

## SLOVAK HUMANISTS ACTIVE IN BOHEMIA AND MORAVIA AS OWNERS OF BOOKS

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**Abstract** In the early modern period, book ownership was not very common. Books came to their owners in various ways, most educated people owned only one or two books. In the present study, we deal with books owned by humanists originating from the territory of present-day Slovakia, but who lived and worked in Bohemia and Moravia for a long time. These were both book calendars and books in which their owners kept a diary (owners J. Tesák Mošovský, O. Thuri and M. Monkvicenus). The larger group consisted of owners of one or two books, mostly related to their profession, interests, or political orientation (M. Plorantius, S. Omasta, J. Bastner etc.). Although we assume that these individuals also owned a larger book collection, we do not know about their books. So far, we know of only two humanists from the studied group who owned a larger library (E. Berger and S. Rochotius).

**Keywords** Bohemia, Moravia, present-day Slovakia, Books, owners, humanism, possessory records.

### Introduction

In the early modern period, owning a book or even several books meant having a certain amount of property. Books were bought, sold, donated, exchanged and inherited. They not only witnessed the professional activity of their owner(s), but also provided a lot of other direct or indirect information about them, and were also a valuable source of information about the everyday life of the time.

At the turn of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, we have recorded more than a hundred humanists originally from the territory of today's Slovakia who, for various reasons, were active in Bohemia and Moravia, or who, due to various circumstances, were connected with the local environment. They were a very diverse group of humanists, among whom we find clergymen, professors of

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Charles University, teachers at lower schools or in the service of the nobility, town clerks, scribes... Many of them studied at Charles University or at other, mainly German, universities and remained publicly (publishing/socially) active even after graduation. Evidence of the education of the personalities from the territory of today's Slovakia was not only the fact that they themselves were authors and translators (or supporters and patrons of authors and translators) of books, but also the fact that many of them owned books. In the following, we will select from among the humanists who were active in Bohemia and Moravia, but whose origins are linked to the territory of today's Slovakia, those who demonstrably owned one or more books. We will try to shed more light on what kind of books they were and focus on any additional information we can learn from the possessor records in these books.

The owner or possessor of a book represented his or her relationship to a particular copy in various ways; it could be a *supralibros* on the binding of the book, a bookplate / pasted-in or manuscript *exlibris*, or other notations (*marginalia*) in the book (on the preface, title page, or any other place in the book). All these forms are considered part of the provenance. Possessory records in historical prints document that, some of the humanist sample studied had at least one book but there were also those who had a larger book collection.<sup>1</sup>

### A note on research

For research on the life and work of humanist figures, entries in biographical dictionaries usually provide basic information. These are often compiled on the basis of a variety of information, with an important role played by the information hidden in the paratextual parts of his works. However, biographical entries in dictionaries rarely include information on whether the selected personality owned any books or had a library. Even in the group of humanists we have chosen, it is not possible to single out which of them may have been the owners of the books. Since they were mostly students and later teachers or clergymen, it is assumed that they possessed the books. The initial information that a given personality owned a book is usually rather accidental and is related to the bibliographical processing of a particular document in the selected library, followed by research in the registers of owners/possessors in bibliographies and, in the case of the availability of a document, the verification of the provenance record "*de visu*." Individual documents are often scattered in different libraries, which also complicates and prolongs the research, and in some cases, we are forced to rely only on the information that a particular author owned the books. The selected examples are of illustrative value for the time being, but may be the starting point for further, more extensive research on reading in our chosen social group.

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<sup>1</sup> The present article is the result of research within the framework of the project APVV-22-0130 Noble Libraries of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries in western and central Slovakia.

## Manuscript diaries and autobiographical notes in books and book calendars

Among the popular documents of the time were (book) calendars. Their publication was one of the main economic supports of the printing business and was secured by certain privileges granted primarily to the author himself, but also to the printer. The most important function of calendars is the division of time into larger and smaller units (months, weeks, years) according to selected, usually astronomical, criteria related to the orbit of the moon around the earth and the earth around the sun. They were based on astrological predictions but also on empirical observations and provided a variety of information and recommendations of a practical nature concerning, for example, health and the economy related to the cycle of nature and the seasons. In the 16th century, they also included chronicles and topical reports. With the increase in the information that this medium could provide, and with regard to everyday practical use, the book form of the calendar was already being promoted in the 1570s. Before the middle of the 16th century, the so-called Writing Calendar (Schreib-Kalender) appeared, in which unprinted spaces were reserved for daily handwritten entries. Calendars, especially those printed in the German language area, usually had several blank pages for writing notes.<sup>2</sup> Among the sample of Slovak humanists studied, Daniel Basilius (1585 – 1628), a professor of Charles University from Nemecká Ľupča (Deutschlipisch, Nemetlipcse), focused on publishing calendars. However, we cannot confirm whether he used his own calendars or whether he recorded anything in them.<sup>3</sup>

In the Czech cultural context, *Kalendář historický* (1578) is one of the most important works of Daniel Adam of Veleslavín (1546 – 1699), an important Czech writer and, above all, publisher. It contains descriptions of historical events arranged according to the days of the year and gives a historical description of each day of the year from the creation of the world to the second half of the 16th century. Compared to most contemporary historiographical production, it is not limited to Czech history, but also provides important information from the history of the neighbouring countries of the Bohemian Crown, i.e. also from the history of Germany, Poland, Hungary and the Balkan countries.<sup>4</sup> It includes events described in the Bible and events from ancient history. It is also interested in personalities, i.e. rulers and church dignitaries, scholars, writers, politicians, artists and other personalities who have had a significant influence on cultural and social events – for example, it mentions Jan Hus (approx. 1369-1415). It describes not only important events in Czech history, such as the conclusion of important treaties, but also reports on “fluctuations” in the weather, for example. This chronicle is also intended to warn against the

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<sup>2</sup> Bronislava Svobodová a Katarína Pekařová (Vývin a funkcie knižných kalendárov) in *Fragmenty z kultúrnej histórie v kalendároch* (Univerzitná knižnica v Bratislave, 2015), 12-14.

