

PH.D-THESES

The Peril at Parthenope

*The Latest Issues Concerning
the Janus Pannonius-philology*



written by

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I.

The hereby dissertation deals with those questions of the Janus Pannonius-philology, that are, regardless of their importance, outside of the focus of current Janus-researches. Some of the chapters contain studies on Janus I made earlier, driven by personal interest, without the aim of getting any scientific degree. In 2009 though, I made a significant literary discovery, as I was lucky to find the whole text of *Renatus-panegyricus*, (which until then had been only partly known) in a manuscript in Naples. As it was judged to be of scientific importance, I decided to create a Ph.D dissertation by combining the fresh thesis on the newly discovered script and the former studies. The chapters begin with the presentation and examination of authentic texts, followed by attributions, biographical assumptions and the survey of iconographic hypotheses. After the introduction of an interesting case of reception and recomposition they end with presenting a poem of dubious authenticity, the rich afterlife of an epigram wrongly attributed to Janus and the identification of the real author.

II.

1. In the introduction I tried to outline the history of all those things that might lead a researcher to an unexpected discovery of such significance. As a “motto”, to describe the coincidence as a result of various conspiring factors offered by fate through persistent research, I used a part of the French historian Marc Bloch’s (1886–1944) study. My Italian experiences, the research-trips to Rome and Naples, the quest of the traces of Janus in Narni, at the Feronia-spring all proved to have been inspiring during my work and therefore have also been mentioned. I was touched by the experience of Italy and the spirit of France and they accompanied me throughout my studies on Janus Pannonius.

2. The first chapter of the dissertation titled “*The Peril at Parthenopé*” is about the poem of Janus Pannonius which praises Sicilian king René of Anjou (1409–1480). The 18-year old poet was commissioned to write *Renatus Panegyricus* (about the siege of Naples) by a Venetian patrician, Jacopo Antonio Marcello in 1452. The piece that had been written in Ferrara became published only later, in 1880, when Jenő Ábel found its first half in the Library of Vatican. Except József Huszti’s excellent essay from 1929, hardly any study has dealt with the incomplete work so far.

My interest in Janus Pannonius' iconography resulted in finding two illustrations of the Strabon-volume (the book translated by Guarino is now taken care of in Albi), one of them I considered to be the portrayal of the poet. My research on the attributions led me to the discovery of the complete text of the panegyricus. Léon-Gabriel Pélissier (1863–1912), positivist historian reviewed the poem attributing the work to an unknown artist in 1898, in a French periodical. In 2009, when reading the article that has been left without a comment for 111 years I recognized the author and it got me started in chasing down the whole text of the writing in Naples.

Studying the specialized reads, during writing an essay I noticed a so far unknown 100-line poem that could be attributed to Janus Pannonius. I tried to support his authorship with detailed arguments. I produced the Hungarian translation and the textbook of the poem praising Saint Maurice (patron of the Order of the Crescent) and René of Anjou (founder of the Order).

3. In the summer of 2010 with the help of the Klebelsberg-scholarship programme, I traveled to Naples, where I managed to trace down the copy-writer of the 19th century script of Renatus-panegyricus. He was Scipione Volpicella (1810–1883), head of a scientific society that did researches on the history of the city.

His figure led me to Castelnuovo and the Library of Società Napoletana de Storia Patria, where I found the antecedent of the copy kept in the National Library of Naples. Although part of a composite volume dating back to the middle of the 17th century, it may be regarded as primary source.

4. Janus Pannonius, *De laudibus Renati Siciliae regis libri tres – Three books praising Renatus, king of Sicily*. – The publication of the full Latin text and its Hungarian literary translation. The translation of Grácia Kerényi lasts until the 110th line of the second book. I had to make up for the missing lines 23 and 72-73 of the second book. It is followed by my literary translation of line 219-223 of the first book, line 111-320 of the second one and line 1-333 of the third book, a total of 551 lines. I rearranged the structure of Kerényi's translation according to the Neapolitan manuscript, as the dedication including inverted lines consists of two parts and the laudatio itself is made up of three books.

5. Janus Pannonius: *Laudatio Sancti Mauritii et sociorum eius – The appraisal of Saint Maurice and his companions*. The text is borrowed from Joseph Bernard de Montmélian's version (*Saint Maurice et la légion thébéenne*, vol. 2., Paris, 1888, 350-352). It is followed by my literary translation.

