

**BABES-BOLYAI UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY OF LETTERS  
DEPARTMENT OF HUNGARIAN LITERATURE**

**German-Hungarian literary contacts:  
Heltai Gáspár writer and publisher**

**- Ph.D. Thesis -**

**Scientific Coordinator:  
Univ. prof. Egyed Emese, Ph.D.**

**PhD candidate:  
Szell Anita-Andreea**

**Cluj- Napoca**

**2011**

# German-Hungarian literary contacts: Heltai Gáspár writer and publisher (synthesis of main parts)

## CONTENTS

Contents .....	3-4
<i>I. Introduction</i> .....	5-11
<i>II. Culture of letters in the 16th century</i> .....	12
<b>1. Culture and literature</b> .....	12
1.1. On the concept of culture .....	12-14
1.2. Concepts of literature in the 16th century .....	14-17
<b>2. Factors which influence the contents analyzed</b> .....	18-20
<b>3. Erudition of Saxons from Transylvania</b> .....	20-23
<i>III. Heltai Gáspár – Publishing and printing activity</i> .....	24-25
<b>1. Old Hungarian printings and their significance in the development of literature</b> ..	25-26
<b>2. Circumstances and environment of dissemination of texts in the 16th century</b> .....	26-28
<b>3. The role of formator of printing culture</b> .....	28-33
<b>4. Printing works in Sibiu, Braşov and Cluj in the 16th century</b> .....	33
4.1. Printing works in Sibiu .....	33-40
4.2. Printing works in Braşov .....	40-43
4.3. Printing works in Cluj .....	43-50
4.4. Comparison between the three printing works in Transylvania .....	50-56
<b>5. Language and spelling of old Hungarian printing works</b> .....	56-68
<b>6. The necessity of analysis of the text critics criteria</b> .....	68-70
<i>IV. Literary works – approach attempts</i> .....	71
<b>1. Heltai's works, general view</b> .....	71-109
<b>2. Heltai Gáspár: <i>Imádságos könyv (1570-1571)</i>.</b> .....	109-114
<b>3. Heltai Gáspár: <i>A farkasról, vadászról és pásztorról</i>. Attempt of analysis based on the text book <i>Száz fabula</i></b> .....	114-121
<b>4. Translation, processing or individual literary work. Heltai Gáspár: <i>Imádságos könyv</i> and <i>Ponciánus császár históriája</i>.</b> .....	121-143
<b>5. Publishing and translation activity of Heltai Gáspár – contemporary German appreciations</b> .....	143-164
<i>V. Conclusions</i> .....	165-167
<i>VI. Bibliography</i> .....	168-180

## **KEY WORDS**

culture, literature, interculturality, printing houses, writer and editor Heltai Gáspár, translations, phraseology, religion, humanist and reformer, multilingualism, German-Hungarian analysis

## **SYNTHESIS OF MAIN PARTS**

**Chapter I** of the thesis is destined to the introduction. In this chapter I described in detail the purpose of the thesis, the research methods, I also described the main points revealed, also the type of texts used.

The research in the direction of both languages of written creations by bilingual authors from Transylvania represents a frequent theme in the Hungarian and foreign specialty literature of the past decades (in our case German), various branches of science focusing on the research based on various criteria applicable on the texts of German authors from Transylvania, texts published in German, Hungarian and Romanian language. The purpose of the thesis is to analyze the modality in which Heltai Gáspár's activity may be discussed based on the theory of interculturality, searching an answer to the question how he structures his creation, with what linguistic and lexical elements the author works, counting on the readers of a multiethnic and multicultural region. The processing of the modality of writing specific to Heltai, having as basis the previous theories is incompletely achieved in the German and Hungarian specialty research areas. My purpose was the processing and interpretation of Hungarian texts of the Saxon author, pursuant to the hypothesis that the election of themes does not happen to the detriment of form and content of creations, respectively I also had as purpose the analysis from the perspective of interculturality, to what degree the lexic and spelling of the creations are influenced by these factors.

The next important step in the analysis of lexic, of the stylistic methods of translations from German language into Hungarian language was: I noticed that the parts in which the influence of Heltai's mother tongue is felt in the Hungarian text may be grouped according to certain criteria.

