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“GRAMMATICA EST...”

The significance and sources of János Sylvester’s definition

János Sylvester’s parallel Latin–Hungarian grammar written in Latin, *Grammatica Hungarolatina* (1539) is a precious document of the Hungarian language and literature approach.¹ On the pages of this journal, I have already written about Sylvester’s German sources.² This time I am examining the first sentence of the work, the definition of grammar: “Grammatica est ars recte loquendi et scribendi autoritate optimorum poetarum et oratorum constans”³—that is “Grammar is the art of proper speaking and writing leaning on the best poets and orators’ authority”.

A number of people have already dealt with the significance of the definition and its possible sources both in the earlier and the more recent Hungarian literature. However, at some points we can tinge the explanations formulated so far. It is extremely important for Hungarian literary history to know the effects that have shaped Sylvester’s conception. The major part of the documents of humanist language and literature approach is in Latin, thus it cannot be neutral to the international neo-Latin research in what ways the intellectual trends entangling Western Europe have appeared in the central parts of the continent. Those general problems which lead beyond the narrowly defined field of linguistics and literary theory can be especially interesting.

1. Description and speculation—didactics and philosophy—rhetoric and logic

Sylvester’s words can be valued more precisely than before if we set the definition in the wider context of the European literature of grammar. From the methodological point of view, it is expedient to separate the descriptive and the speculative type of grammatical manuals. It must be emphasized that *Grammatica Hungarolatina* belongs to the first type. The spine of the work is the discussion of morphology, mostly based on the adaptations of Donatus’ *Ars minor*, which were dispersed all over Europe and played a decisive role in the development of the grammatical literature of the national languages. *Gram-*

¹ SYLVESTER János, *Grammatica Hungarolatina in usum puerorum recens scripta*, Újsziget, 1539. Latest facsimile edition: *Grammatica Hungarolatina*, facsimile text published by KŐSZEGHY Péter, covering study written by SZÖRÉNYI László, Budapest, 1989 (Bibliotheca Hungarica Antiqua, 23).

² István BARTÓK, *Grammatica Hungarolatina – Grammatica Latinogermanica: János Sylvester und Marcus Crodelius*, *Camoenae Hungaricae*, 1(2004), 93–104.

³ SYLVESTER, *op. cit.*, a1r.

matica Hungarolatina is an invaluable source of the history of Hungarian linguistics, at the same time it also provides the history of ideas with interesting data.

The descriptive grammars were principally written for scholastic use and wished to succeed in pedagogic purposes: the acquisition of the most important rules and appropriate language usage. This is closely connected to the creation of written texts, and the instructions for these could be found in rhetoric. Thus, descriptive grammars are characterized by the junction of didactics and rhetoric. The expression “Gebrauchsgrammatik” of the German literature refers to the practical availability with scholastic purposes. However, in the speculative grammars, the more abstract and theoretic aspects came to the front. Due to our present views, the works of this type are closely related to general linguistics, language philosophy and the concerned areas of epistemology. They are determined by the logical approach of linguistic questions. The German term (“Gelehrte Grammatik”) suggests that these tracts can be rather considered definitions of academic theories.

The earliest known Greek and Latin grammars belong to descriptive grammar. Their main parts are phonetics and morphology. Later, the discussion of the errors and values of linguistic expression was attached to these topics. The ancient tradition kept on living in the middle ages and in the times of humanism as well. This line of development continued in the 15th century in Italy. In the row of the rhetorically defined writings, Lorenzo Valla’s work, *De linguae Latinae elegantia* (1449) is of decisive significance. Valla’s chief purpose is the restitution the one-time elegance of Latin language. He finds it attainable on two levels. The first one is the level of grammatical correctness. This is the precondition of reaching the higher purpose, the Latinity and elegance, which can be interpreted on the level of rhetoric-stylistic competence.

To achieve grammatical correctness, one has to turn to the grammar writers (grammatici). Valla divides them into two parts. He considers the writings of the “grammatici veteres” the starting point: he takes into consideration the Roman and late antique authors’ activity, primarily that of Varro, Donatus, Servius, and Priscianus; critically examining, correcting and specifying their results when needed. He does not consider the other group of grammarians, the authors after Priscianus, worth to be followed; he definitely words his objections in some cases.

The study of standard authors (auctores) is built on a firm grammatical basis. Valla ranks here all the writers and poets from the century before and after Christ’s birth, but he supposes that the principal examples of attaining *elegantia* are still Cicero and Quintilian. He condemns the later authors, especially Macrobius and the Church Fathers writing in Latin—most of all Lactantius.

Realising Valla’s programme, the Italian grammarians of the second half of the 15th century—Niccolò Perotti, Sulpitius Verulanus, Antonius Mancinellus, Aldus Manutius and others—strove to enforce the requirements of the Latin language use of high standard. Their critic was directed against the barbaric, incomprehensible, and faulty Latin of the middle ages. They convicted scholastic philosophy and speculative grammar as well.

Besides Latin, they also strove for linguistic elegance in connection with vulgar languages. Almost two centuries after its birth, they rediscovered Dante's principal work (*De vulgari eloquentia*, 1304) in Italy, and it became an important point of reference in the debates of the first half of the 16th century (Pietro Bembo, *Prose della volgar lingua*, 1525; Sperone Speroni, *Dialogo della lingua*, 1542). The debate over correct Italian language went on with a stylistic-rhetoric vehemence. As the Italian grammarians were the first to strive to realise Valla's programme, the descriptive, rhetorically influenced way of grammatical literature is also called southern type tradition from the times of humanism.

The antecedents of speculative grammars can also be led back to the ancient times. In the 2nd century A. D., some syntactic problems had already appeared; these broke open the narrow frames of phonetics and morphology, and raised several theoretic questions. In the middle ages, philosophical grammar was revived by the modists, who proceeded from the old question of how humans can come to know reality with the help of language. Their effect prevailed again and again throughout centuries. The best known medieval representatives of "grammatica speculativa" are Johannes Salisburiensis and Thomas von Erfurt. On the grounds of a geographic respect, the speculative, logically determined branch of the development of grammatical literature is also called northern type tradition.

This branch came to the front again in the 16th century. In the examination of the connections between thinking, language, and reality, Ramism is considered the most important school. Other significant representatives of philosophic language approach are the English Linacre (*De emendata structura Latini sermonis*, 1524), the Italian Scaliger (*De causis linguae Latinae*, 1540), the Spanish Sanctius (*Minerva, seu de causis linguae Latinae*, 1587). The important authors of rational-universal grammar in the 17th century are the Italian Campanella (*Grammatica*, 1638), the French Arnauld and Lancelot ("*Port-Royal Grammar*", 1660), the German Schottelius (*Ausführliche Arbeit von der teutschen Haupt Sprache*, 1663). The decisive role of logics is especially typical of the two latter works; both excludes prosody, poetics, and rhetoric from grammar.

The descriptive and speculative branches existed side by side for long centuries. Among the representatives of humanist science, some of Sylvester's contemporaries—such as Erasmus or Melanchthon—strove to realise the stylistic elegance considered ideal and based on the examples of the ancient precedents. Thus, they preferred the descriptive grammars setting the rules of appropriate language use; they regarded the philosophically-logically inspired theories doubtful speculations.

