

TOWNS AND BOOK CULTURE IN HUNGARY AT THE END OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY AND DURING THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

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In the medieval Hungarian kingdom, the formation of towns, their development and the establishment of the legal guarantees of their privileges followed the same pattern as the ones in other countries of the Central European region.¹ The system of legal privileges adopted, to a great extent, the example set by the Holy Roman Empire.² This can be seen in the change of the Latin terms used (*urbs/civitas*, *castrum/oppidum*) to the legally close counterpart expressions in German and Hungarian (*civitas/Freistadt/szabad város* and *oppidum/Markstadt/mezőváros*).³ However, only eight percent of the population of Hungary lived in towns at the beginning of the sixteenth century,⁴ while it was mainly German people

¹ Maria Boguska, "The Towns of East Central Europe from the Fourteenth to the Seventeenth Century," in *East Central Europe in Transition*, ed. Antoni Maczak, Henryk Samsonowicz, and Peter Burke (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 97–108; Vera Bácskai, "Small Towns in Eastern Central Europe," in *Small Towns in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Peter Clark (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 77–89.

² András Kubinyi, "Stadt und Kirche in Ungarn im Mittelalter," in *Stadt und Kirche*, ed. Franz-Heinz Hye (Linz: Österreichisches Arbeitskreis für Stadtgeschichtsforschung, 1995), 179–198.

³ Free cities (*civitas/Freistadt/szabad város*) existed in contrast to non-privileged towns (*oppidum/Markstadt/mezőváros*). Although oppida had certain autonomy such as for electing mayors and/or parish priests and market rights, they were subject to the jurisdiction of secular or ecclesiastical lords. In the early sixteenth century, there were some 800 oppida in Hungary. Erik Fügedi's studies on the development of medieval towns are considered fundamental. Erik Fügedi, "Die Entstehung des Städtewesens in Ungarn," *Alba Regia* 10 (1970): 101–118; Erik Fügedi, "Die Ausbreitung der städtischen Lebensform—Ungarns oppida im 14. Jahrhundert," in *Stadt und Stadtherr im 14. Jahrhundert: Entwicklungen und Funktionen*, ed. Wilhelm Rausch (Linz: Österreichisches Arbeitskreis für Stadtgeschichtsforschung, 1972), 165–192; András Kubinyi, "Einige Fragen zur Entwicklung des Städteneetzes Ungarns im XIV.–XV. Jahrhundert," in *Die mittelalterliche Städtebildung im südöstlichen Europa*, ed. Heinz Stooß (Köln: Böhlau, 1977), 164–183; András Kubinyi, "Urbanisation in the East-Central Part of Medieval Hungary," in *Towns in Medieval Hungary*, ed. László Gerevich (Budapest: Akadémia, 1990), 103–149.

⁴ See András Kubinyi, "Die Bevölkerung des Königreichs Ungarn am Ende des 15. Jahrhunderts," in *Historische Demographie Ungarns, 896–1996*, ed. Gyula Kristó (Herne: Schäfer, 2007), 66–93; Géza Dávid, "Magyarország népessége a 16–17. Században," in *Historical Demography of Hungary between 896 and 1995*, ed. József Kovácsics (Budapest: Központi Statisztikai Hivatal, 1997), 141–171.



who lived in *civitas*.⁵ By the end of the Middle Ages, on the other hand, the settlement structure of Hungary changed in a way that does not fit the *civitas-oppidum* dualism since the town-like quality would also apply to villages which, by holding regular markets, were in a way central places.⁶

Due to the Ottoman invasion and the permanent wars, the wealthier people of the towns in the Great Hungarian Plain and the nobility fled to the West, North (Upper Hungary or *Hungaria Superior*) and North-East regions, choosing the security offered by fortified towns. This process did not take place without conflicts.⁷ Clergy from the bishoprics of the regions conquered by the Ottomans also moved into the towns of these regions.

Civitas where the majority of the population was German became Protestant (Lutheran) both in Hungary and in Transylvania. The population of *oppida* with a Hungarian majority either converted to Lutheranism or, in few cases, stayed Catholic. There were very few Slavs or Romanians among town dwellers until the end of the sixteenth century.⁸ Economic growth in towns in the sixteenth century was mainly due to mining rights and mining itself as well as long-distance trade and the agrarian boom. The constant presence of armies also kept food demand high. Besides all this, a special type of town, called a fortified town in the Hungarian literature, was formed.⁹

In the period studied herein, three years stand out in terms of legal regulations of towns in Hungary:¹⁰ namely 1514, 1563 and 1608. István Werbőczy in his fundamental legal work (*Tripartitum juris Regni*

⁵ See András Kubinyi, "Zur Frage der deutschen Siedlungen im mittleren Teil des Königreichs Ungarn (1200–1541)," in *Die deutsche Ostsiedlung des Mittelalters als Problem der europäischen Geschichte, Reichenau-Vorträge 1970–1972*, ed. Walter Schlesinger (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1975), 527–566.

⁶ For a summary, see György Granasztói, *A középkori magyar város* (Budapest: Gondolat, 1980); Vera Bácskai, *A városok Magyarországon az iparosodás előtt* (Budapest: Osiris, 2002). Detailed information in András Kubinyi, "Városhálózat a késő középkori Kárpát-medencében," in *Bártfától Pozsonyig. Városok a 13–17. században*, ed. Enikő Csukovits and Tünde Lengyel (Budapest: MTA ITI, 2005), 9–36. For Transylvania (Erdély), see Enikő Rüszt Fogarasi, "Központi helyek az erdélyi középkori vármegyékben," in *Erdélyi várostörténeti tanulmányok* ed. Judit Pál and János Fleisz (Csíkszereda: Pro-Print, 2011), 20–42.

⁷ For a thorough case study, see István Rácz, *Városlakó nemesek az Alföldön 1541–1848 között*, (Budapest: Akadémia, 1988).

⁸ Representatives of these groups would have a chance to move into town during the seventeenth century, especially in its second half.

⁹ See Lajos Gecsényi, "A 16–17. századi városfejlődés történetéhez, Az erődváros megjelenése," in Lajos Gecsényi, *Gazdaság, társadalom, igazgatás. Tanulmányok a kora újkor történetéből* (Győr: Győr-Sopron Megye Győri Levéltára, 2008), 213–28.

¹⁰ See H. István Németh, "A kora újkor Magyar Királyság várospolitikájának vázlata, 16–17. Század," in *Bártfától Pozsonyig. Városok a 13–17.,* ed. Enikő Csukovits and Tünde Lengyel (Budapest: MTA ITI, 2005), 375–402.



Hungariae) used the term 'town' only for *civitas* and the term 'burger' for the population of *civitas* (1514). In 1563, King Ferdinand I issued regulations for nobles acquiring properties in towns and made them pay dues equal to those paid by the bourgeoisie. In 1608, King Mathias II granted nobles unrestricted rights to acquire properties in towns and reinforced their rights against town people.¹¹ However, in the Principality of Transylvania, the Saxon Towns (*Universitas Saxonum*) managed to maintain their privileges and the unified German character of their population until the eighteenth century. Nevertheless, the taxes paid by towns during the seventeenth century were raised drastically everywhere, which contributed to the phenomenon in cultural history usually described as the belated reception of Western European ideas and trends. The present study will describe how this phenomenon occurred in book culture.

Codex book culture reached its peak in the Hunyadi period when humanists from Italy and other countries, along with Hungarian church dignitaries, through the openness of the king, managed to establish the collection of *Bibliotheca Corvina*.¹² Compared to the collections of the contemporary European rulers,¹³ it was one of the most comprehensive libraries of ancient and contemporary humanist books.¹⁴ The example set by Mátyás Hunyadi bore its fruits during the three decades after his death, and this period of almost thirty years before the Ottoman invasion is considered a remarkable period in Hungarian bibliophily. Several towns provided homes to ateliers of codices, although each known scriptorium was

¹¹ Vera Bácskai, "Die Entwicklung und Funktion der Marktflecken nach dem Bauernaufstand," in *Aus der Geschichte der ostmitteleuropäischen Bauernbewegungen im 16–17. Jahrhundert*, ed. Zsigmond Pál Pach and Gusztáv Heckenast (Budapest: Akadémia, 1977), 303–8; Vera Zimányi, "Városfejlődés és polgárság," in *Magyarország története 1526–1686*, ed. Pál Zsigmond Pach and Ágnes R. Várkonyi (Budapest: Akadémia, 1985), 353–83; György Granasztói, "Die Urbanisierung des Donauraums in 16–18. Jahrhundert," in *Etudes historiques hongroises 1990. Publiées à l'occasion du XVIIe Congrès international des sciences historiques par le Comité national des historiens hongrois*, ed. Ferenc Glatz and Attila Pók (Budapest: Institut of History of the Hung. Acad. of Sciences, 1990), 97–128; György Granasztói, "Développement et déclin urbains dans l'espace danubien à l'époque moderne, 1500–1800," in *The First Millennium of Hungary in Europe*, ed. Klára Pap and János Barta (Debrecen: KLTE, 2002), 305–310.

¹² Csaba Csapodi, *The Corvinian Library: History and Stock*, (Budapest: Akadémia, 1973); Csaba Csapodi and Klára Csapodi-Gárdonyi, dirs., *Bibliotheca Corviniana: La bibliothèque du roi Mathias Corvin de Hongrie* (Budapest: Corvina and Helikon, 1982).

¹³ *Matthias Corvin, les bibliothèques princières et la genèse de l'état moderne*, ed. Jean-François Maillard, István Monok and Donatella Nebbiai (Budapest: OSZK, 2009).

¹⁴ Summary and bibliography in István Monok, *Les bibliothèques et la lecture dans le Bassin des Carpates, 1526–1750* (Paris: Champion, 2011), 7–30 and 225–29.

part of a religious institution.¹⁵ The question, however, is in what form and to what extent printed books were present in Jagiellonian Hungary.

