

Eötvös Loránd University  
Faculty of Humanities

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

Máté Bibor

The Life Work of the Transylvanian Memoir Writer Lestár Gyulaffi

Theses

Scientific advisor:

Dr Margit Sárdi CSs., Associate Professor

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Lestár Gyulaffi is not among the celebrated authors of the old Hungarian literature, having received hardly any attention from the part of literary historians. However, neither his notes nor his person were completely forgotten after his death. Several handwritten notes prove that his records were used even at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Most of his extant writings were published at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The texts edited by Károly Szabó and Sándor Szilágyi do not rise above the deficiencies which characterized the publishing practice of the age: they are more or less incomplete, they contain many inaccurate passages, their orthography is inconsistent; moreover, the editors rearranged the original text. In spite of all this, this edition is indispensable on the one hand because no new (and more accurate) edition has been yet prepared, and mainly because Károly Szabó printed several documents which have disappeared since then. The publications intended for a larger public, which conform the orthography and the language to that of their own age, include only some fragments from Lestár Gyulaffi's writings. Works of literary history hardly ever mention this author, and studies focusing on him appeared only in the past decade.

## **2. THE SOURCES OF THE DISSERTATION**

The main sources of the thesis are Lestár Gyulaffi's presently known writings, most of them being preserved in autograph form as well. The smaller part of Gyulaffi's manuscripts entered the Eötvös Loránd University's University Library as a part of the 58<sup>th</sup> and 59<sup>th</sup> volume of the *Collectio Prayana*, while the majority as a manuscript volume found in Gusztáv Wenzel's bequest. A significant, though smaller, part of Lestár Gyulaffi's writings is known only from later copies, some of them having been altogether lost.

Naturally, all extant sources, charters and historiographical records alike, have been used in the dissertation. To prepare the paper, especially to outline the historical background, it was necessary to use a wide range of secondary sources as well. (The *Historical Overview* offers information on the age, the *Chronological Survey* may facilitate for the reader to place Lestár Gyulaffi's life in the course of public history, while the *Current Official Form of Geographical Names* may help one to identify the locations.) The thesis concludes with the *Bibliographical List* consisting of *Manuscript Sources*, *Printed Primary Sources and Manuscripts Used in Printed Editions*, and *Secondary Sources*.

### **3. THE LIFE OF LESTÁR GYULAFFI**

The bulk of the dissertation consists of Lestár Gyulaffi's detailed critical biography – whenever possible reconstructed on day to day basis. On the one hand, it summarizes earlier results, on the other hand, contains all the data we could discover in the past few years in Budapest and in Kolozsvár. As a result of these finds, we were able to correct numerous earlier errors and to fill in several “blank spots”. At the same time a few questions require further research, which we hope to be able to carry out as soon as possible.

The name of the family had several different spellings: Gyulafi, Gyulaffi, Gyulafy, Gyulaffy. Since Lestár Gyulaffi spelled it consistently with –ffi in his writings and his signatures also show this form, we used this form throughout the dissertation (naturally, with the exception of titles and quotations).

All the geographical names which have Hungarian versions are used in this form in the thesis irrespective of the former or current proportion of the ethnic groups living in that location or of the fact whether or not the place belonged to Hungary in some period.

#### **3.1. The ancestors and the family**

Lestár Gyulaffi's ancestors held high offices during the second half of the Árpád Age and in the first half of the Angevin rule: there was among them Voivode of Transylvania, Royal Cupbearer, *comes curialis regis*, and several *comes*. By the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century the family had lost its countrywide importance and functions. Thus, by the 15<sup>th</sup> century – as the owners of Csobanc Castle –, the Gyulaffis had become a family of the Transdanubian middle nobility. During the reign of the Jagiellos, then later during the reign of the two rival kings, Ferdinand I and János Szapolyai several formerly less influential nobles acquired significant power. Most of the families who played an important part in the Hungarian history of the 16–17<sup>th</sup> centuries rose from among the lesser nobility in this period. Although Lestár Gyulaffi's grandfather, István Gyulaffi was a Royal Judge of the Court of Appeal in 1507 and managed – mainly through his marriages – to increase his estates, this process of political and economic growth did not continue. The Gyulaffis did not benefit from the change of elite; on the contrary, consequently to the Turkish advance they became more and more impoverished and they could hardly maintain their family castle. However, an uncle of Lestár Gyulaffi, László

Gyulaffi, on account of the fame he had gained in the wars against the Turks in Hungary, obtained offices and estate in the Principality of Transylvania.

