dark “bake-ovens,” “passageways and underground vaults” must be understood in the context of the history of Spalato. The walls were co-extensive with the perimeter of the fourth century palace of Diocletian. The subterranean passages of the palace were for centuries used as a dump by the citizens. Only within modern times have these extensive underground corridors been completely cleaned out of centuries of debris.⁸¹ My suspicion is that the reference to “bake-ovens” should be understood as another allusion to some feature of the ancient palace, possibly to one of the Roman baths. In a town filled with refugees, the bakers of Spalato would have been so busy their ovens would never have been dark. When neither houses, nor streets and alleys, nor the recesses of the palace would provide shelter, tents were pitched in the main square in front of the cathedral and in other open spaces within the walls.

A clue to the system of providing for the refugees is given in the reference to the areas “around the seven churches [of the city].” Our source does not tell us what role if any the civil government played in dispensing charity, but the clustering of refugees around the urban churches points to the churches as the principal agency in ministering to the refugees’ needs. Medieval social tradition and canon law prescribed that the church should extend hospitality and dispense charity to the poor, the weak, the vulnerable, to widows and orphans.⁸² In addition to the cathedral which was the largest and wealthiest church, the churches of Spalato included a convent of Benedictine nuns and a recently established community of Franciscan friars. Outside the city walls several houses of Benedictine monks were among the major landowners of the region.⁸³ It is reasonable to conclude that the monastic and mendicant clergy, in particular, played a significant role in caring for the refugees.

Thomas of Spalato’s narrative contrasts the responses of the residents of the town and of the Hungarian refugees to the same event — the arrival of a Mongol army outside the urban walls. In these different reactions we obtain some insight into the refugees’ psychological state. To the town dwellers the Mongols were a sort of distant menace. Even after the Mongols had crossed Croatia and descended the mountains “it still seemed incredible to the Spalatans,” Thomas says.⁸⁴ When the Mongols appeared before the city walls the Spalatans did not recognize them at first “believing them to be Croatians”!⁸⁵ When the Hungarian

refugees saw the Mongol battle standards, on the other hand, they were terrified. Some fled to the church trembling with fear of imminent death. "Others wept as they rushed into the embrace of wives and sons." Into their mouths Thomas has placed a lamentation:

"Woe wretched ones! What is the use of having made such great efforts to flee only to be battered to pieces? Why should we have labored to traverse so great an expanse of land if we are unable to escape the swords of the persecutors, and if we await being murdered here?"⁸⁶

The sense of desperation and the seeming futility of all previous exertions are both palpable and wholly believable. With the city surrounded and the sea at their back, here surely for them would be the end of flight, the end of the refugee experience, the end of life.⁸⁷

The historical outcome, however, was unpredicted. The Mongols did not besiege Spalato, but moved north to attack the king at Traù. But no battle occurred there either. Rather, the Mongols rode south along the Adriatic coast pillaging and burning the countryside all the way to Albania.⁸⁸ Ultimately all Mongol armies abandoned Central Europe and returned to the Eurasian plain. The Hungarians had no idea what the earthly reason for their deliverance was, but rejoiced that in the end God had spared them. We today know that the death of the Great Khan Ögedei in distant Kharakorum precipitated a succession crisis in which Batu Khan unsuccessfully advanced his candidacy for the throne. The Hungarians at first not believing the Mongols to have left remained in their places of refuge and sent out scouts to see where the Mongols were hiding.⁸⁹ In May the king left the Adriatic coast for Hungary, but the queen, the royal heir and their attendants remained at Klis until September. Except for the case of the Dominican nuns at Zara and Nona, all our evidence points to the fact that most of the refugees returned to Hungary.

What they found in their homeland upon their return was also a part of the refugee experience. The towns and villages had undergone nearly complete physical destruction. The wholesale slaughter of the population left vast areas virtually uninhabited. The destruction of the harvest of 1241, and the failure to plant crops in the spring of 1242, created widespread famine. Many of those who returned home having escaped death at the hands of the Mongols, died of starvation. Thomas of Spalato comments that death from starvation after the departure of the Mongols was so endemic "that it is uncertain whether more of the Hungarian population was wiped out by this bitter calamity of starva-

tion or by the pestiferous savagery of the Tartars [Mongols].⁹⁰ Some returning refugees did not go back to their pre-invasion habitation, the devastation being so great. One example was our guide and informant Roger of Torre Maggiore who exchanged the war-torn eastern Hungarian archdeaconry of Nagyvárád for the unscathed archdeaconry of Sopron in western Hungary. In 1249 Roger was, coincidentally, elected archbishop of Spalato, a see which he occupied until his death in 1266.⁹¹ Béla IV, meanwhile, confronted the enormous task of rebuilding his ravaged and impoverished country while also constructing better defenses in the likely event the Mongols should return.⁹² There can be little doubt that the Mongol invasion was a "defining moment" for those who survived.⁹³ Further research is needed to determine how for persons of all ranks the experience of having been a refugee shaped their later lives.