I have already mentioned above the role of descriptive grammars in the development of the grammatical literature of national languages. The authors of the parallel Latin-popular language grammars attempted to describe their mother tongues with using the frames offered by Latin grammar, practically forcing popular language in the frames of Latin grammar which were many times too narrow. Just the recognition of the digressions from Latin grammar led to the wording of the specific rules of the certain living languages.

We must mention the speculative type of the grammar of national languages as well. The authors of these acquired a metalanguage, that of Latin examples. Proceeding on this way, they tried to adjust popular language to two norms: on the one hand to Latin grammar itself, on the other to the theoretic requirements deriving from that.

Naturally, it is impossible to strictly distinguish the descriptive and speculative group of grammar manuals. More philosophical grammars did not miss pedagogic purposes either, as the authors' theoretic ideas could be figured from descriptive grammars expressly written for scholastic purposes. János Sylvester is also an example of this. As mentioned above, Lorenzo Valla's work is given a decisive significance in the forming of descriptive, rhetoric grammar, however, his work also serves as a starting point for discussing several language philosophical problems. It is time to examine Sylvester's definition of grammar and the referring parts of his manual also because the questions of language approach and the relation of older and more recent theories are being given a greater and greater role in the examination of literary thinking in the late decades. For instance, the connection of Valla and Wittgenstein have been much examined,⁴ and there are also some who regard the medieval modists as the forerunners of Chomsky's transformational-generative grammar.

2. *The components and the scope of grammar*

In Hungarian literature history writing, it has already been formulated in the 19th century that Sylvester's definition of grammar shows the effect of humanist language approach. Benedek Jancsó emphasized the typical feature of renaissance grammars, the common presence of grammatical rule and linguistic norm: "While other grammarians only say «Grammatica est ars bene loquendi et scribendi», he [Sylvester] also tells what this appropriate speaking and writing could be, how one can establish its rules, what examples one needs to see them. He says that one can establish the rules of grammar by the examples of the best poets and orators, that is the works of the classics. This shows that the idea of Latin grammar improved by renaissance men was in his mind when he wrote these words, because these men were the ones who wanted to eliminate the medieval barbarisms, and used the language of the classics as a yardstick."⁵

Sylvester's monographer, János Balázs has recorded that besides the authority of classic writers, contemporary language use was also important in forming the norms: "Humanist grammarians strove to set the norms of literary language habits not only in their Latin grammars but also in the ones of vulgar languages. So worked the Italian gram-

⁴ Summary of the debates: KECSKEMÉTI Gábor, *Vallától Wittgensteinig (és vissza?): A nyelv- és irodalom-elméleti gondolkodás vizsgálata mint irodalomtörténeti kihívás* (From Valla to Wittgenstein [and back?]: Examination of language-theoretic and literature-theoretic thinking as a literature-historical challenge), *Helikon*, 51(2005), 309–324.

⁵ JANCÓS Benedek, *Magyar nyelvtudomány-történeti tanulmányok a XVI–XVII. századból* (Studies of Hungarian history of linguistics from the 16–17th centuries), Budapest, 1881, 28.

marians at the beginning of the 16th century, as we will see this intention pervaded our Sylvester as well, not only in the Latin parts of his works but also in the ones of Hungarian grammar.”⁶

In his covering study written for the facsimile edition of *Grammatica Hungarolatina*, László Szörényi emphasizes the significance of the antique authors’ norm creating roles, and besides he relates to the expansion of the scope of grammar: “The decisive difference between medieval Latinity and humanism is just the normative nature of the latter one, that is the humanists break with living Latin, which is considered barbaric, and they establish the language habit to be followed, which can be justified by classic authors, most of all by Cicero. Nevertheless, this norm change of Guarino’s, his students’, and the educators’ with similar ideas not only refers to the antique norm-based correction of Latin language needed for a scientific way of writing and speaking, but also to make the humanist better understand, interpret and explain classic authors with this newly interpreted grammar.”⁷

The cited remarks of Jancsó’s, Balázs’s, and Szörényi’s call the attention to some extremely important features of humanist grammatical literature. These features are on the one hand linked with the components of grammar, such as the language rules, the norm creating role of the classics’ authority and the contemporary language use; on the other hand they are connected to the scope of the discipline, which includes the explanation of literary texts as well.

The more recent research also sees the components of grammar in these features. In humanist manuals which want to teach a style matching the antique norms, the same requirements appear as the ones which are to ensure appropriate language use in the antique authors’ work. Based on antique grammatical literature, Wolfram Ax has systematized the criteria searching for the ancient parallels of Lorenzo Valla’s essential work. He marked the certain components with typical Latin terms:

- *ratio (or analogia)*: the grammatical rule;
- *auctoritas*: the accepted authors’ language use, that is the literary tradition;
- *consuetudo (or usus)*: the language habits of the actual author’s age.⁸

Marked with different terms or completed with relating phenomena in some cases, these concepts regularly appear in the grammatical literature of both the antiquity and the renaissance, most often in the definition of grammar. Mentioning the poets and prose writers in the definitions is important not only because their *auctoritas* is the basis of the language norm to be followed, but also because it is the grammarian’s task to interpret and explain their works.

⁶ BALÁZS János, *Sylvester János és kora (János Sylvester and his age)*, Budapest, 1958, 196.

⁷ SZÖRÉNYI, *op. cit.*, 15–16.

⁸ Wolfram AX, *Lorenzo Valla (1407–1457), Elegantiarum linguae Latinae libri sex (1449)*, in: *Von Eleganz und Barbarei: Lateinische Grammatik und Stilistik in Renaissance und Barock*, Hrsg. Wolfram AX, Wiesbaden, 2001, 29–57; 47.

3. *From antiquity to humanism*

Hungarian literature did not miss to look for the antique and humanist parallels of Sylvester's definition. From the second third of the 20th century, József Turóczi-Trostler⁹ and János Balázs¹⁰ have especially significant extracts from the well-known and less-known sources with references to the former comparisons as well. I suppose that we can usefully complete their compilations if we take a look at the most important authors from the above-mentioned viewpoints (the criteria of linguistic correctness and the scope of grammar) with a special regard to those ancient and contemporary grammarians whom Sylvester mentions by name in *Grammatica Hungarolatina*.

a. *Antiquity*

To examine antique authors is also extremely important to the neo-Latin studies because this makes the ancient sources of 15–16th century theoretic works distinct. Examining the origin and development of humanist language approach, we can see how the elements of antique grammar which were neglected in the middle ages appear in the works of Italian, German, and other, for instance Hungarian authors.

In the ancients' mind, there was a strong connection between appropriate language use and the creation and interpretation of texts; between grammar and rhetoric. As according to the ancient approach, the grammarian is not only the expert of language forms and structures but he is also the scholar of literature, above all of poetic texts. This is how it appeared both in Greek and Latin works. Hellenic philology covered all the aspects of studying texts. In the respect of his effect, Dionysios Thrax's activity is especially important. *Tekhné grammatiké* was probably born in the 2nd century B. C., the text survived in a compilation supposedly from the 4th century A. D. Dionysios Thrax unambiguously belonged to the Alexandrian philology tradition. In his definition, grammar is the practical study of what poets and writers generally say.¹¹

In the Roman theoretic literature, for the first time, the science of correct language use and text interpretation appears together as the grammarians' task in Varro's works: "docte scribere legereque et erudite intellegere probareque" (*De lingua Latina*, 45–44 B. C.).¹² For the middle ages and the renaissance, it was mainly Quintilian to convey the

⁹ TURÓCZI-TROSTLER József, *A magyar nyelv felfedezése* (Discovery of Hungarian language), Budapest, 1933, 16–21.