### **3.2. Childhood years**

As the present research revealed, Lestár Gyulaffi was born on 20<sup>th</sup> September or 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> November 1556 – a year earlier than it was formerly believed – in the Castle of Csobánc. He spent his childhood in Csobánc, Szigliget, Kemend, and Körmend. Since he lost his father as a toddler (1559), he was raised by his mother. Probably, his much older (already adult) siblings also assisted him according their means, but in two decisive moments of his life he received the necessary support from his above mentioned uncle. László Gyulaffi (†1579) who was then the head of the Gyulaffi clan, left behind the captaincy of Tihany and the general captaincy of Veszprém when he went over to the side of János Zsigmond. Although he soon (1571) made his peace with King Maximilian, he never returned to the Kingdom of Hungary. This is understandable, of course, since he quickly made a significant career in the Principality of Transylvania: he became a Princely Counsellor and the Captain General of the Irregular Troops. It is quite probable that he assisted his nephew when the latter was admitted to the Lower-Austrian Provincial School.

### **3.3. Studies**

Between 11<sup>th</sup> October 1571 and 18<sup>th</sup> September 1574 Lestár Gyulaffi studied in the Viennese *Niederösterreichische Landschaftsschule*; during these three years he completed the four grades of this school. Nevertheless he could not go to the university – mainly because of material reasons. Neither his siblings, nor his widow mother had enough money to finance his further education. The person who could have done this, his uncle, who had not only become a lord counsellor and a general but also very rich, limited his assistance to the use of his social capital from time to time. Lestár Gyulaffi must have finished the Lower-Austrian Provincial School with great financial difficulties. This is revealed by the fact that there was a plan to deduce a part of his unpaid tuition fee from the payment of his soldier brother who served in Pápa. But Mihály Gyulaffi died as a prisoner of the Turks, and the debt accumulated further. It was still unpaid by Lestár Gyulaffi in 1585. All things considered, the Niederösterreichische

Landschaftsschule – we could call it nowadays a secondary school – laid the foundations of Lestár Gyulaffi's humanistic learning. Presumably, if he had had the means to attend a university, he would not have had problems with his studies; even thus, without higher education, he had a solid basis for self-improvement.

### **3.4. In the service of the Principality**

#### **3.4.1. Arriving to Transylvania**

As we can deduce from the sources, soon after finishing the Lower-Austrian Provincial School, around 1575 (certainly before 13<sup>th</sup> May 1579) Lestár Gyulaffi went to the Principality of Transylvania – most probably to the invitation of his patron-uncle. László Gyulaffi helped him to obtain a place in Gyulafehérvár in István Báthory's court probably between 1574 and 1576, but at the latest in Kristóf Báthory's court between 1576 and 1579. Two arguments suggest the former date. On the one hand, his uncle, who was sickly in his later years had to be still rather active when he arranged his nephew's career; on the other hand, from 1571 to 1575, Ferenc Forgách was the chancellor. As he was the brother-in-law of the patron-uncle, it can be presumed that Lestár Gyulaffi already entered the Chancery during his time of office, namely in late 1574 or in 1575. There, he must have held at first a lower position, working probably as a scribe, but he soon (for certain before 27<sup>th</sup> May 1581) became a secretary.

#### **3.4.2. A secretary of the Greater Chancery**

As a result of the present investigations, it became certain that – contrary to the statements of earlier literature – Lestár Gyulaffi worked in the Chancery not only from 1585 to 1597, but from a much (a decade?) earlier date and he was a secretary there from the spring of 1581 at latest. There can be no doubts that he served the Principality of Transylvania until his death, that is for several years after 1597 with at least one interruption of approx. one year and a half.

