



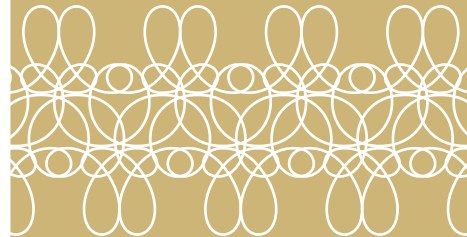
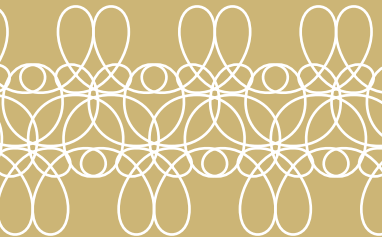
THE

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ACADEMIÆ SCIENTIARUM HUNGARICÆ
*Early Humanism in Hungary
and in East Central Europe*

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Early Humanism in Hungary and in East Central Europe

Farkas Gábor Kiss
Special Editor of the Thematic Issue

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Origin Narratives: Pier Paolo Vergerio and the Beginnings of Hungarian Humanism

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Earlier studies have attributed a pivotal role to Pier Paolo Vergerio Sr in transmitting the fundamental ideas of humanism to the writer Johannes (Vitéz) of Zredna, the first acolyte of Renaissance humanism in Hungary. This paper investigates the possible contacts between Pier Paolo Vergerio Sr and Johannes of Zredna, mapping the channels through which Johannes of Zredna first encountered humanist rhetoric. Whereas many of these possible connections turned out to be historical fictions that proved to be untenable in the form they are described in later historiography, there seems to be a genuine core to the embellished stories. I argue that his direct use of Italian early humanist texts (Guarino's translation of Plutarch, Gasparino Barzizza's letters) and an avid reading of Livy's historical work (witnessed by the ms. Cod. 3099 of the Austrian National Library) are the earliest testimonies of his humanistic interests.

Keywords: Pier Paolo Vergerio, Johannes (Vitéz) of Zredna, humanism

The appearance of Renaissance Humanism in Hungary is closely connected to the most decisive political events of the first half of the fifteenth century in Europe. First, the Council of Constance (1414–1418) succeeded in eliminating the schism in the Catholic Church and brought religious peace to Europe, with the exception of conflicts with the Hussites. The meetings of the emperor, kings, church prelates, and ambassadors created numerous occasions for cultural exchange between north and south, Italy and the rest of Europe. Italy's new "cultural capital," Renaissance Humanism, could infiltrate northern courts through the agency of the representatives of the states by spreading new stylistic ideals in Latin composition and new interest in the discovery of long-lost, ancient texts.¹ The following efforts to resolve the conflict between the Council and the Pope and to unify Eastern and Western Christianity (the Council of Basel in 1431–32² and the council of Ferrara and Florence in 1438–39) offered further

1 Helmrath, "Diffusion des Humanismus," 9–54.

2 My study summarizes the results of Kiss, "A magyarországi humanizmus" and "Konstanztól Budáig." On the importance of the Council of Basel to the evolution of Humanism in Hungary, see Pajorin, "A bázeli zsinat," 3–26.

opportunities to generate new diplomatic and intellectual ties. Thus, intellectual exchanges were created in a new context, in the field of politics and diplomacy, and not limited to the scholasticism of the university and or to the monastic environment.

The other important element of change, which became especially important for Hungary, was brought about by the new political situation following the first Battle of Kosovo (1389) and the Battle of Nicopolis. After these two clashes, the rising Ottoman empire became a direct threat to Western Christianity. The organization of a common resistance resulted not only in collective political action but also in a mutual exchange of ideas and a redefinition of a political and social identity (e.g. the idea of Europe, or the *Respublica Christiana*), which could be perceived as a common ground for Western and Central European political powers. These ideas became a primary touchpoint for the intellectuals of the regions which were most exposed to the Ottoman expansion, i.e. Italy (mostly Venice and the Papacy), Hungary, the Empire, and Poland.

The idea of a Europe primarily not as a geographical but as a cultural and political unity was created in the writings of the Enea Silvio Piccolomini (the future Pope Pius II) from the perception of a common threat. It reached back to the ideology of the Crusades.³ Two parallel theories tried to describe the process of how Renaissance Humanism took root in Hungary, which, although they did not contradict each other, put emphasis on different events and personalities in this process. In his classic work, “The Revival of Classical Antiquity” (*Die Wiederbelebung des classischen Alterthums*, 1859, revised in 1893), Georg Voigt (1827–1891), a professor at the prestigious university of Leipzig, identified Enea Silvio Piccolomini in his role as the secretary to Emperor Friedrich III as the most important instigator of Renaissance Humanism in Hungary.⁴ Voigt’s conception of the genesis of Humanism was entirely based on the nineteenth century nationalistic idea of a competition between nations which tried to outdo each other by absorbing various cultural and political agendas in order to reach a higher intellectual rank. As Voigt writes, Hungarians were generally open to ideas coming from Italy, as they had shared sympathies with Italians, and they were

3 Bisaha, *Creating East and West*; Meserve, *Empires of Islam*; Helmraht, “Pius II. und die Türken,” 79–137; Pajorin, “Keresztes hadjáratok,” 3–14.

4 Voigt, *Die Wiederbelebung*, vol. 2, 315. About the role of Enea Silvio Piccolomini in the introduction of Humanism into Central Europe, see Luger, *Humanismus und humanistische Schrift*, 49–64; Helmraht, “Vestigia Aeneae imitari,” 99–141; Zippel, “Enea Silvio Piccolomini,” 267–350.

politically distant enough in order to avoid any conflicts of interest.⁵ Accordingly, the early acceptance of Humanist ideas was facilitated by the agency of Enea Silvio Piccolomini, who was an Italian, even if he was acting on behalf of the German Emperor, and thus more sympathetic among the Hungarians than a German would have been. Thus, according to Voigt, the lack of a conflict of interest between an Italian movement and the Hungarian national spirit explains at least in part the early acceptance of Humanist ideas brought to Hungary by Piccolomini.