¹⁰ BALÁZS, *op. cit.*, 192–196.

¹¹ Short summary about the ancient grammarians in the entries of *Historisches Wörterbuch der Rhetorik* (Hrsg. Gert UEDING, Tübingen, 1992–): *Grammatik* (III, 1996, 1030–1112) and *Grammatikunterricht* (*ibid.*, 1112–1174).

¹² *Lexicon grammaticorum: Who's Who in the History of World Linguistics*, ed. Harro STAMMERJOHANN, Tübingen, 1996, 766–767.

particulars of classical grammar and rhetoric, but in the antiquity Varro was still willingly referred to as we will see it about Diomedes.

The earliest author mentioned by Sylvester is Quintilian. Until the age of humanism, Marcus Fabius Quintilian (c. 35–96) was not only a first-rate authority of rhetoric but also one of grammar. In Quintilian's works, it is clearly visible that grammar and rhetoric are in connection but these two fields are already distinct as well.

According to *Institutio oratoria*, the science of appropriate speaking and poets' explanation belongs to the scope of grammar.¹³ The three virtues of rhetoric speech are: it should be correct (emendata); structurally transparent, clear (dilucida); ornately composed (ornata).¹⁴ The first virtue is accomplished by *latinitas*. This is discussed in the grammatical part significantly leaning on Aristotle, the Stoa, and Dionysios Thrax. However, explaining the rules of clear and ornate speech is not the grammarian's task yet but the rhetor's one; the rhetoric books of *Institutio* are about this. Thus, literary critics separates from grammar.¹⁵

Proceeding in time, Gellius is the next author whose name appears in Sylvester's work. Aulus Gellius (c. 123–165) was a Roman lawyer and grammarian. During his stay in Athens, he wrote the 20 books of *Noctes Atticae*, in which there are also grammatical chapters (264–398). These can be divided into two major parts. In the first part, the most needed particulars are discussed on an elementary level. The definition and tasks of grammar are followed by the discussion of the parts of speech, then the values and errors of speech are analyzed. The second part is the more elevated *ars grammatica*. The requirements of *latinitas* are explained here: *natura*, *analogia*, *consuetudo*, *auctoritas*. Here appears the Alexandrian tradition: *poetarum enarratio*, the interpretation of poets, is also a task of grammar.¹⁶

Sylvester most often mentions Donatus. Throughout centuries, the master's name meant the same as Latin grammar. He lived in the 4th century, he was the instructor of Saint Jerome and perhaps that of his later commentator, Servius. He wrote comments on the works of Terence and Virgil.

Upon a pedagogic consideration, Donatus divided the teaching of Latin grammar in two parts: *Ars minor* and *Ars maior*. *Ars minor* is a brief, elementary-level summary, an extract of the more extensive *Ars maior*. Its clue is the "octo partes orationis", that is the eight possible components of the sentence, the word categories due to our ideas today. The work makes the pupils practise their main particulars and inflection with question-and-answers.

¹³ "Hac igitur professio [grammatica], cum brevissime in duas partis dividatur, recte loquendi scientiam et poetarum enarrationem." (*Institutio oratoria*, 1, 4, 2, 2–3); "Et finitae quidem sunt partes duae quas haec professio pollicetur, id est ratio loquendi et enarratio auctorum, quarum illam methodicen, hanc historicen vocant." (*Ibid.*, 1, 9, 1, 1–3.)

¹⁴ "Iam cum oratio tres habeat virtutes, ut emendata, ut dilucida, ut ornata sit (quia dicere apte, quod est praecipuum, plerique ornatui subiciunt), totidem vitia, quae sunt supra dictis contraria: emendate loquendi regulam, quae grammatices prior pars est, examinet." (*Ibid.*, 1, 5, 1, 1–4.)

¹⁵ Cf. STAMMERJOHANN, *op. cit.*, 766–767.

¹⁶ STAMMERJOHANN, *op. cit.*, 331–332.

Ars maior was used on a higher level of education, and it is consisted of three parts. The first one is the detailed phonetics, that is the discussion of letters, syllables, metrical feet, stresses, punctuation marks. The second part is syntax, the description of the eight speech parts. The third part is about the values and errors of speech. From our point of view, this is especially important because completing the traditional discussion of speech parts, he extends the scope of grammar here. This relates to rhetoric education: here he discusses the means with the help of which it is possible to analyze poetic texts.¹⁷

Among the authors referred to by Sylvester, Diomedes is the next one in the chronology. His *Ars grammatica* was probably born around 370–380. Compared with other similar works, Diomedes undoubtedly seems to be a compiler, but he created a precious synthesis of the different grammatical trends of his age, therefore we can even consider him an original author. His work, just like Donatus' system, the *Ars minor* and *maior*, is consisted of two parts with different levels of difficulty. The first one reviews the most basic information. The second one supposes the knowledge of the first one, it is built on that, and further develops that. His ideas about grammar combine the well-known factors. "Grammatica est specialiter scientia exercitata lectionis et expositionis eorum, quae apud poetas et scriptores dicuntur, apud poetas, ut ordo servetur, apud scriptores, ut ordo careat vitiis."¹⁸ Elsewhere: "Latinitas est incorrupte loquendi observatio secundum Romanam linguam. Constat autem, ut adserit Varro, his quattuor: natura analogia consuetudine auctoritate."¹⁹ The connection of grammatical knowledge and examination of literary works is obvious. The final aim of the work is to promote the analysis of literary texts. He defines the concepts with the knowledge of which one can identify the stylistic means that the poets and writers use in their works.²⁰

The name of Donatus' commentator, Servius also appears in Sylvester's work. Marius Honoratus Servius, Roman grammarian lived at the end of the 4th century. He also commented Virgil. Due to some assumptions, he was Donatus' student. Different grammatical works are assigned to him, but only *Commentarius in artem Donati* can surely be considered his work. Here again appears the thought that grammar is closely connected to those sciences which deal with language (philosophy, dialectics, and especially rhetoric). Together with Donatus, he taught that the aim of grammatical studies is to examine the parts of speech, and the interpretation of poetic texts is based on this.²¹

b. Humanism

As we can see, the criteria of language appropriateness and the scope of grammar in the ancient authors' work appear in a similar way to the definition of *Grammatica Hun-*

¹⁷ STAMMERJOHANN, *op. cit.*, 251–253.

¹⁸ Quoted by Raphael DAMMER, *Diomedes grammaticus*, Trier, 2001, 184.

¹⁹ Quoted by DAMMER, *op. cit.*, 201.

²⁰ Cf. STAMMERJOHANN, *op. cit.*, 243–244.

