

# New Europe College Yearbook 2011-2012



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DANIEL BRETT  
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SORIN GOG  
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HYLARIE OURANIA DELYS KOCHIRAS  
RICCARDO NANINI  
BUKOLA ADEYEMI OYENIYI  
ZSUZSA PLAINER  
KATALIN PRAJDA  
AMY SAMUELSON

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New Europe College  
Str. Plantelor 21  
023971 Bucharest  
Romania

[www.nec.ro](http://www.nec.ro); e-mail: [nec@nec.ro](mailto:nec@nec.ro)  
Tel. (+4) 021.307.99.10, Fax (+4) 021. 327.07.74



## **KATALIN PRAJDA**

Born in 1980, in Hungary

Ph.D., European University Institute, Florence (2011)

*Thesis: Rapporti tra la Repubblica Fiorentina e il Regno d'Ungheria a livello di diplomazia, migrazione umana, reti mercantili e mediazione culturale nell'età del regime oligarchico (1382-1434), che corrisponde al regno di Sigismondo di Lussemburgo (1387-1437)*

Doctoral grant, Department of History and Civilization, European University Institute (2006-2010)

National Science Foundation Grant, Santa Fe Institute, USA (2007-2008)

Conferences attended in Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Romania, Spain, UK, USA

Scholarly articles on Early Renaissance Florentine Art, History of Late Medieval Florence, Relationships between the Florentine Republic and the Kingdom of Hungary

Other research projects: Research assistant to prof. John F. Padgett:  
“Co-evolution of State and Market in Renaissance Florence”, Santa Fe Institute;  
Università degli Studi di Trento (2007-2009)

# THE BIOGRAPHIES OF PIPPO SCOLARI, CALLED LO SPANO (19<sup>TH</sup>-21<sup>TH</sup> CENTURIES)

In 2009, Szilárd Süttő in his short article regarding the latest Hungarian biographies on military captains of merchant origins, among them Pippo Scolari, called the attention to the fact that – due to their partiality – there is a need for new interpretation of the baron’s activity.<sup>1</sup> The aim of the present study is to analyze - in the light of emerging sources housed by the Florentine National Archives - the modern biographies of Pippo di Stefano Scolari (1368/69-1426), called Lo Spano, produced since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in order to open up new research perspectives.

Interpretations of Pippo Scolari’s life story have militated - starting from the 19<sup>th</sup> century until recent years - against becoming an international topic even though the topic is imbedded in the late Middle Ages, at the time when the meaning of the Florentine term “nazione” was very different from its modern one.<sup>2</sup> The identity of Pippo Scolari could probably be best described by contemporary political terms. He was on the one hand citizen of the Republic of Florence and on the other hand subject of the Hungarian crown. He was born in 1368/69, at the time when the majority of the inhabitants of the city of Florence were Florentines; they were born either in the city or in the neighboring countryside and they spoke the local vernacular language. This was not the case in many other states of late medieval Europe, including the Kingdom of Hungary. Persons called “ungheri” or “ungari” in Florentine sources were not necessary of Hungarian ethnicity.<sup>3</sup> On the contrary, this category might have included all subjects of the Hungarian crown, regardless of their ethnic backgrounds. There were indeed – besides Hungarians – many other ethnic groups leaving in the Kingdom, such as Slavs, Latins, Germans, Jews and Turkish ethnic groups; including the ancestors of the neighboring nations of present day Hungary.

Why did Pippo Scolari's history inspire a number of authors over the centuries? It is probably due to the impressive career he built in the Kingdom of Hungary; from an assistant of a Florentine merchant in Buda he became one of the most influential barons at Sigismund of Luxemburg's (1387-1437) royal court.<sup>4</sup> Besides, scholars might be interested in his biography because of the multiple types of activities - merchant, military captain, patron - in which he got involved during his life and because of the multiple activity areas, including various parts of the Italian Peninsula, the Kingdom of Hungary and other neighboring regions where he operated.

Therefore the main question of the present inquiry is concerned with the general context of Pippo Scolari's history in which the authors of the modern biographies have interpreted his life. This might also provide us with an answer to the question why Pippo's career became a topic of their works. The second question regards the national historiographies represented by these authors, showing in this way Pippo Scolari's importance from various angles and tracing also the image of the baron reconstructed by these biographies. It is also going to be analyzed - in the light of emerging evidences from the Florentine National Archives - the documentary basis of these works.

Since all of the modern authors took advantage of the already existing secondary literature for their own interpretation, I will examine the biographies in chronological order; starting with Giuseppe Canestrini (1843), through Gusztáv Wenzel (1863), Curzio Ugurgeri Della Berardenga (1963), Pál Engel (1987), Franco Cardini (1994), Ioan Hațegan (1995) until Gizella and Adriano Papo (2006).

By analyzing their biographies a few similarities can be traced in the ways of reconstructing Pippo Scolari's activity. It is common in all of these works that the authors looked at Pippo's life story from the point of view of their own national history.<sup>5</sup> Italian authors considered him an important figure of the history of the Florentine communities resident abroad and therefore interpreted his story in the context of Florentine or Italian history. Hungarian scholars analyzed the topic in the framework of the history of the Kingdom of Hungary, emphasizing Pippo's importance as one of the most influential barons of the royal court. Ioan Hațegan instead incorporated his story into the history of Romanians, thanks to Pippo's connections to the Banat region and to Transylvania, located in present day Romania. Generally speaking, the authors when taking into account Pippo's career and his multiple personal connections, made no distinction between medieval ethnic groups and modern nations.<sup>6</sup> This phenomenon

is also reflected by how the authors of the biographies mentioned Pippo Scolari in various languages and how they used the names of places back then belonging to the Hungarian crown.<sup>78</sup>

Another common feature in these works is that regarding the period covered until the time of the earliest document on Pippo's activity, found in Hungary and dated to 1399, their authors relied exclusively on a 15<sup>th</sup>-century biography written by Jacopo di Poggio Bracciolini. Jacopo di Poggio (1442-1478) was a Florentine-born humanist who had probably only completed Pippo's biography started by his father, Poggio (1380-1459). Poggio – leading humanist of his time - had the occasion to meet Pippo at the Council of Constance (1414-1418) and he might have obtained information from the baron himself. The Bracciolini were even distant relatives to the Scolari, since Poggio's wife, Vaggia came from the Buondelmonti family, ancient lineage of the Scolari. It is also plausible that Poggio and Jacopo knew Pippo's nephew, Lorenzo di Rinieri Scolari or his niece, Francesca di Matteo Scolari who in the 1470s had still been living in Florence. Therefore Jacopo di Poggio's biography is the most reliable, almost contemporary narrative source on Pippo Scolari. Thanks to the lack of extensive research at the Florentine National Archives, it has become commonplace to refer to the Bracciolinis' work as primary source. A closer look at the archival documents though reveals that the information transmitted by the biography is need to be verified at several points.