The first printing house or officina moved to Buda in 1473, which is very early compared to that of western Europe. Experts agree that this could only happen as part of the cultural policy of János Vitéz (Johannes de Zredna), Archbishop of Esztergom and Royal Chancellor.¹⁶ The ambitious church dignitary already had a remarkable collection of books in his court as Bishop of Nagyvárád, where he held symposia. He also financed the Italian study tours for talented young men and established a university in Pozsony. János Vitéz died before the German printer Andreas Hess arrived in Buda (1472). He was charged with conspiracy against the king, was disgraced (1471) and imprisoned and soon afterwards died.¹⁷

We know of two books printed by Hess in 1473, after which he disappeared.¹⁸ The unknown second printer arrived in Buda only after King Matthias' second marriage, to Beatrice of Aragon (1476), and he may have been part of Queen Beatrice's entourage. His types show similarities with those of Matthias Moravus of Naples. Only four of his publications are known,¹⁹ but experts agree that he remained active between 1477 and 1480,²⁰ after which there was no printing in Hungary until 1525. These two printers established in Buda, the capital, and served the royal court with their publications. Andreas Hess published a book on the history of the Hungarians, as well as two tracts on moral philosophy (works by Gregorius the Great and Xenophon translated by Leonardo Aretino into Latin), which catered to the humanists in the court and which met the representational needs of the royal King. The unknown printer printed, on the king's order, a political tract, indulgences to finance the war against the Ottoman Turks and two books to help priests in their work. He did not

¹⁵ I refer here only to two recent studies: *Mátyás király öröksége: Késő reneszánsz művészet Magyarországon: 16–17. század*, ed. Árpád Mikó and Mária Verő (Budapest: MNG, 2008); Árpád Mikó, *A reneszánsz Magyarországon* (Budapest: Corvina, 2009).

¹⁶ Csapodi-Gárdonyi, *Die Bibliothek des Johannes Vitéz*, (Budapest: Akadémia, 1984); Ferenc Földesi, ed., *A Star in the Raven's Shadow, János Vitéz and the Beginnings of Humanism in Hungary* (Budapest: OSZK, 2008).

¹⁷ József Fitz, *Andreas Hess der Erstdrucker Ungarns* (Gyoma: Kner, 1937); Judit V. Ecsedy and Ilona Pavercsik, *A magyarországi könyvkiadás és kereskedelem 1800-ig* (Budapest: Balassi, 1999), 19–25.

¹⁸ The Hungarian National Bibliography provides a thorough description of the history of each publication. A bibliographic summary of the history of each publication can also be found in Gedeon Borsa et al ii, *Régi Magyarországi Nyomtatványok* (RMNy) — *Res litteraria Hungariae vetus operum impressorum 1473–1600* (Budapest: Akadémia, 1971). The Publications of Andreas Hess in RMNy 1 and 2.

¹⁹ RMNy 3, 4, 5 and 6.

²⁰ Judit V. Ecsedy and Ilona Pavercsik, *A magyarországi könyvkiadás*, 25–28.

serve the educational needs of the town dwellers of Buda or their entertainment. The German townspeople of Buda, however, realized the importance of printed books and knew that the making of paper in Hungary did not exist at the time and would have been very expensive.²¹ It was cheaper to have a work published abroad and then imported and sold in Hungary. We know of nine publishers in Buda in this period; all of them were German.²² They ordered sixty-one books between 1480 and 1525.²³ The contents of the publications show that the publishers did not take risks; one can find service books of Hungarian dioceses, a few grammar books, the *Legendaria* of Hungarian saints, the *Regulae* of the Order of Saint Paul, the First Hermit founded in Hungary, commentaries of the Holy Scriptures and manuals for priests among the sixty-one publications. Under King Mathias' rule Theobald Feger ordered from Erhard Ratdolt's printing house in Augsburg the publication of János Thuróczy's *Chronica Hungarorum*. This must have been a success because there were three editions in the year 1488; Ratdolt made two editions of it²⁴ after the first edition in Brunn.²⁵ Intellectual life in Buda and the intelligentsia who moved here provided a safe market for publishers and the book trade and, apart from printed publications, manuscripts remained in use.²⁶ The connections the royal court had with humanists of the universities in Vienna, Cracow and

²¹ István Bogdán, "Volt-e papírmalom Budán?," *Századok* 111 (1977): 544–60; István Bogdán, "Az írásbeliség anyagi-technikai alkotóelemei," in *A magyar hivatali írásbeliség fejlődése, 1181–1981*, ed. István Kállay (Budapest: ELTE, 1984), 606–25; Gedeon Borsa, "Druckorte und Papiermühlen des XV. und XVI. Jahrhunderts in Ungarn," in *Villes, imprimerie et moulins à papier du XIVe au XVIe siècle* (Bruxelles: Crédit Communal de Belgique, 1976), 239–45.

²² Theobald Feger (1484–1498); Georg Ruem (1493); Joannes Paep (1497–1511); Joannes Hertzog (1500); Urban Kaym (1503–1520); Matthias Milcher (1511–1519); Jacob Schaller (1512–1516); Stephanus Heckel (1512–1514); Prischwicz (1523–1525).

²³ *A budai könyvtárak kiadványai, 1480–1525*. Data collected by Gedeon Borsa and Sándor Dörnyei in *Régi Magyar Könyvtár, vol. 3* (RMK III); *Magyar szerzőktől külföldön 1480-tól 1711-ig megjelent nem magyar nyelvű nyomtatványoknak könyvészeti kézikönyve* (Budapest: OSZK, 1996), 5: 249–82. See Gedeon Borsa, "L'Activité et les marques des imprimeurs de Buda avant 1526," in *Le livre dans l'Europe de la renaissance. Actes du XXVIIIe Colloque internationale d'études humanistes de Tours*, dir. Pierre Aquilon and Henri-Jean Martin (Paris: Promodis, 1988), 170–81.

²⁴ Károly Szabó and Árpád Hellebrant, *Régi Magyar Könyvtár, vol. 3* (RMK III) *Magyar szerzőktől külföldön 1480-tól 1711-ig megjelent nem magyar nyelvű nyomtatványoknak könyvészeti kézikönyve* (Budapest: Akadémia, 1886–1891); Amendments, additions, corrections. Vols. 1–5. (RMK III. pótlások) ed. Sándor Dörnyei and Irma Szálka (Budapest: OSZK, 1990–1996) Johannes Thuróczi, RMK III. 15; RMK III. 731.

²⁵ RMK III. 16.

²⁶ József Köblös, *Az egyházi közélet Máttyás és a Jagellók korában* (Budapest: MTA TTI, 1994); András Kubinyi, "Írástudás és értelmiségi foglalkozásuk a Jagelló-korban," in *A magyar hivatali írásbeliség fejlődése, 1181–1981*, ed. István Kállay (Budapest: ELTE, 1984), 186–208; András Kubinyi, "A Jagelló-kori értelmiség," in *Az értelmiség Magyarországon a*



northern Italy²⁷ or with the Venetian atelier of Aldo Manutio²⁸ all prove that the importing of books in the first three decades of the sixteenth century must have been significant. Besides humanist publications from Basel,²⁹ Venice³⁰ and Paris,³¹ books from Vienna and Augsburg were very much present too.

One can provide an outline of the use of books in other towns in Hungary in the Jagiello period by using archival sources and the handwritten notes in the remaining books. A few inventories we have from this period and the inventories of church institutions do not help us to distinguish between printed books and manuscripts in the collections in question.³² There is no example of a collection where we have inventories from before and after 1450. With reservations, we can say that chapter libraries such as the ones in Veszprém, Pozsony and Zagreb, the collections of which are known from before the invention of the printing press,³³ must

16–17. *Században*, ed. István Zombori (Szeged: Móra Ferenc Múzeum, 1988), 7–21; András Kubinyi, “Polgári értelmiség és hivatalnokréteg Budán és Pesten a Hunyadi- és a Jagellókorban,” in *Tanulmányok Budapest középkori történetéről*, ed. István Kenyeres and Péter Kis and Csaba Sasfi (Budapest: Budapest Fővárosi Levéltár, 2009), 599–619; András Kubinyi, “Spielleute und Musiker von Buda (Ofen) in der Jagello-Epoche,” *Studia Musicologica (Budapest)* 7 (1967): 77–97.

²⁷ Imre Trencsényi-Waldapfel, *Erasmus és magyar barátai* (Budapest: Officina, 1941).

²⁸ Donatella Nebbiai, “Les réseaux de Matthias Corvin,” in *Contribution à l’histoire intellectuelle de l’Europe: Réseaux du livre, réseaux des lecteurs*, ed. Frédéric Barbier and István Monok (Budapest and Leipzig: OSZK and Universitätsverlag Leipzig, 2008), 17–28; *Rapporti veneto-ungheresi all’epoca del Rinascimento*, dir. Tibor Klaniczay (Budapest: Akadémia, 1975).

²⁹ István Monok, “Der Basler Buchdruck und die Gelehrtenbibliotheken in Ungarn im 16. Jahrhundert,” in *Orbis Helveticorum, Das Schweizer Buch und seine mitteleuropäische Welt*, ed. Viliam Čičaj and Jan-Andrea Bernhard (Bratislava: SAV, 2011), 33–39.

³⁰ István Monok, “A velencei könyvkiadás és Közép-Európa a 15–16. században,” in “*Ez világ, mint egy kert ...*” *Tanulmányok Galavics Géza tiszteletére*, ed. Orsolya Bubryák (Budapest: MTA Művészettörténeti Kutatóintézet and Gondolat, 2010), 347–54.

³¹ István Monok, “L’expansion du livre parisien en Europe Central aux 15e–18e siècles,” *Histoire et civilisation du livre. Revue internationale*, 7 (2012): 67–86.

³² Most of these data were published by Béla Iványi, “Könyvek és képek a Szepességben a XVI–XVII. században,” *Közlemények Szepes vármegye Múltjából* 13 (1912): 69–78; János Herner and István Monok, eds., *A magyar könyvkultúra múltjából. Iványi Béla cikkei és anyaggyűjtése* (Szeged: JATE, 1983) In the serie Adattár XVI–XVIII. Századi szellemi mozgalmak történetéhez — Material for the Study of the History of Intellectual Trends from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Centuries (see above Adattár), vol. 11. For a bibliographical grouping of data sources, listing the surviving books, itemized description of latent books as well as data of lost books, see Csaba Csapodi and Klára Csapodi-Gárdonyi, *Bibliotheca Hungarica. Kódexek és nyomtatott könyvek Magyarországon 1526 előtt*, vols. 1–3 (Budapest: MTAK, 1989–1994).

³³ “Les bibliothèques des chapitres de Veszprém, de Presbourg et de Zagreb d’après leurs inventaires,” in *Formation intellectuelle et culture du clergé dans les territoires Angevins*



have grown at the turn of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, but we cannot support the point with evidence. In a few cases, however, we know the composition of a few book collections between 1470 and 1530.

