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ABSTRACT

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GEORGE OF TREBIZOND'S GRAMMAR ABSTRACT ON THE BASIS OF PRISCIAN'S „INSTITUTIONES"

TEXT AND ANALYSIS

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# The main goals of the dissertation and chapters of the study

The primary aim of the present PhD dissertation is the publication of the text of the Compendium (= **Textual publication**). The publication is based primarily on the *editio princeps* (1471), the last edition (1537), and the Berlin manuscript of the *Compendium*. The reading thus obtained is on occasion also compared to the manuscripts of the *Compendium* kept in San Daniele del Friuli and the Vatican, as well as with the Corvinian manuscript.

The concise compendium based on books i.—xvi. of Priscian's *Institutiones grammaticae* may be analysed and evaluated substantively, if the textual comparison highlights which sections of the *Institutiones* the claims of the *Compendium* stem from. Thus, the textual publication is closely related to the following work procedure: to supply the text of the *Compendium* section by section (sentence by sentence) with references (concordance) (= **Textual publication, references after each section**). Accordingly, several conclusions may be drawn:

- On the parts where Trapezuntius differs from Priscian's methods, logic and order;
- On the parts where Trapezuntius does not rely on Priscian, but rather on others.

In possession of the comparison results, general conclusions may be made concerning Trapezuntius's method of work, which will be elaborated in a separate paper. In possession of the concordance, an opportunity is given for analysing cardinal issues in a separate study (=**Comparative analysis**).

Having fully familiarised ourselves with the method of extracting, a case study is developed focusing on three nouns (*faex, saepes* and *pecus*) in order to locate the *Compendium* among medieval and humanist grammar books used in 15th century Hungary (and the first third of the 16th century). (=**Methodological problems in Latin grammar books used in 15th century Hungary**).

The publisher's notes in the last edition of the *Compendium* (1537) make allusions to the applicable works of Lorenzo Valla. Erasmus, Thomas Linacre and others. By comparing the *Compendium* and the works of these humanists, the answer to the question of how 16th century users (readers) saw the *Compendium* will be sought after. It is thus implied that at the further reception of the *Compendium* is also studied. (=**„Grammaticam Latinam phrasi continua scriptam interrogandi sale condire voluit." Quintilianus, Valla, Erasmus and Linacre in a Priscian Compendium, 1537.**)

In the introductory chapters, the use of Trapezuntius's works in Hungary and his Hungarian contacts are described (=**Trapezuntius codices, Trapezuntius Corvinas**). Trapezuntius was a decisive figure in 15th century Italian humanism. His knowledge and methods reflected the features of Byzantine scholarship. Therefore Trapezuntius and his activity will not be discussed in isolation, but rather as integrated in the Hungarian network of his compatriots. (= **„Propugnacula Christianitatis – studia humanitatis". Byzantium and the relations of Byzantine humanists with Hungary in the middle third of the 15th century).**

There is a vast literature concerning the Greek predecessors, medieval impact and role in the renaissance of the *Institutiones*. The present dissertation is limited to the relations between the works of Trapezuntius and Priscian. Therefore, only a literature review is provided for the methodology of *Institutiones* and its position within the history of grammars, briefly mapping out the findings of Hungarian analysts (=**Priscian's life, works, impact in the middle ages and the 15th century, his presence in Hungary. Trapezuntius. Renaissance Humanism in Hungary**). The dissertation ends with a cumulative **Bibliography**.

**"Propugnacula Christianitatis – studia humanitatis". Relations between Byzantium, Byzantine humanists active in Italy and Hungary in the middle third of the 15th century**

Starting with the successful defence of Nándorfehérvár, in the anti-Turkish propaganda Hungary was often referred to as the Bastion of Christianity, a name earlier applied to Constantinople. Byzantium, pressed by the Turks and dwindled to almost negligible as compared to its earlier size, was expecting help not only from the Pope and Venice, but also from Hungary, the strongest state in contemporary Central Europe, which was also threatened by the Ottoman Empire. Enjoying outstanding prestige due his fights against the Turks, János Hunyadi understood that Ottoman conquerors should not only be kept away from Hungary's borders but should be expelled altogether from the whole of Europe.