He retained his office during the reigns of Zsigmond Báthory, Boldizsár Báthory, and András Báthory, the regencies of the Habsburg Maria Christina, and even during the (nominal) rule of Archduke Maximilian of Habsburg, his position being stable irrespective of the

frequent changes of rulers. It seems that he could have remained in his place during the reign of Mihai the Brave, but mistrusting the Walachian Voivode who had become the master of the Transylvanian Principality, he did not serve him. During the return of Zsigmond Báthory and then during the reign of Mózes Székely and Istvá Bocskay, he was again in his office.

The Transylvanian Chancery was the governmental institution of the Voivode at first, then of the Prince. The Smaller Chancery (*cancellaria minor*), being the continuation of the medieval voivodes' chancery, dealt with the administration of justice and became the "office" of the Princely Court of Appeal. It was headed by two judges, having no separate chancellor.

The Greater Chancery (*cancellaria maior*) fulfilled governmental and administrative functions, dealing with both internal and external affairs. This Chancery, or at least a smaller division of it, accompanied the Prince on all his trips. Lestár Gyulaffi too participated in such journeys (1586, 1589). It was important for the head of the Greater Chancery to have not only good abilities, but also to hold the Prince's trust. The deterioration of the relationship between the two could have had serious consequences for the country and also for the Chancellor. (In 1594 and in 1598 the chancellors were executed.) The secretaries, among them Lestár Gyulaffi, were the direct subordinates of the Chancellor. When his office was vacant (in the discussed period between 1601 and 1603), the secretaries led the Chancery out of necessity. Since three secretaries were employed at most at one time, in such periods Lestár Gyulaffi must have also participated in conducting the affairs of the office.

The word *secretarius* in the age meant more than a present-day secretary. It denoted a well educated diplomat who could be entrusted with delicate matters, who compiled charters, letters, orations, negotiated state affairs, and even represented the country abroad. Nevertheless he did not make political decisions, but had to carry out the Prince's and his counsellors' decisions. He was a servant of the state (a high official in present-day terms), though one of the highest. Although Lestár Gyulaffi held in some measure a special position, since on account of his diplomatic activity in Poland, he could not participate continuously in the everyday work of the Greater Chancery, he naturally fulfilled tasks of "internal affairs" as well. Apart from his already mentioned duties, from time to time, he had to proceed in cases of taxation (1583) and administration (1596) too. He also aided the work of foreign envoys sent to the Principality of Transylvania (1590, 1595, 1597), participated in different tours of the country (1585, 1589), inaugurations (1596), negotiations (1601, 1603), etc.

### 3.4.3. A diplomat in Poland

In the service of the Transylvanian Principality, Lestár Gyulaffi's diplomatic missions were even more important than his above listed "internal" tasks. By comparing the sources, we have discovered that – contrary to the statements of earlier literature –, between 1582 and 1596, he went to Poland not for eleven but for *at least* fifteen times. There he had to organize a party of supporters and find a Polish wife for Zsigmond Báthory who claimed the Polish throne. (After Zsigmond Báthory's plan came to nothing, the formerly Poland-oriented Transylvanian diplomacy changed its direction.) It was Lestár Gyulaffi's task as well to reclaim, after István Báthory's death, the unicorn horn taken by the Prince and King from Transylvania to Poland or the thirty thousand florins offered by the Poles in exchange for it. Gyulaffi's notes reveal that the restitution of the unicorn horn or the hastening of the payment in exchange for it served mainly as a pretext for his frequent trips. His main activity, to organize a party supporting Zsigmond Báthory, was, of course, *secrete*.

After the death of Griseldis Báthory, wife to Jan Zamoyski and younger sister to Zsigmond (1590), Lestár Gyulaffi arranged the restitution of the dowry. Using this as a pretext, similarly to the unicorn horn, he had several occasions to negotiate with the Báthory-supporter Zamoyski. He discussed with the Chancellor to synchronize the two country's defence against the Turks who threatened both Poland and the Principality of Transylvania.