According to Poggio, Pippo was born in 1369 in Tizzano, in the Florentine countryside and spent his childhood in poverty, sharing the same household with his father Stefano, his mother Antonia and his brother, Matteo.<sup>9</sup> The census of the settlement of Tizzano written in 1371/72 instead informs us that shortly after Pippo's birth in 1368/69, his family was composed, besides Pippo, by his father Stefano, his mother called Caterina, his two sisters Ricca and Balda and their brothers, the eldest Francesco, and the youngest, Matteo.<sup>10</sup> There is no other information about the family in the censuses of Tizzano until 1393 when we learn that Pippo's father, Stefano had already been died and his sons had already moved to the Kingdom of Hungary. At that time Pippo was 24/25 years old and Matteo was 22/23 years old. The archival source also reveals that the Scolari brothers, Pippo and Matteo arrived to Hungary together, meanwhile Jacopo di Poggio does not even mention the cooperation of the brothers at this early stage of their career. Jacopo refers though to another important detail about Pippo's youth, that he worked as a adolescent in

another Florentine's shop in Buda.<sup>11</sup> A Florentine citizen, called Luca di Giovanni del Pecchia was indeed involved in long distance trade between Florence and Buda as early as the 1380s. Since he had connections both in the royal court in Buda and in Naples, he might have even played some kind of intermediary role in the struggle for the Hungarian crown between the Durazzo and the rebellion barons in Hungary.<sup>12</sup> By taking into account Luca's connections to King Sigismund's opposition, one could find an explanation of why Pippo became castellan of the rebellion Lackfi family's former castle.<sup>13</sup> If Pippo's nomination happened before or after 1397, the date of the owner's, István Lackfi's decapitation, we do not know. But two years later, Pippo, the newly-made officer of royal gold mines, was already in King Sigismund's service.

Besides Pippo's chronology and personal connections it is also Jacopo di Poggio who provides us with a description of Pippo's physical appearance and character. The description – which is definitely partial and cannot be verified by archival documents – has been used by most of the authors as primary source.<sup>14</sup>

Another topic brought up by Jacopo di Poggio's biography concerns the fact that Lo Spano helped his fellow-Florentines in obtaining offices in the Kingdom of Hungary.<sup>15</sup> Indeed many primary sources talk about Pippo supporting other Florentines who worked in Hungary during the first three decades of the 15<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>16</sup> Jacopo di Poggio also acclaimed Pippo's military skills as captain of the anti-Ottoman troops.<sup>17</sup> This image was later elaborated by Pippo's other biographer, Domenico di Guido Mellini.

Mellini (1531-1620) was a Florentine humanist patronized by the Medici family who dedicated his Pippo biography to the Grand duke. As distinguished scholar of his time, Mellini's main idea was to show the glory of the Florentine *nazione* abroad, through the example of the successful military captain, Lo Spano. He did not rely exclusively on Jacopo di Poggio's work, but he conducted archival researches as well, investigating a number of family documents which were kept by the Venetian branch of the Scolari family.<sup>18</sup> Unfortunately due to the lack of extensive researches carried out in the Archives of Venice regarding the Scolaris' history, these documents are not available for further analysis. Not only the Venetian sources are special in this regard, there has been similarly no in-depth research carried out in Florence since the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Giuseppe Canestrini (1807- 1870) was the first scholar in modern times who devoted his study appeared in 1843 and entitled "Discorso sopra alcune relazioni della repubblica Fiorentina col Re d'Ungheria,



e con Filippo Scolari”, to Lo Spano’s history. He moved to Florence in order to study archival materials connected to the city’s history. Canestrini thus became an expert of Florentine medieval history and therefore reconstructed Pippo’s life on the basis of the former biographies as well as of primary documents and placed it in the context of Florentine and Italian history.<sup>19</sup> As we learn from the title, the main topic of his essay is not Pippo Scolari himself, but the Florentine foreign affairs; the Venetian wars, the schism, the connections to the Durazzo of Naples and to the Kingdom of Hungary.<sup>20</sup> He retains that Lo Spano was a mediator between Sigismund and Florentines in Hungary.<sup>21</sup> Canestrini’s intention was probably to show that Florence gave many military captains and powerful landlords to history.<sup>22</sup> He also unearthed sources on the Scolari in general, among them the ones concerning the Oratory commissioned in Florence by Pippo’s brother and cousin.<sup>23</sup> Thus his essay became a clear manifestation of local patriotism and the social and the moral values of the author.<sup>24</sup>

Twenty years after Canestrini’s work - appeared in the *Archivio Storico Italiano*, together with Jacopo di Poggio’s and Domenico Mellini’s biographies - in 1863, a Hungarian jurist, named Gusztáv Wenzel (1812-1891) published Pippo Scolari’s first modern biography, entitled “Ozorai Pipó. Magyar történelmi jellemrajz Zsigmond király korából”. In spite of the fact that the later Hungarian biographer, Pál Engel praises Wenzel’s work for his knowledge of Italian sources, we learn in fact that he did not conduct researches in any of the corresponding Italian archives.<sup>25</sup> He only republished and investigated those sources which had already been transcribed and edited by Canestrini and Polidori in the *Archivio Storico Italiano*. Besides these evidences, the documentary basis of his work was provided only by a handful of secondary literature and Hungarian sources, published by György Fejér and Wenzel himself.<sup>26</sup> Wenzel – as he has stated on the first page of the book – was interested in Pippo’s life because of the role he played in the history of medieval Hungary.<sup>27</sup> According to him, Pippo was not an extraordinary figure, only someone who made the most of his fortune.<sup>28</sup> Wenzel’s biography embraces seven aspects of Pippo’s life; his origins, his activity in Sigismund’s service, his activity in the Kingdom of Hungary, his achievements, family background, his last military campaign and his personality. Wenzel’s work of course is characterized by romantic descriptions and repeated evaluations of Pippo’s life and importance. Alongside the publication of a number of Hungarian documents concerning the baron, the novelty of Wenzel’s work lies in

the fact that he was the first scholar who set the biography in the context of the history of the Kingdom of Hungary.<sup>29</sup>