In the knowledge of contemporary Hungary's political and military weight, it is understandable why reports about Hungary and events there are so frequent in Byzantine historiographers' works in the half century preceding the fall. The fall is described by Georgios Sphrantzes, Ducas, Michael Critobulos and Laonicos Chalcocondyles.

In addition to the real political contacts detectable through historical documents, Byzantium had another thread too tying it to contemporary Hungary. The main actors of the cultural influence and intellectual wave were Greek émigrés fleeing Byzantium. The main scene of their activity was Italy rather than Byzantium or the Balkan Peninsula. It is worth a thought that while Byzantine historiographers did not have a strong impact on 15th century Italian (thus Western and Central European or Hungarian) humanism, many of the Byzantines active in Italy played a major role in the development and strengthening of *studia humanitatis.*

One of the most crucial elements and results of Renaissance humanism, namely the widespread direct study of the Greek language and literature would not have been possible without the contribution of Greek émigrés from the (former) Empire to (primarily) Italian towns (Venice, Florence, Rome, etc.). Their immigration took place in several waves from the late 14th to the 16th century. In the area of their taking up contacts with the west, the 1438-39 Council of Ferrara-Florence was regarded as a milestone. Many of them were highly educated scholars at home in classical Greek, who in their new home were engaged in education, copying manuscripts, publishing classical authors and later in preparing them for printing. In the 1460s, the Italian Golden Age of Byzantine scholars, in Florence  Ioannes Argyropulos, in Bologna Andronicos Callistos, in Padua Demetrios Chalcocondylas, in Milan, Naples and Messina Constantinos Lascaris, while in other Italian towns Andronicos Contoblaces and Demetrios Castrenos were teaching Greek. Theodoros Gazes was active in Naples and Rome, Georgius Trapezuntius worked as a translator and teacher in Rome and Venice. Cardinal Bessarion, in turn, made a memorable conribution by supporting the Greeks.

Italian towns (e.g. Venice) involved in Mediterranean trade always turned towards Byzantium with heightened interest. The Greek *exodus* brought along to the West the thriving scholarly literature of an empire seeing its final days, with its Platonic-Aristotelian traditions, textual critical considerations and collection of text books. Thanks to the lively mutual (cultural) relations, Greek manuscripts containing classical works, dictionaries, grammars and commentaries emerged in Italy in larger numbers. Italian humanists' keen interest in antique Greeks was satisfied by Byzantium, as it is there that the classical heritage had been preserved. In the West the foundations of Greek philological studies were laid down by Byzantine scholars.

The chapter deals with the connections between Hungarian humanists and Philippo Podocatoro, Theodoros Gazes, Demetrios Chalkocondyles, Ioannes Argyropulos, and Cardinal Bessarion.

**Trapezuntius codices, Trapezuntius Corvinas**

Georgios Trapezuntios with his own works and translations features in eight extant authentic Corvinas, thus is "the most frequent" author and translator of the *Bibliotheca Corviniana* (among 15th century authors and translators). He was born on the island of Crete, and the name suggests the family's origins. In 1420 he became a citizen of Venice and converted to the Roman Catholic faith in Rome in 1426. He lived a long and adventurous life, repeatedly spending time in prison and having heated debates with Bessarion, Lorenzo Valla, Niccolò Perotti, Theodoros Gazes, and Ioannes Argyropulos. He taught Greek, Latin, rhetoric, logic and philosophy, translated Greek authors (mostly church fathers) and acted a Papal Secretary in the Pope's Court in Rome. He stayed in the Naples court of Alphonso (V) of Aragonia. His student Pietro Barbo later became pope under the name of Paul II.