The preceding discussion has shown that the textual sources identify a broad range of *fugitivi* seeking to escape the Mongol advance. In general their dispersal was toward the western and southern regions of the country. The duration of the refugee experience extended from the time when news of the approach of the Mongols was received until well after the Mongols' departure. The threatened populations of towns, villages and small rural communities took flight regardless of age or gender. They were joined by members of the clergy — bishops, archdeacons, other prelates and persons from religious houses both monks and nuns. To this number were added displaced populations, such as the Cumans, who retained their cultural and political identity and who in the early stages of the invasion became the scapegoats and victims of the defending Hungarians. Lastly, the defeated joined the ranks of the refugees. The king, the royal family and court, warrior aristocrats, and noblewomen widowed during the attack, sought refuge mostly in Dalmatia.

The problems of flight were numerous. When the Mongols invaded the public highways were clogged with refugees; after they left these roads had become overgrown and impassable. In both instances routes of escape were uncertain and perilous. The refugees were vulnerable to serious injuries from foe and friend alike. They experienced great losses of real and movable property and were uprooted from family and community. The Mongols took few captives but as Archdeacon Roger's case reveals the termination of captivity could mean a return to the life of a refugee. The sources suggest that more refugees were killed by the

Mongols than were taken prisoner. They further document the refusal by fellow refugees of pleas for food and the practice of extortion by those who had greater advantages. Robbery was an equally grave threat.

The most immediate need of those in flight was to obtain shelter and food. In the search for shelter the evidence provides sufficient information to develop a preliminary typology. Natural features afforded at least temporary refuges. Woods, mountain peaks, and islands, whether in rivers or in the sea, were avidly sought out. Man-made constructions appear to have been even more desirable if not especially more effective as places of refuge. Fortified or re-fortified towns, fortified monasteries, newly formed refugee communities enclosed with a palisade, stone castles, and crude mountain refuge-forts were each thought to be places of safety. Within the newly formed refugee communities improvised methods of internal organization are suggested by the evidence and in at least one case we are informed of regulations restricting admission of new refugees to these communities. The need to assuage hunger and avoid starvation was equally critical. To obtain scarce food refugees were compelled to eat comestibles which were not normally a part of their diet such as mallows or houseleeks or acorns. To find food they were obliged to engage in behavior which in other circumstances would have been thought distasteful or repugnant such as picking over corpses.

In studying the refugee experience further research should consider the extent to which differences in social status and gender were maintained. In the foregoing discussion it is clear that aristocrats continued their privileged status and that women in general and aristocratic women in particular were given preferential shelter when possible. Whether this pattern would have persisted over time is a question requiring comparative analysis in light of the relatively short duration of the Mongol occupation of Hungary. In the same way the provision of charity to refugees should be further explored. The residents of Spalato shared their houses and the clergy of that town, in all likelihood, ministered to the refugees' needs. In isolation this piece of information can serve neither as the basis of a generalization nor as an exception. The sources report on the large number of refugees, but at present only estimates of the aggregate number of persons can be offered and these are difficult to verify.

Better documented, however, is the development of a recognizable refugee psychology. The initial flight was motivated by widespread fear which in some communities intensified to the level of general panic.

Those refugees who saw the Mongol battle standards approach the walls of Spalato were plunged into great despair at the sight while the equally threatened residents of the town who had never before seen a Mongol did not share this reaction. The progression from fear and panic to loss of hope and a sense of futility characterized the outlook of the refugees. The different ways in which the refugee experience was terminated are also suggested by the evidence. Some persons remained in their places of refuge and were presumably assimilated into their new surroundings. Others returned home but not to the locations they had once lived in, while others took up their lives in those places they had formerly occupied. Whatever the way in which the refugee condition came to an end, the experience of having been in flight must have been enduring. Additional research into the post-invasion period offers the best way to shed light on the lasting psychological and other effects upon the survivors.