Hundred years later, in 1963, published the Italian count, Curzio Ugurgieri Della Berardenga his volume entitled "Avventurieri alla conquista di feudi e di corone (1356-1429)". Meanwhile the first part of the book is dedicated to the Florentine Niccolò Acciaiuoli who made a notable career in the royal court of Naples, the second part instead is concerned with Pippo Scolari's history. Della Berardenga knew and used Wenzel's book for his essay, but did not mention any of the Latin sources edited by the Hungarian author. Therefore the documentary basis of his work is provided mainly by the sources and studies appeared in the volume of the Archivio Storico Italiano, combined with other secondary literature.<sup>30</sup>

Della Berardenga's biography – in a similar way to Canestrini's work – is more about Hungarian politics and Florentine history than about Pippo himself.<sup>31</sup> When he talks about the baron, he uses long descriptions of sentiments and thoughts and sometimes we have the general impression that he invented the major part of the story without any evidences, reconstructing in this way for example Pippo's childhood.<sup>32</sup> According to him, Luca del Pecchia – a textile merchant working in Buda – was a friend to the Scolari family who in 1382 on his way back from Florence to Buda, took the young Pippo with him.<sup>33</sup> The main points of his essay are the struggle for the Hungarian crown in 1401-3, the Ottoman conflicts, Pippo's ambassadorship in Florence in 1410 and the Venetian wars. Della Berardenga identified Pippo as a Florentine "condottiero", that is mercenary captain and accused him of fighting against "Italians" in foreign service.<sup>34</sup>

Thanks to the many generalizations, dubious details and to the almost complete absence of references, Della Berardenga's work is not of scholarly nature and provides us with little novelty on the empirical level. On the theoretical level though the comparison between Pippo Scolari's service in the Hungarian court and that of Niccolò Acciaiuoli in the court of Naples might open up new perspectives in the evaluation of the baron's career.

Probably thanks to its informing style, Della Berardenga's work was not included in Pál Engel's biography. Engel (1938-2001), important Hungarian medievalist of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, published his study in 1987, in an essay collection dedicated to Pippo Scolari and entitled: "Ozorai Pipo emlékezete". The volume includes also the Hungarian translation of Jacopo di Poggio's and Domenico Mellini's biographies and a study of

Pippo's castle located in Ozora, Hungary.<sup>35</sup> Besides these works, Engel analyzed also the documents published by Wenzel.<sup>36</sup> He was also the first and until recently the only scholar who conducted a very extensive research at the Hungarian National Archives in order to explore Pippo Scolari's activity in the Kingdom of Hungary, starting from 1399 - date of the earliest document in Hungary - until his death in 1426.

As Szilárd Süttő has already noted, Engel to a certain extent romanticized Pippo's character and the career he built in the Kingdom of Hungary.<sup>37</sup> The mystification of Pippo's achievements and general tone of the article, aimed at picturing Pippo as the prototype of a Hungarian nobleman rather than a Florentine merchant, are probably due to the absence of researches in Florence preceding Engel's work.<sup>38</sup> Given no Florentine sources at his disposal, Engel did not find any explanation to the fact of why and how Pippo was promoted to the court of Sigismund of Luxemburg. Therefore he attributed Pippo's success essentially to his fortune and talent.<sup>39</sup> New studies however suggest that – besides these factors - there might have been also others in play which considerably helped him in building a notable career in Hungary. The primary sources at our disposal show that several members of Pippo's family – including his uncles – worked as *condottieri*, that is mercenary captains in Northern Italy. Thanks to their profession, the Scolari already in the 1370's had established connections to the high nobility in Hungary which might have facilitated Pippo's career as well.<sup>40</sup>

Engel also misinterpreted Jacopo di Poggio's description about Pippo's childhood and family, assuming that Pippo's family became poor and it was not among the notable lineages of Florence.<sup>41</sup> Engel left aside many other information provided Jacopo di Poggio, that is the members of the original lineage, the Buondelmonti were powerful landlords in the countryside before the guelf-ghibellin conflicts and their descents, the Scolari still had a reputation in Florence for their participation in the urban conflicts. The family was also noted by Sigismund of Luxemburg's father, Emperor Charles IV who intervened at the Florentine Signoria for the restitution of the Scolaris' estates.<sup>42</sup>

Since Engel had no information about Pippo's *condottieri* relatives, he presumed that Pippo became a military captain without any previous experience or specialized training.<sup>43</sup> Both the history of Pippo's uncles and the fact that he served his master as a castellan seem to contradict to Engel's theory. Instead, he might have had far more connections to the art of war than we have imagined and it is probably not by accident that he became the first castellan of foreign origins in medieval Hungary.

According to Engel, Pippo probably served his master, János Kanizsai, the archbishop of Esztergom as castellan, after 1397, when the rebellion István Lackfi had already lost the castle of Simontornya.<sup>44</sup> Jacopo di Poggio – the only source on Pippo’s service in Simontornya – did not mention the date of the event. It must be noted however that the former owner of the castle, the Lackfi family were acquainted with Pippo’s uncles already in the 1370’s. Indeed Pippo’s uncles fought together with the voivoda of Transylvania, István Lackfi, cousin of the owner of Simontornya.<sup>45</sup> It is therefore possible that Pippo was appointed to castellan in Simontornya before 1397, during the time of the Lackfi.