Another theory supposed a more direct connection to Italian Humanism in the person of Pier Paolo Vergerio the Elder. The Hungarian literary historian József Huszti saw the importance of Vergerio in the fact that he was the first Humanist to join the chancellery of the Hungarian king (and later Emperor) Sigismund I, which helped spread Humanist ideas in the scriptoria of Hungary.⁶ As he wrote in his monograph on the poet Janus Pannonius in 1931, “I cannot explain the Humanism of John Vitéz [of Zredna] without Vergerio [...] I think that John Vitéz [of Zredna] could not have existed without Vergerio, and Janus Pannonius could not have existed without John Vitéz [of Zredna].”⁷ Sigismund of Luxembourg, the king of Hungary and emperor from 1431, received book dedications throughout his life from Italian Humanists, but especially during his travels in the last decade of his life. Just to name the most significant authors, Ciriaco d’Ancona, Francesco Barbaro, Maffeo Vegio, and Antonio Beccadelli (whom he crowned poet laureate in 1432) all dedicated works to him. Nevertheless, only Pier Paolo Vergerio came to Hungary and settled in the country. Hence, Huszti stressed that Vergerio’s Humanist ideas may not only have exerted a lasting impact on the style of Vitéz of Zredna’s official and private letters, but also may have influenced the Humanist education which King Mathias and Janus Pannonius received under the guidance of Vitéz of Zredna. Furthermore,

5 “Die Neigung der beiden Völker, der Magyaren und der Italiener, war eine gegenseitige, obwohl es nicht leicht sein möchte, die verbindenden Elemente herauszufinden [my italics]. Vielleicht standen sie einander örtlich und politisch fern genug, um Collisionen zu vermeiden, während doch der Ungar stets mit Frömmigkeit und Ehrfurcht nach Gräbern der Apostelfürsten blickte und nach dem Lande überhaupt, in welchem einst die Sprache seiner Geschäftsführung und seiner Landtage als Muttersprache geredet worden.” Voigt, *Die Wiederbelebung*, vol. 2, 318.

6 Huszti, “Pier Paolo Vergerio,” 521–33.

7 Huszti, *Janus Pannonius*, 20. My translation in the following, unless otherwise stated. John Vitéz of Zredna used only the name form “Iohannes de Zredna” in his writings, and the family name “Vitéz” is only a result of a mistake in Bonfini’s late fifteenth-century historical work, which was nevertheless perpetuated in later scholarship. Thus, I use the form John/Iohannes Vitéz of Zredna everywhere. See Pálosfalvi, “Vitézek és Garázdák,” 15.

he assumed that after his death, Vergerio's books might have become integral parts of Vitéz of Zredna's library, thus forming the first Humanist library in Hungary.⁸ A similar theory was exposed by Leonard Smith, the scholarly editor of Vergerio's letters in 1934. In a long footnote to his work, he claimed that both the "father" of Hungarian Humanism (John Vitéz of Zredna) and the "father" of Polish Humanism (Gregory of Sanok) were students of Vergerio,⁹ although there was no direct proof of such a relationship between any of them. The same thesis became the foundation for József Huszti's speech held on the occasion of becoming a full member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in 1941 (although it was published as an article only in 1955),¹⁰ and the idea of a direct link between Vergerio and Vitéz became a cornerstone of Tibor Kardos's history of Humanism in Hungary.¹¹

In comparison with the theory which posits the local origins in the influence of Enea Silvio Piccolomini, this hypothesis might have seemed to suggest "autochthonous" origins, with Vergerio being present in the Buda court. Nevertheless, there were serious problems with its foundations. There was hardly any proof of direct personal contact between Pier Paolo Vergerio and John Vitéz of Zredna, not to speak of any exchange of letters or any contemporary written documents.¹² Whereas Vitéz of Zredna was a member of Sigismund's chancellery at least from 1437,¹³ Vergerio, who died in 1444, did not seem to have had any influence on the official literate culture of the court, and he did not have the title of *secretarius*. There survives one single reference as to his official activity in Hungary from a contemporary Bolognese copyist of his famous letter against Carlo Malatesta, addressed to Lodovico Alidori (1397). According

8 The same theory was put forward by Klára Csapodi-Gárdonyi, who identified twelve manuscripts which might have belonged to Vergerio and then went on to the library of John Vitéz of Zredna (Csapodi-Gárdonyi, *Die Bibliothek*). Nevertheless, the scientific criteria applied in her research were rather vague, and the identifications were often based on the presence of red ink annotations in a manuscript. As both the late Gothic bastarda and the Humanist minuscule scriptures are very widespread and generic, only the cases in which there is serious external proof of the identity of the annotator should be accepted as authentic manuscripts of writings by Vergerio or Vitéz. The current catalogue of "authentic" Corvin manuscripts only accepts Oxford Bodleian I.F.14. and Paris, BnF Lat. 6390 from these twelve manuscripts as authentic Corvinas, although in both cases the identity of the annotators is unclear, and neither of them bears an ownership mark of Vergerio or Vitéz. Cf. [Anonymous], *A biteles Corvinák listája*. Hence, Csapodi-Gárdonyi's suggestions cannot be a-critically accepted.

9 Vergerio, *L'Epistolario*, 390.

10 Huszti, "Pier Paolo Vergerio," 521–33.

11 Kardos, *A magyarországi humanizmus*.

12 This point was already stressed by Pajorin, "Vitéz János," 533–40.

13 Szakály, "Vitéz János," 11.

to the explicit of this copy (Vatican, Barb. Lat. 1952, 110r), Vergerio was a “referendarius,” a referendary of the Emperor at the time of copying, which is otherwise unknown.¹⁴ It seems that Vergerio did not participate actively in politics after 1426, and King Sigismund did not take him along anymore on his frequent travels after this date.¹⁵ How can the scarcity of written documents be reconciled with the importance attributed to Vergerio’s presence in the Buda court? The aim of my paper is to reconsider these ideas in the light of recent research on early Humanism in Hungary.

In order to understand how Vergerio could have had such a pivotal role in the evolution of Humanism in Hungary, it is worthwhile to give a summary of his literary output. The first phase of this Capodistrian Humanist’s career is closely connected to Padua and its ruling family, the Carraras, at the end of the fourteenth century. In his youth, Vergerio compiled a historical work on the deeds of the family,¹⁶ and his most popular text, *On noble character and liberal studies of youth* (c. 1402), was in fact a pedagogical guide for Ubertino Carrara, the son of Padua’s lord, Francesco Carrara. Vergerio’s cultural canon was entirely secular, and it completely ignored theological subjects. In addition to raising questions of moral philosophy, he emphasized the importance of Ciceronian “civilis Scientia,” rhetorics, poetics, and the seven liberal arts, and he also held the practical sciences, such as military knowledge and sports, in high esteem.¹⁷ His treatise became one of the bestsellers of the fifteenth century, transmitted by more than one hundred manuscripts and printed at least 30 times until 1500, mostly in Italy.¹⁸ Vergerio was the author of the first Renaissance Latin school

14 Rome, Vatican Library, Barb. Lat. 1952, 110v: “nunc serenissimi Imperatoris referendarium.” The same Humanist hand copied the folios 79r–121v, including Poggio’s *De nobilitate* (79r–92v), the *De amicitia* of Lucian, translated by Giovanni Aurispa (97r–107v), *Vita Pauli Aemilii* by Plutarch, translated by Bruni (110v–121v). Banfi, “Pier Paolo Vergerio,” 17. The note is critically evaluated by Kiséry, *Et poetis ipsis*, 147–48. The ms. is now accessible online https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Barb.lat.1952 (accessed on October 5, 2019).

15 Banfi, “Pier Paolo Vergerio,” 17–21.; cf. Vergerio, *L’Epistolario*, 379. On Vergerio, see also Solymosi, “Pier Paolo Vergerio,” 147–63.