<sup>3</sup> Eva Frimmová (Basiliove efemeridy, kalendáre a minúciá) in the book: Daniel Basilius (1585-1628) (Veda, 1997), 67-77.

<sup>4</sup> A thorough content analysis of this document would be required to identify records relating to present-day Romania and Transylvania. However, this was not a planned part of this study and remains a research challenge for the future.

pitfalls of life and contains necessary lessons relating to various problems. It is intended to contribute to the useful and peaceful administration of the towns and to avoid damage that could lead to ruin.

It is important for our research, however, that in the one copy of Veleslavín's *Kalendář historický* handwritten records were found in the form of a memoir by the eminent Slovak humanist Juraj Tesák Mošovský († 1617), who worked as a Protestant clergyman in various Czech villages and is the author of more than 40 Czech and Latin, as well as combined Czech-Latin, writings.<sup>5</sup> In addition to the information about his life provided by J. Tesák Mošovský himself in the prefaces and dedications of his prints and supplementary sources, which are occasional prints dedicated by friends and acquaintances to various events in his own life or in the lives of his children, Veleslavín's *Kalendář historický* constitutes important source material for the biography of Juraj Tesák Mošovský. It was obviously a publication which, also thanks to its practical focus, was a very important guide for Juraj Tesák on his life's journey. He carried it with him from one place of work to another and added his own notes on its blank pages as well as on the pages containing historical events of individual days. After the death of Juraj Tesák, his son Adam inherited the calendar and continued to record events.<sup>6</sup>

Other evidence that the calendar was used to record the life events of its owner is provided by the diary of a church dignitary, Pastor Ondrej Thuri (Thuri, Turzsky Zolnensis, 1556-1625), who after studying at domestic Slovak schools continued his studies in Jihlava, Wittenberg and Jena.<sup>7</sup> The diary, as its incipit *Diarium Rev. Condam D. Andreae Thuri, alias Turßky Zolensis pastoris Predmieriensis dein Ponicensis, propria ejus manu sparsim per Calendarium suum historicum connotatum, ex ipso originali ad ordinem redactum et transumatum per Mathiam Schulek Velicsnae Arvensum h. r. Eccl. VagyPalugyensis V. D. M. Anno 1786 (hodie an. 1789 iam ab annis 13. Taxoviensum Parochum)* states, together with the autobiography of Ondrej Thuri (*Brevis delineatio Vitae Andreae Thuri*),<sup>8</sup> was produced between 1786 and 1788 as a copy from the original manuscript entries in the printout of the historical calendar of the evangelical theologian, composer of religious hymns and reformer Paul Eber (1511 –1569) *Calendarium Historicum Conscriptum A Pavlo Ebero Kitthingensi, et recens ante obitum ab eodem recognitum plurimisque locis auctum*.

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<sup>5</sup> Angela Škovierová, "Juraj Tesák Mošovský – a humanist whose works were forgotten twice," *Roczniki Biblioteczne* 66 (2022): 43-54, <https://doi.org/10.19195/0080-3626.66.2>.

<sup>6</sup> Today, it is a very rare publication stored in the Museum Library in the Czech city of Písek under the signature III, 315. Compare August Sedláček, "Paměti Jiříka Tesáka Mošovského a jeho syna," *Časopis Musea království českého* 83, no.1 (1909): 57-68.

<sup>7</sup> Josef Hejnic and Jan Martínek, *Rukověť k písemnictví humanistickému, zvláště básnickému v Čechách a na Moravě ve XVI. stol. V., S–Ž* (Academia, 1982), 369-370; Jozef Kuzmík, *Slovník autorov slovenských a so slovenskými vzťahmi za humanizmu II., N–Ž* (Matica slovenská, 1976), 761.

<sup>8</sup> The description of Thurius's diary and his autobiography is deposited in the Archive of Literature and Art in the Slovak National Library in Martin (Turócszentmárton /Turz-Sankt Martin) under the signature MJ 303.