The general context of Engel’s Pippo-biography is not military history, rather Engel’s major field of expertise: history of administration of the medieval Kingdom of Hungary, including the history of castles, noble estates, counties, offices and the feudal system in general.<sup>46</sup> Engel by concluding his discourse on Pippo’s network of servants and „familiares” states that the baron did not surround himself with many Florentines, but he hired his fellow-citizens only for administrative purposes.<sup>47</sup> He also retained that Pippo - besides his brother, Matteo - did not give inheritance to other members of the family.<sup>48</sup> Florentine sources however entirely contradict to Engel’s hypothesis. Pippo actually helped many Florentines in obtaining offices in Hungary – administrative and church offices as well – and he gave a considerable part of his properties, inherited from his brother, Matteo and from his cousin, Andrea to his Florentine relatives.

It is also misleading the image designed by Engel according to which Pippo did not have any financial ventures in Hungary and he had no interest in long distance trade, due to his social position as baron of the Kingdom of Hungary.<sup>49</sup> This affirmation might have something to do with the generally disapproving tone used by Engel in referring to Pippo’s training as merchant.<sup>50</sup> This profession instead was one of the most distinguished ones in Florence; all the important art patrons and politicians came from merchant families.

Engel’s article – in spite of its partiality which leaves aside Pippo’s connections in the Republic of Florence and the use of a vocabulary specific to studies appearing in the communist area – is still the most well-researched and historically cemented interpretation of Pippo Scolari’s activity.<sup>51</sup>

Surprisingly Engel’s landmark article was not noted by Franco Cardini (1940-) – professor of medieval history at the University of Florence – who published in 1994, two times in the same year, his essay on Pippo

Scolari; first in his book entitled “Storie fiorentine” and once again in the essay collection “Italia e Ungheria all’epoca dell’umanesimo corviniano”, edited by Cesare Vasoli. Cardini did not produce a new contribution to Pippo’s biography, instead he provides us with a shorter version of Della Berardenga’s work, including the same bibliography and sometimes even the same errors.<sup>52</sup> He also describes Pippo character often with the Romantic tone, one can trace at Della Berardenga’s work.<sup>53</sup> Even though the article is concerned – besides the ambassadorship to Florence - mainly with Pippo’s military campaigns against Venice, the Ottomans and the Hussites, Cardini’s general conclusion is that Pippo was not a talented military captain, only a loyal servant to King Sigismund.<sup>54</sup>

In a similar way also the general context of Ioan Hațegan’s biography – entitled “Filippo Scolari. Un condottier italian pe meleaguri dunărene” and appeared in 1997 – is Pippo’s military campaigns, especially against the Ottomans, alongside the history of the Banat region, now belonging to Romania.<sup>55</sup> Hațegan’s interpretation is therefore a continuous dialogue between Pippo’s activity and the settlement of Vlachs in the Banat and their participation in the anti-Ottoman wars. Hațegan’s book at some points even gives us the impression that Transylvania in the 15<sup>th</sup> century was mainly inhabited by Vlachs who governed themselves independently from the Hungarian crown.<sup>56</sup> Engel in his article only mentioned the fact that a good number of Vlachs were fighting from time to time in Pippo’s service, but he did not give us any further details due to the lack of extensive written evidences.<sup>57</sup> The contacts between Vlachs and Florentines is well-reflected by a letter, written by a Florentine merchant, called Giovanni di messer Niccolò Falcucci, resident in Hermannstadt (Szeben, Sibiu, RO) on August 9, 1414. He mentions in this document, addressed to the bishop of Várad (Oradea, RO), Andrea Scolari that according to the information provided by a Vlach coming to Hermannstadt, Lo Spano had already arrived to the region and was waiting for the Ottomans’ attack.<sup>58</sup> Jacopo di Poggio also underlines Pippo’s connection to the Vlachs by mentioning that he spoke “valacca lingua”.<sup>59</sup>

It was also Hațegan who advanced the hypothesis that Pippo’s father, Stefano di Francesco was a soldier and died in 1406 or 1407 in Buda.<sup>60</sup> His hypothesis is very plausible though we do not have any evidences at our disposal in this regard. Hațegan was also the first among Pippo’s biographers who looked at the baron’s activity in its complexity, emphasizing his patronage and his activity in the construction of defense systems against the Ottomans in the Temes (Timiș, RO) region.<sup>61</sup>

Haṭegan – with critical revision – uses a wide range of secondary sources for his study, including the previous biographies as well. Even though he did not discover new archival sources on Pippo Scolari's history, the questions raised by his book, provide us with new ideas on further research possibilities, including Pippo's family and genealogical tree, his personal connections, his participation in the Italian wars and his patronage.

The most recent work dedicated to the history of Pippo Scolari is the book of Adriano Papo and Gizella Németh-Papo. Even though they have used a very vast bibliography and references, they included into their work also non-contemporary narrations, such as the chronicles of Antonio Bonfini and János Thuróczy, literary works and non-contemporary images, without applying any further critical revision.<sup>62</sup> Besides the previous biographies, the authors also studied the transcriptions of sources prepared by the Hungarian Ernő Simonyi in the Florentine National Archives in the 19th century.<sup>63</sup> His collection today is available for research at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and other researchers also take advantage of them as a primary sources, in spite of the fact that their documentary basis has never been verified by original documents.<sup>64</sup> The Papos' work also gives us the misleading impression that they carried out archival research both in Venice and in Hungary. A closer look at the archival sources cited in the footnotes shows that all these documents have already been transcribed and previously published.<sup>65</sup>

Also the language applied in their book is essentially characterized by the romantic tone borrowed from the earlier Italian biographies. Also their evaluation of Pippo's activity and his place in the history of the Kingdom of Hungary is based on Gusztáv Wenzel's view.<sup>66</sup> Meanwhile Pippo's questionable image as mediator of the Florentine Renaissance in Hungary was inspired by Jolán Balogh's article.<sup>67</sup> Since the book of Gizella Németh and Adriano Papo has received much publicity as scholarly work in Hungary, I am going to analyze it more in details.