16 The authorship of the *Historia principum Carrariensium* was disputed by Leonard Smith, the publisher of Vergerio’s letters. See Vergerio, *L’Epistolario*, 492, but it was defended by Marchante, *Rivierbe*. For an edition of the text, see Vergerio, “De principibus Carrariensibus.”

17 On its circulation, see Robey, “Humanism and Education,” 27–58. For a new English translation, see *Humanist Educational Treatises*, 1–45. The Latin text is available in Vergerio, “Ad Ubertinum de Carraria.”

18 Ld. Robey, “Humanism and Education,” 56–57. For the incunable editions, I have used the data of the Incunable Short Title Catalogue. Apart from the *De ingenuis moribus*, the only printed text published from Vergerio in the fifteenth century was the Latin translation of Hippocrates’ oath (*Lusinrandum*).

comedy, entitled *Paulus*.¹⁹ His translations of the history of Alexander the Great by Arrianus, and the Hippocratic oath demonstrate his knowledge of Greek, although we do not know how and when he learned the language. He was probably the first person in the Hungarian royal court in the fifteenth century to attain this advanced knowledge of Greek, although his translations were deemed unsuccessful by the following generation of Humanists.²⁰

The Venetian conquest of Padua in 1405 meant a significant break in his career, as he had to flee the town together with the members of the Carrara family. He joined the retinue of Cardinal Francesco Zabarella in Rome, and through these ecclesiastic connections, he met King Sigismund of Hungary. The history of these contacts has been fully expounded by Florio Banfi, thus a short summary will suffice. King Sigismund started a war against Venice in the direction of Friuli in 1411–12, and he joined his army in October 1412. The war came to an end with a truce with Venice in April 1413, and Sigismund's Italian contacts were greatly intensified afterwards. In October 1413, the king started negotiations with Pope John XXIII with the participation of cardinals Francesco Zabarella and Antonio de Challant, which were terminated by an agreement in Lodi in December 1413, which specified the time and place of a general council as Constance, November 1, 1414.²¹ Zabarella's retinue included not only Vergerio, but also Manuel Chrysoloras, who became so closely connected to the Hungarian king that the king named him his "familiaris" on June 15, 1414.²² Vergerio reached Constance together with Cardinal Zabarella on October 18, 1414, followed by Pope John XXIII and his secretaries (Poggio Bracciolini, Antonio Loschi, and Leonardo Bruni) and King Sigismund himself, who arrived on December 24, 1414.

The unexpected death of Manuel Chrysoloras on April 15, 1415 had important consequences for Vergerio, his friend, who composed a funerary inscription for the Greek scholar which is still visible in the former Dominican convent in Constance.²³ As Chrysoloras was a "familiaris" of Sigismund, Vergerio could take his place. On July 15, 1415, the council elected him as one of the fourteen "procuratores generales et speciales," the special envoys who were

19 See Katchmer, *Pier Paolo Vergerio* and Hermann Walter, "Il Paulus di Pierpaolo Vergerio," 241–53.

20 On the translation of Hippocrates, see Stok, "Pier Paolo Vergerio," 167–75. On the translation of Arrianus and its impact on Enea Silvio Piccolomini, who copied information on India from it into a letter, see Tournoy, "La storiografia," 1–8.

21 Banfi, "Vergerio," (2) 2.

22 Banfi, "Vergerio," (2) 10 n. 11. Banfi refers to Loenertz, "Les dominicains byzantins," 12–16.

23 Id. Wulfram, "Ein Heilsbringer," 94–95.

supposed to join King Sigismund on his road to Perpignan and help him reach an agreement with Antipope Benedict XIII.²⁴ Vergerio disappears from the records of the council of Constance between July 1415 and January 1417. Florio Banfi's suggestion that he remained part of the retinue of King Sigismund and traveled around Europe with him seems reasonable.²⁵ After his return to the council, Vergerio openly switched sides and changed his patrons. Sigismund and the cardinals from Northern Europe preferred to bring a conclusion to the Church reforms first and only then to elect a pope, whereas the Italian and "Latin" cardinals would have rather elected a pope first and then finished the reforms. Vergerio, representing himself both as a lawyer and a poet ("utriusque iuris ac medicine doctor necnon laureatus poeta"), suggested an open disputation and proclaimed three statements, which he attached to church doors in Constance ("affixe valvis ecclesiarum") and promised to defend on August 10, 1417: 1. those who want to elect a pope without the council support the schism; 2. it follows from the term "reformatio in capite" that church reform should precede the election of the head of the church; and 3. the negotiations concerning the election of the pope should be postponed.²⁶ With the publication of these three theses, Vergerio distanced himself from his former patron, Cardinal Zabarella, who was a leading figure of the "Latin" party, and began to side with King Sigismund. Nevertheless, the switch was not completely successful, as Vergerio fled from the debate when it turned out that the counterparty would present three canon lawyers and three theologians against him. Therefore, as the diary of Cardinal Fillastre indicates, "many thought that the abovementioned Pier Paolo is foolhardy, and he was derided."²⁷ After hearing Zabarella's moving oration, Sigismund finally accepted the plan to have the council elect a pope first. In September 1417, Cardinal Zabarella died, thus Vergerio could join the retinue of Sigismund without moral scruples. Afterwards, his name occurs in documents concerning the circles surrounding Sigismund more often: he vindicated the bull of the Crusade against the Bohemian heretics, stepped up as an orator in Prague against the Hussites, and his name occurs in several charters of Hungary in 1424 and 1425.²⁸

24 Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum*, vol. 27, 769; Banfi, "Vergerio," (2) 13, n. 21.

25 On Sigismund's itinerary, see Engel and C. Tóth, *Királyok*, 55–159.

26 The texts have been published in Finke, *Acta*, 668–69, followed by the answers, *ibid.*, 669–70.

27 *Ibid.*, 203: "Ille autem Petrus Paulus fuit reputatus a pluribus temerarius et derisus."

28 See Banfi, "Vergerio," (3) 19–21.

Nevertheless, the only surviving documents which bear testimony to Vergerio's Humanist activity are his translation of Arrianus, dedicated to Emperor Sigismund and dated to 1433–37 by Smith, and the two letters (n. 140 and 141 in Smith's edition), which contain altogether three short anecdotes. Whereas the second letter (n. 141), which is addressed to Giovanni de Dominis, Bishop of Senj (Segna/Zengg), must be dated to after 1432 on the basis of the bishop's title,²⁹ the story comparing the Czech and the Polish (n. 140) was dated to after 1420 only because of its Central European references.³⁰ A recent discovery was made of Vergerio's scholarly interests in Hungary. György Galamb has called attention to a lost text which was once contained in the ms. München, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, clm 3590³¹ and which bore the title "Collatio D[omini] P. de Capodistri super Disputatione Fr. Iacobi de Marchia ordinis Minorum facta cum Iudeo Rabbi Ioseph in Buda, A. D. 1433. Scripta in Pelisio sine manibus. A. D. 1468 per Michaellem Rutenstrauch" according to a catalogue from the seventeenth century.³² Although this part was later torn out of the manuscript,³³ the description clearly states that it contained a collation (a speech or perhaps a *reportatio* or a summary) on a disputation held by the famous Observant Franciscan, James of Marchia, who was active as an inquisitor in Hungary, against the rabbi Joseph in Buda. According to the note, Pierpaolo Vergerio prepared this summary of the disputation in 1433, and the only (lost) copy was made by the otherwise unknown Michael Rutenstrauch in 1468 in the Cistercian abbey of Pilis, which had a significant library.³⁴ Nevertheless, this collation was probably not a Humanist literary product, but rather a scholastic summary of James of Marchia's disputation against the rabbi of Buda.