²¹ STAMMERJOHANN, *op. cit.*, 850–851.

garolatina, but no direct example is offered for the wording of the definition. Concerning the origin of the definition, József Turóczi-Trostler examined the humanist grammars. Sylvester indicates Melanchthon as a source. Nevertheless, he cites definitions from other authors as well.²²

János Balázs was the first one to note that among the places cited by Turóczi-Trostler there was a closer relative of the definition of *Grammatica Hungarolatina* than that of Melanchthon's. In his monograph on Sylvester, he quotes Guarino da Verona following Turóczi-Trostler: "Quid est grammatica? [...] Grammatica est ars recte loquendi, recteque scribendi Scriptorum et Poetarum lectionibus observata."²³ Based on this, he states: "In his definition of grammar, Sylvester does not directly follow Melanchthon but Guarino or another humanist grammarian walking in Guarino's steps."²⁴

Zoltán Éder carries on this thought in his study examining Guarino and Sylvester's relationship. Like earlier János Balázs, Éder also leans on the renaissance grammar definitions published by Turóczi-Trostler. He points out that "Guarino's definition is not the only one which matches that of Sylvester's, but Heinrichmann's one is exactly the same as that. Thus, without further examination, we can hardly claim that Sylvester borrowed his definition from Guarino, because he could take it from Heinrichmann all the same. It is rather possible that Sylvester drew from a generally spread conception, a language approach that had already become a public property, which he knew from certain authors' different texts."²⁵

For Hungarian literature history, Guarino da Verona is especially important, because the greatest Hungarian humanist poet writing in Latin, Janus Pannonius was Guarino's student in Ferrara between 1447 and 1451. Both his master's personality and the years spent in Ferrara significantly influenced the development of his work. If we could really see Guarino's effect in the definition of *Grammatica Hungarolatina*, we could indirectly consider Sylvester a Hungarian student of the master of Ferrara, too.

Besides the question of the source, the Guarino–Sylvester relationship raises a more general problem as well. Many link the turn between medieval and humanist grammar with Guarino's work, while others draw the borderline elsewhere. Thus, the supposed Guarino-effect concerns the medieval or humanist character of Sylvester's grammar, too. The different judgements of the question have appeared in Hungarian literature as well. By right of Guarino's 19th-century expert, Remigio Sabbadini, Janus Pannonius' monographer, József Huszti declared for the medieval character of Guarino's grammar,²⁶ and

²² TURÓCZI-TROSTLER, *op. cit.*, 20.

²³ TURÓCZI-TROSTLER, *op. cit.*, 19–20; BALÁZS, *op. cit.*, 195.

²⁴ BALÁZS, *op. cit.*, 196.

²⁵ ÉDER Zoltán, *Sylvester és Guarino* (Sylvester and Guarino), in: *Emlékkönyv Benkő Loránd hetvenedik születésnapjára* (Memorial volume for Loránd Benkő's 70th birthday), eds. HAJDÚ Mihály, KISS Jenő, Budapest, 1991, 154–157; 155.

²⁶ HUSZTI József, *Janus Pannonius*, Pécs, 1930, 18–19.

he was joined by Zoltán Éder.²⁷ János Balázs²⁸ and László Szörényi²⁹ emphasize the humanist features of the work.

The more recent literature draws a tinged picture of the relationship of medieval and humanist grammar. Keith W. Percival's activity³⁰ has entered the professional common knowledge as "Sabbadini-revision", and several others have joined it agreeing or arguing. In contrast with the earlier judgement, which became popular by Sabbadini, Percival rather stressed the humanist features in Guarino's grammar instead of the medieval ones. It would also be difficult to draw a sharp borderline between tradition and innovation in the respect of grammatical literature. Neither Percival debates the medieval origin of *Regulae grammaticales*: in his conception, the work is the extract of the typical 14th-century material, it especially draws from the grammatical traditions of the late Trecento. Nevertheless, he considers the way of recitation more important than the sources. The work is brief, clear, transparent, it is purified of dialectic and metaphysical frills. In Percival's opinion, this is not a negligible circumstance but just the most characteristic feature of the new approach. Based on this, he claims that the first Latin grammar of a humanist spirit is Guarino's work.

Not everybody agrees with this evaluation. Compared to both the earlier and the more recent similar works, Guarino's grammar was argued to be the turning point at the border of the middle ages and humanism. Robert Black emphasizes continuity in contrast to novelty. He does not assign such a great significance to Guarino's way of performance as Percival. He points out that abridged grammars had spread throughout Italy much earlier. As an example, among others he mentions the summary titled *Regulae parvae* of the 13th-century grammarian following Aretius, Maestro Goro, which shows very close parallels of text with Guarino's work. Thus the similar pre-humanist initiations go back to the 13th century at least. Based on all this, he thinks that no considerable innovations can be seen

²⁷ ÉDER, *op. cit.*, 157.

²⁸ BALÁZS, *op. cit.*, 196.

²⁹ SZÖRÉNYI, *op. cit.*, 15–16.

³⁰ Keith W. PERCIVAL, *The Historical Sources of Guarino's Regulae grammaticales: A Reconsideration of Sabbadini's Evidence*, in: *Civiltà dell'Umanesimo: Atti del VI, VII, VIII Convegno del Centro Studi Umanistici «Angelo Poliziano»*, Florence, 1972, 263–284; ID., *The Grammatical Tradition and the Rise of the Vernaculars*, in: *The Current Trends of Linguistics*, ed. Thomas A. SEBEOK, The Hague–Paris, 1975 (Historiography of Linguistics, 13), 231–275; ID., *Renaissance Grammar: Rebellion or Evolution?*, in: *Interrogativi dell'Umanesimo*, Florence, 1976, 73–89; ID., *Textual Problems in the Latin Grammar of Guarino Veronese*, *Res publica litterarum*, 1(1978), 241–254; ID., *The Place of the Rudimenta grammatices in the History of Latin Grammar*, *Res publica litterarum*, 4(1981), 233–264 (on Perotti's grammar); ID., *Grammar and Rhetoric in the Renaissance*, in: *Renaissance Eloquence: Studies in the Theory and Practice of Renaissance Rhetoric*, ed. James J[erome] MURPHY, Berkeley–Los Angeles–London, 1983, 303–330; ID., *Renaissance Grammar*, in: *Humanism and the Disciplines*, ed. Albert RABIL, Philadelphia, 1988 (Renaissance Humanism: Foundations, Forms and Legacy, 3), 67–83.

in the grammatical literature between 1350 and 1500, and it is difficult to notice the signs of the humanist revolution in scholastic education.³¹

Franz Joseph Worstbrock also engages in discussion with Percival. He disputes Guarino's determining role in the reformation of the discipline with respect to the later and not the earlier grammarians. Since Percival connects the decisive turn with Guarino's person, it is logical that in his study on Perotti³² he rather emphasizes the following of the traditions in the later Italian grammar writer's work. He introduces the author as someone who adapted and purified the late medieval grammars but did not separated from them radically. In Percival's opinion, Perotti owed his popularity just to his keeping the traditions. In contrast with it, Worstbrock points out the factors of continuity in Guarino's work, while in Perotti's one he praises the innovations based on which he regards him the first real humanist grammarian. He cites several places from the contemporaries who had a similar view.³³

4. Possible sources of Sylvester's definition

From the viewpoint of Sylvester's definition, it is essential what approach the supposed source gives evidence of. We can see that the estimation of middle ages and renaissance, scholastics and humanism, continuity and change is not unequivocal in grammatical literature either. Before taking sides, we must clarify the philological reference of the question in a closer sense: where Sylvester's definition really originates, and what sources can be taken into consideration.

a. Guarino da Verona

As we have seen, Hungarian literature regards József Turóczi-Trostler's study of 1933 and the grammar definitions quoted by him the starting point. Turóczi-Trostler accurately marks the sources of his citations. He writes the following about Guarino's definition: "I have got the following edition: Guarini Veronensis viri eruditissimi regulae grammatices. Nunc denuo, recognitae, et summa ac diligenti cura excussae... Venetiis 1606."³⁴

In Budapest, in the National Széchényi Library, a not much earlier edition is kept. In the 1589 redaction, the text begins with the words quoted by Turóczi-Trostler, and it continues with listing the parts and examples of grammar: "Quid est Grammatica;

³¹ Robert BLACK, *The Curriculum of Italian Elementary and Grammar Schools, 1350–1500*, in: *The Shapes of Knowledge from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment*, eds. Donald KELLEY, Richard H. POPKIN, Dordrecht, 1991, 137–163.