Trapezuntios's interest in Hungary and its people, as reflected in written documents, may be dated to the late 1460s, i.e. to the last years of his life. The only exception is the 1441 letter addressed to Johannes de Dominis, the Várad bishop about his fear of the Ottoman enemies and his urging of Christian unity.

He dedicated his commentary *(Commentaria ad Claudii Ptolomaei Magnam Compositionem)* to Ptolemy's *Magna composition* to Matthias Hunyadi.

Trapezuntios also translated the *Magna compositio* from Greek into Latin, giving a better text to the reader than the medieval rendering based on the Arabic version. Kept in Vienna today, the Corvina containing the translation was in Esztergom in 1467. A drawing of the Universitas Istropolitana's horoscope had been drawn on its last page: „figura celi hora institutionis universitatis Histropolitanae anno domini 1467 in Iunii tempore equato die 5…".

The translation of Saint Basil was also dedicated to Hungarian humanists, the *Adversus Eunomium* to the Archbishop of Esztergom János Vitéz, the *De Spiritu Sancto* to Janus Pannonius the Bishop of Pécs.

The two above works (without dedications to Vitéz and Janus) are contained also in a Corvina kept at the National Széchényi Library, with corrections made by Vitéz. Trapezuntios may have met Janus in person, because Janus mentions Trapezuntios from Crete in a panegyric written to Guarino. György Kosztolányi (Policarpus), who was Janus's school-mate in Guarino's school, entered into Trapezuntios's family by marrying one of his daughters. The more frequent hints at Hungary, Trapezuntios's interest in Hungary and his possible coming to the country may have been due to a possible professorship in Pozsony, although there are no direct signs of an invitation.

In the Corvina, Trapezuntios had other works too belonging to the field of *studia humanitatis*. In the form of a catechism *De partibus orationis ex Prisciano compendium* made Priscian's *Institutiones* more usable for school education. According to Csapodiné, the Corvina copy in the National Széchényi Library contains János Vitéz's notes. *Rhetoricorum libri V* – based primarily on Hermogenes, Cicero and Aristotle – provides a synthesis of the Greek and Roman rhetorical tradition. It is the only truly influential rhetorical summary of the 15th century, being the most comprehensive overview of classical rhetoric since Quintilianus. The figure sitting in the initial C at the head of the text of the Corvina may represent the king or the author. A simplified reproduction of the initial appears on the back side of our one thousand forint note. A natural complement to *Rhetoricorum libri V* was Trapezuntios's *Isagoge dialectica*, a manual on logic with a humanist's approach, based on Aristotle's teachings and summarising the minimal knowledge of logic for speakers. The manual was particularly popular, and saw as many as 55 editions between 1470-72 and 1567.

# Methodological study

It is a primary feature of the *Compendium* that unlike Priscian's descriptive style, it teaches Latin in the form of a **catechism**. In the smaller part, which he prepared later and which contains the description of *partes indeclinabiles*, there are no questions. The catechism makes the hard-to-follow series of data more interesting for students. Trapezuntius builds the compendium around over three hundred questions. The questions are sometimes formulated as imperatives (e.g. ʼPoemaʼ genitivo ʼhuius poematisʼ dic regulam.). The advantage of the question and answer approach is that it always starts presenting a phenomenon with a well-selected example, making the emblematic examples easy to recognise and easy to remember in codices and prints. When reading Trapezuntius's *Compendium*, we can picture the students replying orally to the questions posed by the instructor testing their knowledge of the material he had taught them.

Trapezuntius shortened his work to about its **one sixth,** cutting *Institutiones* primarily by leaving out theoretical and historical sections (e.g. reflecting the views of Greek grammarians) and by decreasing the number of quotes taken from authors.

Priscian wrote his work in a **Greek-speaking** town in Byzantium during the reign of Emperor Anastasios, where he taught Latin. In line with his Greek-speaking readers' expectations, his work contains a number of Greek quotations (lines or just words from classical authors). This is especially conspicuous when discussing the *praepositio*, where Latin words are repeatedly interpreted in Greek.