The first chapter of the book - dedicated to Pippo as historical figure and to his family – is based, without any critical revision, on Pippo's anonym biography, Jacopo di Poggio's, and on Mellini's works. The authors also made use of the non-contemporary Anea Silvio Piccolini's writings. They also incorporated into this chapter the Scolari-genealogy of Pompeo Litta and Luigi Passerini, composed in the 19th century.<sup>68</sup> Meanwhile their interpretation of the origins of the Scolari-Buondelmonti lineage is basically identical with Giuseppe Canestrini's work.<sup>69</sup>

Interestingly, among the modern biographers, only the Papos took into consideration the abovementioned genealogical trees, in spite of the fact that until recently only Passerini researched extensively the Scolari family in Florence. The main author, Pompeo Litta (1781-1852) was a count of Milanese origins who dedicated his activity to the composition of a series of genealogical tables which appeared under the title of “La storia delle famiglie celebri italiane”. He was the one who invited Luigi Passerini to participate in his project. Passerini (1816-1877) was born in Florence and devoted his professional activity to the study of Florentine history and genealogy. His Scolari-Buondelmonti genealogy is therefore until recently the most complete family tree.<sup>70</sup>

Following the history of Pippo’s family, the Papos – using mainly Jacopo di Poggio – intended to reconstruct the baron’s personality, using the romanticized vocabulary known from Wenzel’s and Della Berardenga’s works.<sup>71</sup> The chapter continues with a detailed list of Pippo’s portraits which the authors were trying to compare to the surviving non-contemporary descriptions of his physical character and personality. At this point, scholars might question the authenticity and the importance of non-contemporary narratives and images in the history of the baron. The other chapters of the book are dedicated to Pippo’s career until 1401 – based on the previous biographies – and to his intimate relatives, his wife, Borbála Ozorai (Barbara de Ozora), his younger brother, Matteo di Stefano Scolari (1370/71-1426) and his cousin, Andrea di Filippo Scolari (†1426). Meanwhile the fragmentary details on Bobála’s life are coming from the earliest biographies, the interpretation of Matteo’s life is based on Litta’s and Passerini’s work, including also the misleading information according to which Matteo arrived to Hungary as late as 1412.<sup>72</sup> They concluded the chapter with the figure of Andrea Scolari, tracing his activity in Hungary through Jolán Balogh’s short article published in 1926.<sup>73</sup>

Chapter V of the Papos’ work – dealing with the Venetian wars – presents some novelty on the empirical level about Pippo’s participation. The two registers they studied from the Venetian National Archives have already been mentioned in connection with Pippo by Michael Mallett in his book on the Venetian military system. These documents have also been partially transcribed and published in a collection of medieval documents concerning the Kingdom of Hungary.<sup>74</sup> Nevertheless the chapter calls the attention once again to the fact that many documents may lay unexamined until now in the Venetian National Archives regarding Pippo’s participation in the Venetian wars in the early 1410s.

The Papos concluded their book with stating that Pippo was a prominent personality of his time and he played an important role as military captain in Hungary during Sigismund of Luxemburg's reign.<sup>75</sup> They also made a comparison between Pippo Scolari's career and that of Lodovico Gritti (1480?- 1534), calling them "Princes of the Renaissance".<sup>76</sup>

In spite of the fact that the Papos' work is not a scholarly publication, it has several merits. Besides the reinterpretation of Gusztáv Wenzel and Pál Engel's studies, they collected an impressive number of secondary literature on Pippo Scolari.<sup>77</sup> The book includes also a chapter on the Scolari's patronage, the most important building projects and once again calls the attention – in a similar way to Hațegan's book - to the complexity of Pippo Scolari's and his family's activities both in Florence and in the Kingdom of Hungary.<sup>78</sup>

The analysis of the modern biographies of Pippo Scolari has pointed out that the life story of the baron has attracted the interest of generations of scholars of various national backgrounds. Even though the majority of the existing literature is not of scholarly nature and show little novelty on the empirical level, they have raised many questions to be answered through further archival research. Since 1843, the appearance of Jacopo di Poggio's and Domenico Mellini's biographies in the Archivio Storico Italiano, there have been no systematic archival researches carried out on Pippo Scolari in any of the corresponding Italian archives, neither in Florence nor in Venice. There has been similarly no in-depth research conducted since 1987 – since the appearance of Engel's work – in the Hungarian National Archives which, in spite of Engel's encyclopedic study, might still house new evidences on the Florentine-born baron. As Szilárd Süttő has already underlined in his article, there is a clear need for the re-interpretation of Pippo Scolari's activity. The new history of the baron could be reformulated within the context of European history, putting into consideration the many important questions raised by the previous biographies.



NOTES

- 1 Süttő p. 17-18.
- 2 The term “nazione” referred to a certain type of corporation into which Florentine merchants organized themselves abroad. Goldthwaite p. 108.
- 3 For subjects of the Hungarian crown living in Florence see: Prajda 2014.
- 4 For the Scolari family see: Prajda 2010.
- 5 This phenomenon has already been noticed by Agostino Sagredo. Sagredo p.131.
- 6 See for example Della Berardenga who talks about the “Hungarian nation” in his biography on Pippo Scolari. “Era una splendida nazione (l’Ungheria)... dormiva ancora, in grande parte, sotto le nebbie dell’inverno medievale.” Berardenga p.124. “...nell’armata di Sigismondo il dissidio regnava tra i comandanti, che per orgoglio nazionale...” Berardenga p. 148. “La nazione ungherese rispose magnificamente all’appello...” Berardenga p. 147. “Il confronto con i re Angioini, i quali, stranieri anch’essi, erano riusciti a divenire dei veri e completi ungheresi...” Berardenga p. 150. Della Berardenga also refers to “ungheresi, transilvani, serbi, cumani”. Berardenga p.209. Also Pál Engel uses the term “olasz” rather than “itáliai”, in spite of the fact that the term “olasz” refers to citizens of the modern State of Italy. Engel therefore established Pippo’s identity as an “olasz” and he mentioned only in the second place that he came from Florence. “Ő (Pippo) születésére nézve ugyanis olasz volt, közelebbről firenzei... és kivált mély benyomást tehetett Pipo olasz honfitársaira...” Engel p. 53. See also Hațegan: “...participării comune la lupta antiotomană a popoarelor din cuprinsul regatului: români, maghiari, sârbi, slovaci, cumani...” Hațegan p. 83.
- 7 The variations of Pippo’s name include the following: Pippo Scolari, Pippo Spano, Ozorai Pipó, Pippo de Ozora. But also the name of the so-called Count of Signa and Modrus is mentioned in three different forms in the biographies. Since his family was probably of Venetian origins, Italian scholars talk about Niccolò Frangipane. Hungarian scholars instead refer to him as Frangepán Miklós even though he was not Hungarian of ethnicity, but only a subject of the Hungarian crown. Hațegan instead uses the Latin version of his name and calls him Nicolae de Frankapan(i). Hațegan p. 46.
- 8 Canestrini in 1843 Della Berardenga in 1863 and Cardini in 1994 used in their works the vernacular names of the towns in medieval Hungary. Cardini p. 49, Berardenga p. 206, 212. For example Fehérvár’s (Székesfehérvár, HU) Latin name was Alba Regia which was transformed in Florentine vernacular language to Alba Reale. Thus became Varadinum/Várad (Oradea, RO) in vernacular Varadino Szeben (Sibiu, RO), Sibino and Esztergom/Strigonium Strigonia. Other authors instead used the modern versions of names of places which did not exist in the Middle Ages. For example Hațegan used the name Bratislava instead of the medieval names of the city such as Posonium,