³² PERCIVAL, *The Place of the Rudimenta grammatices...*, cit.

³³ Franz Joseph WORSTBROCK, *Niccolò Perottis „Rudimenta grammatices“: Über Konzeption und Methode einer humanistischen Grammatik*, in: *Von Eleganz und Barbarei*, cit., 59–78.

³⁴ TURÓCZI-TROSTLER, *op. cit.*, 50.

Grammatica est ars recte loquendi, recteque scribendi, scriptorum, & poetarum lectionibus observata. Unde dicitur Grammatica apo ton, grammaton, Hoc est a literis. Latine enim literaria dicitur, quod ex; literis syllabae fiant, ex syllabis dictiones, ex dictionibus orationes, ex quibus disciplina Grammaticae constituitur.

Partes Grammaticae sunt quatuor: videlicet, Litera, Syllaba, Dictio, & Oratio. Litera, ut v, Syllaba, ut ve; Dictio, ut veritas; Oratio, ut veritas odium parit.”³⁵

Regulae grammaticales was written between 1414 and 1418. In the course of time, it has undergone many changes, thus Guarino’s original words can be reconstructed on the basis of the earliest texts. Literature knows about 40 manuscripts worth to be considered,³⁶ the most important ones are kept in the libraries of Milan, Bologna, Venice, Oxford, and New York.³⁷ Géza Vadász’s kindest verbal message is also linked here; during the works of publishing the critical edition of *Regulae grammaticales*, he arrived at the conclusion that the earliest manuscript from before 1450 could be found in the Vatican Library. The “usual incipit” of the sources considered competent is cited in the following way: “Partes grammaticae sunt quattuor...”.³⁸ In the sequel, the different texts diverge in the examples. For instance: “Partes grammaticae sunt quattuor, videlicet littera, syllaba, dictio et oratio; littera, ut v, syllaba ut, vi, dictio, ut Victor, oratio, ut Victor amat Iohannem.”³⁹ Or: “Partes grammaticae sunt quattuor, videlicet littera, syllaba, dictio et oratio; littera, ut v, syllaba ut, vi, dictio, ut Victor, oratio, ut Victor amat Andream.”⁴⁰ So, Guarino’s original text had not include the definition of grammar, it was added to the later variations posterior.

It can be seen from the summarizing bibliography⁴¹ of the incunables, the first printed editions began in the same way as the earlier manuscripts, that is with listing the parts of grammar. The first known printed version originates from Venice, from 1470.⁴² In 1474, two variations were published at two places, in Padova and Venice, in which there was a definition at the beginning of the text: “Quid est grammatica? Est scientia recte loquendi recteque scribendi origo et fundamentum liberalium artium.”⁴³ This formula can be found in five other editions of the century.⁴⁴

³⁵ Guarini Veronensis viri peritissimi, *Regulae grammaticae, nunc denuo recognitae, et summa, ac diligenti cura excussae, et emendatae*, Asculi, apud Isidorum Fatium, 1589, Aijr.

³⁶ PERCIVAL, *Textual Problems...*, cit., 242.

³⁷ PERCIVAL, *Grammar and Rhetoric...*, cit., 315–316.

³⁸ PERCIVAL, *Textual Problems...*, cit., 251.

³⁹ PERCIVAL, *The Place of the Rudimenta grammaticae...*, cit., 238. The manuscript cited: Venice, Biblioteca Marciana, Ms. Lat. XIII, 143 [4042].

⁴⁰ PERCIVAL, *Grammar and Rhetoric...*, cit., 304. The manuscript cited: Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Lat. Misc. E. 123.

⁴¹ *Gesamtkatalog der Wiegendrucke*, hrsg. von der Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, X, Stuttgart, 2000 (hereafter: GW). GUARINUS VERONENSIS, *Regulae grammaticales*: 11609–11674.

⁴² GW 11616.

⁴³ GW 11637, 11638.

⁴⁴ GW 11640, 11644, 11645, 11648, 11637.

The typical medieval definition was later changed to a more up-to-date one. We also know the place of origin of the version which the Hungarian research assigns to Guarino by József Turóczi-Trostler. As I have already mentioned before, in his referred study, Worstbrock reasons that the real turn at the borderline of medieval and humanist approach was not Guarino's but Perotti's grammar. This is proved by Perotti's definition of grammar: "Quid est grammatica? Est ars recte loquendi recteque scribendi, scriptorum et poetarum lectionibus observata." Worstbrock emphasizes with due stress: this definition is totally new, nobody has used it before Perotti.⁴⁵

b. Niccolò Perotti and his followers

Perotti wrote his grammar in 1468, approximately half a century later than Guarino, and its first printed edition was published in 1473, in Venice. Thus, in the age of humanism, the essence of the ancient grammatical approach compressed in a definition first appears in his work. Besides the theoretic system of rules, the reading of writers and poets also turns up, that is the *auctoritas*, the classical writers' authority, the norm creating role of their language use, which was neglected in the middle ages.

So we can see: the definition later assigned to Guarino on the basis of the later editions does not come from the master of Ferrara but from Perotti. In the 16th century, the more recent text variations of *Regulae grammaticales* were complemented with his formula. Thus, we probably must give up considering János Sylvester besides Janus Pannonius a Hungarian student of Guarino's. We do not know if Sylvester could have a Guarino edition which already included Perotti's definition. In this case, he could also think that he followed the master of Ferrara in his definition of grammar. Naturally, it is in question whether Sylvester knew about the grammarian Guarino and his grammar. In *Grammatica Hungarolatina*, one line is quoted from the poet Battista Guarino who is the son of the master "Guarinus Veronensis".⁴⁶

Besides the works adapted and published with Guarino's name, we also have to consider the many different compositions which use Perotti's definition. Turóczi-Trostler cites Sulpitius Verulanus: "Grammatica est recte loquere recteque scripture scientiaque

⁴⁵ WORSTBROCK, *op. cit.*, 67.

⁴⁶ "Sunt etiam urbium nomina, quae pluralis tantum sunt numeri, ut Athenae, Thebae, Quinque ecclesiae. Quinqueecclesiam usurpavit Guarinus Veronensis in carminibus ad Ioannem Pannonium scriptis.