Thus, the contemporary evidence of Vergerio's influence in Hungary is meagre and uncertain. Four decades later, in Cracow Filippo Buonaccorsi wrote a biography of his former patron, Gregory of Sanok (Gregorius Sanocensis, 1403–1477), archbishop of Lvyv. In this biography, Buonaccorsi described the symposia held in the court of the Bishop of Várad (Oradea, RO), where

29 Klára Pajorin dated it to 1435–36. See Pajorin, "Alcuni rapporti," 47.

30 Vergerio, *L'Epistolario*, 388–95. For an analysis of the short stories, see Pajorin, "Per la storia," 33–45. On the textual tradition, see McManamon, *Research Aids*.

31 Galamb, "Egy budai hitvita," 132–33.

32 Ehinger, *Catalogus*, col. 125.

33 Rauner, *Katalog*, 430.

34 Hervay, *Repertorium*, 149 (a note praising the library in 1505 from Munich, BSB, clm 19822, f. 167). The note "sine manibus" (without hands) is a common scribal joke (e.g. "Finivi librum totum sine manibus istum.").

Gregory of Sanok was supposedly also present and Vergerio was among the select participants. Unfortunately, Buonaccorsi's description conveys several chronological impossibilities, and the events could not have happened in the way the text suggests.³⁵ As Buonaccorsi claims, a certain John Gara, Bishop of Várad (who later was transferred to the See of Esztergom) hosted Filippo Podocataro, the Cypriot Humanist, Vergerio, and Gregory of Sanok in his court, where they held literary debates and poetic exercises. As Vergerio died in 1444 (at the age of 74), but John Vitéz became the Bishop of Várad in June 1445, the bishop in question could not have been John Vitéz, who in fact became Archbishop of Esztergom later (and whose surname was not Gara anyways).³⁶ On the other hand, Vitéz's predecessor, the Italian Giovanni de Dominis (Bishop of Várad from December 1440 to Nov 10, 1444, dying in the battle of Varna) was never transferred to the See of Esztergom, and he hardly could have been mixed up with the famous Humanist bishop and archbishop, Vitéz.³⁷ Buonaccorsi remarks that Bishop John lured Gregory of Sanok to his court because he persuaded the governor of Hungary (i.e. John Hunyadi) that his sons should be educated by someone who spoke their mother tongue, not a foreign one. The fact that the bishop was entrusted with the education of the governor's sons befits John Vitéz.³⁸ Furthermore, at one of the Humanist debates described by Buonaccorsi, the bishop recounted the entire history of Hungary by heart ("memoriter et ornate recensisset varietatem fortunae utriusque Pannoniae³⁹ et qui mortales diversis temporibus eas tenuissent"), which implies that the bishop was a local,

35 For the text, see Callimachus, *Vita et mores*. On the historical unreliability of Buonaccorsi, see Morawski, *Histoire de l'université*, vol. 2, 20. On Gregory of Sanok in Hungary, see Toldy, "Szánoki," 183–93; Olsz, "Szánoki," 169–87; Huszti, *Janus Pannonius*, 305; Balázs, "Veronai Gábor," 3–9; Klaniczay, *A magyarországi akadémiai mozgalom*, 27–37. Cf. Kristóf, "Egy lengyel humanista," 21–32.

36 Pajorin, "Alcuni rapporti," 45–52; Pajorin, "A bázeli zsinat," 12–13. Florio Banfi argued that these events happened within a longer period between 1440 and 1454 in several different settings and with more participants. Banfi, "Vergerio," (3) 29, n. 31.

37 Leonard Smith tried to resolve this chronological problem by identifying the bishop with Giovanni de Dominis: Smith, "Note cronologiche," 127, which was supported with further arguments by Pajorin, "Per la storia."

38 Obviously, the part of Buonaccorsi's sentence that implies that Bishop John (and John Hunyadi) spoke the same language as the Polish Gregory of Sanok is completely false and was made up by the Italian historiographer.

39 This expression is a further mark of Buonaccorsi's anachronistic approach: probably Janus Pannonius was the first to characterize himself as "Pannonian" instead of "Hungarian" in the 1450s, followed by John Vitéz only in 1464, and Humanists started to use the Ancient concept of two Pannonias (i.e. inferior and superior) only at the end of the fifteenth century. See Klaniczay, "The Concepts of Hungaria," 173–89.

not an Italian. It is clear from Buonaccorsi's words that when he spoke of Bishop John of Várad, he meant John Vitéz, and not Giovanni de Dominis.

These anachronisms throw Buonaccorsi's historical reliability into question, and the doubts which arise are further strengthened by other arguments. According to Sabbadini, Filippo Podocataro, who must have been very young at this time, was in Ferrara in 1444, the year Vergerio died in Hungary.⁴⁰ Although Buonaccorsi claims that Vergerio was better in oral rhetoric performance, while Podocataro was prominent in poetry, and Gregory challenged both of them, no poetry by Podocataro survives to my knowledge.⁴¹ In many respects, Buonaccorsi's descriptions of the Humanist debates do not seem to be more than fictional rhetorical exercises embellished with small details from the actual events. According to the Italian Humanist, Vergerio raised the subject in Várad (ch. 19) that, according to the law of Charondas, one who has been widowed once, should not remarry, because if his previous marriage was successful, it is not reasonable to risk his luck, but if it was bad, he must be considered foolish, because he did not learn from his experience.⁴² The law of Charondas states that if one's marriage ends, that person should not remarry, because he could be blamed for foolishness, and it survives only in Diodorus Siculus' historical work (in prose: 12, 12; in verse: 12, 14).⁴³ When Vergerio, Podocataro and Gregory

40 Remigio Sabbadini rejects the possibility that they could have met: Sabbadini, *L'Epistolario di Guarino*, vol. 3., 510. Podocataro, who later became a schoolmate of Janus Pannonius in Guarino's school together with his brothers, Lodovico and Carlo Podocataro, is still an unexplored figure in many respects. See Huszti, "Hans Gerstinger: *Johannes Sambucus*," 185.