*Vittebergae excudebat Iohannes Crato Anno M. D. L. XXI.*, which was published in many editions, and today copies of this calendar are part of various European historical book collections.<sup>9</sup>

Religious literature was no less important than calendars. Martin Monkovicenus (1593-1624), a teacher from Liptov (Slovakia), who was invited by Gašpar Illešházy (1593-1648) in October 1615 to Trenčín (Trentschin, Trencsén) as rector,<sup>10</sup> also kept a diary in such a book focused on practical piety. Martin Monkovicenus, who came from Bobrovec in Liptov (Nagybobróc), was an interesting personality. After studying at the local lower schools, he studied in Jihlava. At Charles University he received a bachelor's degree and later a master's degree in philosophy. After finishing his studies, he returned to Slovakia at the end of 1615 and worked as a school administrator in Trenčín in 1616. He wrote the manuscript school regulations for the local school. After a short tenure as rector in Trenčín, he returned to Prague and in 1616 he published a speech explaining the reasons for his departure from the post of administrator of the Trenčín school. In a special essay in this press, he dealt with the problems of contemporary Slovak education, and his national awareness is evident here. He was one of the first to use the Latin term *Slavonia* to refer to Slovakia.<sup>11</sup> M. Monkovicenus's diary<sup>12</sup> manuscript (or, more precisely, transcript), is preserved in University library in Cluj thanks to the copy of a collector of old manuscripts, the rector in the Slovak village of Necpaly (Necpál), Samuel Ivanka (1761-1842), as part of his manuscript collection *Collectanea*, and it is not entirely clear how it came to Cluj. The manuscript in a relatively small space (less than 10 pages, format approximately A5) provides a lot of interesting and hitherto unknown information about Martin Monkovicenus. Already his title or incipit in the wording: *Diarium Rev. Martini Monkovizeny Pastoris Oppidi Tarnocz apud Liptovienses desumptum ex Libro cuius titulus Hominis Spiritualis Anatomia et Meditatio per me Samuelem Ivanka Anno Dni 1800*, speaks of the fact that M. Monkovicenus wrote down important data of his personal life in a book. It was a book of the German theologian, philosopher, and anthropologist Otto Casmann (1562-1607) *Hominis spiritualis anatomia et meditatio: ex sacrae scripturae fontibus et piorum tam recentium, quam veterum obseruatione deducta et methodice practiceque delineata. Collegio Paltheniano, Prostat in nobilis Francofurti 1605*. On the basis of the diary, we know that M. Monkovicenus was the owner of the book in question, and we assume that it was not the only one. Although we searched in the available bibliographies for an owner's record with the name Martin Monkovicenus, we did not find any. But we think that as an educated teacher and clergyman he has more books.

<sup>9</sup> Cecilia Bianchi. *Le Calendarium Historicum et ses lecteurs. La place du calendrier de Paul Eber dans la lutte confessionnelle du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle. Texte présenté pour le Prix de Excellence* (Université de Neuchâtel, 2011).

<sup>10</sup> Vladislav Ružička, *Školstvo na Slovensku v období neskorého feudalizmu (po 70-te roky 18. storočia)* (Slovenské pedagogické nakladateľstvo, 1974), 53-54.

<sup>11</sup> Kuzmík, *Slovník autorov slovenských a so slovenskými vzťahmi za humanizmu*, 482; Hejnic and Martínek, *Rukověť k písemnictví humanistickému, zvláště básnickému v Čechách a na Moravě ve XVI. stol.*, 373-374.

<sup>12</sup> M. Monkovicenus's diary manuscript is preserved in The Lucian Blaga Central University Library of Cluj-Napoca, under the signature Ms 334/VI, f. 77v-82r or pages 154-163; Incipit: *Diarium Martini Monkoviceny Past. Ev. Tarnocensis...*

## Owners of at least one or two books

For certain figures, we were able to conclusively establish ownership of only one or two books, but there are indications that they may have owned multiple books.

Many Slovak youths who studied in Prague also maintained lively contacts between Trenčín and Charles University in Prague. Apart from Martin Moncovicenus, it was also the rector of Trenčín, Daniel Hadík (Hodík, Hodikius; \*†?).<sup>13</sup> He came from Turiec (Slovakia) and in 1616 was a student of Jan Campanus Vodňanský (1572-1622), Jan Chassenios (\*†?), Daniel Blasius (\*†?) and others in Prague. In 1618 he delivered a dispute *Collegii novi logici disputatio... secunda proposita* on logic at the University of Wittenberg. After his studies, from 1619, he served as administrator (rector) of the school “*ad sedem Castuli*” – in Trenčín. Then he was an Evangelical parish priest in Slovak towns and villages; in the year 1622 in Modra (Modern, Modor), in the year 1624 in Modrová (Nagymodró, Großmodro /Großmodrau), in the year 1626 in Liptovská Teplá (Bad Liptsch) and in the years 1630-1659/1660 in Banská Bystrica-Radvaň (Besztercebánya-Radvány, Neusohl). He owned at least two books. The first was the work *Gesta Rhomanoru[m] cum applicationibus moralizatis ac mysticis*. The work was published in Hagenau, in 1508, has two appendices<sup>14</sup> and according to the provenance record, to D. Hadík was this book given as a gift on 21 July 1636 by Georgius Tzermakius (\*†?), cantor of the German church in Banská Bystrica, as a token of eternal friendship. The second was a convolute containing the Frankfurt edition of the work of the famous Dutch engraver, illustrator and publisher Theodor de Bry (1528 – 1598) from 1590 *Admiranda Narratio fida tamen de commodis et incolarum ritibus Virginiae nuper admodum ab Anglis... anglico scripta sermone a Thoma Hariot... latio donata a C. C. A.* and its seven appendices.<sup>15</sup> A foundation work on the early exploration and delineation of America, describing and illustrating the first British colony to be established there. This volume is the first issued by the publisher, Theodor De Bry, in his extraordinary series, describing the exploration of the New World. According to the provenance record, which states that Daniel Hadík was a “Pannonius” from Turiec, he owned this book from 17 May 1647.