Hinc urbs pontificem te Quinqueecclesia cepit.

metri scilicet coactus necessitate." SYLVESTER, *op. cit.*, cijv. *Baptista Guarinus, Guarini filius ad Ianum Pannonium, Quinque-ecclesiensem Episcopum Poëmata [...] omnia, Opusculorum pars alt. I-II*, ed. Samuel TELEKI, Alexander KOVÁSZNAI, Utrecht, 1784, I, 663, 43. I owe the identification of the Guarino place to László Jankovits.

usu ratione auctoritate constat”⁴⁷ and Heinrichmann: “Grammatica. Est ars recte loquendi: recteque scribendi scriptorum et poetarum lectionibus observata.”⁴⁸

The striking similarity is the reason for which Zoltán Éder, in his cited study, also called the attention to these parallels. From our viewpoint, the most important thing is this: in Heinrichmann’s and Sulpitius Verulanus’ work *auctoritas* appears besides *ratio* just like in Perotti’s and Sylvester’s grammar; in Sulpitius’ work, *usus* turns up as the third determining feature of correct language use. Searching for the sources of Sylvester’s definition, it is worth to systematize the potential samples arisen, and to complete them with new suppositions within the pale of reason.

From the possibilities arisen so far, Sylvester could also obtain the Italian grammarians’ works, most easily during his studies in Wittenberg. It is a commonplace to mention that from the end of the 15th century the Italian authors’ grammars quickly became popular in the areas north of the Alps. They were not only purchased and published but also imitated. However, later we will see that neither the question of the Italian effect is unequivocal, especially in German grammatical literature.

On the basis of the above-mentioned Franz Joseph Worstbrock’s and Kristian Jensen’s researches, we can have an overall picture about the European grammatical literature of the turn of the 15th and 16th century. According to Worstbrock’s summary, until the end of 1500, 130 different Latin grammatical textbooks were published, altogether nearly in 1700 editions. This is about 6 percent of the whole number of incunables. Donatus’ *Ars minor* was issued most often, 380 times, this was followed by Alexander de Villa Dei’s *Doctrinale*, which had been regularly published since 1470, altogether 285 times. The third one in the rank is Perotti’s *Rudimenta* with 132 editions since 1473.⁴⁹

Perotti’s prominent place in the European summary also means the first Italian one on the 15th-century list. It also had editions for other nations: for the English (Leuven, 1486) and for the French (Lyon, 1492). From the Italian grammars, the following one is Guarino’s *Regulae grammaticales* with 57 editions from which 50 were published in Italy, 6 in Paris, 1 in Leuven. The last two redactions were also meant for English and French usage. The Italian authors were published in the 16th century beyond Italy’s borders as well; for instance Perotti 6 times in German-speaking area.

From Jensen’s book historical researches, it also emerges that the Italian authors’ works could be obtained not only as local publications but also by importation. The majority of the Italian export was aimed at Bavaria and Frankland. In these areas, it was easier to obtain the books from Italy than to print them there. In contrast, the Italian import cannot be observed by the Rhine and the Main. In these areas, it was more practical

⁴⁷ TURÓCZI-TROSTLER, *op. cit.*, 20. The cited edition: *Grammatica Sulpitii cum suo vocabulario in fine annexo*, Liptzigck, 1503.

⁴⁸ TURÓCZI-TROSTLER, *op. cit.*, 50. The cited edition: *Grammaticae institutiones Jacobi Heinrichmanni Sindelfingensis...*, Hagenau, 1506.

⁴⁹ WORSTBROCK, *op. cit.*, 59–60.

to publish the Italian books locally. From Perotti's above-mentioned 6 editions, 3 was printed in Basel, 2 in Cologne, 1 in Strasbourg.⁵⁰

The Italian export expanded also more eastwards. Due to his statement, Bernhard Perger, the rector of the university of Vienna, wrote his own work (*Grammatica nova*, Venice, 1481) on Perotti's basis, still it differs from that in many respects. Although he published his book in Italy, he records in his preface that Perotti's Italian editions can be bought from book traders travelling in Vienna.⁵¹ If we could suspect a correspondence that the more times a work was issued the easier it was to purchase it, then on the basis of the number of editions we could suppose most of all about Perotti among the Italian grammarians that he was known by Sylvester.

From the Italian authors, Sulpitius Verulanus is interesting because he is the only more recent grammarian who is named by Sylvester in *Grammatica Hungarolatina*. He mentions him together with his colleague, the contemporary Lilius.

The original name of the author, known in humanist circles as Sulpitius, is Giovanni Antonio Sulpizio. He was born before 1450 in Veroli. From 1475, he was studying in Perugia, then in Urbino; around 1480, he was already living in Rome, and he belonged to Pomponius Laetus' circle. He redacted a vast number of texts. He made the editio princeps of Vitruvius' *De architectura*. He published Vegetius Renatus', Aelianus', Frontinus' works. His comments on Lucan and Quintilian were published the most times. Some poetic works of his are left over as well. He wrote prosodic summaries, too (*De versum scansione, De syllabarum quantitate*).⁵² Sulpitius edited several grammatical works; Erasmus regarded him one of the best grammarians of his age.

Sylvester closes the part about the gender of nouns saying that it is enough of the general rules what he has explicated so far. As for the rest of the general and specific regulations, he directs the pupils to other authors. He considers the works put in rhymes the most practical because those are easier to memorize and remain better in the memory. From the more recent authors, he mentions Sulpitius and Lilius.⁵³ Their names often appeared together. The volume which included Sulpitius' summary titled *De constructionis figuris* and Lilius' *De constructione octo partium orationis* was a popular Latin grammar textbook in the first decades of the 16th century. The latter one was published with Erasmus' corrections, thus it is in some cases recorded among his works.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ Kristian JENSEN, *Elementary Latin Grammars Printed in the Fifteenth Century: Patterns of Continuity and of Change*, in: *Von Eleganz und Barbarei*, cit., 103–123; 115–122.

⁵¹ Kristian JENSEN, *Die lateinische Grammatik Melanchthons: Hintergrund und Nachleben*, in: *Melanchthon und das Lehrbuch des 16. Jahrhunderts*, Hrsg. Jürgen LEONHARDT, Rostock, 1997, 59–101; 70–73.

⁵² *Contemporaries of Erasmus: A Biographical Register of the Renaissance and Reformation*, ed. Peter Gerard BIETENHOLZ, I–III, Toronto, 1985–1987, III, 300.

⁵³ “Haec de generalibus regulis sufficient. Reliquas tum generales, tum speciales commodius pueri discent ex aliis, maxime iis, qui eas carmine sunt complexi, inter quos sunt ex recentioribus Sulpitius et Lilius. Ut enim facilius discuntur praecepta, quae carminibus sunt inclusa, ita firmius retinentur.” SYLVESTER, *op. cit.*, civv–dir.

⁵⁴ I could obtain the following edition: *Absolutissimus de octo orationis partium constructione libellus, nuper ab Erasmo vigilantia cura emendatus. Adiectus est insuper libellus Sulpitii Verulani, de aliquot Cons-*

In Sulpitius' syntax, the definition of grammar does not appear, and the whole work is written in prose. I found the definition quoted by Turóczi-Trostler in an other work of Sulpitius': *Jo[hannis] Sulpitii Verulani viri clarissimi de octo partibus orationis libellus utilissimus*, in the following form: "Grammatica est recte loquere recteque scripturae scientia, quae usu, ratione auctoritateque constat."⁵⁵ The short work is an extremely brief summary, also in prose. Nevertheless a version in rhymes of Sulpitius' grammar existed as well, which Sylvester referred to. At the turn of the 15th and 16th century, it was published several times by Jodocus Badius Ascensius (Joost van Assche), the publisher originating from the Netherlands and working in Paris. In 1508, it already had its fifth "recognitio",⁵⁶ which was issued in German-speaking area in the same year,⁵⁷ and it was followed by further editions as well.

