

## JAKOB KLÖSS: THE PRINTER OF DECSI'S ADAGIA – A PRINTER AND PUBLISHER IN BÁRTFA

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**Abstract:** The author examines the reason why the press of the one-time Upper-Hungarian town Bártfa (today Bardejov, Slovakia) owned by Jakob Klöss was chosen in 1598 to print Baranyai Decsi's *Adagia*, his third book to appear in Hungary. His former two works both dedicated to the Transylvanian Prince Sigismund Báthory unlike his *Adagia* which was addressed by the author to Georgius Warkocs were published in two different Transylvanian towns. It was very likely his person that connected Baranyai Decsi and the printer of Bártfa. He was akin to several noble families resident in Upper Hungary who financially supported a series of books issued by the printer Jakob Klöss. It appears that it was to the advantage of Baranyai Decsi's proverb-collection that it was issued by a competent printer in a well-equipped office also supplied with Greek types. The author also gives a reconstruction of the printing types used in *Adagia*.

**Keywords:** Jakob Klöss, printer, Bártfa (Bardejov, today Slovakia), printing types, Hungarian text, patron, text-books, Baranyai Decsi, *adagia*, proverbs

The subject of this paper is the printer and the press that issued the *Adagia* by Decsi.<sup>1</sup> First it is necessary to survey a wider field, to consider briefly the number and spread of presses in Hungary with special emphasis on Upper Hungary at the very end of the 16th century.

It is perhaps worth reminding the reader that printing was very early introduced to Hungary – during the reign of King Matthias Corvinus – although the enterprise was short-lived and foredoomed to failure. Still, in the 1470s there were two independent printing offices in Hungary. Then, after a period of some fifty years when historical and economical conditions did not make it possible to establish presses, a new start was made. While the central part of the country was occupied by the Turks, in the Western part of Hungary, in Upper Hungary and in Transylvania several printing offices began to work. (As to their distribution see Fig. 1, with the remark that Buda was no printing place in that century, it is marked there only for better orientation.) The central blank spot marks the territory occupied by the Turks. In the course of the 16th century there were altogether 29 printing places in Hungary, some of them prospering for a longer period and some working only for a couple of years under unfavourable conditions.

Keeping in mind the 29 printing places, it is striking to see the extremely small number of presses, only nine, active in the very years interesting us most (1598) – the

<sup>1</sup> RMNy Nr. 815.



Fig. 1. Printing shops in Hungary in the 16th century

year Decsi's *Adagia* appeared. Of these some were working continuously like the press in Debrecen, Kolozsvár, Bártfa and Nagyszombat\* (this latter being the only Catholic printing office at the end of the 16th century,) while all the others were working for the Protestants – for Calvinists, Lutherans and Unitarians, the three accepted protestant religions in Hungary, or we should rather say in Transylvania.

We are 50 years after the fall of Buda, three years after the fall of Esztergom, in a year that brought a series of successful battles against the Turks in Hungary. Nevertheless, the Turks held occupied the central part of the country for another hundred years. Although they were often endangering Upper-Hungarian towns, Bártfa, lying to the North, close to the Polish border was always safe from such military events. Politically the town belonged together with Western Hungary to the Hungarian kingdom under Habsburg rule.

At that time Bártfa was the only town of Hungary where two presses were working simultaneously. It was rather exceptional, because otherwise there was no demand in Hungary – even in a privileged free royal town – for two presses. In fact, Bártfa was situated very favourably along the commercial route connecting Poland and Hungary. This circumstance may also explain why the first printing office of Upper Hungary was established there by the learned bookseller David Gutgesell and it also explains the prominent role played by this town in Hungarian book printing–

\* Here and hereafter (for brevity's sake) we shall use only the common Hungarian forms of the place names, without further specification.

publishing throughout the next century as well, continuing the tradition from the manuscript period.