Štefan Omasta (Stephanus Omasztha\*†?) was also connected with Trenčín.<sup>16</sup> He studied at the school in Jihlava and during the presidency of Pavel Müller (\*†?) he defended a disputation in the field of rhetoric and philology *Disputatio prima de constitutione rhetoricae*.<sup>17</sup> It was published in Prague in 1615 and is dedicated to Alexander Socovský (cca 1570-1617), who was also active in Trenčín for some time, and to the Trenčín town council. On the other hand, the greeting

<sup>13</sup> Ružička, *Školstvo na Slovensku v období neskorého feudalizmu (po 70-te roky 18. storočia)*, 54.

<sup>14</sup> Livia Fábryová, *Tlače 16. storočia v knižniciach nitrianskeho samosprávneho kraja a nitrianskej diecézy* (Slovenská národná knižnica, 2013), record no. 244.

<sup>15</sup> Fábryová, *Tlače 16. storočia v knižniciach nitrianskeho samosprávneho kraja a nitrianskej diecézy*, record no. 85.

<sup>16</sup> Kuzmík, *Slovník autorov slovenských a so slovenskými vzťahmi za humanizmu*, 549.

<sup>17</sup> Bibliografie cizojazyčných bohemikálních tisků, record BCBT32929, <https://kvo.lib.cas.cz/bibliografie-cizojazycných-bohemikalnich-tisku-do-roku-1800-bcbt/>.

verses to his friend were written by Elias Ursinus (\*1579), who was at that time the rector of the school of St. Salvator in Prague, but later worked in Levoča (Lőcse, Leutschau) and Spišská Nová Ves (Igló, (Zipser) Neu(en)dorf). *Dictionarium Latino Germanicum et Vice Versa Germanico latinum...* from the year 1564, which was authored by an Swiss educator and humanist Peter Dasypodius (between 1490 and 1500 – 1559),<sup>18</sup> and which according to the provenance record Štefan Omasta possessed, was apparently related to his studies. However, we can assume that he also inherited (and owned) the work of professor of medicine at the University of Marburg Theodor Dorsten *Botanicon, continens Herbarum, Aliorumque Simplicium, quorum usus in Medicinis est...* dated 1540, which is annotated *Ex libris Stephani Omasztha Senioris*.<sup>19</sup>

As mentioned in the introduction to the study, books were the subject of inheritance and records of them were also found in the probate inventories. From the estate of Michael Sudor (Sutoris – Novacius, † 1618/1619), which came from the village Nováky in the Nitra County, is preserved writing *Bohemais Hoc est De Ducibus Bohemicis Libri Duo, De Regibus Bohemicis: Libri Quinq[ue]* from the year 1587, authored by the Protestant Reformed theologian Pantaleon Candidus (1540 – 1608). The work also contains Sudor's autograph *Michael Sudor Novacius posteritati gratae 1591* on the title-page.<sup>20</sup> Michael Sudor studied initially in Prievidza (Priwitz/Pritz, Privigye) by Albrecht Hussellius (\*†?) and in Prague, where he was an inmate of the College of Nations (*Collegium Nationis*). On 25 August 1593, he attained his bachelor's degree with the thesis *U[trum] qui proficit in literis et deficiat in moribus, plus deficiat quam proficiat nec ne?* In addition (in 1593 and 1598) he made minor contributions to contemporary periodicals. The priest Matthias Iacobides of Volhynia (\*†?) called him to the ministry and he was ordained in Wittenberg on 1 November 1601. He then served as a parish priest in Czech town Hradiště nad Ohří and from the feast of St. Havel (16 October) 1611 he was dean in the town of Žatec. He was still alive in 1618, but either in that year or shortly thereafter he died, for we know from literature that the dispute over Sudor's estate was settled in the house of an educated Prague burgher, one of the leading representatives of the Czech estates uprising Jan Sixt of Ottersdorf (cca 1569 – 1654) in 1619.<sup>21</sup>

The study and practice of school plays was apparently connected with the book containing the seven tragedies of Sophocles *Σοφοκλῆς Τραγωδίαί Ἑπτα Μετὰ σχόλιον καὶ τὰ ὠφέλιμον*,<sup>22</sup> which was published in Frankfurt in 1544. According to the provenance record, it belonged to Johann Tobias Krebs, who received it from his beloved brother Johann Karl Krebs. However, it is uncertain whether or not Tobias Christophorus Krebs (Novosoliensis Ungarus\*†?), who was enrolled at Charles University in Prague in the autumn of 1608, was related to these brothers.

<sup>18</sup> Vojtech Strelka. *Tlače 16. storočia v piaristickej knižnici v Trenčíne* (Matica slovenská, 1996), record no. 40.

<sup>19</sup> Strelka, *Tlače 16. storočia v piaristickej knižnici v Trenčíne*, record no. 46.

<sup>20</sup> The Book is now housed in the National Library in Prague under the signature UK:52C17, no. 1.

<sup>21</sup> Jana Štulrajterová. "Študenti pochádzajúci z územia dnešného Slovenska na stredoeurópskych univerzitách," *Zborník Filozofickej fakulty Univerzity Komenského Pedagogica* 22 (2010): 10; Hejnic and Martínek, *Rukověť k písemnictví humanistickému, zvláště básnickému v Čechách a na Moravě ve XVI. století*, 244.

<sup>22</sup> Fábryová, *Tlače 16. storočia v knižniciach nitrianskeho samosprávneho kraja a nitrianskej diecézy*, record no. 506.