The most well-known medieval collection of books in Hungary is the collection of Lőcse. This library was founded by the Brotherhood of the Clergy in Szepes. It is of great importance to us because it was founded at the same time as similar libraries of similar brotherhood movements. Their members, who lived in isolation and had very limited access to books, even invented a very modern way of sharing the books.³⁴ We have inventories from the beginning of the fifteenth century and the increase of books can also be traced due to the documents related to Father Johann Henckel, who lived at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The town of Lőcse kept buying books for this library until the end of the sixteenth century, when the majority of the population was already Lutheran. They sold the entire collection to Ignác Batthyány, Bishop of Transylvania in 1797, and the hand-written notes of the incunabula can be studied in his library in Gyulafehérvár.³⁵ As a result of these studies, one can state that seventy-five volumes (ninety-one texts) of incunabula of the Gyulafehérvár Library were part of the Lőcse Collection in the fifteenth century. The number of books coming from a given place of publication (Nürnberg, Augsburg, Ulm, Cologne, Venice, Milan, Basel, Rome, and Lyon) is, in essence, related to the distance; the farther the place, the fewer the books imported from that publisher. It is surprising that from Cracow, the closest town to Lőcse today, we have only one incunabulum. The composition of the collection corresponds to the use of the library; there are the first prints of the writings of the church fathers, collections of orations, Bible commentaries and papal letters. Seventy printed books of the sixteenth century from the Lőcse Collection can be traced back. A study of the notes written in these volumes enables a description of two phenomena. One of them is the case of Johann Henckel, while the other is how medieval books were used in

(*milieu du XIIIe – fin du XVe siècle*), dir. Marie-Madeleine de Cevins and Jean-Michel Matz (Rome: École Française de Rome, 2005), 221–30.

³⁴ Florian Holik, "Die erste gelehrte Gesellschaft in Ungarn," *Ungarische Jahrbücher* 2 (1923): 383–99; András Vizkelety "Die Fraternitas XXIV plebanorum civitatum regalium in Oberungarn und der Handschriftenbestand Zipser Pfarreibibliotheken," in *Pfarreien im Mittelalter: Deutschland, Polen, Tschechien und Ungarn im Vergleich*, ed. Nathalie Kruppa (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2008), 327–38.

³⁵ *Catalogus incunabulorum Bibliothecae Batthyányanae* (Szeged: JATE, 1965); Eva Selecká Márza, *A Középkori Lőcsei Könyvtár* (Szeged: Scriptum, 1997). On pages 119 and 120, the author identifies four more printed books which are not kept in Gyulafehérvár and which used to belong to the Lőcse Collection.

towns converted to Lutheranism. Johann Henckel (1486–1539) who studied theology, philosophy and law in Cracow, Vienna, Bologna and Padova between 1506 and 1510, became a priest in Lőcse in 1510 and collected all the books of churches in the Szepes County and in Lőcse. He took care of the ordering of new books as well.³⁶ Some of his books stayed in Lőcse even after he left for Kassa and later, in 1520, became the confessor of Queen Maria Habsburg. He exchanged letters with Erasmus and was a friend of Miklós Oláh, humanist historian courtier of Queen Maria Habsburg and later Archbishop of Esztergom. Henckel was in touch with Martin Luther and Philipp Melanchthon as well and, at the end of his life, he even converted to Lutheranism. His library, which enriched the public collection of the town, was humanist: he had the most updated versions of the church fathers' writings by contemporary humanists and Lutheran incunabula. The town itself, when adding new volumes to his medieval collection in the sixteenth century, broadened the range of Lutheran books. This latter tendency was general everywhere in the Carpathian Basin (both in Hungary and in the Principate of Transylvania). When a town municipality became in majority Lutheran, they did not destroy the library of medieval church institutions (those of the chapters or religious orders), but made the books available for the public town libraries or the newly-founded schools. School libraries were very often the public libraries of the towns as well, as is documented in the case of Brassó³⁷ or Kassa.³⁸

The case of Lőcse can be summarized in the following way: Lőcse was the regional centre of Szepes County, and its population was German. Later on in the sixteenth century, several Hungarian noble families moved into town. The books of several parish libraries were gathered at the end of the fifteenth and at the beginning of the sixteenth centuries. This collection was taken care of by a priest of humanist education (in this case by Johann Henckel). He bought new books and modernized the

³⁶ On Henckel's life and intellectual horizon, see a comprehensive study of Zsigmond Jakó, "Várad helye középkori," in Zsigmond Jakó, *Írás, könyv, értelmiség: Tanulmányok Erdély történelméhez* (Bukarest: Kriterion, 1976), 138–69. More precisely on Henckel, pages 162–65, since Henckel was also Prebend of Nagyvárad for a short period.

³⁷ Sixteenth-century catalogues of Protestant town and school libraries are an important source for studying this aspect and for gaining insight into the religious changes, before the Reformation, in the books in those libraries. See *Erdélyi könyvesházak IV/1–2. Bibliotheken in Siebenbürgen IV/1–2. Lesestoffe der siebenbürgen Sachsen, 1575–1750*, ed. István Monok and Péter Ötvös and Attila Verók (Budapest: OSZK, 2004); *Adattár* (16/4/1–2), 526–52; Brassó, *Bestandkatalog der Kronstädter Gymnasialbibliothek*, 1575.

³⁸ *Kassa város olvasmányai, 1562–1731*, ed. Hedvig Gácsi at al. (Szeged: Scriptum, 1990); *Adattár* 15, 115–87; *Catalogus Librorum Bibliothecae publicae Cassoviensis*, ca. 1670.

composition of the library, which later became a public library in the spirit of the Reformation. New books were added until the end of the sixteenth century, and it became the town library. There was no printing house in Lőcse in the sixteenth century and, regrettably, inventories kept in the town archives did not survive. Chronologically, the first surviving inventory (that of a Lutheran minister, Matthias Frölich, from 1635) proves well that the readings of the town people and intellectuals of Lőcse did not differ from the ones outlined in the second part of our study based on sources from other towns.³⁹

Let us take another example. Nagyvárád, the seat of the Bishop of Nagyvárád, was one of the most important towns in Hungary in the Middle Ages. The majority of its inhabitants were Hungarian. During the sixteenth century, a good number of rich merchant families moved here from regions occupied by the Ottomans. A Helvetian-type Reformed church became the dominant church in the town. In the sixteenth century, the town was turned into a stronghold against the Ottomans (as their last conquest, the Ottomans finally took Nagyvárád in 1660). Following the successful campaigns of the Transylvanian Princes taken against the Emperor, the town of Nagyvárád became the centre of *Partium Regni Hungariae* and became a key to the west part of Transylvania. The position of the Commander-in-Chief of Nagyvárád was one of the most influential political positions in Transylvania.

As Bishop of Nagyvárád, János Vitéz (Johannes de Zredna) was a most deserving successor of both Andrea Scolari (bishop from 1409 to 1426) and his immediate predecessor, Giovanni de Dominis, who died in the battle of Varna in 1444. Vitéz brought the town of Nagyvárád into the focus of attention of European humanist centres. Pier Paolo Vergerio, Pilippo Podocataro, Johannes Regiomontanus, and Georg Peuerbach are the most noteworthy names in his circle. His library did not stay in Nagyvárád, but the bishops and prebends active in Nagyvárád at the turn of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries followed in his footsteps as far as collecting books is concerned in a most admirable way, setting an example for the rich bourgeoisie of the town as well. From among the bishops, one should mention János Filipec (bishop from 1476 to 1491), Bálint Farkas (bishop from 1491 to 1496),⁴⁰ Domonkos Kálmáncsehi (bishop from 1496 to 1501),

³⁹ The inventories of Lőcse were published by Tünde Katona and Miklós Latzkovits *Magyarországi magánkönyvtárak*, vol. 2, (1580–1721) (Szeged: Scriptum, 1992); (Adattár 13/2) The book inventory of Frölich: 227–228.

⁴⁰ In his last will, he mentions 203 books. See Zsigmond Jakó, "Várád helye," 161.

and György Szatmári (bishop from 1501 to 1505). In connection with Lőcse, Henckel has been mentioned, while for Nagyvárád, one should focus on Márton Haczaki (1495–1547). After studying in Vienna and Cracow (1516–1518), he arrived in Nagyvárád, where he was appointed a prebend and, later on, a bishop. He was a known bibliophile of his time.⁴¹ After his death, his books were sold to Prince János Zsigmond Szapolyai, whose intention to develop his court library in Gyulafehérvár and also to found a university are well-documented. The bibliophilic nature of the Haczaki Library is due to its specialization in fifteenth century manuscripts. The surviving data, however, draw scholarly attention more to the text editions and the contemporary humanist books of the first half of the sixteenth century. A renowned Calvinist school was founded in Nagyvárád in the sixteenth century, the history of which, however, is only known in parts from the seventeenth century on. After the town was occupied by the Ottomans, the town archives were destroyed. This is why almost nothing is known of the books owned by the town bourgeoisie.

Nagyvárád did not have a permanent printing house. Nevertheless, Raphael Hoffhalter (1565–1568), and, later, Rudolf Hoffhalter (1570, 1584–1585), wandering printers, were offered a place there. The publication of a total of nine books is documented, but only five books are known from copies which survived from the town collections.⁴² One of these is a calendar, while the rest are Calvinist Bible translations of one book of the Bible each and a Calvinist pamphlet.⁴³

Books published in Hungary and Transylvania in the sixteenth century are very poor in quantity. The Hungarian Retrospective Bibliography registered 869 publications in 1971, while twelve more books have been documented since then.⁴⁴ The reasons why there were so few publications were general poverty, the lack of paper as raw material, illiteracy, and the fact that those who read and used books knew Latin (the official language of Hungary until 1844) and, perhaps, German. To import Latin and German books was cheaper than to publish them in Hungary. It is no wonder then that the printers, almost entirely of German origin, published books in

⁴¹ Zsigmond Jakó, "Várád helye," 138–68, 169–79.

⁴² RMNy 213, 222, 238, 258, 259, 293, 559, 560, and 572.

⁴³ Judit V. Ecsedy and Ilona Pavercsik, *A magyarországi könyvkiadás*, 61–66.

⁴⁴ RMNy. It is important to highlight the fact that this number contains the books in the Hungarian language published abroad as well (Cracow, Vienna, etc.). It is the duty of the Hungarian National Széchényi Library to look after the Hungarian Retrospective Bibliography, <http://mnb.oszk.hu/>. For comparison, it could be added that in the first half of the seventeenth century about 1,600 books were published in Hungary and Transylvania, while in the second half of the seventeenth century 2,500 publications are known.

Hungarian to meet the modest demand of local people. Eleven Romanian books (fragments from the gospels),⁴⁵ twenty-three books in Church Slavic (for the Romanian population), one Slovenian, and two Croatian and Slovakian books each were also published. There are very few books (forty-one) in German, but, surprisingly, we have sixteen Greek publications, which were school editions of authors, indicating the presence of humanist schools. To summarize, one could say that books printed in Hungary and Transylvania were mainly in Latin and in Hungarian.