Trapezuntius, on the other hand, who is of Greek origin himself, tends to avoid Greek vocabulary. This is probably because the work written in an Italian environment is intended as a Latin schoolbook and he does not wish to burden his students with another foreign language. He leaves out the comments referring to the Greek language (or in other words, the notes on contrastive linguistics).

The compendium does not always meet the desired objective. It is literally unmanageable, for instance, when Trapezuntius is trying to combine in one sentence a general rule applicable for several phenomena, therefore tries to be concise and thus creates sentences that are far from transparent and cannot be used for teaching.

One general advantage of the *Compendium* is that it talks about the phenomena that Priscian had repeatedly come back to only once or less often than he did. For example, Priscian had given information on the assimilation of consonants in the *De litera* and *De syllaba* chapters, while Trapezuntius gives this information on phonetics only once. In other words, he pulls together the first and second books, mentioning the assimilation in the words ʼofficioʼ and ʼcollidoʼ only once.

The *Compendium* is unsuitable for acquiring the **conjugation of verbs**. As the *Institutiones,* which served as a model, contains no paradigms, Trapezuntius includes the relevant sections of Donatus's *Ars Minor*. He describes how the forms are generated, but gives no examples. This is not the right method, as among the abstract terms of grammar, students do not immediately get examples. As a result, they are unable to produce conjugations on this basis. It is no coincidence then that in the given sections of the Vatican manuscript, which has been explored, there are no marginal notes at all, although at other points they frequently occur and come from different hands. It may be rightly supposed that the given chapter was acquired from another grammar (e.g. Donatus).

Priscian lists the **supinums** of verbs according to their conjugation, more speciafically in the order of the endings of *praesens imperfectum indicativi activi* (e.g. in the third conjugation verbs -go, e.g. rego; -bo, e.g. nubo; -lo, e.g. fallo stb.). Trapezuntius takes a markedly different approach: irrespective of conjugations *(cuiuscumque sint coniugationis),*

he creates groups that form the supinum in the same way. In the section (10.15) represented by the verb *munio, munivi, munitum*, he lsits the supinums ending in tum, whichever verb conjugation they belong to, as for example *potatum, lavatum, cautum, citum, solutum, ignotum, munitum, scitum.* A similar method is applied in the *habeo habui habitum* section (10.26): *'frictum', 'nectum', 'doctum', 'cultum', 'consultum', 'altum', 'desertum', 'apertum', 'indutum', 'annutum' etc. The same is done for 'lugeo', 'luxi', 'luctum'* (10.30): *'auctum', 'sanctum', 'intellectum', 'tinctum', 'unctum'*. Trapezuntius's approach is pedagogically justifiable. The mastery of dictionary forms of verbs is still not easy; remembering them does not depend on whether we know which conjugation they follow.

For prepositions too, Trapezuntius concentrates only on describing the **most important teachiong points.** He discards Priscian's theoretical discussion of whether a word is an adverb or a preposition. Trapezuntius collects Priscian's scattered phonetic, theoretical and other remarks under the relevant prepositions. Trapezuntius presents to children in one transparent bunch the preopositions that Priscian listed but did not elaborate on (*'prope', 'pone', 'ultra', 'praeter', 'propter', 'supra', 'usque', 'secus'* and *'penes'*).

In the case of conjunctions, Trapezuntius concentrated on their description in their most important sense, giving examples and grouping them into 17 species (*copulativa, causalis, adiunctiva, effectiva, continuativa ...)* Only after this does he list their other meanings as well, e.g. for the words que (copulativa – completive) ne (dubitativa – confirmativa); vel (disiunctiva – diminutiva).

## 'faex', 'saepes', 'pecus'. Methodological problems in Latin grammar books used in 15th century Hungary).

The present case study will introduce the methods applied in teaching and practising a grammar point in the most popular Latin grammars in Europe, and thus in Hungary.