Some humanists were found to have books related to their political preferences, e.g. Jan Bastner (Joannes Bastner Neosolinus\*†?) owned the *Unio Bohemica sive confederatio inter regnum Bohemiae et vicinas provincias* edited in Prag in the year 1619,<sup>23</sup> which is a celebration of the confederation of the Bohemian resistance states and the election of Frederick V (1596 – 1632) as King of Bohemia. The print was donated to Jan Bastner by its compiler Jakub Včelín (\*†?) himself, as can be read from the estate record on its title page: *Clarissimo et doctissimo viro D. Joh. Bastnero Rectori Scholae ad D. Petri Neopragae [...] amico, confratri dilecto in memoriam sempiternam [...] Bohemico autor d̄ ditt mp.* Bastner and Včelín apparently knew each other personally from their student days at Charles University and even afterwards when they served as rectors of Prague's particular schools. Since the print with this dedication is the first in a convolution of ten prints, it can be assumed that the other prints also belonged to Jan Bastner. This hypothesis is also supported by the fact that these are Prague prints from 1599 – 1626 and include the theses of Bastner's *Disputatio philosophica miscellanea* (1618).

Ján Bastner, who came from Banská Bystrica, was a teacher at St. Haštál's School in the Old Town of Prague from 1611 to 1612, and in 1612 he became a trustee at St. Clement's School. In the same year he obtained the rank of bachelor with the dissertation *Num sanguinis fluxus in cadavere occisi praesentiam interfectoris vere indicare possit?* and in 1615, the rank of magister with the dissertation *Philosophus an medico praeferendus?* Later he worked in Czech town Tábor, in 1617 at the school of St. Martin in Prague, and from 1620 at the school of St. Peter also in Prague. Apart from his dissertations, of which only theses have survived, he was the author of occasional poetry, which was published mainly in collections edited by Charles University.<sup>24</sup>

Another group of humanists owned books related to their profession or interests. Matthias Plorantius (Plačko\*†?), from whose library some books are (supposedly) still preserved.<sup>25</sup> However, we can document so far only a specimen of the printing of *Imp. Caes. Iustiniani Institutionum Libri IV*, published in Frankfurt am Main in 1610.<sup>26</sup>

Matej Plorantius was born in Slovenská Ľupča (Zólyomlipcse, Slowakisch Liptsch). After completing his lower studies in Slovakia, he apparently attended the school in his birthplace, continued his studies in Šariš (Sáros, Scharosch) for five years, and studied for three years or more in Veľké Meziříčí in Moravia (during the rectorship of Master Johann Ursinus, the first known rector there). He then stayed briefly in Prague, where he was to work as a tutor in an unspecified family. Subsequently he was for more than five years tutor to the sons of Karel of Žerotín (†1596), who had sons Viktorin, Vratislav and William (not Karel the Elder of Žerotín – the patron of the humanist

<sup>23</sup> The book is now housed in the University Library in Bratislava under the signature UKB S. D. 47364.

<sup>24</sup> Michaela Sibylová (Ján Bastner – Slovenský humanista pôsobiaci v Čechách a jeho znovuoobjavená dišputácia) in the book: Kniha 2023. Zborník o problémoch a dejinách knižnej kultúry (Slovenská národná knižnica 2023), 99-110.

<sup>25</sup> Martin Holý. *Ve službách šlechty. Vychovatelé nobility z českých zemi (1500–1620)* (Historický ústav AV ČR, 2011), 257.

<sup>26</sup> The book is now preserved in the Saxon State and University Library in Dresden (SLUB Dresden), under the signature Jus. Rom A.485.d.



Ondrej Rochotius (\*1583) but a relative of his) at Czech towns Sary Jičín and Holešov (in 1594). On 19 August 1594, he was ordained a priest in Wittenberg. He served first as a deacon in Holešov and from 1603 he was an evangelical parish priest in the main church in Czech town Lipník nad Bečvou. In 1608, he was elected Evangelical inspector of the Olomouc diocese. During his time there, he published a sermon, apparently inspired by a fire, *Neděle provodní to jest oheň.... v městě Lipníku...* printed in Olomouc in the year 1613. From his works is known an occasional print dedicated to the memory of Elizabeth of Bruntál from Vrbno, published in 1607. He apparently died in 1620.<sup>27</sup>

### Owners of larger book collections

It can be assumed that the imperial historiographer Elias Berger (Bergher, Perger, Berghler, Brisenensis 1562 – 1644) possessed an interesting library, probably in connection with his important professional and literary activities. He came from Slovak city Brezno nad Hronom (Brezinobánya, Bries / Briesen). His father, Peter Berger, was a well-known supporter of Slovak Protestant students studying in Wittenberg and Prague. Elias Berger studied in Slovak cities Brezno, Bytča (Nagybiccse / Nagybittse) and at the Calvinist University in Heidelberg. After returning from his studies, he worked at an evangelical school in Bratislava and in 1597 taught in Trenčín. Later he left the teaching profession and converted to the Catholic faith. King Matthias II (1557-1619) appointed him a royal courtier and in 1603 conferred on him the title *poeta laureatus caesareus*. From 1604 he was royal historian and was given the noble predicate from Grünberg. In his capacity as imperial historian he lived for a time at the court of Matthias II and in Bratislava. In 1622, among other economic benefits, he was granted possession of the town of Skalica by the king, where he settled. In 1634, King Ferdinand II (1578-1637) appointed him director of the royal thirty in town Skalica (Szakolca). He held this office until 1644, when he retired at his own request. He died shortly afterwards. He became active in literature in 1600, when he published his work *Rapsodiae de cruce, insigniis regni Hungariae sanctissimis* in Olomouc. He published writings in verse and prose such as *Carmen historicum de ponte lapideo inter urbem magnam minoremque Pragam miro artificio ...extructo*. (Prague 1602), *Idyllia de virtute bellica id est de militiae christianae ... utilitate* (Prague 1603), *Typus monarchiae Europae Austrio-Romanae* (Prague 1603), *Connubium Hungariae et Bohemiae in ... principe ... Matthia secundo* (Prague 1611), *Spectator theatri extemporanei belli Hungarici* (Prague 1612) and a number of occasional verses published in contemporary collections. Berger's poems had good verse technique. His historical writings, however, often relied on data that contradicted reality in terms of historical reliability.<sup>28</sup>