- Pressburg or Pozsony. He used in a similar way the term „Slovakia”. Haġegan p. 11, 46. Also the Papos referred to Székesfehérvár instead of Fehérvár. Pappo, p. 50, 169.
- 9 Jacopo di Poggio p. 163-164, Mellini p.12.
- 10 Prajda 2011. p.115.
- 11 Jacopo di Poggio p. 164.
- 12 Prajda 2011. p.33.
- 13 Jacopo di Poggio p. 164.
- 14 Jacopo di Poggio p. 176. “Appassionato cacciatore, buon cavaliere, esperto nel maneggio delle armi e nel torneare, lo Spano fu anche un ottimo padrone di casa. Parco nel cibo, ma buongustaio, preferì sempre che sulla sua mensa comparissero poche vivande, ma cucinate con cura e servite in piatti d’oro e d’argento. Curò che il personale di servizio facesse bella presenza, fosse ben vestito, rispettoso e pratico del mestiere.” Berardenga p. 221. “...il buono e continente Pippo Spano, mancava talvolta, non solo di continenza, ma anche, e soprattutto, di cuore.” Berardenga p. 225. “Filippo, detto effettuosamente Pippo dai familiari e dagli amici, era un ragazzo piuttosto minuto, dagli occhi scuri intelligenti, amante della vita all’aria libera, ma al tempo stesso studioso e particolarmente portato per i numeri e l’arimerica, della quale il padre, fin da piccolo, gli andava insegnando le regole fondamentali...era dotato di una intelligenza e di una maturità di sentimenti e di pensiero superiori alla sua età...” Berardenga p. 122. , 124. For Pippo’s character see: Wenzel p. 68-70, Pappo p. 35-38.
- 15 Jacopo di Poggio p. 179.
- 16 Prajda 2011. p. 103.
- 17 Jacopo di Poggio p. 175, 179.
- 18 Mellini p. 42. The Venetian branch of the Scolari family was founded by one of Pippo’s nephews, Branca di Rinieri Scolari.
- 19 Canestrini p. 196-203. He used primary sources housed by the Florentine National Archives from the fond of Signori regarding ambassadorships conducted by Florentines to Sigismund in 1413, 1426 and 1427-28.
- 20 “La biografia dello Spano è un periodo di Storia ungherese; e perché tale, ella deve elevarsi all’altezza e alla gravità delle vicende politiche e degli avvenimenti contemporanei, sul quali lo Spano esercitò ... un’influenza...” “la vita dei quali (per esempio di Pippo) è inseparabile dalla storia del loro tempo.” Canestrini p. 185.
- 21 Canestrini p. 193.
- 22 Canestrini p. 211-212.
- 23 Canestrini p. 209-210.
- 24 Canestrini p. 213.
- 25 Engel p. 54.

- 26 The appendix of his book contains documents published in the Archivio Storico Italiano and a few sources from the Hungarian National Archives. Wenzel p. 75-101.
- 27 Wenzel p.1.
- 28 "Ilyen kor tehát képes ugyan egyes szerencsés személyek emelkedését felmutatni, de történeti nagyságokat nem. Ozorai Pipo ezeknek sorába tartozott Magyarorszáiban." Wenzel p. 4. "Legyünk tehát méltányosak Ozorai Pipóra nézve; de igazságosak is. Ő történetileg nevezetes férfi, tehát historiai notabilitás volt; de nem nagy férfi, nem historiai nagyság." Wenzel p. 74.
- 29 Engel p. 54.
- 30 The main sources of Berardenga's study are the three early biographies and other narrative sources produced after Pippo's time, like Luca di Simone della Robbia (1400-1482), "Vita di Bartolommeo Valori" and Enea Silvio Piccolomini (1405-1464) "Le istorie de' Boemi tradotte", Vincenzo Borghini (1515-1580), "Discorsi storici con annotazioni di Domenico Manni".
- 31 Berardenga p. 165.
- 32 "Stefano vide la mano di Dio nell'affetto dell'amico (Luca del Pecchia) verso Filippo..." Berardenga p. 124. "I genitori, consci della non comune intelligenza di Filippo, si angustiavano, pensando che egli avrebbe dovuto trascorrere l'intera vita nel contado, soffocando dalla mediocrità e dalle preoccupazioni finanziarie." Berardenga p. 123. "La maschia avvenenza e la parlantina del fiorentino fecero breccia nel cuore della contessa Barbara..." Berardenga p. 156. "Il padre (di Pippo) era un maestro esigente... lo affidarono (gli genitori di Pippo) a un prete di campagna, uomo di notevole dottrina...". Berardenga p. 123.
- 33 Berardenga p. 123-124.
- 34 Berardenga p. 163. "...può accusare il conte di Ozora di molte cose, non ultima quella di aver combattuto al servizio dello straniero contro gli Italiani (benché al suo tempo il sentimento di italianità, in un'Italia divisa in tanti stati spesso nemici fra loro, fosse assai nebuloso." Berardenga p. 224.
- 35 Feld-Koppány, *Az ozorai vár*
- 36 Süttő p. 12-13.
- 37 Süttő p. 14, Engel p. 73-74.
- 38 "Noha Pipo sokkal inkább magyar országnagy volt, mint firenzei kereskedő, az olaszok mindig is a magukénak tekintették..." Engel p. 54.
- 39 "Ki tudja, az évszázadok során szerte a világon hány suhanc ábrándozott már arról, hogy egyszer majd dúsgazdag, híres-nevezetes nagyúrként tér vissza oda, ahol született, és a nép ámulattal fog tódulni elébe, hogy messziről, egy pillanatra láthassa őt, akinek hajdan a nevét sem ismerte. Elképzelni könnyű, de millióból talán ha egynek sikerült el is érnie. Pipo mindenesetre egy volt a milliók közül, és higgyük, hogy ifjúkori álmai teljesedtek be..." Engel p. 54.