The analysis is focused on the class of nouns out of the eight classes of words *(octo partes orationis),* and within it on the third declination, or more precisely on the answer to the grammar problem posed by the three (or rather: four) *nomen (faex, faecis; pecus, pecudis – pecus pecoris; saepes, saepis).*

The choice was guided by two main criteria: Firstly, as they applied different approaches, different grammars occasionally supplemented (and even corrected) one another. Secondly, at an early stage of language learning, these words are easily confused with similar words. *Faex* enables text books to distinguish it from *fas, fas, falx, fax* and *fraus. Pecus pecudis* and *pecus pecoris* usually featured in the *De generibus* chapters of grammar books. In the case of *saepes*, the clarification of *seps,* meaning a rare type of snake, is required.

The analysis is directed at grammars used in 15th century Hungary. In this period, there were marked changes in the area of available grammars: besides the antique-late antique grammars (Donatus and Priscian) and then medieval grammars and vocabularies, first in Italy and later beyond the Alps too gradually new grammatical-rhetorical works meeting Renaissance and Humanist ideals started to appeared (Guarino Veronese, Lorenzo Valla, Niccolò Perotti, Giovanni Sulpizio, Antonio Mancinelli, etc.). Although a number of important Humanist grammar authors had strong feelings against medieval grammars, they still stayed in use, and saw numerous editions even in the following century. In other words, changes in the grammar literature of the 15th century and the exploration of the relationship between "old" and "new" grammars seems an intriguing research topic.

Naturally, in addition to trying to demonstrate the points concerned, the criterion of logic is also applied. For this reason, the scope of the present paper is limited to the widely used popular (occasionally Hungary-related) grammars. Due to the nature of the problem

selected, the task ahead is not the analysis of the (monumental) modist grammatical works, as their main goal was not to teach declinations. It is understood that in the course of time every successful grammar „acquires its own life", is enriched by its own layers through interpolations and contaminations, becoming unique by adjusting to its location of use. It is also to be considered that teaching the Latin language was not done solely from text books. Teachers would often supply books (sometimes printed ones) available to them with annotations. Manuscripts of students' school notes are also used as sources. In addition, several word lists have survived, containing the equivalents of the main Latin words in the vernacular.

Thus, the following authors have been selected: Donatus, Priscian *(Institutiones)*, Papias *(Vocabularium)*, Eberhardus de Bethunia *(Graecismus)*, Alexander de Villa Dei *(Doctrinale)*, Johannes de Garlandia *(Synonyma)*, Guarino Veronese *(Regulae)*, George of Trebizond *(De partibus orationis ex Prisciano compendium)*, Lorenzo Valla *(Elegantiae lingue Latinae)*, Niccolò Perotti *(Rudimenta* and *Cornucopiae)*, Giovanni Sulpizio *(De generibus opusculum* and *De nominum declinatione opusculum compendiosum)* and Antonio Mancinelli *(Carmen de figuris)*.

Although to differing degrees, at the various levels of education Donatus (4th c.) and Priscian (5-6th c.) were always among the most significant grammarians in medieval Europe and Hungary. Papias (11th c.) with his *Vocabularium*, Alexander de Villa Dei with his *Doctrinale* written around 1200 and Eberhardus de Bethunia (†1212 cca.) with his *Graecismus* are among the most distinguished medieval grammarians (and lexicographers).

Of the outstanding personalities of the 15th century, the first to be listed is Guarino Veronese (1374-1460), whose educational methods and text books opened a new era in education. Because of his relations to Hungary, George of Trebizond (1395-cca. 1472) is also to be noted, as his abstract of Priscian's *Institutiones* is an extant and authentic Corvina codex. The authors of grammars usually labelled in the literature as „Humanist" grammars are represented in the present analysis by Niccolò Perotti (1429-1480), Giovanni Sulpizio (15th cent.) and Antonio Mancinelli da Velletri (1452-cca. 1506).