Printers and presses did not always become established in towns. The wandering printers of the sixteenth century were often forced to move around due to the lack of orders, not because they expected to earn more elsewhere. Another motive for their movement was to spread the ideas of the Reformation. They were also active in villages, small towns, and the mansions of aristocrats. It was also quite common for the town community to receive well, if only temporarily, these wandering missionary printers.

In the sixteenth century, printing houses were active for a longer period only in the following five towns: Nagyszeben, Brassó, Kolozsvár, Debrecen, Bátfá, and Nagyszombat. Among these, there were only two Hungarian towns: Debrecen and Nagyszombat; the rest of the towns were German. This is true even if we know that Kolozsvár had a growing Hungarian population in the second half of the sixteenth century. Nagyszeben, Brassó and Bátfá were undoubtedly Lutheran, while Debrecen was Calvinist. Kolozsvár showed a complex picture in terms of religion practiced there since there were Lutheran Germans, Unitarians, Catholics, and, in a smaller number, Calvinist Hungarians, in the sixteenth century. This last parish became dominant there during the seventeenth century. Nagyszombat remained the only Catholic centre where there was an active book press. A good number of the institutions of the Bishopric of Esztergom moved to Nagyszombat after Esztergom was conquered by the Ottomans in 1543. One should also mention the fact that in the sixteenth century a sizable Calvinist parish was also there.⁴⁶ The fact that 682 out of 881 books published in the sixteenth century were published in one of the above-mentioned five towns (while the rest were published either abroad

⁴⁵ It is noteworthy that the majority of these are Protestant translations, which means that the new churches meant to spread their influence among the Romanian community as well.

⁴⁶ The most recent printing history monograph is Judit V. Ecsedy and Ilona Pavercsik, *A magyarországi könyvkiadás*. See also their English language website, <http://typographia.oszk.hu/>



or in smaller places) shows the growing importance of towns in the spread of book culture. Now, before concentrating on these five towns and on a case study of the editions in Brassó, let me outline briefly a more general phenomenon; namely, the fact that the towns on the fringes of western Christianity played a key role in meeting the special demands of locals in spite of the fact that their activity in the publication of books was negligible.

One of these demands came from Orthodox Christian Romanians. The Romanians of the Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia and the Romanians moving into the Carpathian Basin mainly to flee the Ottomans basically depended on Venice for the publication of their service books and for the publications used for their daily religious rites. Venice in general benefited greatly from the lack of books in Croatia, Hungary, Transylvania and the Balkans.⁴⁷ Cyrillic book printing in Venice was established after recognizing this demand. In the fifteenth century, however, the Ottomans occupied Bosnia and then the Balkans as far as the Danube and the regions outside of the Carpathians, so, by the second third of the sixteenth century, there could be no book trade between Venice and the Romanian principalities. Out of the 396 publications in Transylvania in the sixteenth century, thirty-four were in Cyrillic Church Slavic language and a few in Romanian. This shows that the merchants of Brassó, in the South East corner of Transylvania, and those of Nagyszeben, located at the foot of the pass towards Bucharest, knew the market, which had a moderate need of books. The old books in Romanian published in Gyulafehérvár, Szászsebes or Szászváros cannot be classified among the above-mentioned books since a number of the books in Cyrillic Romanian were Protestant translations of the Bible or church commentaries, meant for the Romanies of Transylvania for missionary purposes.⁴⁸ In addition to the German printers, trained Romanian printers were also active in the market (for example, Filip Moldavean, Coresi, Călin, Lorinț, Șerban Coresi).⁴⁹

⁴⁷ See István Monok, "A velencei könyvkiadás," 347–354.

⁴⁸ Judit V. Ecsedy and Ilona Pavercsik, *A magyarországi könyvkiadás*, 79–81; István Juhász, *A reformáció az erdélyi románok között* (Kolozsvár: Református Egyház, 1940); Zenovie Păclișanu, *Relatio Rumenorum e terris coronae Sancti Stephani ad Reformationem saeculis XVI et XVII; Legătura românilor de pe pământurile soroanei Sfântului Ștefan cu Reforma în secolele al XVI-lea și al XVII-lea*, Viena, 1912, ed. Andrea Mărza and Iacob Mărza (Sibiu: Editura Techno Media, 2010); Lajos Demény and Lidia Demény, *Carte, tipar, societate la români în secolul al XVI-lea* (București: Kriterion, 1986).

⁴⁹ István Monok and Edina Zvara, *Humanistes du bassin des Carpates. I. Traducteurs et éditeurs de la Bible* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008), 49–74. The Romanian editions in Cyrillic fonts with full bibliography. The description of the Transylvanian items of the Hungarian National Retrospective Bibliography (RMNy) with the history of their edition in German



The first printing house in the sixteenth century in the Hungarian kingdom was established in Nagyszeben,⁵⁰ in Transylvania, which still belonged to the Hungarian kingdom. In 1525, Valentinus Corvinus, on his return from Venice, was granted permission to establish an officina.⁵¹ Until 1600, forty-two publications were produced through the officinas of nine printers.⁵² This means that one cannot speak of a strategy or profile for publishing books there. The first three publications were calendars and a single-leaf print of prayers. In 1529, the town expelled the monks and religious orders and declared itself Lutheran. The publications following this date were mainly schoolbooks in Latin or Hungarian and texts used in schools. A booklet with medical advice was the only exception.

The founder of the printing house in Brassó, Johann Honter (1498–1549), however, was someone who had a definite strategy for publishing books.⁵³ He started higher education at the University of Vienna in 1520, then went to Cracow and Basel. After returning home, he stayed in touch with his friends, and his books were published mainly in Cracow and Basel. He was a chaplain in Brassó from 1533 and became a parish priest in 1539.⁵⁴ He converted to Lutheranism and under his leadership the thematic composition of the library collection in the local parish school was modified.

were published in German in Gedeon Borsa *Alte siebenbürgische Drucke (16. Jahrhundert)* (Köln, Weimar and Wien: Böhlau, 1996).

⁵⁰ Transylvania was separated from the Hungarian Kingdom as a vassal to the Ottoman Empire only after 1541. It had its own independent parliament as part of the Ottoman Empire until 1690 and later as Duchess (Grossfürstenthum) of the Habsburg Empire until 1848.

⁵¹ On the three publications found in 2007, see Zsolt Simon "Primele tipărituri din Transilvania: Sibiu, 1525," *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie „George Barițiu” din Cluj-Napoca* 46 (2007): 89–106; Zsolt Simon, "Az első szebeni nyomtatványok 1525-ből," *Magyar Könyvszemle* 125 (2009): 1–29; Gedeon Borsa, "Az első szebeni nyomda történetéhez," *Magyar Könyvszemle* 125 (2009): 357–361.

⁵² The nine printers were Valentinus Corvinus, Lukas Trapoldner, Martin Heusler, Martin Wintzler, Gregor Frautliger, Filip Moldavean, Georg Greuss, Johann Heinrich Crato, and Johann Fabricius.

⁵³ His career is widely detailed in numerous studies. About the foundation of his officina, his knowledge as a printer, or his published books, either in Transylvania or abroad, see proceedings of the conference in memory of the 450th anniversary of Honter's death. Judit V. Ecsedy and Gernot Nussbächer correct a number of mistakes in the literature. See *Honterus-Festschrift: Wissenschaftliche Tagung und Ausstellung zum 450. jährigen Todestage von Johannes Honterus in der Ungarischen Széchényi Nationalbibliothek*, 1999, ed. Ágnes Salgó and Ágnes Stemler (Budapest: OSZK and Osiris, 2001).

⁵⁴ See the book mentioned in the previous note *Honterus-Festschrift*, 150–190; Gernot Nussbächer, "Versuch einer bibliographie der ausländischen Ausgaben der Werke des Kronstädter Humanisten Johannes Honterus." His map of Transylvania is known from no less than 126 editions published between 1530 to 1692. His most popular books were *De grammatica libri II* (twelve editions between 1530 and 1562), and *Rudimenta cosmographiae libri duo* (eight editions between 1530 and 1599).

He himself prepared the fundamental documents of the Reformation in Barcaság, the region around Brassó, as well as the Regulations of the Transylvanian Saxon Lutheran Church (Kirchenordnung). He may have learnt printing in the towns where he went to university, especially in Basel. He founded the officina in Brassó in 1539 and published thirty-six books before his death. One aim of his publications was to spread the ideas of the Reformation, but he would not publish something which was cheaper to import from German-speaking countries. Honter is, however, well known more as a humanist printer since he published the books of a number of Greek and Latin authors for the local humanist school.⁵⁵ He also made sure the school library acquired new books.⁵⁶ For Brassó, located at the foot of the Eastern Carpathians, it was an interesting and important, albeit not well-documented event, when Honter published, in editio princeps, an unknown Greek manuscript found in a monastery in Moldavia. These texts were pieces by Pseudo-Nilus and Thalasius,⁵⁷ which became known by scholars through the re-edition of Michael Neander in Basel.⁵⁸ The Saxon merchants of Transylvania knew the world beyond the Carpathians well and they benefited from their connections. They were aware of the fact that manuscripts could still be hidden in Moldavia and Walachia and also in older monasteries. It was no coincidence that János Szapolyai, Hungarian king and Voivode of Transylvania, called for a public debate at the time when the ideas of the Reformation were becoming widespread in Hungary and in Transylvania and sent a letter to Athos to find out from the monks there how the disputed theological questions were answered in the earliest Christian texts found there.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ He published texts of Aphthonius Sophista (RMNy 32); Aristoteles (RMNy 28, 34); Augustinus (RMNy 29, 30); Ausonius (RMNy 31); Cato (RMNy 31); Cebes (RMNy 49A); Cicero (RMNy 34); Dicta sapientium ex Graecis (RMNy 37); Epictetus (RMNy 49A); Erasmus (RMNy 43); Hermogenes (RMNy 32); Hesiodus (RMNy 51); Nilus (RMK III 463, cRMK III 5275A[!]); Petrus de Rosenheim (RMNy 45, 60); Plutarchus (RMNy 41); Pseudo-Aristoteles (RMNy 46); Pseudo-Ausonius (RMNy 31); Pseudo-Nilus (RMNy 40); Pseudo-Plato (RMNy 46); Publilius (RMNy 37); Quintilianus (RMNy 34); Seneca (RMNy 38); Sextus Pythagoraeus (RMNy 37); Terentius (RMNy 61); Thalasius (RMNy 40); and Theognis (RMNy 62, 225). See Jean-François Maillard, Judit Kecskeméti and Monique Portalier, *L'Europe des humanistes: XIVe–XVIIe siècles* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998), 239.