6. The footnotes and explanations of *Renatus-panegyricus* and the *Saint Maurice-appraisal* have been appended. In order to support the attribution, the lines that may be collated with those of classic authors' works have also been collected.

7. Both in the 17th century Neapolitan manuscript and in its 19th century copy, as a supplement of *Renatus-panegyricus*, there is the famous elegy praising the fountain of Feronia written by Janus Pannonius in 1458 in Narni, Italy. Because of this, an essay of mine on the poem and its translation history written in the summer of 2008 on the occasion of the 550th anniversary of its birth (after visiting the location) has been added to the chapters.

8. The chapter on the birthplace of Janus Pannonius is based on a rather new assumption. One of son of master Guarino from Verona, Battista appointed Varadinum of Pannonia as Janus' place of birth in a letter remained only in copy to his relative Bertuccio. I suppose the name has been misspelled and therefore the Latin word doesn't allude to Várad, (a town next to the river Körös), but it does to Varasd, a town closely related to the river Dráva. This assumption is also supported by the fact that Dráva played an important part in Janus' oeuvre. Writing of his birthplace, instead of referring to an area near the mouth of Dráva, there

is a hint to a river that empties into Ister (or the Danube): "Qua mox Danubio mixturus nomen et undas / Pinguia culta leni iam gurgite Dravus." (Where the river Drava, which later will empty into the Danube, slices across the fertile grounds with its slow and graceful flow.)

9. The ironic epigram about the abbot of Szekszárd who had castrated himself was first published by László Nagy Szelestei. The poem which quite often appeared in the scholarly correspondence between the 16th and the 18th centuries is considered to be apocryphal by the new critical edition. To prove its authenticity, my philological and textological arguments have been supported by János Filiczky's (c. 1580–1622) never before examined epigram „*In monachum se ipsum castrantem*”, as it consists of the elements of the Janus'-poem of doubtful origin. Such an ironic work was only worth composing of poems of well-known and high-caliber authors.

10. In the chapter titled *The imaginary depiction of Janus Pannonius* I summarized the much-debated iconographical questions. Janus Pannonius in his elegy written in 1458 praising Andrea Mantegna mentions that the Italian master depicted Janus and Galeotto Marzio on a painting as a pair. Giorgio Vasari in his bibliographical book on the renaissance artists wrote that

there is a Hungarian bishop on Mantegna's Saint Christopher-mural in Padova. I tried to illustrate the concerning hypotheses with pictures beginning with the suggestion of Jolán Balogh to the facial reconstructions carried out by Ágnes Kustár based on the burial finds in Pécs. The chapter ends with my own theories.

11. There is a remarkable, yet so far undiscovered document of the Janus Pannonius-reception: a compiled epigram engraved on the tomb of István Ecsedi Báthory in Nyírbátor. The creator likely to have been a reformer preacher produced an euphonic funeral poem by taking parts of the Janus Pannonius-elegy and rewriting them. The poem that has been published many times over the centuries proved to be useful in discovering further connections.

12. The epigram having a long afterlife beginning with "Romulidae Cannas" surfaced around the end of the 16th century as the fictitious epitaph of king Wladislas I., who fell in 1444 during the battle of Varna. The poem became popular as the political literature discussing international treaties often referred to it. In the middle of the 17th century, a Hungarian preacher arbitrarily attributed the authorship of the Europe-wide cited epitaph to Janus Pannonius. The debate with its pros and cons concerning the poem's authenticity has lasted until these days. Now I have the original, begin-

ning with "Romulidae Carrhas", moreover longer version of the poem and have identified the real author of the epitaph as Christophorus Manlius (1546–1575) of Lausitz. To demonstrate how interesting the pseudo-Janus-epigram is from a historical point of view, I have arranged its various occurrences into a database in chronological order.

III.

I believe that the newly discovered scripts contained in the chapters of the dissertation and the related statements and suggestions can further stimulate the Janus Pannonius-philology, especially in those fields that hardly have been studied till now. *Renatus-panegyricus* will be an essential part of a critical edition in progress. A detailed guide of the work and the related dissertation will soon get into the scene of international renaissance researchers as part of a book that will debut in Rennes at the René d'Anjou-conference.

List of related publications

IANUS PANNONIUS: *De laudibus Renati Siciliae regis libri tres – Janus Pannonius: Renatusnak, Szicília királyának dicséretéről szóló három könyv*, fordította KERÉNYI Grácia és SZENTMÁRTONI SZABÓ Géza [a II. könyv 111. sorától végig], JANKOVITS László bevezetőjével, Jelenkor, 2010, február, enclosure, 1-54.