Niccolò Perotti's *Cornucopiae* and Lorenzo Valla's (1407-1457) *Elegentiae linguae Latinae libri sex* are not classified as traditional school books, but due to their method and popularity they are regarded as worthy of including in the present analysis.

For the availability in 15th century Hungary of the works selected for analysis, the literature on Hungarian book culture preceding the Battle of Mohács (1526) is to be consulted. The lack of concrete data, however, does not necessarily mean that the item in question did not exist in Hungary. This is especially true for good text books: because they were in everyday use, they wore off and were usually discarded. On the other hand, thanks to personal contacts among other things, the existence of certain works in Hungary is most likely. For instance, it seems certain that through Janus Pannonius, Guarino Veronese's works widely used across the whole of Europe were in use also in the Carpathian Basin.

Learning the *octo partes orationis* (the eight parts of speech) happened in the early stages of acquiring the Latin language. Discussing and teaching nouns had an outstanding role in grammars. Following in the footsteps of the great masters (Donatus and Priscian), every grammar would usually start with the *nomen*, and was followed by the other declinable *(partes declinabiles=nomen, verbum, participium, pronomen)* and indeclinable word classes *(partes indeclinabiles= adverbium, praepositio, interiectio, coniunctio)*.

For the three examples investigated in the present paper, Donatus provides no data. The *Donatus Minor*, used at the elementary level of education and also the *Maior*, which gives more space to the *octo partes orationis* and deals with tropes and figures, mentions only the vitally important examples when discussing grammar phenomena. As Donatus was writing for native speakers, he used few example words. Later, teachers of non-native

students had to make up for these shortcomings. This is one of the explanations of why the medieval "Donatus" grammars do not have a uniform stock of example words and for their fairly large variety in paradigms.

A considerable part of the medieval grammars in verse (and *vocabularia*) appeared in print in the 15th century. (Some even in the 16th century.) Their great advantage is that they presented the main points about gender, the genitive and usually about morphology in a very easy to memorise manner. In the case of words that are easily confused (*fax, faex, far, fas* etc.), they were definitely useful as the difficult items were juxtaposed in the lines of the verse.

Our examples were repeatedly discussed by Priscian. Analysing word endings, in the fifth book he made general statements about their gender. In the sixth book, also proceeding according to word endings, he introduced how their genitives are formed. In the seventh book, he explained the formation of other cases, proceeding by declinations. In addition, a word could occur also when discussing *diminutives,* in a phonetic context or in other ways, as for example in connection with forming the *perfectum* or *supinum* of verbs. His complicated system was impossible for young students to memorise. It is understandable that based on his grammar used at higher levels of education, usable abstracts were compiled for children. The significance of Priscian's system, of the classical norms and practice he conveyed is indicated by the fact that both with and without commentaries it was reproduced in a large number of manuscripts and printed editions.

In the same way as elsewhere in Europe, medieval and new grammars lived side by side in Hungarian educational practice. Whether a grammar gained popularity or not depended to a great extent on its size, length, form (e.g. catechism), and on whether it was presented in verse or in prose. It is no coincidence that Humanist grammarians like Sulpizio would often compile several small works (e.g. cited in the present paper: *De generibus opusculum, De nominum declinatione opusculum compendiosum*), each focusing on a different grammar point or problem.

One of the main characteristics of Valla's and Perotti's „encyclopedic works" *(Elegantiae, Cornucopiae)* is that rather than using artificial example sentences, they cited a large number of classical authors for highlighting grammar points, as the Renaissance authors' aesthetic values were best reflected by the language usage of Cicero, Virgil etc.

The present analysis is not extended to grammarians beyond the Alps (German, Spanish etc. authors) whose works definitely made good use of the achievements of the 15th century. Therefore their analysis might reveal new aspects of the relationship between medieval and Humanist grammars.