⁵⁶ Adattár 16/4/1, 526–52.

⁵⁷ Corona, 1540, Johannes Honterus. RMNy 40.

⁵⁸ *Neilou episkopou kai martyros Kephalaia, e paraneseis, Nili piscopi et martyris capita, seu praeceptiones de vita pie, Christiane ac honeste exigenda, Graecolatine A Michaele Neandro Sorauiese conuersae et expositae*, Basileae: Ioannem Oporinum, 1559.

⁵⁹ See Ágnes Kriza, "Az ortodox polemikus irodalom kezdetei a Habsburg Monarchiában. Szapolyai János levelezése az áthoszi szerzetesekkel (1533–1534)," *Századok* 144 (2010): 1121–1164.

When selecting texts for publication the editor was well aware what objective the publications would serve: it was not their aim to publish a critical edition with scholarly notes but to make the youth of Transylvania learn the texts and the virtues discussed by the authors in them. Two prefaces prove the existence of this awareness.

One of them was written for the students of the secondary school in Brassó by Gábor Pesti (1510–ca. 1546), a Bible translator and author of a dictionary, and it came out in the Erasmus Desiderus' *Adagia* volume published by Johann Honter in 1541.⁶⁰ The other one was written by János Baranyai Decsi and came out as the preface to his translations of Sallustius in Nagyszeben in 1596.⁶¹

In his preface, Pesti listed the Greek and Latin authors Johann Honter had published until 1541 and described the editorial campaign and policy executed by the printer in Brassó. Pesti gave voice to the expectations, the hopes and *ars poetica* of the humanist generation in Hungary at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Decsi listed the Greek and Latin authors who he thought would be worth translating into Hungarian. The late humanist generation in Hungary were proponents of this list, and it was not their fault that it could only be executed later and in parts. It is, however, important to point out that these two prefaces are not concerned with the question of the Reformation. Humanist editions, Protestant school reform, and the publication of the Bible and the churchfathers in the vernacular had the same weight and importance. The objectives of the humanist and of the reformer are present in the activities and work of the outstanding printers of Transylvania within a conscious framework, and they considered both sets of values as theirs. This duality is present for all of them with shifting emphasis and with generational differences due to the differences of their places of activity or their business interests. The voices of the scholarly humanist and the reformer responsible for his congregation can both be heard in the preface by Valentin Wagner, the second printer in Brassó, written to the son of Johann Benkner, the judge of Brassó, and published in the colligate of Seneca's texts (Brassó, 1555).⁶² He enjoyed reading Seneca and it prompted him to outline briefly *Oculis et animo*, Seneca's work. He decided to publish the edition "piis rationibus motus," or, as Wagner said, "ita hoc studium meum genuino dente rodent."

⁶⁰ RMNy 43; Gustav Gündisch, ed., "Zur Lebensgeschichte des Humanisten Gabriel von Pest," *Magyar Könyvszemle* 81(1965):11–13.

⁶¹ RMNy 786.

⁶² RMNy 122.

“Clamabunt alienum me a mea vocatione facere, qui pastor et inspector dominici gregis, ab Ethicorum scriptis non abstinenceam.... Meum officium qua possum felicitate, certe optima fide et bona conscientia facio.”⁶³ Pesti can also be considered symbolic because of his activity linked to the printing house in Brassó. As a translator of the books of the Bible, he helped spread the ideas of the Reformation even though he remained Catholic. He wrote about the secondary school in Brassó as being the pride of Hungary. The country had been left without its king—he wrote the preface right after the death of János Szapolyai—was bleeding from many wounds, had undertaken advanced humanist studies, and had great need for compilations and school editions of certain authors:

Nam cum eruditio sine praesidiis librorum nulli facile contingat, locaque illa quae nobis librorum copiam facere consueverunt, ita a nobis dissita essent, ut aut raro admodum libri ad nos perferrentur, aut etiam allatorum, propter inopiam rei familiaris multis emendi potestas deesset, assiduitate diligentiaque eiusdem effectum est, ut Typographiam vobis utilissimam, et apud nos antea non visam, suis sumptibus fieri curaret ...⁶⁴

When shaping his editorial profile, Honter did consider these aspects. He did not mean to compete with big publishing centres in Western Europe when preparing a text edition, but published many books which were great for use in school education due to their didactic nature or because they were thought to be useful in moral education. The above-mentioned edition of Pseudo-Nilus (Brassó, 1540) is, of course, an exception since this was something humanist Europe did not know.⁶⁵ Both Honter and Pesti, in his preface where he praised Honter, were aware of the importance of this edition: “Sententias catholicas Nili Monachi Graeci antea nunquam impressas, ex vetusto quodam exemplari nobis quasi denuo peperit”⁶⁶

Wagner followed in Honter's footsteps for the same reasons. He chose high-level compilations of texts for school work, selecting authors who were widely accessible and suitable for moral education and Bible classes. A good example of this is Honter's edition of Petrus de Rosenheim's New Testament (Brassó, 1541).⁶⁷ On the other hand, how can one account for the large number of Greek authors and the relatively large number of Greek texts published by both printers? Teaching ancient Greek at school is no explanation for this, but rather a consequence. Both Honter

⁶³ RMNy 122.

⁶⁴ RMNy 43; Gündisch, “Zur Lebensgeschichte,” 11–13.

⁶⁵ RMNy 40.

⁶⁶ RMNy 43; Gündisch, “Zur Lebensgeschichte,” 11–13.

⁶⁷ RMNy 60.

and, even more so, Wagner were aware of their special location and the connections they themselves and the merchants of Brassó had with certain regions within the Ottoman Empire. These connections were much better than the ones of their contemporary Western European humanists. They were interested in saving the texts and, even more so, in finding the Greek sources of Christianity. Andreas Müller has written in a convincing manner about Wagner's Greek catechism that the Greek diaspora in Brassó could not be considered as a reading public and that the Romanians who knew Greek were also very few.⁶⁸ The disputes among the different movements of the Reformation and Unitarism, which became a church in Transylvania, provided enough intellectual inspiration to keep the interest of the humanist printers alive.

Humanist interest and erudition, Protestant commitment and a printer's pragmatism are explanations to the changes and shifts in their editorial policy. It is not by chance that they published very little in German and they did not take up the publication of whole oeuvres. They traded in German books and printed what the locals needed in schools and in their daily religious practice. If they could provide something new for the western European humanist world, they did it with great care and awareness (Honter's edition of Pseudo-Nilus and also Wagner's catechism can be mentioned here).

The publications of the printing houses in Kolozsvár of Georg Hoffgreff and Gáspár Heltai (especially this latter one) show the commitment to, and in many instances a bias for, the Reformation.⁶⁹ From the point of view of text preservation, the most important activity he had was the organization and the partial execution of the translation of the Bible.⁷⁰ It is true that the translation for Heltai was undoubtedly the result of the ideas of the Reformation and less a result of his interest in the text or the vocabulary of the Hungarian language. They published ancient authors only for school purposes, but several humanist texts were translated due to their activities.⁷¹ The German Heltai spoke Hungarian very well and became one of the masters of Hungarian prose. This is why his name is

⁶⁸ Andreas Müller, *Humanistisch geprägte Reformation an der Grenze von östlichem und westlichem Christentum, Valentin Wagners griechischer Katechismus von 1550*, (Mandelbachtal and Cambridge: Cicero, 2000), 60–68. See *Reformation zwischen Ost und West: Valentin Wagners griechischer Katechismus (Kronstadt, 1550)*, ed. Andreas Müller (Köln, Weimar und Wien: Böhlau, 2000).

⁶⁹ Heltai started printing in 1550, and with its 210 publications, his printing house was the most fertile officina in sixteenth-century Hungary.

⁷⁰ *Humanistes du bassin des Carpates*, 1: 109–201.

⁷¹ Béla Varjas, *Heltai Gáspár a könyvkiadó* (Budapest: MTA ITI, 1973).

written in the Hungarian way (Caspar von Heltau). He was an editor of several historical books and popular stories adapted from ancient literary texts or biblical stories, Bible translations and also literary pieces, all of which were published in Hungarian.

To summarize, one could say that the printers in Transylvania in the sixteenth century, each following a different editorial policy, all led humanist activities to preserve texts by concentrating on school authors as the most influential readings.⁷² In these activities, they were constantly mindful of the changes in book trade and of the medieval texts the Reformation movements may have needed. From the middle of the century, the language composition of the publications also changed and the number of Hungarian books grew dramatically. This was not only due to the conscious and planned translation campaign the Kolozsvár officina led but also to the fact that by then there were more commercial opportunities since German centres were happy to send simpler Latin editions besides the publications in German and on the Reformation to the eastern corners of western Christianity.

Bártfa, located in Upper Hungary near the Polish border in the Carpathians, had a very different network. At the beginning of the Reformation, the Lutheran church in Bártfa sent their ministers to be ordained (*ordinatio*) to Brieg in Silesia. On the other hand, the German merchants of Bártfa obviously had links to big Polish towns, especially to Cracow. The officina in Bártfa was founded in 1577 by David Gutgesell (1577–1599), who had been invited by the town. In 1597 another printer, Jakob Klöss, arrived in the town whose activities reached their climax in the seventeenth century. In the sixteenth century, ninety-eight publications were printed in Bártfa. These were mainly calendars, prognosticons, Lutheran pamphlets both in German and in Hungarian and Latin school editions to serve local schools. In addition to Hungarian romances (*széphistória*), the translation of the books of the Bible were printed here. It was Gutgesell who published the first book in Slovakian, which was Luther's catechism for the Slovak inhabitants of the surrounding areas.⁷³

It is worth noting that the town of Bártfa took great care in the development of the town's public library. Two book inventories were prepared in the fifteenth century, in 1460 and 1479, of the most widely known town church, the Church of Saint Egidius. The town library was enlarged with two collections at the end of the fifteenth century. One of them belonged

⁷² See Judit V. Ecsedy and Ilona Pavercsik, *A magyarországi könyvkiadás*, 30–51.