41 Podocataro was a student of Gasparino Barzizza and was very young at the time (whereas Vergerio was more than 70 years old): Sabbadini, "Lettere e orazioni," 572. In fact, only small portions are edited from his epithalamy, written in 1447 to Ginevra d'Este and Baldassare di Tomeo Paganelli. Sabbadini, *L'Epistolario di Guarino*, vol. 3, 508–9; Giuseppe M. Cagni B., *Vespasiano da Bisticci*, 118. In 1452, he became a schoolmaster and participated in symposia with Bernardo Bembo: "Noto quod contubernium celebratum cum Podocataro, magistro ludorum, initiatum est 12 oct. 1452. Item cum magistro Philippo de Vale romano." Giannetto, *Bernardo Bembo*, 93. On the political importance of the family and on Filippo's sons, Livio and Cesare Podocataro, future archbishops of Nicosia, see Rudt de Collenberg, "Les premiers Podocataro," 130–82. The Podocataro archives (inventoried by Poli, *Inventario della collezione*) are extremely rich in Hungarian relations, but no trace of Vergerio appears in them. Csapodi-Gárdonyi suggests that the cod. lat. 141 (Csapodi-Gárdonyi, *Bibliothek*, 94) of the Hungarian National Library belonged to him.

42 Callimachus, *Vita et mores*, 38: "ne quis, cui primum matrimonium feliciter cecisset, secundum iniret, illos vero, qui infortunati fuissent in primis nuptiis, loco insanorum ducendos, si iterum ea in re fortunam tentarent." About the sources of Buonaccorsi, see Sinko, "De Gregorii Sanocei," 241–70; Miodoński, "Spicilegium Gregorianum," 204–6. The other law of Charondas cited in this debate (banning the practice of "an eye for an eye") is similarly derived from Diodorus Siculus (*Bibliotheca historica* 12, 17).

43 In prose: "Ἐφη γὰρ τοὺς μὲν πρῶτον γήμαντας καὶ ἐπιτυχόντας, δεῖν εὐημεροῦντας καταπαύειν· τοὺς δὲ ἀποτυχόντας τῷ γάμῳ, καὶ πάλιν ἐν τοῖς αὐτοῖς ἀμαρτάνοντας, ἄφρονας δεῖν ὑπολαμβάνεσθαι.

of Sanok were supposed to discuss these issues, the twelfth of Diodorus was not yet accessible in a prose translation.⁴⁴ Buonaccorsi's version follows the prose variant given by Diodorus word by word, and it is hard to imagine that he was not working from the original Greek text. Of course, this does not exclude the possibility that Vergerio read the Greek original,⁴⁵ Gregory of Sanok remembered it, and Buonaccorsi searched the locus in Diodorus for the exact phrasing. But it is more probable that Buonaccorsi selected stories according to his own preferences, as he did in other places, where he embellished the figure of Gregory of Sanok with stories taken from Diogenes Laertius.⁴⁶ In sum, his account seems to contain more fiction than fact.

I raised the possibility of another connection between Vergerio and Vitéz in an earlier article. Johannes Tröster was an Austrian Humanist who enjoyed the patronage of Enea Silvio Piccolomini but who was forced to leave the court of Friedrich III because of a conspiracy. He turned to John Vitéz of Zredna with a letter on September 14, 1454, and tried to speak to his heart, asking for help. He started his letter, with which he introduced himself to the bishop, with the following words: "So that I would talk about domestic and contemporary people, my reverend father, many have told me that Pier Paolo Vergerio of Capodistria used to say often that there is nothing more salutary among the mortals, than to become the friend of excellent men and to be revered and loved by them."⁴⁷ Tröster, in his troubled situation, looked for a new patron in

(Diodorus, *Bibl. hist.*, 12, 12). In verse: Εἴτ' ἐπέτυχες γὰρ φησὶ γῆμας τὸ πρότερον // Εὐήμερῶν κατὰπανσον· εἴτ' οὐκ ἐπέτυχες, // Μανικὸν τὸ πείρας δευτέρας λαβεῖν πάλιν. (Ibid., 12, 14.)

44 Poggio Bracciolini translated the first five books into Latin in 1449–50, which were published three times between 1472 and 1485. See Monfasani, *George of Trebizond*, 69–70. The law of Charondas occurs in a completely different form in Stobaeus: "the person who brings a stepmother to the family should be cursed, because he promotes his own restlessness." (Stob. *serm.* 42.)

45 Vincentius Obsopoeus attributes one manuscript of Diodorus to Janus Pannonius in his *editio princeps* (Diodorus Siculus, *Historiarum libri*, Aα 2v), which he used as the basis of his edition. This manuscript might be the ms. ÖNB Suppl. gr. 30., which was copied by Ioannes Skutariotes in Florence in 1442 (See Csapodi, "Janus Pannonius könyvei," 194.). Cf. Csapodi-Gárdonyi, *Die Bibliothek*, 100–101. Csapodi-Gárdonyi identified the Greek marginalia found in this ms. as coming from John Vitéz's hand, which is of course questionable, as there is no evidence that Vitéz knew Greek.

46 See Olasz, "Szánoki," 185–86. Callimachus, *Vita et mores*, 26. Unfortunately, these references are not decisive on the question of authenticity either, because Vitéz could have known the translation of Diogenes Laertius by Ambrogio Traversari, which started to circulate after 1437. See Pajorin, "A bázeli zsinat," 10.

47 "Retulere plurimi, Pater reverendissime, ut de domesticis nostrique aevi gentibus dicam, Iustinopolitanum illum Petrum Paulum Vergerium semper id in ore sol[il]tum habuisse, nihil inter mortales felicius, quam praeclarorum hominum familiaritate potiri, ab hiis observari diligique." For an edition, see Kiss, "A magyarországi humanizmus," 129–31 and Szilágyi, *Vitéz János*.

the person of Vitéz, and this gesture gives the impression that Vitéz had indeed been a close friend (*de domesticis*) of Vergerio, who could have remembered the favorite saying of the great Italian Humanist. Nevertheless, a thorough research on the sources revealed that the proverb comes not from Vergerio, but from Tröster's own master, Enea Silvio Piccolomini. In fact, it was Piccolomini, the secretary to Friedrich III, who wrote to Zbigniew Oleśnicki, the Archbishop of Krakow, in April 1443 that, "there is nothing more salutary among mortals than to become the friend of excellent men and to be revered and loved by them."⁴⁸ Thus, Tröster copied the sentence word for word from this Viennese patron and used it as a friendly introduction to Vitéz, putting it into the mouth of Vergerio. Upon a closer look, it turns out that several phrases in Tröster's letter to Vitéz are derived from the letters of Piccolomini. When Tröster cites from Cicero the sentence that "as Plato has admirably expressed it, we are not born for ourselves alone, but our country claims a share of our being, and our friends a share,"⁴⁹ the direct source was probably the letter collection of Piccolomini, who cites the same dictum in a letter written to Johann Eich on October 21, 1445.⁵⁰ When Tröster describes himself as a *homuncio*, a tiny man, he again imitates Piccolomini, who characterises himself as such in his letter to his father.⁵¹ Speaking of his "small genius," his *ingeniolum*, Tröster reapplied a term that was once written down in a letter to Giuliano de Cesarini by Piccolomini in 1434.⁵² Thus, he mostly used the stylistic patterns set by the imperial secretary, whose letter collection started to circulate in Central Europe in several copies after 1443, and the reference to Vergerio in his letter is nothing more than a clever imitation of Enea Silvio Piccolomini.⁵³

48 Piccolomini, *Epistolarium*, 140: "ea namque mea sententia est, ut *nihil inter mortales felicius sit, quam preclarorum hominum familiaritate potiri, ab hisque diligi et observari.*"

49 Kiss, "A magyarországi humanizmus," 130; paraphrasing Cic. *de officiis* 1, 7, 22, translated by Walter Miller.

50 "Nec enim nobis nati sumus, ut Plato dicebat, sed ortus nostri partem amici, partem patria vendicant." Piccolomini, *Epistolarium*, 482.