Lestár Gyulaffi negotiated on several occasions with Sigismund III (Vasa), King of Poland and with the Dowager Queen Anna Jagiellon; he also spoke in the Polish Diet. He played an important part in the diplomatic action meant to obtain the Bishopric of Cracow for András Báthory. Probably, his most uncomfortable commission was to explain to Zamoyski on Zsigmond Báthory's behalf the execution of the Transylvanian nobles belonging to the opposition (the Turkish faction). It must have been easier and pleasanter to represent the Prince on aristocratic (Ferenc Wesselényi and Anna Szárkándi, 1582) and royal (Sigismund III and Anna of Habsburg, 1592) weddings in Cracow.

There were years when Gyulaffi travelled four-five times to Poland and there were years when we know of no missions. In a particularly urgent case (1590) he went and returned in two weeks time, although generally only the journey took five-six weeks. He usually stayed for a short while abroad; nevertheless, on a few occasions (e. g. 1587) his stay lasted for months and twice (1591–1592, 1594–1595) for almost half a year.

#### 3.4.4. Master of the Kitchen

A document dated from 1597, but preserved only in a late copy reveals that Lestár Gyulaffi was not only the secretary of the Greater Chancery, but (at least from this date on) the Prince's Master of the Kitchen as well. According to the charter, he had to pay from the salary of 350 florins – somewhat less than half of a counsellor's stipend – he received as a secretary and Master of the Kitchen the steward as well. Apart from the money he was given two suits of clothes and board not only for himself but for two other persons as well. As a Master of the Kitchen he did not have to cook but to organize the cooking. He directed the purchase of food supplies and checked their quality. Apart from this, he organized the work of cooks and kitchen boys and supervised the cleanliness of the kitchen. He kept in evidence the order of tables and how much and what kind of meals were required for each. The dapifers and platter-bearers took the prepared dishes in his presence from the kitchen. It was also the Master of the Kitchen's responsibility to allow no unauthorized persons to the kitchen. He had to buy from the 47 florins he received "for the needs of the kitchen" all the condiments, fruits, and delicacies which were not cultivated in the country. If the weekly, monthly, or quarterly deliveries were not enough, he had to purchase cereals, meat, and fish as well from this sum.

#### 3.4.5. The years of retirement and the end of the career

Between autumn 1603 and spring 1605 Lestár Gyulaffi lived in retirement and in reduced circumstances in Kolozsvár. As a secretary in the Chancery he could have acquired estates and wealth, but he did not abuse his position by taking this opportunity. Thus, having lost his job, he lived in almost complete poverty. We know only of one not too bountiful deed of gift which granted him a part of estate in Nyikómalomfalva. But his small property, reduced by the almost continuous warfare of several years, produced hardly any income in this time of dire need. In his great distress, Gyulaffi turned to Zsigmond Báthory, who meanwhile left the Principality of Transylvania for good, but there is no sign that he received any assistance from him or from anyone else.

After the election of István Bocskay as the Prince of Transylvania, Lestár Gyulaffi resumed his service. This is proven by the fact that on 16<sup>th</sup> April 1606 he was paid an allowance in Brassó. Probably, he did not work for a long time in his resumed position, as he soon died. His last preserved writing refers to the date of 10<sup>th</sup> June 1606. This is the latest date



known at present when he was still alive for sure. He must have died soon afterwards, for he no longer figured in external sources, none referred to him, and his notes abruptly stopped almost from one day to the other.

#### 3.4.6. The private man

Lestár Gyulaffi's private life is in complete shadow. We do not know whether he was married and had issue or not, anyway; we have no data about his descendants. From among the members of his household only the names of one manservant and one maidservant has been preserved by external sources.

Regarding Gyulaffi's residence in Transylvania, it is obvious that as a secretary of the Chancery he had to live in the seat of the Prince, in Gyulafehérvár. The exact place of his residence within the town, respectively the castle has not yet been discovered. He probably did not spend too much time in the manor house on his already mentioned estate in Nyikómalomfalva; at least nothing indicates this. It seems, however, that he had quarters in Kolozsvár already in the 1590s and at least after his retirement he lived there for certain. This is proved by his records from 1604, 1605, and 1606, which were explicitly written from the point of view of an inhabitant of this town. One of his statements indicates that his quarters must have been in the vicinity of the former *Arcade House* (Lábasház), therefore on the northern side of the Main Square.