From the point of view of the research it is however so important to analyze the period and creations of through the influence of the religion and the society. Heltai Gáspár is considered by the specialty Hungarian and German literature as being first a reformer, fact which raises interpretation issues, due to the fact that the author reoriented several times in which regards the religion, and this may be noticed also in his texts and printing activity. In

the specialty German and Hungarian literature may be noticed almost constant differences in the description, appreciation of religious and social events of Heltai's period. For example, German researcher Krista Zach considers that the attempts of Saxons to establish equality between Saxons and Hungarians were unsuccessful, and, on the other hand, Hungarian researcher Molnár Szabolcs notices an almost full equality between Saxons and Hungarians in Heltai's period, as seen in his study also mentioned in the thesis.

In which concerns the analysis criteria, I performed the appreciations regarding Heltai Gáspár's activity first based on the general specialty literature, then the Hungarian one, and finally based on German critical studies. The order mentioned was necessary, because during the analysis of the author's creations I had to consider the specialty literature general opinions in Hungarian language on the author, and, further, if the analysis is, in fact, on the German-Hungarian literary contacts in the author's creations. I considered very important to ascertain which role does the authors having as Saxon mother tongue in literature, in the German contemporary research, thus ensuring that the German-Hungarian research in the case of this author are correct.

During the research, Heltai's original publications were used by me in parallel with their version from the text book made by Molnár Szabolcs, as follows: in the thesis's text remains the version of Molnár's text book, due to the fact that this text is easier to read and easier to decipher than to the work performed by the researcher previously named, at the same time in the footnotes I make reference to the page numbers, titles of chapters, language of Heltai's original printing house (but in the cases when the spelling, content of text does not differ from the original text, I do not repeat the quote, I just mention the page from the original edition). The thesis's body thus remains easy to read, and this shall not influence in a negative manner the philological correctness and credibility.

**In chapter II** entitled *Culture of letters at the beginning of the 16th century* I tried to analyze from the perspective of contemporary cultural concepts and literary concepts from the 16th century the cultural significance of printing houses from Transylvania from the 16th century in the respective period and in the contemporary period. I reached to the conclusion that the three largest printing houses from 16th century Transylvania, that is the one from Cluj, respectively those from Sibiu and Braşov were in a complementarity relationship not only in which concerns the language, thus filling in the significance of their activity, but also from the point of view of the scientific variability of printed creations. Heltai Gáspár's printing house focused on certain creations, religious printings, respectively fictional and historical, the Sibiu printing house served the education and administration, and to a smaller

degree religion, and the printing house from Braşov has in evidence printings from all contemporary scientific areas, but does not reach profundity in any field, profundity encountered at Heltai's Cluj printing house. The analysis of Saxon erudition from Transylvania – we understand here, of course, the creations in printed form – was important, because we obtained a general view on the books read, including not only those from the 16th century, thus we could also observe some tendencies of change in the reading public's attitude.

In **chapter III** entitled *Heltai Gáspár – Publishing and printing activity* the comparison of the three printing houses from Transylvania was thought as a continuation of the previous chapter, taking into account different factors which influenced the activity of these printing houses, respectively the consequences of these factors. I analyzed the specificities of the content and literary genre from concrete creations, respectively the printing houses' principle of activity, and I noticed that the printing house from Sibiu did not work with a single pressman, respectively the type of published texts was not defined by the personality of authors and pressmen, but rather by Saxon interests, by the principle of fulfilling the duty to the city, fact clearly emphasized by the type of creations. The printing house from Braşov and the one from Cluj were already formed on the basis and following the activity of important personalities, however the type and language of texts shows significant differences in the case of the two printing houses. Both authors of Saxon origin from Transylvania, that is Johannes Honterus from Braşov and Heltai Gáspár from Cluj had other purposes, they exercised their activity in various languages (German, respectively Hungarian), but from the virtual competition, in fact not existing and not demonstrated in the 16th century, it appears, however, that Heltai has the advantage, due to the fact that his works with interesting theme not only for philologists, but also for the large public are also read nowadays (especially *Száz fabula*), meanwhile the popularity of texts published in Honterus's printing house diminished during the centuries, fact valid also for the popularity of the Sibiu ones. Of course, in the same time with passing this observation, we must take into account that the Saxon population (and in the 18th century the Swabian population) from Transylvania and Banat drastically diminished compared to the Hungarian population, and the specialty German literature from nowadays Germany did not give them the right attention.

In the subchapter *Language and spelling of old Hungarian printing works* I focused especially on the influence exercised by Heltai Gáspár on Hungarian spelling; Heltai's role in this field was compared to the one of other authors from the respective period. I tried to

answer to the question why the translation of the Bible in Károli Gáspár's version was more popular and subsisted in comparison to Heltai's.