The Hungarian example examined here points to the need for multiple, comparative studies on how the creation of the Mongol world empire led to the displacement of whole populations and to the dispersal of refugees throughout the Eurasian continent. The pattern discerned here and the questions posed constitute only a preliminary and admittedly tentative attempt to sketch the refugee paradigm. This study has been concerned exclusively with the war refugee, but political and economic conditions also prompted individuals and groups to seek a means of escape from their circumstances. Persecution, especially of those holding unorthodox or suspect religious beliefs, and the spread of disease, particularly the bubonic plague, created other classes of refugees. European medievalists who in the past have given attention to the place of the stranger, the traveler, the wanderer and the exile in medieval society need systematically to explore the widespread presence of the medieval refugee.

Notes

- 1 Thomas of Spalato, *Historia pontificum Salonitanorum atque Spalatensium*, ed. F. Rački (Zagreb: Academia Scientiarum et Artium Slavorum Meridionalium, 1894) (Monumenta Spectantia Historiam Slavorum Meridionalium, Scriptorum III), p.175. (Hereinafter cited: Thomas, *Historia*.) See also the German translation with introduction and notes in H. Göckenjan and J. R. Sweeney, *Der Mongolensturm. Berichte von Augenzeugen und Zeitgenossen, 1235-1250* (Graz, Wien, Köln: Styria Verlag, 1985) [=Ungarns Geschichtsschreiber Bd.3], pp. 257-8. (Hereinafter cited: Göckenjan and Sweeney, *Mongolensturm*.) The English translation of passages from Thomas of

Spalato here and below are taken from my translation of the complete text of the *Historia* which is still in progress.

I would like to thank Michael Gervers of the University of Toronto for his kind invitation and warm encouragement to offer this paper to the Central and Inner Asian Seminar of the University of Toronto and János Bak of the Central European University in Budapest and István Petrovics of the University of Szeged, both of whom read and commented upon an earlier draft and generously made useful suggestions.

- 2 *Rogerii Carmen miserabile*. ed. L. Juhász in I. Szentpétery, *Scriptores Rerum Hungaricarum* II (Budapest: Academia Litter. Hungarica atque Societate Histor. Hungarica, 1938), pp. 545-588 (hereinafter cited: Roger, *Carmen miserabile*); the German translation is printed in Göckenjan and Sweeney, *Mongolensturm*, pp. 129-223.
- 3 C. Cahen, "The Turks in Iran and Anatolia before the Mongol Invasions," in K. Setton, *et al.*, *A History of the Crusades*, II (Madison, Milwaukee and London: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), pp. 671-674, and S. Runciman, "The Crusader States, 1243-1291," *idem*, pp. 561-562. For a discussion of the extraordinary loss of life brought on by the Mongols among the Khorezmians (between 1,600,000 and 2,400,000 reported deaths), see D. Morgan, *The Mongols* (Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1986), pp. 74-82.
- 4 For a general overview of the creation of the Khanate of the Golden Horde, see B. Spuler, *Die Goldene Horde: Die Mongolen in Rußland 1223 bis 1502*, 2nd ed. (Wiesbaden: 1965). A useful compendium of relevant sources in English translation arranged chronologically may be found in the appendix to D. S. Benson, *The Mongol Campaigns in Asia* (Chicago: privately printed, 1991), pp. 320-342. The flight of the Russian princes and the presence of Russian and Polish refugees in Germany is discussed in G. Strakosch-Grassmann, *Der Einfall der Mongolen in Mitteleuropa in den Jahren 1241 und 1242* (Innsbruck: Wagner'schen Universitäts-Buchhandlung, 1893), pp. 6-7, and 50.
- 5 Hok-lam Chan, "Chinese Refugees in Annam and Champa at the End of the Sung Dynasty," *Journal of Southeast Asian History* 7, 2 (Sept., 1966), pp. 1-10. See also M. Rossabi, *Khubilai Khan, His Life and Times* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1988), pp. 89-95.
- 6 Tantalizing evidence is readily found; for example, St. Augustine was acquainted with Romans who had fled from Gaul to the security of Carthage (shortly before the Vandal conquest of North Africa!); see P. Brown, *Augustine of Hippo* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1970), pp. 289 and 294. A law of the emperor Honorius from 408 regulated certain aspects of slavery in light of the danger to Roman freemen from the province of Illyricum in becoming refugees who were often kidnapped and sold into slavery; see E. A. Thompson, "Barbarian Invaders and Roman Collaborators," *Florilegium, Carleton University Annual Papers on Classical Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, 2 (1980), pp. 71-88. I thank my colleague Paul B. Harvey, Jr., for this reference. Lucien Musset nearly 30 years ago called for detailed studies of Roman refugees: "There is a very real need for more extensive research into the fate of civilians during the periods of crisis. With very few exceptions this has so far been pursued in a rather abstract manner. ... Because of the nature of the sources, we have more information about the movements of refugees, their complexity, and resulting mixture of peoples in Italy than elsewhere." *The*