The author mentioned with Sulpitius in *Grammatica Hungarolatina*, the English Lilius (William Lilly) was born around 1468. He studied in Oxford. He travelled to Jerusalem, then he educated himself on the island of Rhodes. In Rome, he studied grammar from Pomponius Laetus and Sulpitius Verulanus. He returned to England around 1492. In 1512, the dean of St. Paul School of London, John Colet appointed him to leading teacher of the institute (*ludi moderator primarius*), which was one of the centres of humanist education. Lilius wrote epigrams in Latin. His epigrams translated from Greek into Latin were published in a joint issue with Thomas More's similar works (*Progymnasmata Thomae Mori et Guilielmi Lillii sodalium*, Basileae, 1518). His death is usually dated to 1523, based on some data to 10th December, 1522.

Lilius' grammarian activity is connected to his work as a teacher. He prepared two versions of his Latin grammar, in English and in Latin. In the morphology of the latter one, the research discovers the elements of Donatus', Sulpitius', Melanchthon's, Linacre's, and Colet's works. Its syntax is a derivation of the above-mentioned *De constructione octo partium orationis*.⁵⁸ The centralization of the education was already urged by cardinal Thomas Wolsey, Henry VIII's lord chancellor. The grammar linked to Lilius' name was altered even after his death, it reached its final form around 1540. In schools,

structionis figuris, Lipsiae, 1521. Its call number in Herzog August Bibliothek of Wolfenbüttel (hereafter: HAB): QuH 76 (7).

⁵⁵ The source of the work is the following collection: *Secunda editio Sulpitii Verulani, in qua quae in priore habebantur argutius & completius praecipuntur*, s. a. (c. 1500), a2r-a4r. HAB: M: Kg 304.

⁵⁶ Jean-Claude CHEVALIER, *Histoire de la grammaire française*, Paris, 1994, 66-67; *Quinta recognitio atque additio ad Grammaticen Sulpitianam [...]: Inventaire chronologique des éditions parisiennes du XVI^e siècle*, par Brigitte MOREAU d'après les manuscrits de Philippe RENOARD, I, 1501-1510, Paris, 1972, 299; about its antecedents: *Imprimeurs & libraires parisiens du XVI^e siècle*, ouvrage publ. d'après les manuscrits de Philippe RENOARD, II, Paris, 1969, 60.

⁵⁷ *Sulpitii Verulani de grammatices arte volumen Jodoci Badii opera per carmina compendiosius communicatum*, Francofurti, 1508.

⁵⁸ Colet's and Erasmus' prefaces inform us about the circumstances of the birth of the work: *Ioannes Coletus Decanus Sanctis Pauli, Guilielmo Lillio, ad divum Paulum ludi moderatori primario S. D.* (1513); *Erasmus Roterodamus Candidis Lectoribus S. D.* (1515). The edition used by me includes both: *De Constructione libellus, ab Erasmo Rot[erodamo]. denuo recognitus*, Norinbergae, 1529. HAB: H: P 854.8° Helmst. (1).

the use of the English version (*A Shorte Introduction of Grammar*) and that of the Latin one (*Brevissima institutio seu ratio grammatices cognoscendae*) was made compulsory in 1548 by Edward VI's order. The so-called *Grammatica Liliiana* was the basis of scholastic Latin education in England for three hundred years. In the 16–17th century, this was the most frequently—hundreds of times—published similar work besides Melanchthon's grammar.⁵⁹ Different adaptations, extracts were created from "Lilius"; the lyrical version recommended by Sylvester could also be one of them.

Perotti's definition was published in German authors' grammars, too. On the basis of the number of editions, Heinrichmann's work was the most easily purchasable among them. Sylvester could also easily obtain it during his studies in Wittenberg because in the first third of the 16th century it was published several dozens of times in different German cities.

Heinrichmann's case is also a good example to show that the Italian grammarians' effect is not unequivocal to north of the Alps. It is doubtless that at the turn of the 15th and 16th century the Italian authors became fashionable in German-speaking areas as well; it became a habit to refer to them, and to take over certain elements from their works. In 1500, Heinrich Bebel compiled the list of Italian authors worth to be followed: Valla, Tortelli, Perotti, Sulpitius, and Mancinellus (*Commentaria epistularum conficiendarum*). He returned to the topic in 1512, and he completed the proposed authors' list with two German grammarians, Heinrichmann and Johannes Brassicanus.

From the detailed researches, it can be seen that there is no concert between the practice and the announcement to follow the Italian authors. The German humanists recorded the requirement in theory that the Italians must be imitated in everything, but the grammar textbooks testify something else. Jensen mentions numerous cases which prove that the well-sounding references often remained only empty phrases. For instance, Matthias Herben is typical: he claims to follow Guarino and Perotti, but his work is an adapted and commented version of Alexander de Villa Dei's *Doctrinale*.

The situation is similar with Heinrichmann. He is Bebel's student, perhaps the loudest among the anti-middle ages German grammarians. He attacks Alexander with very harsh words in a letter in 1512. However, his own grammatical conception is not based on Italian samples but basically also on the *Doctrinale*. On the one hand, he differs from Alexander because his syntax is not divided on the basis of the types of transitio and intransitio but according to the parts of a sentence. The rearrangement of the material diverges from the old one in one more respect: Heinrichmann does not dedicate a separate part to the study of cases but he discusses the topic within the parts of speech. In the details, he follows Alexander. He does not use the Italian method in explaining the syntax of verbs, either. Otherwise—as Jensen wittily notes it—he forgives himself this defect, and he directs his readers to Perotti, Mancinellus, Aldus, and Pasius. Brassicanus,

⁵⁹ BIETENHOLZ, *op. cit.*, II, 329–330; STAMMERJOHANN, *op. cit.*, 577–578; JENSEN, *Die lateinische Grammatik...*, cit., 89–90; Brian CUMMINGS, *The Literary Culture of the Reformation: Grammar and Grace*, Oxford, 2002, 207–210.

the other one of the two modern German grammarians proposed by Bebel, was even less innovative.

Even if medieval Latin quickly disappeared from schools by the beginning of the 16th century, German grammarians more and more strongly believed that the Italians could not replace *Doctrinale*, especially not at the area of morphology and the syntax of nouns. Their purpose was still to reach the Italians' level regarding the elegance of Latin language, but they had to admit that using the Italian authors' works in German schools is not necessarily the most appropriate way for this. In 1511, Johannes Coclaeus clearly wrote down that the Italians' works better functioned in their own schools than in the German ones: "Si inter recentiores aciveris Perottum, Sulpitium aut Aldum, Itali sunt suaeque iuventuti quam nostrae longe commodiores." All things considered, we can state that in German areas humanist grammars displaced the medieval tradition to a much smaller extent than in Italy.⁶⁰

The list of parallels can be continued with authors whose definition of grammar is similar to Sylvester's one. From the possible examples to be considered, Sigismundus Lupulus' (Wölfin) work is worth of our special attention. *Rudimenta grammatices* was several times published from 1531. Similarly to Sulpitius Verulanus, all three essential elements of the humanist definition are present in the definition of the discipline. Besides rule and literary tradition, exigent contemporary language use also appears:

"Grammatica est ars & professio, quae usu, ratione, atque autoritate constat: Vel brevis. Grammatica est certa loquendi & scribendi ratio. [...]