The largest and most important part of the thesis is represented by the chapter *Literary works – approach attempts*, that is **chapter IV**. Preceding the concrete analysis of creations mentioned I considered necessary to review some considerations from the specialty literature on Heltai's works, thus making easing the ranking of the place occupied by these creations in the general activity of the author. The texts chosen from Heltai's works and analyzed in detail are three, which, from my point of view prove to be adequate for the analysis based on the theory and practice of translations, of the lexic and of phraseology, but this does not mean that in texts with other theme of which are of a different literary genre of the author these criteria cannot be debated.

Through the German-Hungarian literary contacts I searched for an answer to the complex relation between author's Saxon mother tongue and his works written in Hungarian language. The results obtained by Heltai on the field of Hungarian literature are also emphasized by German appreciations, and the mother tongue is reminded by Hungarian appreciation thus resulting that Heltai Gáspár is assimilated by both languages (by the history of the two cultures), which, in case of Hungarian specialty literature is well understood. It is encouraging that the German specialty literature does not exclude Heltai, although he wrote his works in Hungarian language, moreover, it considers him the most important pressman from the 16th century Transylvania (together with Johannes Honterus from Braşov).

**Chapter V** contains my conclusions following the finalization of the thesis. Following the analysis performed based on works and publishing activities I reached to the conclusion that the hypothesis and observations related to certain creations of Heltai Gáspár, according to which these are translations, not only based on the period's writing rules (according to which the texts processed from foreign creations were not categorized as translations), but also as a result of the stylistical and lexical analysis must be reinterpreted, redefined. Heltai's works, due to their contents, may be defined as either translations, or individual works, but in which concerns the vocabulary, the texts remind only to a small degree of the original texts, they are much better than these.

**Chapter VI** is made up of bibliographical references.

## ANNEX TO THE SUMMARY

### Own publications related to the doctoral thesis:

In Hungarian:

*Gottsched-Bessenyei. Dramaturgiai komparáció (Gottsched Beseneyei. Dramaturgical comparison).* In: Néző, játék, olvasó (Spectator, piece, reader). Ed. Egyed Emese, Cluj-Napoca: Kriterion, 2004. 126-135.

*Írásos műveltség a XVI. századi Erdélyben (The culture of letters in Transylvania of the 16th century).* In: Volume X of the RODOSZ conference. Ed. Székely Tünde, Cluj-Napoca: Clear Vision, 2009. 171-186.

*Heltai Gáspár nyomdászati és írói tevékenységének német méltatásai (German considerations on the editorial and writer activity of the author Heltai Gaspar).* In: A fordítás kultúrája - szövegek és gyakorlatok (The culture of translations – Texts and exercises), Ed. Gábor Csilla – Korondi Ágnes, Cluj-Napoca: Verbum – Láthatatlan Kollégium, 2010. 345-365.

*Heltai Gáspár imádságos könyve (1570-1571) (The Prayers Book of Gaspar Heltai. 1570-1571).* In: Nyelv- és Irodalomtudományi Közlemények (Research studies of linguistics and literary history). Year LII, 1/2008 Ed. Murádin László, Cluj-Napoca: Editura Academiei Române-București, 2009. 91-94.

In German:

*Übersetzung, Bearbeitung oder selbständiges Werk? Das Gebetbuch und Die Geschichte des Kaisers Pontianus von Kaspar Helth (Translation, rewriting or individual work? The Prayers Book and the Story of the Emperor Pontianus by the author Heltai Gaspar).* In: Zeitschrift der Germanisten Rumäniens. Ed. Guțu, George, București: GGR & Paideia, 2009. 285-301.

*Der Kulturvermittler Heltai Gáspár (Kaspar Helth). Interkulturalität und Mehrsprachigkeit in den Werken des Autors (Heltai Gáspár (Kaspar Helth), (The mediator between cultures. Interculturality and multilinguism in the authors` works). In: Germanistik im europäischen Kontext. Zeitschrift des Departements für Deutsche Sprache und Literatur. Vol. 3. 1/2011. Ed. Gorgoi, Lucia – Vladu, Daniela - Sánta-Jakabházi, Réka, Cluj-Napoca: Mega, 2011. 121-140.*

*Die drei Christinnen. Das erste ungarische Drama (The Three Christinnen Virgins. The first Hungarian Play)* In: Drámaszövegek metamorfózisa. Kontaktustörténetek. Vol. I Metamorphosis of (drama)texts. Stories of relation, Ed. Egyed Emese - Bartha Katalin Ágnes - Tar Gabriella Nóra, Kolozsvár (Cluj): Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület 2011. 49-56.