As mentioned above, considering Elias Berger's significant professional and literary activities it can be assumed that he also possessed an interesting library. Elias Berger's library may have included books which, according to indications, may have been preserved in the funds of the

<sup>27</sup> Kuzmík, *Slovník autorů Slovenských a so slovenskými vzťahmi za Humanizmu*, 587.

<sup>28</sup> Eva Frimmová, "Eliáš Berger (1562-1644), cisársky historiograf a poeta laureatus," *Historický časopis* 62, č. 3 (2014): 394, 399.

Franciscan monastery in Skalica (Szokolca). However, so far we know of only two such books.<sup>29</sup> These are *Peter Révai's Commentarius de sacra corona Regni Hungariae ortu, virtute, victoria, fortuna...* (1613), where Berger wrote his letter of recommendation for publication and which he was to take care of publishing himself.<sup>30</sup> The second is Johann Bodin's *Universae naturae theatrum, in quo rerum omnium efectrices, causae et fines quinque libris discutiuntur* (1596) with a damaged Berger manuscript exlibris.<sup>31</sup> Berger's work *Rapsodiae de cruce insigniis regni Hungarici et de gestis pro cruce inclitorum Hungariae regum* with his autograph was also preserved.<sup>32</sup> An interesting indirect evidence of the close (family) relations between Elias Bergeer and Samuel Rochotius (\*†?) – a close relative of the humanist poet Ondrej Rochotius – is the dedication: *Reverendo ac Clarissimo vero [sic!] D. Samueli Rochotio de Rochorenberg Pastori Ecclesiae Prusenowico fidelissimo etc. Domino et affini charissimo librum hanc per concambium dedit 16. Januarij anno 1617. Elias Berger a Grenberg Pl et Caesareus Historicus* in the book *Consensus orthodoxus Sacrae scripturae et veteris ecclesiae....* (Zürich 1578). In his dedication, Elias Berger uses the word *affinis*, which in early medieval Hungary was used to express a kinship relationship acquired mainly in the female line – by marriage. It did not have to be a blood relationship, but could be a relationship such as: brother-in-law, father-in-law, stepfather or son-in-law.<sup>33</sup>

An interesting collection of books was owned by Samuel Rochotius, a parish priest from the Moravian village of Prusinovice and a relative of humanist Ondrej Rochotius. From his library 15 books with a manuscript ownership note could be identified. The hand written notes in the books that belonged to Samuel Rochotius have quite significant narrative value, and thanks to them we can summarize the information about Samuel Rochotius as follows: Samuel Rochotius was a close relative of the humanist poet Ondrej Rochotius, and a relative or friend of the Berger family. He was a preacher and spiritual administrator in the Moravian village of Prusinovice, near Kroměříž. His origins are linked to the territory of today's Slovakia, where he returned after the issuing of recatholization mandates against the non-Catholic bourgeoisie in Bohemia and Moravia. Initially (1629) he worked on the Lednica estate, later (1630) he stayed for a short time in Slovak town Komárno, and between 1631 and 1639 he lived in Trenčín. He was the owner of a library, the contents of which probably corresponded to his profession as a Protestant pastor sympathetic to Calvinism, but its extent is not yet fully known, and only fragments of it are gradually appearing. Existential reasons probably forced him to give up this library, and he gradually sold off the books. Their buyers were often various Protestant clergymen.

<sup>29</sup> Frimmová, "Eliáš Berger (1562–1644), cisársky historiograf a poeta laureatus," 399.

<sup>30</sup> A copy of this print is now in the possession of the University Library in Bratislava under the signature 35644.

<sup>31</sup> This print is now preserved by the Slovak National Library in Martin under the signature ID 85049.

<sup>32</sup> Now it is in the library of the National Museum in Prague under the signature 57 B 40.

<sup>33</sup> Frederik Federmayer (Neskorší majitelia knižnice Zachariáša Mošovského v genealogických súvislostiach), in *Studia Bibliographica Posoniensia 2017* (Univerzitná knižnica v Bratislave, 2017), 11 – 33.