So far it is not clear to which religious confession Lestár Gyulaffi belonged. In this respect there are no external data; moreover, his writings do not reveal it either, which is quite unusual in the age even in the Principality of Transylvania. Considering the officially accepted denominations, one can argue for and against Gyulaffi's membership to each. Taking all things in account, it can be presumed that Lestár Gyulaffi – contrary to earlier opinions which believed him a Protestant – was an Erasmian humanist who was touched somewhat by Luther's doctrines but did not break with Catholicism.

## **4. “HE RECORDED THE TRANSYLVANIAN EVENTS OF HIS TIME”**

### **4.1. Autograph manuscripts**

The majority of Lestár Gyulaffi’s still known notes were compiled in their present form after his retirement in the autumn of 1603. Analyzing them, one must not forget that they have been preserved among István Szamosközy’s manuscripts, therefore they are extracts and copies made for him or at least put at his disposal. (Of course, a reversed formulation is also possible: those manuscripts of Lestár Gyulaffi have been preserved which were included in Szamosközy’s collection.) Several of these contain notes addressed explicitly to Szamosközy, or even Szamosközy’s observations. Thus it can be presumed that Gyulaffi worked not only in collaboration with him but maybe in some cases explicitly to his request. It cannot be excluded the possibility that during these years Szamosközy – who otherwise also lived in reduced circumstances – perhaps recompensed in some form Gyulaffi for his work, assisting in this way the former *secretarius* in his difficult situation.

Lestár Gyulaffi included among his notes several charters, letters, and orations from the age in the original form if possible, or, if not, in copies. The commentaries he made on these are especially interesting. We must mention here that the paper of the manuscripts has not yet been systematically analyzed, but, hopefully, there will be possibilities for such an analysis during the preparation of the planned text edition. On the basis of some preliminary probes, we may already say that the majority of the papers came from Transylvania, though there are also some sheets of Polish origin. Surveying the manuscripts which contain very few corrections, it is worth discussing the different document types one by one.

Under the title *Annales*, or *Excerpták* (Excerpts) Gyulaffi enumerated miscellaneous historical events in Latin, more or less in chronological order. Presumably, this manuscript – though it does not form a single physical unit – resulted from copying together a part of his reading notes.

Among Lestár Gyulaffi’s notes there are some longer textual units which can be considered as separate parts. These usually discuss some historical event in detail and outline its background. Such a unit is *Az székelységnek Bocskay mellé való állásának bizonyos eredeti* (The Certain Cause Why the Széklyes Sided with Bocskay), which is available in a modern edition as well. The same is true of a report with a peculiar subject, which describes the devastation caused by the earthquake of 1590 in Vienna.

The third category consists of shorter notes which comment on diplomatic letters and orations. (The thesis contains a vast selection of these.)

The last group gathers short separate notes which cannot be included in the other categories, such as the recipe of a medicine against the plague, or Lestár Gyulaffi's records made in books which are not, strictly speaking, marginal notes. For example, on the back flyleaf of one of his recently identified volumes, Gyulaffy described the fall of Constantinople and the Battle of Mohács in parallel.