51 Piccolomini, *Epistolarium*, 177.

52 *Ibid.*, 39.

53 One more indirect trace of Vergerio's influence surfaced in a manuscript, the so-called "Szalkai-kódex," into which a section of the *De ingenii moribus* was copied around 1490, attributed to Petrarch. See Lengyel, "Egy Petraracának," 143–46. The so-called "grammar of Vergerio," hypothesized by Csapodi-Gárdonyi, has probably nothing to do with Vergerio: Domonkos, "A ELTE Egyetemi Könyvtár," 121–34. The basic level of this grammar and the "barbaric" Latin style of the short annotation attributed to Vergerio by Csapodi-Gárdonyi (e.g. "infirmus ad mortem," "per antea") also contradict this theory.

The research efforts to establish a well-documented historical link between Vergerio, the “referendarius” of King Sigismund, and John Vitéz, the first Hungarian chancellor with Humanist interests, have proven fruitless. Another method of retracing the genealogy of Hungarian Humanism would be to examine the literary output of its first author, John Vitéz of Zredna, with a more thorough examination of the imitation and paraphrase of Classical and contemporary Latin sources in his texts. The method of composing epistles by paraphrasing and imitating expressions taken from earlier letter collections, formularies, and Classical texts was in widespread use in Humanist correspondence. The epistolary material was still considered a kind of *dictamen*.⁵⁴ A telling proof of this is the title appended to the letter collection in Vienna, ÖNB cod. 3330, in which Humanist authors such as Guarino Veronese and Gasparino Barzizza appear as medieval *dictatores* and the entire collection is called “epistole diversorum doctorum et excellentium *dictatorum*” (1r). Furthermore, not only letters but also basically any linguistically powerful form of expression could serve as the basis of imitation if it had a Classicizing tone. Also, Ciceronian Latinity was not an inevitable standard in the first half of the fifteenth century, especially among Central European early Humanists. Late Antique authors and Medieval texts could inspire authors like John Vitéz of Zredna just as easily as Humanist translations of Greek literature if they seemed to possess enough rhetorical force.⁵⁵ Many examples can be found of this stylistic eclecticism in Vitéz’s epistolary, and some of them (e.g. his imitation of Rufinus of Aquileia) have been already analyzed.⁵⁶ His dedicatory letters in particular are well-formed rhetorically.⁵⁷ I offer the following example:

statui mittere tibi infirma mea *legenti potiora*, ut cum inter excellentes illas
litterarum veterum regiones lassus forte versaberis, ad haec remittens

54 In many respects, Humanist letter writing is a direct continuation of the Medieval practice of “ars dictaminis.” See Witt, “Medieval ‘Ars Dictaminis,’” 1–35; Revest, “Au miroir des choses,” 455; Revest, “Naissance du cicéronianisme,” 219–57; Revest, “Les discours de Gasparino Barzizza,” 47–72.

55 Concerning Vitéz’s Latin style, it is worth taking a note of the remark of the eighteenth-century polyhistor Matthias Bél in the first edition of Vitéz’s letters, who claimed that Vitéz did not want to emulate Cicero or Pliny the Younger. Rather, according to Bél, his stylistic ideals were Symmachus and Sidonius Apollinaris. Bél felt that Vitéz outmatched the second, but not the first. Schwandtner, *Scriptores rerum Hungaricarum*, vol. 2, V.

56 Boronkai, “Vitéz János,” 213–17.

57 For a rhetorical analysis, see Zsupán, “János Vitéz’ Book,” 117–39.

animum iocabundus conquiescas, utque tandem, si summa miraberis, inferiora quoque probes.⁵⁸

I have decided to send you my weakest to the one who reads the better, so that when you get tired of moving around in the excellent regions of Ancient literature, you can rest your soul a bit jokingly, and so that you would approve the lower planes if you admire the summits.

It is obvious that Vitéz's sentence is built around a phrase from Gregory the Great's dedication to his homilies on Ezekiel, addressed to Bishop Martinian:

Sed rursum dum cogito, quod saepe inter cotidianas delicias etiam viliores cibi suaviter sapiunt, transmisi minima, *legenti potiora, ut dum cibus grossior veluti pro fastidio sumitur, ad subtiliores epulas avidius redeatur.*⁵⁹

But again, as I ponder that amid daily delights simple food also often tastes sweet, I have delivered the least to the one who reads the better, so that when you consume cruder food, you may, as if through aversion, the more eagerly return to subtler feasts.⁶⁰

Whereas the clausal sentence structures are clearly parallels, Vitéz imitates only one phrase word by word, “*legenti potiora,*” and the rest of the sentence is transformed to reflect his own situation.

Another example shows him at work transforming two citations. one from Antiquity, specifically Cicero, and one from the writings of a contemporary Humanist, Guarino Veronese, into a single sentence in his:

Igitur si tu quoque recte erudiri volueris, perge ut hos deinceps imitabundus aemuleris, ex iis velim edas paresque studia, ac demum *adiungas frequentem usum, qui omnium magistrorum praecepta superabit.* Nec amplius properes indoctam hanc scientiam consecrari, qua Te ipsum facile perdes, *ad labefactandas eloquii vires procaciter obeuntem.*⁶¹

So, if you want to achieve real erudition, you should continue to imitate and emulate these texts [Jerome and other Church fathers], because I would like you to eat from these, and prepare your studies, and *finally*

58 Vitéz de Zredna, *Opera*, 31–32. (Dated to Várad, April 24, 1445).

59 Gregory the Great, *Homiliarum in Ezechielem*, Patrologia Latina 76, 785; Grégoire le Grand, *Homélie sur Ezechiel*, 48.

60 Translated by Anlezark, “Gregory the Great,” 19.

61 Vitéz de Zredna, *Opera*, 31. (Dated to Várad, April 24, 1445).

add a bit of frequent practice to it, which surpasses the precepts of all the masters. And do not hurry anymore to follow that ignorant science by which you would easily lose yourself, because it cheekily comes to meet you, only to weaken the power of your eloquence.

While the first italicized phrase was imitated from Cicero (*de oratore* 1, 15), the end of the second sentence was a clever and complicated idea (“cheekily coming to weaken someone”) taken from Guarino’s translation of Plutarch’s *Life of Alexander the Great*.⁶² This translation was prepared by Guarino, who was still in Constantinople, between 1403 and 1408, and he started to circulate it publicly after 1412.⁶³ The latter example also demonstrates how the description of a person who wanted to overthrow the empire (*imperium*) could be transformed into the abstract concept of weakening one’s eloquence (*eloquium*).