Some of the books, which were apparently bought as a larger whole by George Rákóczi, were intended to serve the needs of the students of the Reformed College in Sárospatak, while others, after various peripetias and changes of owners, became the property of the historical collections of Slovak libraries. However, we will not devote more space to this library and its owner here, as its detailed analysis is the subject of a separate, recently published study.<sup>34</sup>

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the manuscript provenance notes in the sample of authors and their documents we have studied are also rich in narrative value. The simpler ones – a few lines at most – often tell about the social position and location of their owner, show the relationship between the donor of the book and its recipient, and, in the case of a purchase, the price of the book can also be encountered. A special group consists of book calendars or books in which their owners kept a diary. These also provide a lot of information about the personal life of both the author and the owner of the document. Researching provenance records and matching them to individual authors is not straightforward. Despite the difficulties associated with researching the provenance of books, it turns out that the knowledge obtained by analysing provenance records often provides new information and thus adds to the generally known profile of humanist personalities. They also point to the interpersonal relationships, social and educational structures to which these personalities belonged. Regarding the books themselves, it can be stated that they were related to the author's professional and religious orientation, some of them related to broader socio-political topics. These were mostly relatively expensive publications, bound in Renaissance leather. Many of them contained notes written by several hands and in various inks. This is evidence that the books had multiple owners. Part of our research was also to determine whether these books with handwritten notes by the authors under study became part of the aristocratic libraries of western Slovakia. However, it turned out that they did not. Most of them were preserved in church and religious libraries.

## Appendix 1 – Handwritten diaries

*Diarium Rev. Condam D. Andreae Thuri, alias Turßky Zolensis pastoris Predmieriensis dein Ponicensis, propria ejus manu sparsim per Calendarium suum historicum connotatum, ex ipso originali ad ordinem redactum et transumatum per Mathiam Schulek Velicsnae Arvensum h. r. Eccl. VagyPalugyensis V. D. M. Anno 1786 (hodie an. 1789 iam ab annis 13. Taxoviensum Parochum). [17 pp].*  
(*Brevis delineatio Vitae Andreae Thuri*) [8 pp].

*Diarium Rev. Martini Monkovizeny Pastoris Oppidi Tarnocz apud Liptovienses desumtum ex Libro cujus titulus Hominis Spiritualis Anatomia et Meditatio per me Samuelem Ivanka Anno Dni 1800, [10 pp].*

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<sup>34</sup> Angela Škovierová "Rochotsky's book collection and its fate," *Hunfarian Studies. Special Issue* (2025) (in print).

**Appendix 2** – Detailed bibliographic records of books owned by the authors under review<sup>35</sup>

Kalendář Hystorycský. To gest Krátké poznamenánij wssech dnuow gednohokaždého Měsýce přes celý Rok: k nimžto přidány gsau některé paměti hodné Historiae, o rozličných příhodách a proměnách yak Národůw giných a Zemí w Swětě tak take a obzwlásstně Národu a Králowstwíj Českého z hodnowěrných Kronyk Od M. Danyele Adama Pražského s pilnostij sebraný. A nynij wnowě pro obecný vžitek wssech Čzechuow wydaný a Wytisstěný w Starém Městě Pražském v Giříjho Melantrycha z Awentýnu: a M. Danyele Adama Pražského Léta Páně 1578. Fer DeVs aVXLIVM nobls. [= 1578]. [XII] - 376 - [XXIII] pp.; 4° (owner J. Tesák Mošovský).

Calendarium historicum conscriptum a Paulo Ebero Kitthingensi; et recens ante obitum ab eodem recognitum plurimisq[ue] locis auctum. Vitebergae: Excudebat Iohannes Crato, anno MDLXXI. [1571]. [21], 414, [11], [34] pp., index; 4° (19 cm) (owner Ondrej Thuri)

Hominis spiritualis anatomia et meditatio ex sacrae scripturae fontibus et piorum tam recentium, quam veterum observatione deducta Et Methodice practiceque delineata Ab Othone Casmanno Ad Christianae Sanctimoniae inflammandum studium. Prostat in nobilis Francofurti Collegio Paltheniano. 1605. [28], 459, [1] pp.; 8° (16 cm) (owner Martin Monkovicenus)

Gesta Rhomanoru[m] cum applicationibus moralizatis ac mysticis. (Ex gestis Rhomanorum Historiae notabiles de vicij virtutibusq[ue] tractantes. [Hagenau]: (Inpensis Ioannis Rynman de Oringaw in officina Henrici Gran, Anno salutis nostrae Millesim qingentesimo octavo. XX mensis Martij [1508]). [6] LXXXI [=81] fol. 2° (27 x 20 cm). (owner Daniel Hadík)

Appendix 1. Pleberdus de Temeshwar: Expositio compendiosa. Hagenau: Heinrich Gran, 1504. 2°

Appendix 2. Martinus Polonus. Margarita decreti. Argentinae: Georgius Husner, 1499. 2°

Admiranda Narratio fida tamen de commodis et incolarum ritibus Virginiae nuper admodum ab Anglis... anglico scripta sermone a Thoma Hariot... latio donata a C. C. A. Viviae Imagines Et Ritus Incolarum Eius Provinciae in America, Quae Virginia Appelata Est Ab Angelis Iussu Magnifici Viri D. Walteri Raleigh, Equitis & Praefecti fodinarum Stanni in Cornuwallia & Exonia, profectis anno M D XXCVC ad obseruandas nouas Prouincias, permissu & auctoritate Serenissimae Reginae Angeliae Elizabethae. Omnia Diligenter observata. Et ad uiuum expressa a Joanne With, eius rei gratia in illam Prouinciam Annis 1585 et 1588 misso. Deinde in Aes incisa, et primum in luce euulgata a Theodoro de Bry, Anno M D XC [=1590]. [22] fol. Damaged. 4° (31,5 x 22,5 cm). (owner Daniel Hadík)