#### **4.2. Texts preserved only in copies**

There are approximately thirty texts of various dimensions connected to Lestár Gyulaffi, which are known only from later copies. All of them were preserved in a manuscript volume copied at the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, named by Károly Szabó the *gr. Bánffy-codex* (Count Bánffy Codex). The document itself has perished or is in an unknown location, but, fortunately, Károly Szabó published the greatest part of the material referring to Lestár Gyulaffi in 1881. (Only two letters addressed by Gyulaffi to Zamoyski and one to an unknown person remained unpublished.) Among these documents preserved only in copies, there are diplomatic letters, requests and orders for payment, letters of guarantee, credentials, orations, and poems. The present-day reader may find the eight private letters hidden among the others the most interesting because they reveal something about Lestár Gyulaffi's relationship with his family and friends. For example Bálint Vásárhelyi invited him "as his confidential lord and friend" to his wedding in Kolozsvár. From the point of view of Lestár Gyulaffi's education and thinking, the letters addressed to him by a nephew of his, Mihály Gyulaffi and his answer to the second one are extremely important. Mátyás Csáktornyai in his letter called Lestár Gyulaffi his patron and entrusted to him the fate of his book. He also recommended to his benefactor's attention some poems by Ferenc Hunyadi, Zsigmond Báthory's physician, which he sent him. These poems were borrowed from Gyulaffi by Mátyás Aszalai by means of a letter. Lestár Gyulaffi's letter to György Keresztúri about the Walloons and his missile to the Saxons of Paratěj/Baráthely about his former coachman are also known from this source.

### **4.3. Texts known only from references**

Lestár Gyulaffi had some writings which have not been preserved in their original form, but their content is known to us. Among these, there are those parts of Szamosközy's historical works, János Baranyai Decsi's *Kommentárjai* (Commentaries), Farkas Bethlen's *Historia*, and Péter Bod's article on the 16<sup>th</sup> century secretary, which they borrowed with smaller or greater modifications from Lestár Gyulaffi.

### **4.4. The diary and the "lost" Work**

Some of Lestár Gyulaffi's works are known only from some references made to them in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. József Benkő, Péter Bod, György Haner, Elek Horányi, and Johann Seivert (partly borrowing the data from one another) stated alike that Gyulaffi – in Bod's words – "recorded the Transylvanian events of his time". Several of these authors believed that this work was written in Latin. Such a work by Lestár Gyulaffi – and *any* writing by him that can be called the Work – is not known today. Moreover, recent research strengthens Károly Szabó's doubt regarding the existence of such an opus.

From among the enumerated scholars, only one owned manuscripts by Lestár Gyulaffi: Benkő presumably had – maybe only in a copy – the secretary's diary. This, however, was destroyed together with the town of Nagyenyed in January 1849. Benkő mentioned only Gyulaffi's diary, but no other work by him. Therefore, even if the diary was burned in Nagyenyed, the Latin historical writing could have survived elsewhere. The doubts regarding the existence of this historical work are enhanced by the lack of any references to it from the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. Baranyai Decsi, Bethlen, and Szamosközy all made references to Lestár Gyulaffi. Baranyai Decsi and Szamosközy must have had direct contact with him; they could have received oral information from him. Bethlen, who lived one and a half generation later, could have used only his records. Nevertheless, none of them mentioned Lestár Gyulaffi's historical work to which leads no other trace. Therefore its existence is highly doubtful. However, it is certain that Lestár Gyulaffi kept a diary, even if it has perished. He mentioned it himself and his notes also suggest that – as we have successfully proved – the *Ephemerides*, contrary to several statements, was not the title of his lost (or more precisely never existing) historical work, but simply of his diary. József Benkő reports in his introduction to Volume 5<sup>th</sup> of Farkas Bethlen's *Historia* that Lestár Gyulaffi's diary was in Hungarian language and

discussed mainly economic matters and his official activity. In case of a Chancery secretary who fulfilled the task of a diplomat and of the Master of the Kitchen these subjects are natural. Regarding the language of the diary, it is a general characteristic of Gyulaffi's writings as well that he changed from Hungarian to Latin and *vice versa* or mixed the two languages within one text, sentence, sometimes even within a single grammatical structure. It seems that he wrote his records basically in Hungarian. Nevertheless, whenever he had some difficulty with the language, for example he could not find a suitable Hungarian word for some notion right away, he changed immediately to Latin. Most of the charters, letters, and orations are naturally entirely in Latin.

We may conjecture how Lestár Gyulaffi's diary looked like on the basis of the fragments known at the present. These have not been preserved in their original form but were copied by him among his notes. It is possible that he did not quote them completely, only in an abstracted form, but even considering this, the texts seems to be rather dry. Nevertheless, it is in fact natural that the diary of a high official living more than four hundred years ago cannot be compared to the excellent diaries written by Sándor Márai, László Nagy, Miklós Radnóti, or István Széchenyi. It is rather interesting that Lestár Gyulaffi kept a diary at all, for this was quite rare in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, especially in the Carpathian Basin. Sometimes it is quite difficult to distinguish between the diary fragments inserted by Gyulaffi among his notes and the historical records he made related to particular dates. All the more so, because he probably used his diary entries to compile the latter as well.