The manuscripts which Vitéz used for these texts (Cicero’s *de oratore*, Plutarch’s *Alexander the Great*, and Gregory the Great’s homilies) have not been found yet.⁶⁴ In a unique case, Vitéz’s actual source manuscript could be identified. It is the cod. 3099 in the Austrian National Library, containing the first, third, and fourth *Decades* of the *Ab urbe condita* of Livy.⁶⁵ The large folio manuscript is damaged both at the beginning and the end (with one folio missing at the beginning), but the fact that it was in Vitéz’s possession can be established with relative certainty, as the margins of the two-column text contain a large number of marginalia from at least three different hands. One of these hands, who often annotates the text in red ink, copied hundreds of stylistically interesting words, expressions, and phrases from Livy to the margins, and his hand resembles that of Vitéz. Livy was perhaps Vitéz’s favorite author, as revealed by the number of expressions used in his letters and orations from him.⁶⁶ Many of the expressions in the margins of the ms. cod. 3099 reoccur in Vitéz’s letters and speeches. Just

62 Plutarchus, *Graecorum Romanorumque illustrium Vitae*, 264v: “Inde Lysimachi et Agnonēs instare, qui virum affirmabant ad labefactandas imperii vires procaciter obeuntem.”

63 For the dating, see Pade, “Guarino,” 133–47; Pade, “The Dedicatory Letter,” Pade, *The Reception of Plutarch’s Lives*, vol. 2, 133–36.

64 In the case of Plutarch’s life of Alexander the Great, the text survives in a Corvinian manuscript (ÖNB, cod. 23.), which might have been seen by Vitéz, but this precious illuminated copy was surely prepared later in Florence (1470?, cf. Hermann, *Die Handschriften*, 63) than the date when Vitéz used Guarino’s text (his letter is dated to 1445). Similarly, the ms. cod. lat. 148. in the Hungarian National Library, which contains Cicero’s *De oratore*, would have been prepared too late to influence Vitéz in the composition of this letter.

65 On this ms., see Pellegrin, “Notes,” 190–92, and Billanovich, “Per la fortuna,” 271–72.

66 Many of these were identified by Boronkai in the apparatus of his Vitéz de Zredna, *Opera*, but their number could be easily doubled through a thorough reexamination of textual sources with the tools of modern technology.

to quote a few examples, on May 28, 1448, he wrote from Buda the following sentence: “feratque opem, qui spem dedit, ne differendo elanguat res” (“let the person bring help who gave hope, so that the situation would not languish because of procrastination”), which is composed of two sentences from Cicero (pro Ligario 30) and Livy (5, 26, 3: *differendo deinde elanguit res*). The annotator of the cod. 3099 (most probably Vitéz himself) noted twice in the margins: “Nota differendo elanguit res” and “nota bene hanc rem” (“Note that the situation languishes because of procrastination” and “note well this thing”; ÖNB, cod. 3099, 57^{va}). In a letter addressed to Pope Nicholas V on June 15, 1450 in the name of John Hunyadi and the prelates of Hungary, he used the phrase “hoc incommodo in irritum cadentis spei preter ius et phas amplius torqueremur” (“we would be further tortured by this inconvenience of the uselessly failing hope beyond what is legally allowed”).⁶⁷ At the exact place where Livy uses this phrase (1, 6), Vitéz’s annotation can be found in the cod. 3099 (13^{ra}): “dolore ad irritum cadentis spei. Nota bene” (“Because of the pain of uselessly falling hope. Note well.”).

Vitéz of Zredna also used Livy’s phrases in his orations. Accordingly, orations were of special importance to him in his copy of the *Ab urbe condita*, and wherever a speech occurred in the text, he marked it with the sign ω. In his speech addressed to the young King Ladislaus V on October 8, 1452, he wrote: “quamvis heres esses, consenciens tamen vox populi — ut veteres dicere solebant — ratum nomen imperiumque tibi regi efficeret” (“although you are a heir to the throne, nevertheless the consenting voice of the people—as the ancients used to say—ratified your name and rule as a king”).⁶⁸ The source of this expression (Livy 1, 6) is noted in red in the margin of the first surviving leaf of the ms. cod. 3099: “Consenciens vox ratum nomen imperiumque regi efficit” (1^{ra}). In another oration, held in front of Friedrich III on March 23, 1455 in Wiener Neustadt, the emperor’s task appears as “ut sociorum salutis vindex sis et custos tue” (“so that you would be a vindicator of the security of your allies and a guard of your own”),⁶⁹ which is again a phrase from Livy repeated in the margins of the cod. 3099 (12rb: “non acrior vindex libertatis fuerat quam inde custos fuit”). In sum, the marginalia in his Livy show how Vitéz of Zredna made use of the vocabulary of the Ancient historian and show him as a systematic and eager reader of Classical authors. These examples clearly show that Vitéz’s quotations

67 Vitéz de Zredna, *Opera*, 143, 1.

68 Ibid., 225, 22.

69 Ibid., 258, 8.

from Livy could and should be doublechecked against the manuscript he used, which would lead us to a better understanding of his compilation methods. At the same time, the chronology of these Livian appropriations also demonstrates that he must have owned the Vienna manuscript cod. 3099 of Livy early in his career, already before 1445.

Along these lines, the best method to prove Vitéz's dependence on Vergerio would be to demonstrate his direct use of Vergerio's letters, which often appeared in early Humanist letter collections. Unfortunately, no unquestionable example of the imitation of Vergerio has surfaced yet in Vitéz's letters, but there are a few signs which tend in this direction. Vitéz's epistolary collection opens with a rhetorical game in which Vitéz reacts to the request of his subordinate, Paul of Ivanić, who asked him to compile a letter collection, as if it were a debt which he was forced to take upon himself:

Rursus evocor instancia tua usum seriemque laboris repetere, quo compos efficeris debiti, superiore mea caucione polliciti. [...] Sed uter nostrum initum exinde pacti genus prevaricatus sit, tu pro te videris [...] At mihi multo asperior exactio ipsa visa est, quam pactio fuit, quandoquidem decidis tempore conducto, et numero adicis, atque (ut pace tua loquar) fenore in fedus irruis. Quo fiet, ut dum me debitorem huius morati federis insimulas, tu ipse fenoris expetiti reus videberis.⁷⁰

I am forced again by your perseverance to take up this long job, by which you receive back the debt, which was promised to you by my earlier provision. [...] But you should see for yourself which one of us has violated this agreement which we have made [...] For the retortion seemed to me much coarser than the covenant was, because you have shortened the agreed deadline, raised the sum, and (pardon my word!), you destroy the contract with usury. As a consequence, while you pretend that I am a debtor of a delayed loan contract, you actually will be sinning in usury.

Thus, the compilation of the letter collection is presented as a debt, but the repeated demands of Paul of Ivanić are usury.