- Germanic Invasions*. (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1975), p. 179. The original French edition was published in 1965. Some attention is paid to refugees fleeing the Turks in the context of Ottoman expansion and Balkan resistance in J.V.A. Fine, *The Late Medieval Balkans* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1988), pp. 548-611, esp. pp. 576-577.
- 7 J. LeGoff, *Medieval Civilization 400-1500*, tr. J. Barrow (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988), p. 322.
 - 8 John of Plano Carpini, ed. C. Dawson, *The Mongol Mission* (London and New York: Sheed and Ward, 1955), p. 58.
 - 9 *Ibid.*, p. 55.
 - 10 *Ibid.*, p. 58.
 - 11 A. Pálóczi Horváth, *Pechenegs, Cumans, Iasians: Steppe Peoples in Medieval Hungary* (Budapest: Corvina, 1989), pp. 43-45; G. Vernadsky, *Kievan Russia* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1948), pp. 224-5; and Göckenjan and Sweeney, *Mongolensturm*, pp. 188-9, nn.24-26.
 - 12 Kötöny's son-in-law was Mstislav the Daring who with Cuman help took Galicia (Halics) from the Poles and Hungarians in 1221; see Paloczi Horvath, *Pechenegs, Cumans, Iasians*, p. 46, and Vernadsky, *Kievan Russia*, pp. 223, 228.
 - 13 Quoted by Vernadsky, *ibid.*, p. 237.
 - 14 N. Pfeiffer, *Die ungarische Dominikanerordensprovinz* (Zürich: Gebr. Leeman & Co., 1913), pp. 75-92, esp. pp.79-80; and E. Fügedi, "La formation des villes et les ordres mendians en Hongrie," *Annales. Economies. Sociétés. Civilisations* 25 (1970), p. 970. For the history of the bishopric of Milkó see L. Makkai, *A Milkói (Kun) Püspökség és Népei* [The (Cuman) Bishopric of Milkó and its People] (Debrecen:1936) and B. Altanar, *Die Dominikanermission des XIII. Jahrhunderts* (Habelschwerdt: 1924).
 - 15 Brother Julian, Latin text ed. H. Dorrie, *Drei Texte zur Geschichte der Ungarn und Mongolen: Die Missionsreisen des fr. Julianus O.P. in Uralgebiet (1234/35) und nach Rußland (1237) und der Bericht des Erzbischofs Peter über die Tartaren* (Göttingen: 1956) [Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen. I. Phil.-hist. Klasse, Jg. 1956, Nr.6]; German translation in Göckenjan and Sweeney, *Mongolensturm*, pp. 95-125.
 - 16 Julian, in Göckenjan and Sweeney, *Mongolensturm*, p. 105.
 - 17 Julian, *Mongolensturm*, pp. 107-8.
 - 18 J. M. Bak, *Das ungarische Königtum im späteren Mittelalter*. Ph.D. diss./Göttingen: 1961/62., Anhang I: "Die Abwandlung des ungarischen Königstitels im Mittelalter," p. 160; see also, for example, I. Szentpétery and I. Borsa, *Regesta Regum Stirpis Arpadianae Critico-Diplomatica*, (Budapest: Akadémia, 1923-1987) I/2, 190, no. 620 (11 May 1237). (Hereinafter cited Reg. Arp.) Pálóczi Horvath describes the political and religious background to the Hungarian king's assumption of the royal title for the Cumans, *Pechenegs, Cumans and Iasians*, p. 48.
 - 19 Roger, *Carmen miserabile*, SRH, II, 553; Göckenjan and Sweeney, *Mongolensturm*, p. 141.
 - 20 Roger, *Carmen miserabile*, SRH, II, 554; Göckenjan and Sweeney, *Mongolensturm*, p. 142.
 - 21 Roger, *Carmen miserabile*, SRH, II, 561; Göckenjan and Sweeney, *Mongolensturm*, p. 150.
 - 22 Thomas of Spalato, *Historia pontificum*, ed. Rački, p. 136-137; Roger, *Carmen miserabile*, SRH, II, 566; Göckenjan and Sweeney, *Mongolensturm*, p. 157 and n.123.
 - 23 Roger, *Carmen miserabile*, SRH, II, 566, Göckenjan and Sweeney, *Mongolensturm*, p. 157.