⁷³ RMNy 479.

to the church elder Georg Petri, while the other one was owned by the illuminator Balthasar Blutvogel. The town had become Lutheran by this time. Petri and Blutvogel died as church elders of the Lutheran church. In the sixteenth century, the library was used as a public town library, which helped school work as well. Their volumes were marked with printed ex libris by the end of the sixteenth century, which was the second known ex libris in Hungary. The town and its library were returned to the Catholics in the seventeenth century. The inventory made on that occasion shows the care that was taken in preserving the medieval books in the collection.⁷⁴

The oldest printing house, which has stayed active ever since its foundation in 1561, is that of Debrecen.⁷⁵ The town founded a boarding school for the followers of the Helvetian Church. This school of secondary education has become the most important one in the history of Calvinist education in Hungary. The town and the church in close connection directed the life of the secondary school as well as the officina, based on strictly orthodox Helvetian principles. Some of the printers of the sixteenth century arrived here as wandering printers and worked in the officina established in 1561 by a town decree. The printing house was moved to a new place in 1571, where it became active for a hundred years. The printers were the following: Gál Huszár, Mihály Török, Raphael Hoffhalter, András Komlós, Rudolf Hoffhalter, János Csáktornyai and Paulus Rheda, almost all Hungarian in origin. If they were German, they learnt Hungarian, since a significant part of the 158 publications printed in Debrecen in the sixteenth century came out in Hungarian.

Besides the usual school books, the profile of the printing house in Debrecen was determined by the most outstanding personalities of the local Calvinist church, so collections of orations at religious disputes and during masses came out in great number. The ministers in Debrecen meant to resist and stop even in books the spread of Antitrinitism in Hungary, which was officially accepted in Transylvania in 1568. The most outstanding figure of these religious disputes was Péter Melius Juhász (1532–1572), who also directed the translation into Hungarian of the Bible,

⁷⁴ *Katolikus intézményi gyűjtemények Magyarországon, 1526–1750*, ed. Edina Zvara (Szeged: Scriptum, 2001); Adattár 19/1, 195–202. About the ex libris, see Sándor Dörnyei, "Zur Geschichte des ungarischen Exlibris im 16. Jahrhundert," in *Armarium. Studia ex historia scripturae, librorum et ephemeridum — Studien aus der Geschichte der Schrift, der Bücher und der Periodica*, ed. Piroska Dezsényi Szemző and László Mezey (Budapest: Akadémia, 1976), 127–33; Gedeon Borsa, "Mikor és hogyan készült a bártfai ex libris?," *Kisgrafika*, 5 (1967): 381.

⁷⁵ Judit V. Ecsedy and Ilona Pavercsik, *A magyarországi könyvkiadás*, 51–55.

which was translated and published book by book. His most well-known collaborator was Tamás Félegyházi (1540–1586).⁷⁶

On the Catholic side, it was the prebend officina in Nagyszombat, founded in 1578 and supported by the Archbishop Miklós Telegdi, which published the most books in Hungarian as far as church disputes were concerned. In this atelier, which was active until 1609, fifty-eight books were published during the sixteenth century. Apart from the pamphlets on church disputes and the collections of Catholic orations, calendars and a few translations of great importance also came out here, such as Saint Augustine's *Soliloquia*,⁷⁷ which was published in 1591.

From the evidence collected, the nature of publishing in Hungary and Transylvania can be described in the following terms. During the sixteenth century, religious perspectives fundamentally changed in medieval Hungary after the country collapsed due to the Ottoman invasion. At the beginning of the century, influenced by universities in Italy, Vienna and Cracow, and following the patterns established during the reign of King Mathias Corvinus (Hunyadi Mátyás), humanist ideas, bibliophilia and the use of books became widespread. The following factors must be taken into account when considering the publishing strategies of the printing houses in the towns: the Ottoman Turks settled down in a significant part of the country, Transylvania became independent, there was constant warfare, and Reformation became widespread. The meagre book production served local needs: printers produced texts used in local schools, books for religious daily practice of the local churches, calendars, and books for the Hungarian reading public to get information in their own language. In this latter category, the translation campaign of the Hungarian humanists can be recognized.

Apart from publishing, towns and the merchants living there (and not just the ones active in publishing and binding) had an opportunity to import books that were not published locally. These imports were significant in its quantity and can be described using sources about private collections.

To briefly summarize, from the inventories of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries⁷⁸ and publications of book lists,⁷⁹ one has the

⁷⁶ *Humanistes du bassin des Carpates*, 1: 81–108.

⁷⁷ The translator was Lukács Pécsi. RMNy 671.

⁷⁸ <http://www.bibl.u-szeged.hu/eruditio/>; The printed version in *Könyvtártörténeti Füzetek, Könyvjegyzékek bibliográfiája*, vols. 1–12, ed. István Monok (Szeged and Budapest: JATE and OSZK, 1981–2006).

⁷⁹ In the series of *Adattár XVI–XVIII: Századi szellemi mozgalmaink történetéhez*, *Adattár 15: Kassa*; *Adattár 16/2: Erdélyi könyvesházak*, vol. 2, *Kolozsvár, Marosvásárhely*,

impression that a detailed description of the book culture in the towns of the Carpathian Basin at the early modern period could easily be written. Researchers might select a set of aspects through which they could authentically analyse this book culture, which could be compared to and verified with European counterparts and analogies. Working with the sources, however, one is faced with doubts since there is no aspect of analysis which is valid for all the towns of the Carpathian Basin. Each town has had old and new local histories.⁸⁰ There are even concise monographs, even if they are not the most recent ones.⁸¹ One can find studies combining aspects of economics, social science and cultural history,⁸² but most studies on the reading culture of town dwellers in Hungary take literary history or the history of education as their starting point, similar to the trends in international research (namely, Austrian,⁸³ German,⁸⁴ and British and

Nagyenyed, Szászváros, Székelyudvarhely, ed. István Monok, Noémi Viskolcz, and Sándor Tonk (Szeged: Scriptum, 1991); Adattár 13/2: *Magyarországi magánkönyvtárak*, vol. 2, Lőcse, 227–326; Adattár 18/1: *Lesestoffe in Westungarn*, vol. 1, Sopron (Ödenburg), 1535–1721, ed. Tibor Grüll et al. (Szeged: Scriptum, 1994); Adattár 18/1: *Lesestoffe in Westungarn*, vol. 2, Kőszeg (Güns), Rust (Ruszt), Eisenstadt (Kismarton), Forchtenstein (Fraknó) 1535–1740, ed. Tibor Grüll et al. (Szeged: Scriptum, 1996); Adattár 13/3: *Magyarországi magánkönyvtárak*, vol. 3, Bányavárosok olvasmányai, 1533–1750, ed. Viliam Čičaj et al. (Budapest and Szeged: OSZK–Scriptum, 2003); Adattár 16/4: *Erdélyi könyvesházak*, vol. 4.

⁸⁰ Antal Bodor and István Gazda, *Magyarország honismereti irodalma 1527–1944* (Budapest: Téka, 1984). For further information, see the volumes of the Historical Bibliography Database HUMANUS, <http://www.oszk.hu/humanus/>; ARCANUM Digital Library, <http://www.arcanum.hu/>; National Periodical Database (EPA), <http://epa.oszk.hu/>.

⁸¹ See for example, Kálmán Demkó, *Polgári családélet és háztartás Lőcsén a 16–17. században* (Lőcse: Reiss, 1882); Kálmán Demkó, *A felső-magyarországi városok életéről a 15–17. században* (Budapest: Akadémia, 1890); Kálmán Demkó, *Lőcse története, 1. köt. Jog-, mű- és művelődéstörténeti rész* (Lőcse: Reiss, 1897). The most recent study may be useful for cultural historians, it is of less use for studies into the history of reading. Ferenc Szakály, *Mezőváros és reformáció* (Budapest: Akadémia, 1997).

⁸² The best example from older studies is József Mikulík's book on Rozsnyó: *Magyar kisvárosi élet 1526–1715. Történeti tanulmány* (Rozsnyó: Kovács, 1885).

⁸³ I refer here to the proceedings' series of the annual conferences on urban history organized by the University of Linz from the 1970s: *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Städte Mitteleuropas*. Several books have been published in these series concerning the history of urban reading culture: Band V: *Die Städte Mitteleuropas im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert*, hrsg. von Wilhelm Rausch (Linz: Österreichisches Arbeitskreis für Stadtgeschichtsforschung, 1981); Band VI: *Städtische Kultur in der Barockzeit*, ed. Wilhelm Rausch (Linz: Österreichisches Arbeitskreis für Stadtgeschichtsforschung, 1982); Band XIII: *Stadt und Kirche*, ed. Franz-Heinz Hye (Linz: Österreichisches Arbeitskreis für Stadtgeschichtsforschung, 1995). Other research centers have also been working on urban culture. See *Stadt und Öffentlichkeit, Die Entstehung politischer Räume in der Stadt der Vormoderne*, ed. Stephan Albrecht (Köln und Weimar und Wien: Böhlau, 2010).

⁸⁴ Some examples are Erich Kleinschmidt, *Stadt und Literatur in der frühen Neuzeit, Voraussetzungen und Entfaltung im südwestdeutsche, elsässischen und schweizerischen Städtoraum* (Köln und Weimar und Wien: Böhlau, 1982); *Literatur in der Stadt: Bedingungen und Beispiele städtischer Literatur des 15. bis 17. Jahrhunderts*, hrsg. von Horst Brunner



American⁸⁵). The following studies belong to this trend. There is the research led by Károly Kokas on Kőszeg,⁸⁶ especially, Tibor Grüll's dissertation, which shows the focus of its analysis in its title: Literary Life and Book Collection in Sopron in the Seventeenth Century.⁸⁷ A Classic monograph detailing several towns and written by Rolf Engelsing⁸⁸ starts from a similar point of view, analysing the spread of certain intellectual movements among town bourgeoisie. A similar small monograph in Hungarian and Slovakian literature is the one written by Viliam Ľièaj on mining towns.⁸⁹ There are also some studies written by the author of the present article.⁹⁰ Similar comparative studies were also written for a Symposium in Szeged by Czech, German and Hungarian researchers.⁹¹

Back in the 1930s, researchers, when writing about urban reading culture, wanted to present and describe the readings of the bourgeoisie along with those of other social strata (especially together with the readings of nobles) and to point out the interrelations between reading culture and social movements. The dissertation of Walter Wittmann on eighteenth century Frankfurt-on-Main is an early example of this.⁹² Later on,

(Göppinger: Kümmerle, 1982); Jan Thorbecke Verlag, ed., *Stadt in der Geschichte; Stadt und kultur*, ed. Hans Eugen Specker (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1983); *Stadt und Mäzenatentum*, ed. Bernhard Kirchgässner and Hans-Peter Becht (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1997).

⁸⁵ "The Ownership of Books in England, 1560–1640: The Example of Some Kentish Townsfolk," in *Schooling and Society: Studies in the History of Education*, ed. Lawrence Stone (Baltimore and London: Hopkins University Press, 1976), 95–111. The work of Miriam Usher Chrisman on Strasbourg can serve as a model approach for any future research into Hungarian urban book culture. Miriam Usher Chrisman, *Lay Culture, Learned Culture. Books and Social Change in Strasbourg, 1480–1599* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1982).