Gasparino Barzizza wrote a letter to Cardinal Francesco Zabarella from Padua in August 1414 in which he used a similar leading metaphor of indebtedness, as he felt obliged to his new patron because of the praise transmitted to him by

⁷⁰ Ibid., *Opera*, 37.

Vergerio. Barzizza described his feelings for his new friend, Zabarella, using the same rhetorical motifs:

Tantum ergo hac re tibi debeo, quanti amicitiam hominis et eruditissimi facio. Qui si solvendo essem, non differrem in diem, sed statim hoc alieno aere me exolverem. Nunc vero quum nihil dicere mihi etiam religio sit, ut verbis poetae comici utar, et me ipsum superiori tempore pro multis aliis meritis tuis insolutum dederim, *faciam quod debitores non mali solent, quum non suppetentes sunt, unde suis creditoribus reddant, saltem hoc curant, diligentem calculi rationem habeant. Conficiam ergo novos calendarios, nam priores tuis creditis iam omnes sunt pleni, et a capite libri in albo, ut dicitur, scribam: 'Receptum P. P. Vergerium nostrum': Summam autem non taxabo, est enim mea sententia inextimabilis. Tu quanti voles taxabis, et ego ratum habeo. Vale.*⁷¹

I owe you as much because of this as much I esteem the friendship of a man, and of a very learned one. If I had to pay now, I would not delay it even a day, but I would pay it even by a loan. But now, when I am scrupulous not to say anything, to use an expression of the comic poet [Ter. Heaut. II, ii, 6], and I have become insolvent to many of your honors previously, I will do what those debtors do who are not that bad: when they cannot secure the money from which to pay back their debts, at least they care for a diligent and careful payroll. Thus, I will start a new calendar, because the earlier ones are full of your credits, and on the first page of the book I will write on an empty page: “I received P. P. Vergerio.” And I won’t even estimate the final sum, because it is invaluable.

Was it perhaps this section of Barzizza’s letter which inspired him to compose his own metaphoric dedication to his works?

This connection seems all the more probable because of some circumstantial evidence. Vitéz of Zredna’s letter collection, which was edited by Paul of Ivanić, his collaborator at the royal chancery, in 1451, survives in two copies, the elegantly written Vienna manuscript cod. 431, which bears Humanist tendencies,⁷² and another one in the Library of the Metropolitan Chapter in Prague ms. G. XX, written in characteristic Central European Gothic *bastarda* scripture. Whereas the Vienna manuscript contains only the letters of Vitéz of Zredna, the Prague copy also includes a Humanist letter collection on folios

⁷¹ Vergerio, *L'Epistolario*, 356.

⁷² Papahagi, “Gothic Script,” 5–14.

315^r-451^v with the works of Gasparino Barzizza,⁷³ Guarino Veronese, Ognibono Leonicensi, Pier Paolo Vergerio, Francesco Barbaro, Piero da Monte, Poggio Bracciolini, Carlo Gonzaga, Leonello d'Este, and others. As this part of the manuscript has not been described in detail in the catalogue of the library, no one noticed that this collection is closely related to the one transmitted in the manuscript Munich, University Library 2^o ms. 607⁷⁴ and, to a lesser extent, to the mss. London, British Library, Arundel 70, and Vienna, National Library, cod. 3330.⁷⁵ This connection hinted at by Ludwig Bertalot,⁷⁶ but the contents of the Prague manuscript, which transmits these early Humanist letters and orations along with Vitéz of Zredna's letters, have been never examined. This Humanist anthology in the Prague manuscript was copied by the same hand as the letter collection of Vitéz of Zredna, and it can be safely dated to 1459 ("feria V ante festum S. Bartholomaei," 315^r). It is important to note that Barzizza's letter to Zabarella, which we have cited above and which might have influenced the rhetoric of Vitéz of Zredna's letter to Paul of Ivanić, is contained in the Prague manuscript (331^r-331^v: "Gasparinus Pergamensis Francisco Gabarele [=Zabarelle]"), as well.⁷⁷ Thus, it seems reasonably possible that this—probably Bohemian—copyist had access to Vitéz's letters in the same place where he had found this Italian Humanist letter collection: at the Hungarian chancery. If this hypothesis is correct, this "Humanist copybook" might have had a serious impact on the composition of Vitéz of Zredna's letter collection.

In sum, the beginnings of Hungarian Humanism can be better characterized using a philological approach and finding the codicological evidence behind the practice of textual appropriation than by looking for direct personal and historical contacts. As Humanism began to take root in Hungary, there stands a letter collection, that of Vitéz of Zredna, which relies heavily on late medieval notarial practices. His working method reflects the compiling techniques of medieval litterati: texts are basically made up of formal elements the primary function of which is to confirm the authenticity of the text, not to recognize the source

73 Podlaha, *Soupis rukopisů*, vol. 2, 95–96.

74 See Natalia Daniel, Gerhard Schott, Peter Zahn, *Die lateinischen mittelalterlichen Handschriften der Universitätsbibliothek München: Die Handschriften aus der Folioreihe, Hälfte 2*. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1979), 107–16. Very often, the Prague Metropolitan Chapter, ms. G XX includes these texts in exactly the same order as the Munich, University Library 2^o ms. 607; e.g. the series of letters of Guarino on Prague, 337^r-247^v and Munich, 154^v-164^v.

75 On this group of manuscripts, see Bertalot, "Humanistisches Studienheft," 83–161.

76 Bertalot, "Die älteste Briefsammlung," vol. 2, 41.

77 For a list of all the copies of this text, see Mazzuconi, "Per una sistemazione," 212.

or establish some kind of textual relationship. Nevertheless, in this Humanist letter collection, the most important difference from a medieval formulary is the range of texts that are considered authentic and worthy of imitation. In the case of Vitéz of Zredna, the range of these authentic authors extends from Plautus through Cicero, Livy, and Lucanus to figures of late Antiquity, such as Saint Jerome and Gregory the Great. Most probably, he also turned to contemporary Humanist authors, such as Guarino Veronese, Gasparino Barzizza, and Pier Paolo Vergerio. The final result was not yet a clean, Ciceronian Latin prose, but something that was Classical at least in its intention. One could apply the judgment of Marcantonio Sabellico on Gasparino Barzizza's Latinity to Vitéz of Zredna: "As I hear, he was the first person who cast an eye on the shadow of Ancient eloquence, because that was all that was left of this very noble subject."⁷⁸

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78 "Est in Bergomati agro vicus obscuri olim nominis, nunc clarus suoque partu illustris, Barzizam vulgo nominant. His Gasparinus grammaticus ac rhetor sua tempestate illustris, qui in hac urbe ut audio, mox Patavii, inde Mediolani multa nominis celebritate litteras docuit magis felici consilio, quam quod tantae cladis resarciendae spes ulla praetenderetur. *Primus omnium, ut audio, ad veteris eloquentiae umbram, nam ex re tam nobili nil tum praeter id unum supererat, oculos retorsit.*" Sabellico, *De latinae linguae reparatione*, 97.

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THE

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THE

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*Early Humanism in Hungary
and in East Central Europe*

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