- 24 Roger, *Carmen miserabile*, SRH, II, 567; Göckenjan and Sweeney, *Mongolensturm*, p. 159.
- 25 Dawson, *Mongol Mission*, p. 58.
- 26 J. M. Bak, Gy. Bónis, and J. R. Sweeney, *Decreta Regni Mediaevalis Hungariae*, I (Bakersfield, Calif.: C. Schlacks, 1989), "1279," pp. 69-72, and 133-135. The later settlement of the Cumans is discussed in detail by Páloczi Horváth, *Pechenegs, Cumans and Iasians*, pp. 54-61, 68-85.
- 27 Refugees themselves were frequently the best source of information. For example, the king's brother Kálmán after Muhi [German: Mohi] fled to Pest not by the public highways swarming with fleeing Hungarians, but wandering across open country (*non per viam publicam, per quam Hungarica natio lubricabat, sed per devium laxati*), in order to urge the citizens to prepare for their own flight and that of their wives by boat down the Danube; Roger, *Carmen miserabile*, SRH, II, 571; Göckenjan and Sweeney, *Mongolensturm*, p. 163.
- 28 Roger, *Carmen miserabile*, SRH, II, 579.
- 29 Roger, *Carmen miserabile*, SRH, II, 587; Göckenjan and Sweeney, *Mongolensturm*, p. 185.
- 30 Thomas, *Historia pontificum*, ed. Rački, p. 167.
- 31 Roger, *Carmen miserabile*, SRH, II, 580; and Göckenjan and Sweeney, *Mongolensturm*, p. 175.
- 32 Ibid.
- 33 Roger, *Carmen miserabile*, SRH, II, 587; Göckenjan and Sweeney, *Mongolensturm*, p. 185.
- 34 Roger, *Carmen miserabile*, SRH, II, 587; Göckenjan and Sweeney, *Mongolensturm*, p. 185. The correct translation of *cicardis* is the Hungarian: *fülfü*, hence "houseleeks"; see A. Bartal, *Glossarium mediae et infimae Latinatis Regni Hungariae* (Budapest: Franklin, 1901), p. 125, s.v. "cicadus" and "cicarda" (not as per Göckenjan: "Himbeeren" = raspberries(!) in *Mongolensturm*). Houseleeks are defined as "an Old World crassulaceous herb, *sempervivens tectorum*, having pink flowers and thick, succulent leaves, found growing in the roofs and walls of houses," *Random House Dictionary*, ed. 1967, p. 689, s.v. "houseleek" (cf. German: "Hauswurz"). On the "hungry gap" see Robert W. Frank, "The 'Hungry Gap,' Crop Failure, and Famine: The Fourteenth-Century Agricultural Crisis and *Piers Plowman*," *Yearbook of Langland Studies*, 4 (1990), pp. 87-104, excepting that in the Hungarian case in 1242, no spring crops had been planted.
- 35 Roger, *Carmen miserabile*, SRH, II, 588; Göckenjan and Sweeney, *Mongolensturm*, p. 186.
- 36 Roger, *Carmen miserabile*, SRH, II, 586; Göckenjan and Sweeney, *Mongolensturm*, p. 184.
- 37 Roger, *Carmen miserabile*, SRH, II, 587; Göckenjan and Sweeney, *Mongolensturm*, p. 185.
- 38 Roger, *Carmen miserabile*, SRH, II, 579; Göckenjan and Sweeney, *Mongolensturm*, p. 174.
- 39 "Almost no river, however swift, impedes them [Mongols] from crossing while seated on their horses. If in fact they happen upon an impassable stream, they immediately fashion boats out of boxes of wicker covered with uncured animal skins into which they place their baggage. They get into these and cross without fear," so reported Thomas, *Historia pontificum*, ed. Rački, pp. 170-171. See also J. R.