Parthenope veszedelme. Újdonságok a Janus Pannonius-filológia köréből, Cédrus Művészeti Alapítvány–Napkút Kiadó, Bp., 2010. (Értekezők – etűdök, 2)

Nápoly veszedelméről. Janus Pannonius újonnan megkerült Renatus-panegyricusa, Trefort-kert. Az ELTE Bölcsészettudományi Kar kulturális és közéleti magazinja, II. évfolyam 4. szám, 2009, 64-69.

Janus Pannonius Feronia forrásánál. Jegyzetek egy hatodfélszáz esztendeje írott elégiáról a Reneszánsz Év jegyében, Napút, 2008. szeptember, 7. szám, 89-92.

Janus Pannonius Feronia forrásánál. Jegyzetek egy hatodfélszáz esztendeje írott elégiáról a Reneszánsz Év jegyében, in, *A magyar reneszánsz stílus*. Szerk. BALÁZS Géza, Inter–Magyar Szemiotikai Társaság–PRAE.HU. Bp., 2008, 26-35. (Magyar Szemiotikai Tanulmányok, 17.)

Janus Pannonius szülőhelyéről, in “Nem süllyed az emberiség” *Album amicorum Szörényi László LX. születésnapjára*, főszerk. JANKOVICS József, MTA Irodalomtudományi Intézet, Bp., 2007, 225-236. – web edition.

575 évvel ezelőtt történt. Hol és mikor született Janus Pannonius? Élet és Tudomány, 2009. szeptember 18., 38. szám, 1194-1195.

Janus Pannonius és a szekszárdi apátúr, in *Summa. Tanulmányok Szelestei N. László tiszteletére*, szerk. Maczák Ibolya. Pázmány Péter Katolikus Egyetem Bölcsészettudományi Kar, Piliscsaba, 2007, 288-299. (Pázmány Irodalmi Műhely, tanulmányok)

Janus Pannonius vélt ábrázolásai, in *A Janus Pannonius Múzeum Évkönyve*, 2/50–52. (2005–2007). Pécs, 2008, 154-168. (N.B! published in 2009!)

Talányos arcképek. Kegyelmed-é a magyar Janus? Élet és Tudomány, 2009. december 18., 51–52. szám, 1644-1645.

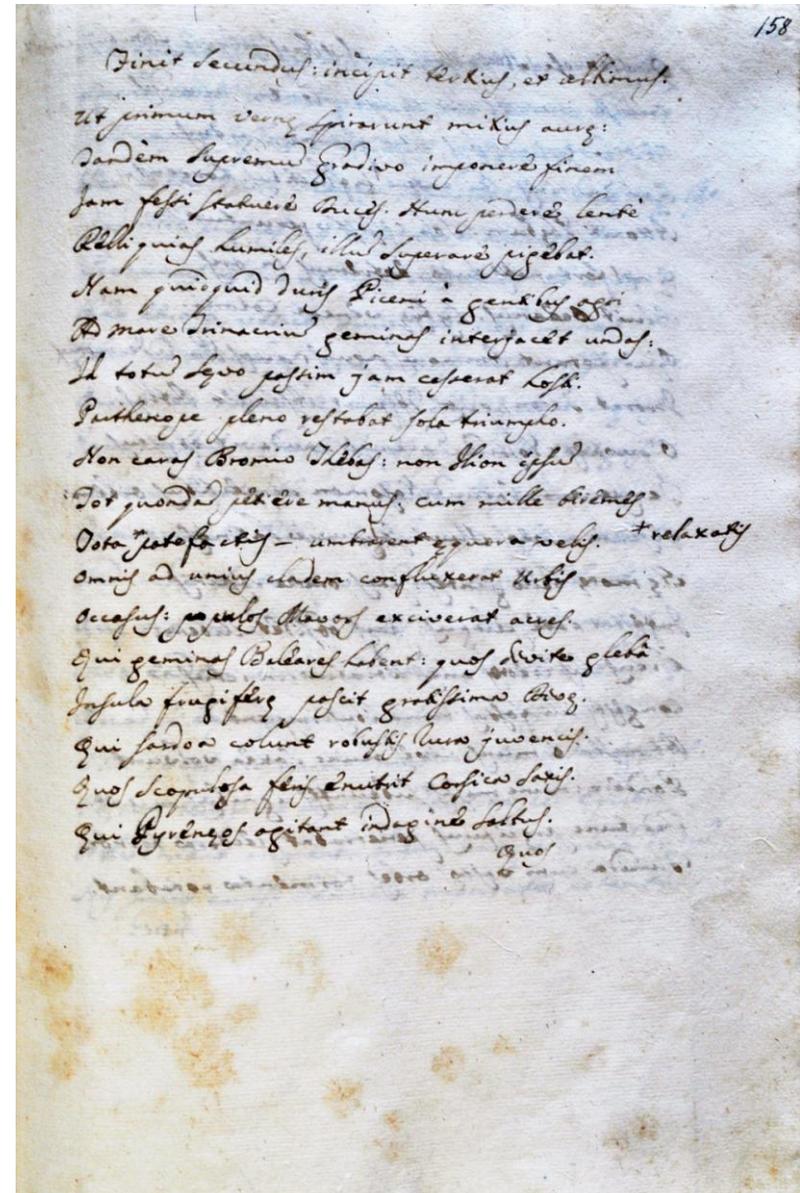
Janus Pannonius ábrázolásai – rövid összefoglalás, in *Janus Pannonius E-digitália földjén*. The website is maintained by OSZK see: www.januspannonius.hu