- 40 Prajda 2011. p. 18, 35, 121.
- 41 "Családja valamikor, a guelf-ghibellin harcok idején jobb napokat is látott, de ekkorra bizony, semmi kétség,már elszegényedett, és a nevét hiába keressük a kor nevezetesebb firenzei famíliái között." Engel p. 54. "...allevato col padre e madre poveramente..." Jacopo di Poggio p. 164.
- 42 Canestrini p. 187.
- 43 "Elég különös, de a hajdani kereskedősegédből a korabeli Magyarország legismertebb és legeredményesebb hadvezére lett, ami arra mutat, hogy ez a mesterség akkoriban inkább csak veleszületett kvalitásokat kívánt meg, semmint szakismeretet Természetes intelligencia, határozottság, egyéni bátorság kellett hozzá, egyéb azonban nem." Engel p. 63.
- 44 Engel p. 55-56.
- 45 Jacopo di Poggio p.164.
- 46 Engel p. 56.
- 47 "A sókamaraigazgatás volt az egyetlen terület, ahol Pipo olaszokat is foglalkoztatott. Nevéből ítélve olasz voltaz a Pero (Piero?), aki 1407-1412 között a tordai kamarát vezette, és közben átmenetileg Pipo saját birtokán, Sárvárton volt vámagy. Olasz lehetett az egyébként szebeni polgárnak mondott Baldi Mátyás vízaknai sókamarás (1408) is, és biztosan az volt Byank Jinus lippai polgár és ottani alkamarás (1410). Kétségtelenül Pipo idején jött Magyarországra Firenzéből Gasparo da Colle, Filippo és Jacopo del Bene, Papé Manini és testvérei, akik egészen az 1440-es évekig kezükben tartották a legtöbb fontos sókamara tényleges vezetését. Külön kell megemlékezni Pipo legfontosabb olasz pénzügyi alkalmazottjáról, Onofrio Bárdiról, a 14. század egyik legnevezetesebb firenzei bankárcsaládjának budai polgárrá lett saljáról, aki márjával Pipo előtt Magyarországon élt, de 1409-1415 táján már őt szolgálta, és egyidőben budai kamarásként nemcsak a sóregálét kezelte, hanem „az összes királyi jövedelem behajtója” is volt. Fiai később Bajmóc vár uraiként nagybirtokos urakká emelkedtek fel.” Engel p. 72-73.
- 48 "...Pipo kömyezetében, állandó kíséretében egyetlen olasszal sem találkozunk, s egyetlen édestestvérén kívül atyafiságát sem részesítette javaiban.” Engel p. 73, 76.
- 49 "...minden ízében magyar úr kívánt lenni... Tudatos asszimilációja érthető,... és azt is megmagyarázza, miért vált meg teljesen egykori szakmájától. Arról sem tudunk, hogy pénzügyekkel, kereskedelmi vállalkozásokkal foglalkozott volna. Mindez nyilván nem fért össze a magyar országnagy mimikrijével, amit - mint az eddigiekben is láttuk - oly tökéletesen magára öltött.” Engel p. 73.
- 50 "...nem igen számíthatott többre, mint hogy más polgáritokhoz hasonlóan az üzleti életben próbál majd érvényesülni.” Engel p. 55.
- 51 "A történet egyebekben is összevág mindazzal, amit Zsigmond egyéniségéről és „káderfejlesztési” gyakorlatáról tudunk.” Engel p. 57.

- 52 Short reference to Florentines who operated in Hungary as merchants, mentioning in all of the three works the same merchants and their families. Canestrini 187-188. Dell Berardenga p. 123. Cardini p.44. The original source, Rinaldo degli Albizzi only mentions the fact that they are soon to becoming relatives to Lo Spano. Della Berardenga p. 216. Cardini p. 49-50.
- 53 "Cortesìa, generosità, amor di patria, senso di solidarietà consortile, mecenatismo, gusto per il bello; questi sono gli ingredienti della fama di Filippo Scolari, una fama che dovette il suo carattere anche guerriero e cavalleresco al riflesso di molte e indubbie qualità spirituali e culturali che, in lui si sposarono a un'indubbia capacità prima amministrativa, quindi politica, infine diplomatica." Cardini p. 43. "In fondo questo generoso mecenate, questo gran signore, questo perfetto vassallo, questo soldato non sempre fortunato ma sempre valoroso e fedele..." Cardini p. 50.
- 54 Cardini p. 50.
- 55 Hașegan p.1-2.
- 56 "La întretăierea celor două veacuri, XIV și XV, se reliefează în cadrul regatului rolul activ al populației românești. Voievodatul autonom al Transilvaniei, Maramureșul, Bihorul și Banatul progresează în formele lor specifice, atât pe plan economico-social cât și politico-militar. Situate în părțile sud-estice ale regatului ținuturile românești vor avea de înfruntat încă din ultimul deceniu al sec. XIV primejdia otomană. Participarea masivă a românilor la campaniile regale s-a concretizat prin diverse forme, contribuind substanțial la stăvilirea invaziei pe linia Dunării....Formele specifice de organizare românească – obștei sătești, cnezatele și districtele – se manifestă pregnant în zonă, deși li se suprapune instituția feudală a comitatului." Hașegan p. 4.
- 57 "A familiárisokon kívűl voltak olyan népelemek is Pipo tartományában, akiknek kötelessége volt háború idején hadba szállni. A lugosi, karánsebesi és a többi vlach kerület hadakozó szabadjai, a kenézek voltak ezek, és noha valószínű, hogy harcértékük viszonylag csekély volt, a számuk nem volt jelentéktelen." Engel p. 71.
- 58 "...E di turchi per ora non si ragiono. I Dio dia loro d'affare tanto non si richordino di chrispiani. Sentendo d'avisarne lo farò di presente. Un valaccho venuto da Sangnia (Segna?) dice questa mattina chome messer lo Spano à tratto di là Piero e Niccolò Lamberteschi ..." Archivio di Stato di Firenze, Corporazioni Religiose Soppresse dal Governo Francese 78. 326. 277r. A month later, in September started the war against the Ottomans, headed by Pippo. Engel p. 66.
- 59 Jacopo di Poggio p. 176.
- 60 Hașegan p.8.
- 61 Hașegan p. 70-78.
- 62 Among them we can find the book of Bálint Hóman and Gyula Szegfű on medieval Hungary, written in 1936. They also used as primary sources non-contemporary narrative sources, like János Thúróczy's *Chronica Hungarorum*