Looking through Lestár Gyulaffi's presently known writings (records, notes, diary and correspondence fragments), their variety and the fact that nothing could be further from them than to belong to one great work is obvious. Therefore one must use with more than customary care those older editions which (not only in the case of this author) published the text in a rearranged form, constructing thus from it, even against the editors' intentions, almost consistent works, which however have never existed.

## **5. "A GOOD PATRIOT OF GREAT LEARNING"**

To outline Lestár Gyulaffi's learning spanning from Herodotus to Bodini, to reveal his relationship to the humanist circle created in the Princely Chancery, and to investigate the circle formed around Gyulaffi is a future task. Although only a small part of Lestár Gyulaffi's library has been explored so far, we have succeeded in adding several new bibliographic units

to those formerly known. The analysis of the notes he made in his volumes will be done in parallel with the reconstruction of his library. Regarding Lestár Gyulaffi's learning a few things can be stated preliminarily. Thus, for example, there is not a single Greek word in all his records, though he studied this language for several years. Despite his Viennese education, there are no German parts in his notes either; except a few Hungarian words corrupted from German. A Polish proverb, the meaning of which is still known today, although it has been scarcely used since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, is all the more conspicuous.

Lestár Gyulaffi's Latin texts, which form the 45% of his preserved writings, would require an analysis by a Neo-Latin philologist on the one hand because humanist and chancery Latin are curiously mixed in them, on the other hand because it is a fairly large corpus (approximately of 190 000 characters). Gyulaffi's Latin was naturally unimpeachable; from time to time even a *non*-specialist can observe that he seemingly thought in Latin – at least in official matters. Had he encountered any difficulty in formulating something in Hungarian (or even without any visible reason), he changed at once to Latin. In case of mixed texts, he used to conjugate Latin words in Hungarian, and sometimes *vice versa* too. At the same time – so far as one who is not an expert in the (Neo-)Latin language can be a judge of it – the style of his Latin is average. This is obvious mainly in the orations which he had to write extemporaneously and alone, without consulting with others. On one of these Szamosközy inscribed that it was made in Farkas Kovacsóczy's style. A possible later investigation may reveal the influence of the Padova-educated excellent stylists, such as Farkas Kovacsóczy on the members of the “second line”, such as Lestár Gyulaffi, who did not go to university and acquired their education mainly as autodidacts.

Lestár Gyulaffi's Hungarian texts are also interesting from a linguistic and stylistic point of view. A linguistic analysis on them would not be useless, especially since even a not particularly trained eye can observe that the writer mixed the (Western-)Transdanubian dialect with the Transylvanian in a peculiar manner. (Otherwise, the Hungarian texts are quite colourful, most are not only interesting, but also pleasant readings.)

## **6. CONCLUSION**

Lestár Gyulaffi's literary remains are an important source from the perspective of the history of memoir writing as well, since their greatest part discusses the internal and external affairs of the Transylvanian Principality. Apart from this, it mentions his contemporaries and

records natural phenomena. The present research resulted in a very detailed biography of Lestár Gyulaffi, the like of which probably has not yet been elaborated about a *non*-aristocratic Hungarian of the age. The biography is not expected to undergo essential changes, although it is likely that several smaller details will be put to their proper place during the preparation of a critical edition from Gyulaffi's writings. (Unfortunately, the preparation of a critical edition could not form the part of the dissertation according to the regulations in force.) Although *this* paper attempted first of all to outline the portrait of a not too wealthy second-line 16<sup>th</sup> century intellectual, doubtlessly, Lestár Gyulaffi is really interesting because of his writings. For there were many lay intellectuals and secretaries in the Transylvanian Chancery, but hardly any such vast and varied, mostly Hungarian autograph manuscript collections survive from the age.