⁸⁶ Károly Kokas, *Könyv és könyvtár a XVI–XVII. Századi Kőszegen* (Szeged: Scriptorum, 1991).

⁸⁷ Szeged, 1997, JATE BTK (PhD Diss.).

⁸⁸ Rolf Engelsing, *Der Bürger als Leser. Lesergeschichte in Deutschland 1500–1800* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1974).

⁸⁹ Viliam Ľièaj, *Bányavárosi könyvskultúra a XVI–XVIII. Században* (Szeged: Scriptorum, 1993).

⁹⁰ István Monok, "Lutherische Orthodoxie, sächsischer Philippismus und Irenismus im Lesestoffe des lutherischen Bürgertums in Ungarn," in *Bürgerliche Kultur im Vergleich. Deutschland, die böhmischen Länder und das Karpatenbecken im 16. und 18. Jahrhundert*, ed. István Monok and Péter Ötvös (Szeged: Scriptorum, 1998), 71–80; István Monok, "Nationalsprachige Lesestoffe in Ungarn im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert," in *Latein und Nationalsprachen in der Renaissance*, ed. Bodo Guthmüller (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1998), 137–50.

⁹¹ *Bürgerliche Kultur im Vergleich*. See above.

⁹² Walter Wittmann, *Beruf und Buch im 18. Jahrhundert, Ein Beitrag zur Erfassung und Gliederung der Leserschaft im 18. Jahrhundert, insbesondere unter Berücksichtigung des Einflusses auf die Buchproduktion, unter Zugrundelegung der Nachlassinventare des Frankfurter Stadtarchivs für die Jahre 1695–1705, 1746–1755 und 1795–1805* (Bochum: Langendreer, 1934).



French researchers took up this approach. Roger Doucet has described the erudition of the bourgeoisie and that of the aristocracy living in the royal court based on book lists and inventories of the sixteenth century.⁹³ Henri-Jean Martin, the internationally noted authority on book history, in his two-volume monumental monograph on the book culture in seventeenth century Paris,⁹⁴ not only preceded Albert Labarre's much cited monograph on Amiens,⁹⁵ but also offered a model for its method of interpretation. Both Italian researchers working in later years on Florence⁹⁶ as well as Piacenza⁹⁷ and German scholars have taken the above-mentioned two French scholars' books as models.⁹⁸ In 1979, Strasbourg, and, in May, 1980, Wageningen, hosted international congresses where the authenticity of historical sources such as inventories and minutes taken in town meetings were analysed in many instances with the help of computer technology.⁹⁹ Ingrid Bátori and Erdmann Weyrauch tried out the new methods on Kitzingen, a northern German small town, offering a full picture of the society and culture of the small town.¹⁰⁰ Richard van Dülmen's

⁹³ Roger Doucet, *Les bibliothèques Parisiennes au XVI^e siècle* (Paris: Picard, 1956). For the erudition of the nobles living in towns the results of the long research led in České Budějovice concerning the court are noteworthy. For an example, see Paul Janssens, "Die Höfe und Residenzen des belgischen Adels im Barockzeitalter (1600–1750)" and Thera Wijsenbeen-Olthuis, "Adlige Wohnstätten in den Niederlanden im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert," in *Život na dvorech barokní šlechty (1600–1750)*, ed. Sostavil Václav Bůžek (České Budějovice: Editio Universitatis Bohemiae Meridionalis, 1996), 91–115 and 117–28; Petr Mat'a, "Das Ausklingen der Bedeutung der ländlichen Residenzen," in *Aristokratické rezidence a dvory v raném novověku*, ed. Sostavil Václav Bůžek and Pavel Král (České Budějovice: Editio Universitatis Bohemiae Meridionalis, 1999), 139–62.

⁹⁴ Henri-Jean Martin, *Livre, pouvoirs et société à Paris au XVII^e siècle: 1598–1701*, vols. 1–2 (Genève: Droz, 1969).

⁹⁵ Albert Labarre, *Le livre dans la vie Amiénoise du seizième siècle, L'enseignement des inventaires après décès 1503–1576* (Paris and Louvain: Neuwelaerts, 1971).

⁹⁶ Christian Bec, *Les livres des Florentins (1413–1608)* (Firenze: Olschki, 1984).

⁹⁷ Vittorio Anelli, Luigi Maffini and Patrizia Viglio, *Leggere in provincia, Un censimento delle biblioteche private a Piacenza nel Settecento* (Bologna: Mulino, 1986).

⁹⁸ Bernd Moeller, "Stadt und Buch. Bemerkungen zur Struktur der reformatorischen Bewegung in Deutschland," in *Stadtbürgertum und Adel in der Reformation, Studien zur Sozialgeschichte der Reformation in England und Deutschland*, ed. Wolfgang J. Mommsen (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1979), 25–48; Erdmann Weyrauch, "Bürger und Bücher. Informationen über ein Arbeitsvorhaben zur Geschichte des Buchbesitzes im 16/17. Jahrhundert," *Wolfenbütteler Barock-Nachrichten* 8 (1981): 150–54.

⁹⁹ Bernard Vogler, ed., *Les actes notariés, Source de l'histoire sociale XVI^e–XIX^e siècles* (Strasbourg: Istra, 1979); Ad van der Woude and Anton Schuurman, ed., *Probate inventories, A new source for the historical study of wealth, material culture and agricultural development* (Wageningen: HES, 1980).

¹⁰⁰ Ingrid Bátori and Erdmann Weyrauch, *Die bürgerliche Elite der Stadt Kitzingen: Studien zur Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte einer landesherrliche Stadt im 16. Jahrhundert* (Tübingen: Klett-Cotta, 1982). See "Bücher im Alltag niedersächsischer Bürger im 16. und 17.

monograph followed in their footsteps in depicting the full spectrum of urban life.¹⁰¹

The books noted are very important for researchers of the history of reading because the history of everyday life (*histoire de la vie quotidienne*, *Alltagsgeschichte*) has been a very influential trend in the historiography of European nations since the 1930s, with groundbreaking manuals.¹⁰² Those comprehensive summaries described book culture using statistics of the books published in the country in question or available in book trade. Archival sources and inventories related to the history of reading were less widespread. The rich sources available for the western European nations allowed them to depict each aspect of urban life of town bourgeoisie in detail, and each researcher could specialize in the history of a certain aspect (clothes, jewels, interior design, fine art, family holidays, etc.). Book or reading culture, thus, became either a separate discipline or a (separate) chapter in books describing everyday life. In most cases, however, it is just mentioned that reading was widespread, and in the homes of townspeople characteristically confessional books for everyday devotion, editions used in schools, as well as calendars and entertaining writings were naturally present.

The book production of the Carpathian Basin was rather meagre. From this known fact, one can make some inferences, although the book culture of a certain town cannot be entirely described based on the fact of this meagre production.¹⁰³ The study written by Zsigmond Jakó in 1957 about the material culture of the bourgeoisie in Kolozsvár¹⁰⁴ still has much to

Jahrhundert," in *Stadt im Wandel, Kunst und Kultur des Bürgertums in Norddeutschland 1150–1650*, ed. Corel Mecksepper (Stuttgart: Cantz, 1985).

¹⁰¹ Richard van Dülmen, *Kultur und Alltag in der frühen Neuzeit*, vol. 2, *Dorf und Stadt* (München: Beck, 1992).

¹⁰² The most recent Hungarian and Slovakian studies working on urban development in the Carpathian Basin have used western European research methods, developed on the basis of western European documents. Basic research, however, has been completed only in part. In the most recent studies one can find different standards of scholarly research. See András Kubinyi und József Laszlovsky, eds., *Alltag und materielle Kultur im mittelalterlichen Ungarn* (Krems: Medium aevum quotidianum, 1991). In Slovakian history, there is a trend in the history of everyday life. See for example, Viliam Čičaj and Othmar Pickl, eds., *Städtisches Alltagsleben in Mitteleuropa vom Mittelalter bis zum Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Bratislava: SAV, 1998).

¹⁰³ Katalin Péter, "Aranykor és romlás a szellemi műveltség állapotában," *Történelmi Szemle* 26 (1984): 80–102; Katalin Péter, "A bibliaolvasás mindenkinek szóló programja," *Századok* 119 (1985): 1006–8.

¹⁰⁴ Zsigmond Jakó, "Az otthon és művészete a XVI–XVII: Századi Kolozsváron (Szempontok reneszánszkor művelődésünk kutatásához)," in *Emlékkönyv Kelemen Lajos születésének nyolcvanadik évfordulójára* (Bukarest: Tudományos Könyvkiadó, 1957),

offer us not only because it introduced this genre in Hungarian literature parallel to its introduction into western European scholarship, but also because it combined the approaches used by Béla Radvánszky¹⁰⁵ and Béla Iványi¹⁰⁶ in their respective research. Zsigmond Jakó presented the erudition of the bourgeoisie by describing their books within their household alongside descriptions of the houses' interior design, as well as by exploring both the books published in Kolozsvár and the inventories found in archival sources in connection with book culture. One could say, therefore, that our initial statement about not having a study in Hungarian historical research which would place urban book culture organically into the perspective of contemporary urban life is not true. Unfortunately, Jakó stated already in the title of his study the fact that he was exploring the material culture exclusively of the bourgeoisie and not that of the nobles and the clergy who lived in towns. One should add here that town archives could not preserve documents in this regard since these were kept in the archives of the families and the churches in question and they might be found there.

In spite of the fact that social history and urban social history were disciplines in which research could have been done during the almost half a century long period after World War II, very few studies have actually been made of the life of the nobility who lived in Hungarian towns.¹⁰⁷ As far as nobles living in oppida are concerned, István Rácz summarized the research carried out around the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and also his own studies based on archival findings, in his articles and books.¹⁰⁸ His research, however, concentrated mainly on the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries, so Rezső Zimmermann's writing is the most updated summary concerning the sixteenth and seventeenth

361–93; Gyöngy Kovács Kiss followed Jakó's legacy in Gyöngy Kovács Kiss, *Rendtartás és kultúra, Századok, mindennapok, változások Erdélyben* (Marosvásárhely: Mentor Publishing House, 2001), 40–59.

¹⁰⁵ Béla Radvánszky, *Magyar családélet és háztartás a XVI. és XVII. században*, vols. 1–3 (Budapest: Hornyánszky, 1879).