- Sweeney, "Thomas of Spalato and the Mongols: A Thirteenth-Century Dalmatian View of Mongol Customs," *Florilegium. Carleton University Annual Papers on Classical Antiquity and the Middle Ages* 4 (1982), p. 168. For a description of the Mongol crossing of the river Ural and especially the Volga, see Rashid al-Din, *The Successors of Genghis Khan*, trans. J. A. Boyle (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), pp. 57-58.
- 40 Thomas, *Historia pontificum*, ed. Rački, p. 172. In the previous winter the Mongol attack on Kiev was facilitated by the freezing of the Dnieper; see D. S. Benson, *Mongol Campaigns in Asia*, p. 339. The frequency of the freezing of rivers in this period, in general, may be accounted for not so much as a result of extreme cold temperatures, but as a consequence of their natural shallow, meandering courses littered with islands, swamps, and broad flood plains (in contrast to modern river-courses which have been cannalized, dredged, and banked to accommodate maritime needs and engineering fashion).
- 41 Roger, *Carmen miserabile*, SRH, II, 580; Göckenjan and Sweeney, *Mongolensturm*, p. 175.
- 42 Thomas, *Historia pontificum*, ed. Rački, p. 176.
- 43 Thomas, *Historia pontificum*, ed. Rački, p. 172; Roger, *Carmen miserabile*, SRH, II, 585; Göckenjan and Sweeney, *Mongolensturm*, p. 183.
- 44 Thomas, *Historia pontificum*, ed. Rački, p. 166.
- 45 Thomas, *Historia pontificum*, ed. Rački, p. 165.
- 46 Thomas, *Historia pontificum*, ed. Rački, p. 166.
- 47 Ibid.
- 48 The towns of Nagyszeben, Gyulafehérvár, Nagyvárád, Csanád, Szeged, Vác, and Pest, among others, all fell to the invaders.
- 49 Gyula Pauler as cited in E. Fügedi, *Castle and Society in Medieval Hungary, 1000 - 1437* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1986), p. 47.
- 50 Roger, *Carmen miserabile*, SRH, II, 583; Göckenjan and Sweeney, *Mongolensturm*, p. 179-80.
- 51 Thomas, *Historia pontificum*, ed. Rački, p. 167.
- 52 Roger, *Carmen miserabile*, SRH, II, 585; Göckenjan and Sweeney, *Mongolensturm*, p. 183. Note that Fügedi also lists the abbeys of Zalavár and Tihány as still in Hungarian hands in February 1242; *Castle and Society*, p. 45.
- 53 Roger, *Carmen miserabile*, SRH, II, 578; Göckenjan and Sweeney, *Mongolensturm* p. 173.
- 54 See Gy. Györffy, *Az Árpád-kori Magyarország történeti Földrajza*, I (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1987) for Co. Csanád, p. 867. Cf. C. Juhász, *Das Tschanad-Temesvarer Bistum im frühen Mittelalter, 1030-1307* (Münster: Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1930), pp. 152-154, where Juhász claims the site was a newly settled German community at a location known as Deutsch-Pereg similar to the German settlement at Thomasbrücke.
- 55 Roger, *Carmen miserabile*, SRH, II, 582; Göckenjan and Sweeney, *Mongolensturm*, p. 179. For typical Mongol campaign tactics see Morgan, *Mongols*, pp. 65-73, and the comments of Fügedi in *Castle and Society*, p. 45.
- 56 Roger, *Carmen miserabile*, SRH, II, 588; Göckenjan and Sweeney, *Mongolensturm*, p. 186; Fügedi, *Castle and Society*, p. 47. The refugee camp was near the village of Magyar-Fratra, ten miles from Gyulafehérvár.
- 57 Fügedi, *Castle and Society*, p. 48.