Yet to be published

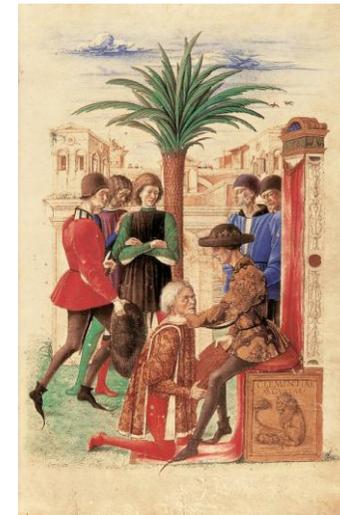
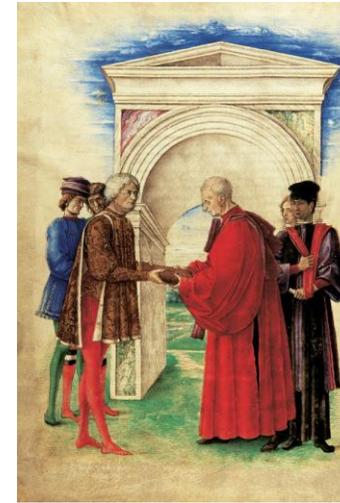
„Márvánköben metszett írás kopik, vészhet...” Nevezetes versorok Ecsedi Báthory István nyírbátori tumbáján, ItK, 2011.
(To the celebration of 80th birthday of Ágnes Rátoók Szalay)

Del luogo nativo di Janus Pannonius, in, AION V, Annali dell'Istituto Universitario Orientale di Napoli – Studi Finno-Ugrici, 2006–2010, Napoli, 2011.

Du péril de Parthénope: La découverte de la version intégrale du panégyrique de René d'Anjou par Janus Pannonius, in *René d'Anjou (1409–1480): Pouvoirs et Gouvernement*, dir. Jean-Michel MATZ et Noël-Yves TONNERRE, Rennes, 2011.



HIC ISTE MAURITIUS mundū celebrāde poem
 Aureaque nitido uenerat sidera uultu:
 Cui chorus angelice legiois et ethens alti
 Applaudit letis rapidis sceleribus ortus:
 Qui quondam scio christi pnoie celsus
 Constans se uia tolerasti pectore mortem.
 Annue queso tuas tentati p mēre laudes:
 Et tanta nostris uires infunde camentis:
 Ut te carminibus dignis extollere possint.
 Nam cū thebeam sub te ductore cohorte
 Maximianus atrox gelidas egisset ad alpes:
 Teq; tuosq; illic omnes infanda pphamif
 Ducere sacra deis: gentili more: iuberet:
 Tu patre etermū stabili pietate colebas.
 Impenosa feni spernes edicta tyranni.
 O quoties penasq; truces: morteq; minatus
 Nil uidit pdesse minas: tu sorte cuncta



Pictures in the manuscript of Guarino's Strabon-translation (1459)
 Bibliothèque municipale d'Albi Ms. 77.
 Guarino hands his Strabon-translation to Jacopo Antonio Marcello
 Jacopo Antonio Marcello hands the manuscript to René d'Anjou