Quid est usus? Est doctorum loquendi et scribendi consuetudo.

Quid est ratio? Est regulae vel scribendi, vel loquendi, vel construendi, quae ad eundem modum plurima fiunt.

Quid est autoritas? Est praeciporum autorum usurpatio."⁶¹

Besides the joint presence of the three essential requirements, further striking accordance can be observed in the wording of Lupulus' and Sulpitius' definition. Regarding the authorities, the source of rules for Perotti and Heinrichmann is the observation based on the reading of the classics ("scriptorum et poetarum lectionibus observata"), while for Sulpitius and Lupulus authority is one of the components of grammar ("auctoritate constat"). Sylvester uses the participial derivative of "constare": "auctoritate optimorum poetarum et oratorum constans".

5. *Intention and realization*

As we could see, adapting a fashionable phrase does not necessarily determine the character of the whole work. We rather have to examine how the intention comes true.

⁶⁰ JENSEN, *Die lateinische Grammatik...*, cit., 78–89; JENSEN, *Elementary Latin Grammars...*, cit., 122–123; WORSTBROCK, *op. cit.*, 61.

⁶¹ *Rudimenta grammatices Sigismundi Lupuli, ab autore nuper revisa, magnaue accessione aucta*, Lipsiae, 1535, A2r. HAB: H: P 899.8° Helmst. (4).

As a norm, the language use of the classical authors can appear above all in syntax. Perrotti in his syntax quotes more than 180 citations from 30 authors, from Cicero to Plinius Jr. Through these, he effectuates what in his definition of grammar he worded as a principal for the first time in humanist grammatical literature.⁶²

Grammatica Hungarolatina does not contain a syntax. Thus, the ancient writers' authority can only be searched for in morphology, naturally in the parts of Latin grammar. In *Grammatica Hungarolatina*, the major part of the classic citations is in the extensive clause attached to the names of months. But these have nothing to do with linguistic questions.⁶³

In other cases, Sylvester refers to grammarians and rules. The only exception where the authority of an antique writer is called to prove a linguistic phenomenon is a citation from Cicero. According to the second passage of the rule referring to the gender of nouns, the gender of trees is always feminine. As Sylvester marks, oil tree is one of the listed masculine exceptions according to Servius.⁶⁴ The remark that "oleaster" is masculine can be read in Servius' comment on *Aeneid*.⁶⁵ In spite of this, "oleaster" behaves as feminine at the cited Ciceronian place. Sylvester leans on the authority of the greatest of *optimorum oratorum* in this connection. Otherwise, "oleaster" is masculine at the given place in other Cicero text variations.⁶⁶

The antique writers' authority can be the standard for Latin writing and speaking at any time, but *usus* or *consuetudo* means the living language habits of the given author's age, and the example of exigent language use. When Latin became a dead language, vulgar languages provided the norms of live speaking in humanist grammars side by side in Latin and national languages or with amendments in national languages. This recognition was worded in German areas as well. In 1528, a nameless summary was published which presented the Latin linguistic phenomena with their German correspondences. The derivation of the article (*articulus*) is shown by paralleling "hic, haec, hoc" and "der, die, das", in all three genders, all six cases, in singular and plural. The author notes that during the explanation one should not rely on the rules but on the practice of the mother tongue.⁶⁷

⁶² WORSTBROCK, *op. cit.*, 72.

⁶³ BARTÓK István, *Grammatica Hungarolatina – Poetica Latinohungarica: Sylvester János hónapversei és a Balassi előtti világi líra* (János Sylvester's month-poems and the profane lyrics before Bálint Balassi), *Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények*, 106(2002), 485–501.

⁶⁴ "Masculina sunt haec: oleaster, rubus, dumus, spinus, auctore Servio. Siler neutrum est. Reperitur et ficus interdum masculino genere. Oleaster Cicero in foeminino videtur protulisse Actionis in Verrem 5. Hominem, inquit, corripit ac suspendi iussit in oleastro quodam etc. Verum ibi oleaster ad arborem refertur, ut sequentia satis indicant." SYLVESTER, *op. cit.*, c4v.

⁶⁵ "Fere omnia Latina arborum nomina generis feminini sunt, exceptis paucis, ut «hic oleaster» et «hoc siler»". *Commentarii in Vergilii Aeneidos libros*, 12, 766.

⁶⁶ "Postea cum ad eum Nymphodorus venisset Aetnam et oraret ut sibi sua restituerentur, hominem corripit ac suspendi iussit in oleastro quodam, quae est arbor, iudices, Aetnae in foro." *In Verrem* 2, 3, 57, 7–8.

⁶⁷ "In Articulorum interpretatione sequi oportet usum patriae linguae, non artem aut analogiam." *Brevis et puerilis declinandí coniugandique formula, cui teutonica casuum ac temporum interpretatio est adiuncta*, Norimbergae, in Aedibus Friderici Peypus, 1528, A2v. HAB: H: P 854.8° Helmst. (3).

In connection with prosodic questions (accentus), Sylvester also refers to everyday speech. After some examples, he continues in the following way: regarding the stress of certain words, everybody can rely on his or her natural linguistic instinct in the mother tongue, there is no need for any rule. He refers to the later parts in which he provides a vast number of examples relating to foreign languages.⁶⁸ From the parts of *Grammatica Hungarolatina* with Hungarian relations, we could mention many further examples in which the use of mother tongue serves as a norm to memorize the rules—but this already concerns the areas of Hungarian linguistics.⁶⁹

Summing up everything told so far, we can claim: János Sylvester adapted an up-to-date humanist definition of grammar, which was published in different interpretations in many manuals. I have not found a formula equalling word by word to the definition of *Grammatica Hungarolatina*, but the essential equality with the variations originating from Perotti is doubtless. The definitions contain the two most important requirements of an exigent linguistic systematization referring to the antique ideals. From the theoretical rules—*ratio* or *analogia*—Sylvester compiled a correct system both in the Latin and the Hungarian parts. Because of their innovative character, the latter ones are especially important. *Auctoritas*, the antique writers' authority as one of the principals of grammar, remained on a theoretical level for Sylvester, because he could not validate the norm creating role of the classic samples in his morphology. Although the third requirement of humanist grammars does not appear in the definition, that is *usus* or *consuetudo*, many examples prove in the Hungarian material that also contemporary language use can be found among the norms of language. Thus, the thoughts in János Sylvester's work originating from neo-Latin sources have become determining for the Hungarian cultural history as well.

⁶⁸ "Dictionum quippe accentum unicuique natura in patrio sermone, absque ullis praeceptis suppeditat. Exempla peregrinarum harum vocum copiosa ex libro secundo, quem nominatim huic rei dicavimus, peti cum possint, nullis hic nos usi sumus exemplis." SYLVESTER, *op. cit.*, aviv–aviir.

⁶⁹ The most detailed summary of Sylvester's activity from the viewpoint of the history of linguistics: SZATHMÁRI István, *Régi nyelvtanaink és egységesülő irodalmi nyelvünk* (Our old grammars and uniting literary language), Budapest, 1968, 69–139.