- 58 Roger, *Carmen miserabile*, SRH, II, 562; Göckenjan and Sweeney, *Mongolensturm*, p. 152. The queen was accompanied by Stephen, bishop of Vác, who later became archbishop of Esztergom and cardinal bishop of Praeneste, and two other churchmen.
- 59 Thomas, *Historia pontificum*, ed. Rački, p. 176.
- 60 Roger, *Carmen miserabile*, SRH, II, 574-575; Göckenjan and Sweeney, *Mongolensturm*, p. 168-169, and n. 173.
- 61 Roger, *Carmen miserabile*, SRH, II, 575; Göckenjan and Sweeney, *Mongolensturm*, p. 169: Moson (Wieselburg), Sopron (Ödenburg), and Locsmánd (Lutzmannsburg) were in Austrian hands, while Pozsony and Győr resisted. See Göckenjan and Sweeney, p. 215, n. 175.
- 62 Roger, *Carmen miserabile*, SRH, II, 575; Göckenjan and Sweeney, *Mongolensturm*, pp. 163 and 169.
- 63 Thomas, *Historia pontificum*, ed. Rački, p. 168.
- 64 On 18 May 1241, Béla IV dispatched from Zagreb Stephen, bishop of Vác, on a mission to Pope Gregory IX in Rome. The king's letter reported the devastation of the country and the widespread loss of life at the hands of the Mongols, and implored the pope to summon the Christian world (*populi Christiani*) to come to his aid and that of his kingdom; A. Theiner, *Vetera monumenta historica Hungariam sacram illustrantia*, I (Rome, 1859), p. 182, no. 335; Szentpétery and Borsa, *Reg. Arp.*, no. 706. The papal response in June 1241, was to extend the crusading indulgence to any crusaders who vowed to fight the invading Mongols; see Theiner, op. cit., I, 183, no. 337 (Potthast no. 11034). In the event, however, no crusaders ever appeared in Hungary. The anti-Mongol crusade of 1241 has been re-examined from a pro-papal perspective by P. Jackson, "The Crusade Against the Mongols (1241)," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 42 (1991), pp. 1-18. Jackson also notes that the bishop of Vác prior to his arrival in Rome visited the court of Emperor Frederick II where he made known Béla's willingness to surrender Hungary to Frederick as an imperial fief in return for German assistance, *ibid.*, p. 13. This latter evidence clearly documents the desperation of the Hungarian royal court.
- 65 Thomas, *Historia pontificum*, ed. Rački, p. 171.
- 66 Roger, *Carmen miserabile*, SRH, II, 573; Göckenjan and Sweeney, *Mongolensturm*, p. 166.
- 67 Thomas, *Historia pontificum*, p. 172.
- 68 Thomas, *Historia pontificum*, ed. Rački, p. 178 and note. The princesses Katherina and Margareta were interred in the walls of the cathedral near the main entrance.
- 69 The problem of scale is the most intractable for the medievalist. J. Szucs offers the most recent and cautious discussion of the number of persons killed by the Mongols which he estimates to be around 400,000, *Az utolsó Árpádok* [The Last Árpáds] (Budapest: Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 1993), pp. 4-6. If we accept this figure and assume that more persons were put to flight than were killed, the refugee population could have been about 500,000 out of a pre-invasion Hungarian population of 2,000,000. A means to verify this estimate is at present lacking and the question is open to further investigation.
- 70 Thomas, *Historia pontificum*, ed. Rački, p. 173.
- 71 N. Pfeiffer, *Ungarische Dominikanerordensprovinz*, p. 163. Zara is modern Zadar, Nona is Nin. For the history of Zara at this time, including the rebellion of the city