¹⁰⁶ Béla Iványi collected and published archival sources of book history all through his life. For his collection, see *Adattár* 11.

¹⁰⁷ In this regard, it is worth studying historical bibliographies as well as the repertoria of historical periodicals. See for example, *A magyar történettudomány válogatott bibliográfiája 1945–1968* (Budapest: Akadémia, 1971), 235–238.

¹⁰⁸ István Rácz, *Városlakó nemesek az Alföldön 1541–1848 között* (Budapest: Akadémia, 1988). A similar study in István Rácz, *Protestáns patronátus, Debrecen város kegyurasága* (Debrecen: Kossuth Egyetemi Kiadó, 1997).

centuries.¹⁰⁹ As for *civitas* (Freistadt/szabad város), we only have Kassa¹¹⁰ and Brassó,¹¹¹ presented in the book by György Granasztói, as well as the study made by Zsuzsanna Ujváry of the ethnic and political changes of the bourgeoisie in Kassa.¹¹² These studies, understandably, do not touch upon book culture.

What chances do we have to get a full view of book culture of the towns in the Carpathian Basin in the early modern age? As far as published books are concerned, the situation is quite good, since the volumes of the National Retrospective Bibliographies (RMNy and RMK) are available with their addenda. We have data of the libraries of schools, churches and secular institutions in towns and inventories and surviving book lists of their collections. While data attesting to the readings of the bourgeoisie are abundant, there are, however, very few documents concerning the nobles living in towns. Matthias Ainfalt (1630),¹¹³ a noble man who gained civic rights in Sopron, and Wolfgang Roll (1589),¹¹⁴ a count living in Körmöcbánya, are not typical examples for a book collection of a nobleman living in a town since by gaining civic rights these two gentlemen entered town administration and this is why their book inventories survived in the town archives. Both collections of books are more similar to the libraries of contemporary town bourgeoisie than those of Hungarian nobility of their time.

In connection with the clergy living in towns, church officials and their book collections are taken into consideration herein. It is our belief that their collections and the libraries of church institutions in towns such as Pozsony, Nagyszombat and the seats of the bishops should be considered

¹⁰⁹ Rezső Zimmermann, "A nemességnek a városokba való telepedése a XVI–XVII: Században," in *A nyíregyházi Ág. Hitv. Ev. Főgimnázium XXXX-ik értesítője az 1903–1904-ik iskola évről* (Nyíregyháza: Iskola, 1904), 3–32. As far as each town is concerned, this problem is in part addressed by modern historical studies.

¹¹⁰ György Granasztói, *A városi élet keretei a XVI. századi Magyarországon. Kassa társadalma a XVI. század derekán* (PhD diss., Budapest, 1976).

¹¹¹ György Granasztói, "Társadalmi tagozódás Brassóban a XV. század végén," *Századok* 106 (1972): 350–399.

¹¹² Zsuzsanna J. Ujváry, "Kassa város polgársága a 16. század végén és a 17. század első felében," *Történelmi Szemle* 21 (1979): 577–591; Zsuzsanna J. Ujváry, "Kassa polgárságának etnikai és politikai változásai a 16. század közepétől a 17. század első harmadáig," in *A magyar polgári átalakulás kérdései: Tanulmányok Szabad György 60. születésnapjára*, ed. Iván Zoltán Dénes, András Gergely and Gábor Pajkossy (Budapest: ELTE, 1984), 9–36. See also István H. Németh, *Kassa város archontológiája: Bírák, belső és külső tanács 1500–1700* (Budapest: Fons, 2006).

¹¹³ Adattár 18/1, 50–51.

¹¹⁴ Adattár 13/3, 228–31.

when describing the cultural profile of a town. Pozsony, the capital of the Hungarian kingdom from 1541 to 1848, deserves additional note. This town hosted most of the Parliamentary sessions, and aristocrats did their best to keep a house there. It also hosted the Royal Chamber, the central governmental office, whose clerks and officials were all well-versed, so one should not reach a hasty conclusion simply based on the fact that there was no *officina* in Pozsony. It should also be kept in mind that the part of the town archives where inventories of the town bourgeoisie of the sixteenth century were kept was destroyed.

We have described the reading culture of the bourgeoisie of the Carpathian Basin in general in several of our studies. One should, however, highlight the fact that the towns in Hungary at the turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were on the same level as European towns on average in terms of the number of books, the modernity of the books and also the intellectual trends received. The same is definitely not true for the end of the seventeenth century, and even less true of the eighteenth century.¹¹⁵

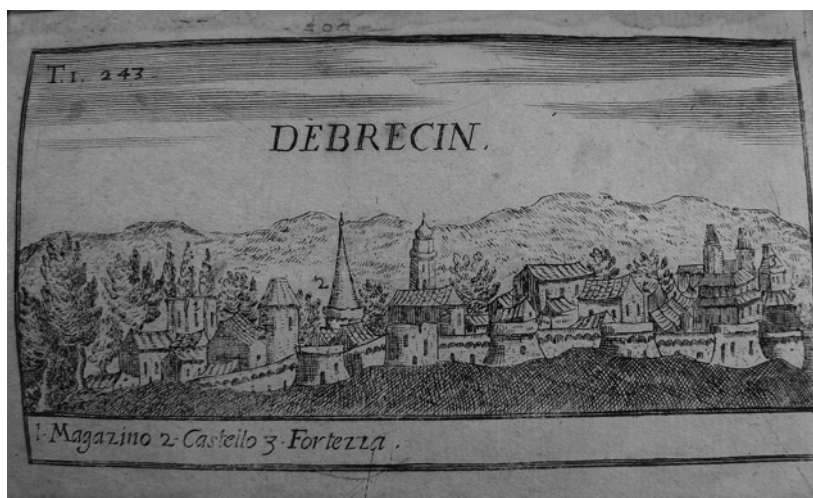
Regardless of whether they survived the century in question or not, near contemporary inventories, or, in especially fortunate cases, catalogues made of the libraries of institutions prove well this point,¹¹⁶ since by the beginning of the seventeenth century the forms of libraries present in any Protestant European town were also established in Hungary. We should not forget the fact that the majority of our towns were predominantly Protestant in this period, a large number of them German and Lutheran. So it goes without saying that an analogy is to be found in German territory, especially in the German principalities. These are the collections, especially legal ones, of town councils, *bibliotheca publica*, the medical collections of hospitals and pharmacies, and the public collections of scholarly circles. The documents examined show the presence

¹¹⁵ For a summary, see Edit Madas and István Monok, *A könyvkultúra Magyarországon a kezdetektől 1730-ig* (Budapest: Balassi, 1998), 160–164. See also Gábor Farkas, “A 16–17. századi polgári könyvtárak típusai,” *Magyar Könyvszemle* 108 (1992): 100–21; István Monok, “Beszterce és Sopron. Egy erdélyi és egy nyugat-magyarországi város olvasmányai a XVI–XVII. században,” in *De la umanism – La luminism*, ed. Ion Chiorean (Trgu Mures: Teleki Téka, 1994), 29–42; István Monok, “Die Buch- und Lesekultur in Ungarn der frühen Neuzeit. Teilbilanz der Ergebnisse einer langen Grundlagenforschung (1980–2007),” *Mitteilungen der Gesellschaft für Buchforschung in Österreich* 10, 1 (2008): 7–31.

¹¹⁶ The collections catalogued during the seventeenth century grew continuously and the libraries where inventories were made in the middle and in the second third of the century are evidence of the book culture of the period a few decades earlier.

of these types of book collections in Selmecebánya, Besztercebánya and Kassa, but sources in Sopron, Körmöcbánya, Kolozsvár, Beszterce, Nagyszeben and Brassó indicate rich collections similar to those of the towns mentioned above.

As a conclusion, we can state that although the present state of primary research in history and cultural history in Hungary does not allow us to provide a full picture of the role that books played in the everyday life of towns, the documents in reading history and the data related to them prove that the inhabitants of the Carpathian Basin could keep informed of contemporary intellectual trends, reading and writing being part of their everyday life beyond administrative literacy. The book world developed with *officinas* and different types of libraries. Experts—doctors, teachers, ministers and even tradespeople—bought manuals, or, if they could not, they could read them in public libraries or in book collections of scholarly circles. Moreover, bourgeois patronage is very



Ill. 1. Debrecen. Bizozeri (Simpliciano), *La Sagra Lega contro la Potenza Ottomana Successi dell' Armi Imperiali, Polacche, Venete e Moscovite. . . . Tutti gli accidenti successivamente Sopraggiunti in 16. [sic] Campagne di questa sanguinosa Guerra sino alla Tregua. Con unadistinta Descrizione di tutte le Citta e Fortezze dell' Austria, Ungheria, Transilvania . . . Historia compita divisa in quattro Tomi, fatta porre in luce da Michele Luigi Mutii arricchita da cinquanta tre Ritratti de Commandanti della sagra Lega, e settanta quattro citta . . . scolpite al naturale nell' Alma Citta di Roma . . . Dedicata al . . . Sig. Antonio Grutther Duca di Santa Severina, &c.* In Nap. Nella Stampa, a spese di Michele Luigi Mutii, 1699.



Ill. 2. Honterus-printers mark. Johannes Honter, *Rvdimenta cosmographica*, [Corona: Honter], 1542.

discernible by the beginning of the seventeenth century.¹¹⁷ It allowed book culture to grow.

This development, however, stopped in part due to the consequences of the Fifteen Year War, in part to the forced Counter Reformation and later

¹¹⁷ János Heltai, "Bürgerliche Patronatstätigkeit und Lesegewohnheiten. (Die Beispiele der Familien Szegedi und Asztalos in Kaschau und Tyrnau)," in *Bürgerliche Kultur im Vergleich*, 37–44.



Ill. 3. Brassó. Georg Kreckwitz, *Totivs Principatvs Transylvaniae accurata Descriptio*. Das ist ausführliche Beschreibung des gantzen Fürstenthumbs Siebenbürgen seinen Ursprung, Aufnahm und Wachsthumb, . . . Städte . . . und Kriegshandlungen bis auf diese Zeit betreffend . . . Mit den neuesten Vorfällen und accuratesten Kupfern . . . wie auch einer Land-Carden versehen von Georg Kreckwitz aus Siebenbürgen, Nürnberg und Franckfurth in Verlegung Leonhard Loschge, 1688.

to the intolerance experienced when Hungary was incorporated into the Habsburg Empire. Then reception of the most modern and contemporary European intellectual movements came to an end and more and more belatedness can be witnessed during the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries in this respect. After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the highly developed system of Protestant institutions was demolished, and, unfortunately, the new structure which replaced them has been unable to make up for lost time ever since.