- written in 1476 and Antonio Bonfini's, *Rerum Ungaricarum decades*, (1497).  
Papo p. 21.
- 63 Papo p. 26.
- 64 Papo p. 28.
- 65 Among the abbreviations and bibliography they also list the Hungarian National Archives (MOL) but they never refer to original sources from that archives, only to those ones which have already been published. Papo p. 187.
- 66 "Ozorai Pipo nem tartozik multunk azon nagy jellemei közé, kiknek neveit az örök dicsőség fénykoszorúja körülsugározza. Sőt mindjárt eleve megjegyzem, hogy ő sem személyisége és tetteivel, sem kora jelentékenységénél fogva a középszerűség színvonalánál magasbra nem emelkedett. Mindamellett nevéhez történetünknek oly fontos visszaemlékezései vannak kövte, sorsa pedig és szereplése Zsigmond király személyes viszonyaiba és mindazon eseményekbe, melyek ennek ötven éves uralkodasa alatt hazánk politikai hatalmának hanyatlását vonták magok után, oly mélyen be volt szöve, hogy történelmi ismereteink teljessége szempontjából életírása nem csekély érdekléssel bír." Wenzel p. 1. "Filippo Scolari, alias Pippo Spano, alias Ozorai Pipo, non fa parte di quei grandi personaggi della storia d'Ungheria che sono stati circondati da un'aura di gloria eterna; anzi, è addirittura rimasto nella mediocrità ed è tuttora poco conosciuto sia in Ungheria che in Italia, pur avendo avuto un peso considerevole nelle vicende storiche e politiche del regno magiaro in virtù del suo rapporto di collaborazione col re Sigismondo di Lussemburgo, di cui s'era guadagnato la benevolenza e la fiducia." Papo p. 15.
- 67 "...lo sviluppo dell'umanesimo e dell'arte del primo Rinascimento, della cui diffusione - come vedremo - il nostro Filippo Scolari si farà promotore nel Regno d'Ungheria." Papo, p. 20.
- 68 Papo p. 31.
- 69 Canestrini p.185-188, Papo p. 31-33.
- 70 In spite of the serious research he probably carried out at the Florentine Archives he never referred to his sources, therefore the information cannot be checked. See Passerini's manuscript at Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Fondo Passerini 156. Tables 14-15.
- 71 "... fu sempre in buona salute...Era eloquente e di eccezionale intelletto, e apprendeva con molta facilità le lingue straniere... Era previdente e coraggioso; era umano, amabile e d'indole mansueta, tollerava le critiche..." Papo, p. 35-36. "Filippo amava il lusso anche a pranzo: esigeva poche portate, purché buone e nella porzione giusta, siccome era molto misurato sia nel mangiare che nel bere. Studiava però il menù a disposizione prima di farsi servirei cibi e non voleva che nessuno assaggiasse le vivande che gli venivano servite, né amava farsi circondare di guardie del corpo. Pretendeva che anche i suoi servitori fossero modesti, educati e di buona presenza, che

vestissero in modo decoroso, che ognuno facesse il proprio compito e che regnasse la concordia tra di loro.” Papo p. 37-38.

72 “La buona fortuna del fratello Spano lo invitò facilmente in Ungheria ove anch’egli prese le armi contro i turchi, in benemerenzia in suoi buoni servigi l’imperatore Sigismondo nel 1416 lo nominò despota di Roscia, che da poco tempo lo Spano aveva riconquistata ai regi domini contro i turchi, i fiorentini volendo onorare un loro concittadino, che in lontano straniera contrade loro faceva tanto onore, e ad un tempo fare cosa grata a Sigismondo, con decreto 1416, 19 giugno ordinarono, che fosse armato cavaliere con dono di targa e pennone, e coll’arme del popolo.” Litta table III.

73 Papo p. 58. Balogh, *Andrea Scolari váradi püspök mecénási tevékenysége*  
74 Papo p. 121-136, 157, 158, 160-163, ASV Senati Secreti Regesti 4, 5. Mallett p.40-42. They were partly published in the Zsigmond kori okelvéltár III, docs. 1286, 1301, 1330, 2123, 2264.

75 “È indiscutibile, infatti, che Filippo Scolari abbia svolto un ruolo di grande peso nella politica ungherese in virtù dell’influenza che esercitava sullo stesso re Sigismondo, il quale poneva nel toscano una cieca fiducia...” He also cites the affirmations of many secondary literature on Pippo – from Bálint Hóman to Frigyes Bánfi – trying to underline in this way his affirmation. Papo p. 179.

76 “I punti in comune tra questi due personaggi sono molteplici: la carriera mercantile agli esordi, l’intelligenza, l’abilità, la versatilità, il mecenatismo, la religiosità, la generosità, il fascino esercitato sui loro contemporanei, la benevolenza acquisita da parte del popolo minuto, ma anche la brama di potere, l’amore per il lusso e la pompa, la crudeltà, un certo cinismo, l’ambizione, l’opportunismo, il nepotismo... E al pari di Gritti anche Filippo Scolari potrebbe essere definito un’principe del Rinascimento’: avido di potere e amante del lusso e della bellezza, uomo dal gran talento e indubbiamente dalla spiccata mentalità economica, crudele e spregiudicato, ma altresì religioso e magnanimo oltre misura, amante e protettore dell’arte e degli artisti. “ Papo. p. 183.

77 On Pippo’s family see Wenzel p. 57-60. Papo p. 57-61.

78 See Chapter VI. Papo p. 165-178.

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