- against the Venetians and the return to Hungarian sovereignty, see Thomas, *Historia pontificum*, ed. Rački, pp. 183-185, and V. Brunelli, *Storia della Città di Zara*, 2nd. ed. (Trieste: Edizioni Lint, 1974), pp. 401-407.
- 72 Thomas, *Historia pontificum*, ed. Rački, p.173.
- 73 Ibid.
- 74 Strakosch-Grassmann, *Einfall*, p. 165.
- 75 On 18 March 1242, Béla IV confirmed the rights and privileges of the bishop of Traù and those of the magistrates and people of Traù explicitly in return for their hospitality during the Mongol invasion; T. Smi iklas, *Codex Diplomaticus Regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae*, IV (Zagreb, 1906), p. 146, no.133; Szentpétery and Borsa, *Reg. Arp.* no. 715.
- 76 Thomas, *Historia pontificum*, ed. Rački, p. 172. Strakosch-Grassmann notes that Prince Stephen was then also in the care of two counts, *Einfall*, p. 161.
- 77 Thomas, *Historia pontificum*, ed. Rački, p. 173, enumerates some of the aristocratic refugees: Stephen, bishop of Zagreb; Stephen, bishop of Vác and archbishop-elect of Esztergom; Benedict, provost of Székesfehérvár, royal chancellor and archbishop-elect of Kalocsa; Bartholomew, bishop of Pécs; "and other bishops"; Hugrinus, provost of Csázma; provosts Achilles, Vincent, Thomas "and numerous other prelates." Among the magnates were Dionysius, ban of Slavonia; Vladislaus, the count palatine; Matthew, the royal treasurer; Orlandus, the royal steward; Demetrius, the judge royal; and Maurice, the royal butler. A similar, but not identical, list of personages may be found among the witnesses to three royal privileges issued at this time, Szentpétery and Borsa, *Reg. Arp.*, nn. 715, 718 and 719.
- 78 Ibid. On the problem of scale see above note 68.
- 79 Thomas, *Historia pontificum*, ed. Rački, p. 175.
- 80 In general, women appear to have been treated differently from men and accorded greater security wherever possible. The case of Queen Maria and the aristocratic widows who traveled with her was noted above. Roger reports that during the Mongol siege of Nagyvárad in 1241, aristocratic women and girls were sheltered in the cathedral church, while other women were lodged in the other churches of the city. But as the Mongols could not take the cathedral by force, they burned it and the ladies (*dominas*) within it. The women in the other churches suffered all manner of atrocities which, according to Roger, were better left unmentioned. Obviously this attention to gender difference and class difference failed to provide the security intended. See Roger, *Carmen miserabile*, SRH, II, 577; Göckenjan and Sweeney, *Mongolensturm*, p. 172.
- 81 T. Marasovi, *Basement Halls of the Palace of Diocletian at Split* (Split, 1970), unpaginated [p. 3].
- 82 The literature on this topic is extensive. In medieval theoretical debates on the obligation to provide charity contradictory opinions were advanced whether the poor in general or only the deserving poor were to be aided. See in particular B. Tierney, *Medieval Poor Law* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1959) and M. Mollat, *The Poor in the Middle Ages*, tr. A. Goldhammer (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1978). Additional insights are provided in B. Geremek, *The Margins of Society in Late Medieval Paris*, tr. J. Birrell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), and J. Imbert, *Histoire des hôpitaux en France* (Toulouse: Editions Privat, 1982).

- 83 For the Benedictine communities see I. Ostoji, *Benediktinci u Hrvatskoj*, II, pp. 638-639; and V. Novak and P. Skok, *Supetarski Kartular* (Zagreb, 1952). For the Franciscans see J. R. H. Moorman, *Medieval Franciscan Houses* (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: The Franciscan Institute, 1983), p. 459.
- 84 Thomas, *Historia pontificum*, ed. Rački, p. 174.
- 85 Ibid.
- 86 Ibid.
- 87 The panic of the Hungarians was subsequently contagious and spread to the Spalatans who began to plan for flight to the offshore islands, and were victims of wild rumors. Thomas, *Historia pontificum*, ed. Rački, p. 176.
- 88 Thomas, *Historia pontificum*, ed. Rački, p. 177.
- 89 Thomas, *Historia pontificum*, ed. Rački, p. 177; Roger, *Carmen miserabile*, SRH, II, 588; Göckenjan and Sweeney, *Mongolensturm*, p. 186.
- 90 Thomas, *Historia pontificum*, ed. Rački, p. 178.
- 91 Thomas, *Historia pontificum*, ed. Rački, pp. 203-205. See also the introduction to Roger's *Carmen miserabile* in Göckenjan and Sweeney, *Mongolensturm*, pp. 129-137.
- 92 See Béla's articulation of his post-invasion program in the letter to Pope Innocent IV usually dated *anno* 1250, in Göckenjan and Sweeney, *Mongolensturm*, pp. 299-314. An argument for revising the date to 1247 has been recently advanced by T. Senga, "IV. Béla külpolitikája és IV. Ince pápához intézett 'Tatár-levele,'" (La politique extérieure du roi Béla IV et sa 'lettre Tatarie' adressée au pape Innocent IV.) *Századok* 121 (1987), pp. 584-612 (with French resumé, pp.611-612). On the second Mongol invasion of 1285, see Gy. Székely, "Egy elfeledett rettenés: a második tatárjáráás a magyar történeti hagyományokban és az egyetemes összefüggésekben (Une terreur oubliée: La deuxième invasion mongole dans l'historiographie hongroise et dans son contexte européen), *Századok*, 122 (1988), pp. 52-88 (with French resumé, pp.87-88).
- 93 Szucs, *Az utolsó Árpádok*, p. 6 ff. Szücs provides the most thorough modern examination of how royal policies during the second half of the thirteenth century were molded by the Mongol attack of 1241-1242 and the possibility of a recurrence.