Appendix 1. Americae Pars Secunda. Francofurti ad Moenum, Theodor de Bry, 1591. 4°

Appendix 2. Americae Pars Tertia. Francofurti ad Moenum, Johann Wechel; imp. Theodor de Bry, 1592. 4°

Appendix 3. Americae Pars Quarta. Francofurti ad Moenum, Johann Feyerabend; imp. Theodor de Bry, 1594. 4°

Appendix 4. Americae Pars Quinta. Francofurti ad Moenum, Johann Feyerabend, 1595. 4°

Appendix 5. Americae Pars Sexta. Francfurt am Main, Johann Feyerabend, 1596. 4°

Appendix 6. Americae Pars Septima. Francfurt am Main, officina Theodori de Bry, 1599. 4°

Appendix 7. Americae Pars Octava. Francofurti, Matthaeus Becker & Theodor de Bry – heredes. 1599. 4°

<sup>35</sup> For individual books, we list the name of its owner in parentheses. Book entries are listed in the same order as they are listed in the article.

Dictionarium Latino Germanicum et Vice Versa Germanico latinum. Argentorati: Excudebat Theodosius Rihelius. Anno M. D. LXIII [=1564]. [448] fol. Damaged. 8° (18, 7 x 11 cm). (owner Štefan Omasta)

Botanicon, continens Herbarum, Aliorumque Simplicium, quorum usus in Medicinis est, descriptions et Iconas ad uiuum effigiatas: ex praecipuis tam Graecis quam latinis Auctoribus iam recens concinnatum. Additis etiam, quae Neotericorum obseruationes et experientiae uel comprobarunt denuo, uel nuper inuenerunt. Aut. Theodorico Dorstenio Medico. Francofurti, apud Christiannum Egenolphum Hadamarium (Anno M. D. XL [= 1540] Mense Martio [10], [306] fol. 4° (27,5 x 18, 7 cm) (owner Štefan Omasta)

Appendix 1. Ptolemaeus Claudius. Quadriparti. Ptol. Venetiis, Octavianus Scotus 1519. 4°

Bohemois Hoc est De Ducibus Bohemicis Libri Duo, De Regibus Bohemicis: Libri Quinq[ue]. Ad Rudolphum II. Rom[anorum] Imp[eratori] Hungariae, Bohemiae, Etc. Regem & Archiducem Austriae Serenissimum principem, Summae in eam familiam pietatis atq[ue] honoris ergo, carmine scripti à Pantaleone Candido Austriaco. Quibus adiunctum est Carmen in Expeditionem Maximiliani II. Rom: contra Turcas Anno 1566. Susceptam eiusdem Autoris. Argentorati [1527], [131 p.] (owner Michael Sudor Novacius)

Σοφοκλῆς Τραγωδίαί Ἑπτὰ Μετὰ σχόλιον καὶ τὰ ὠφέλιμον. *Sophoclis Tragoediae septem*. Cum interpretationes vuestustis et ualde utilibus. Tragoediarum nomina: Ajax flagellifer, Elektra, Oidipus Tyrannus, Antigona, Oidipus coloneus, Trachuniae, Filoktetes. Francofurti Ex officina Petri Brubachii, Anno M. D: XLIII [1544], [193] fol. 8° (21 x 16 cm) (owner Christophorus Krebs)

Imp. Caes. Iustiniani Institutionum Libri IV. Cum adnotationibus ac notis doctiss. scriptorum illustrati & adaucti: quibus adiunximus appendicis loco Leges XII tab. explicatas, Vlpiani tit. XXIX adnotatos, Caii libros II Institut. titulos tractatúsque iur. ciu. studio in primis necessarios. Editio sexta. *Francofurti ad Moenum apud* Jean Crespin, Anno 1610 [423 p.] (owner Matthias Plorantius)

De sacrae coronae regni Hungariae ortu, virtute, victoria, fortuna, annos ulatra DC clarissimae. Brevis commentarius Petri de Reva Comititis Comitatus de Turocz. Augustae Vindelicorum Excudebat Christoph Mangus. Anno M. DC. III. [1613], [119 p.] (owner Elias Berger)

Universae naturae theatrum: in quo rerum omnium effectrices causae & fines contemplantur, & continuas series quinque libris discutiuntur. Autore Io. Bodino. Lugduni, apud Jacobum Roussin, Typographum Regum. i-xvi, 1-633 p. (owner Elias Berger)

*Consensus orthodoxus Sacrae Scripturae et veteris ecclesiae, de sententia et veritate verborum coenae dominicae, adeoque de tota controversia sacramentaria*. In certa capita distinctus, in quibus praeter veram huius mysterij doctrinae explicationem, etiam verè sacramentarij errores ex perpetua articulorum fidei analogia, & genuino patrum sensu excutiuntur, atq[ue] simul excogitatae dipnosophistarum imposturae deteguntur, ex noua recognitione nunc passim locupletissimè auctus. Accesserunt duo indices: alter rerum & verborum: alter personarum patrum, scriptorum, synodorum, confessionum, quorum testimonia & sententiae in hoc opere citantur: item & h[ereticorum] [Herdasianus, Christoph]. Tiguri, apud Froschouerum, 1578, 2°. [497] p. (owner Elias Berger)