Jakob Klöss set up his office in 1597. There were but three years (1597–1599) at the very end of the 16th century when the activity of these two printers ran in parallel, because in 1599 Gutgesell died and Jakob Klöss – distinguished by bibliographers from his son of the same Christian name as Jakob Klöss *senior* – pursued his craft alone in the town.

From his first printings (*Adagia* also included) it was possible to reconstruct<sup>2</sup> the equipment of Klöss. At the time he set up his printing office, which consisted of:

- 3 Roman text-types
- 1 Italic text-type
- 1 German text-type
- 3 series of capitals
- 4 series of wooden blocks with decorated initials
- 1 woodcut title-page border<sup>3</sup>
- 3 other woodcut ornaments and
- 11 elements of typographic ornaments

None of his books were – to our knowledge – decorated with engraving, these being rather exceptional in contemporary Hungary, and at the very beginning he had no printer's device. Later on he used sometimes a Fama emblem<sup>4</sup> as device. We do not know the number of printing machines he owned, he must have had one or two. In general, surveying his books one concludes, that it was a printing office that put more emphasis on correct text and good typography than on decoration. (Figs. 2 and 3 display some characteristic pieces of Klöss' starting equipment).

In 1588 Klöss bought a house in Bártfa. This is the first time his name occurs in the books of the town. His house was in the same street as that of Gutgesell, with ten houses in between.<sup>5</sup> Although not born in Bártfa,<sup>6</sup> he must have been a citizen by the time, otherwise he could not have been a house-owner there. Unlike Gutgesell, Klöss had no privilege for his press. It was not uncommon in Hungary – on the contrary, the exceptions were rather the printing offices that acquired a privilege. In the 16th century only two Hungarian printing offices gained the royal privilege: the Catholic press in Nagyszombat and that of Gutgesell and none of the presses set up in the next (17th) century were working in the possession of a royal privilege. Perhaps in the case of Klöss the town of Bártfa did not feel it necessary to apply for a

<sup>2</sup> The equipment of the Klöss office as it was used between 1597–1635 was reconstructed by Ágnes FARKAS (1985, manuscript) to whom I owe thanks.

<sup>3</sup> RMNy Nr. 828.

<sup>4</sup> Originally the printer's device of Valentin Mantskovit at Vizsoly. See: SOLTÉSZ 1961: Plate XLVII. 4 and ECSÉDY 1990: XXV.

<sup>5</sup> REPČÁK 1968: I. 24–25.

<sup>6</sup> REPČÁK 1977: 12; REPČÁK 1968: 24.



Fig. 2. Decorations of Klöss' printing shop (slightly diminished)

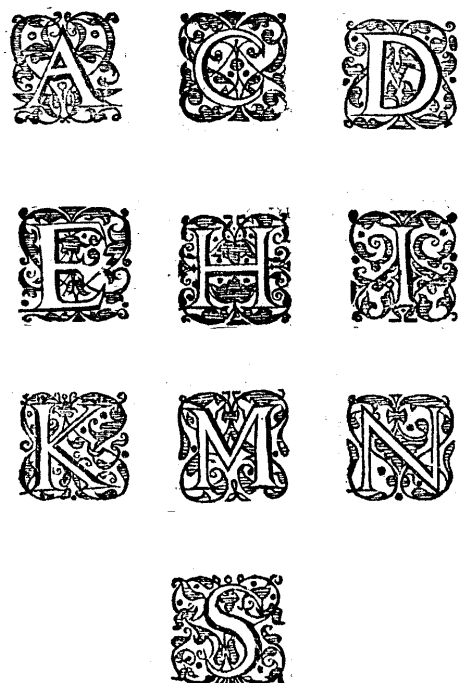


Fig. 3. Decorated letters of Klöss' printing shop (slightly diminished)

privilege once again, especially when Klöss' soon remained the only printer in the town.

The major activity of the Klöss' printing office falls to the 17th century. In 1619 Klöss senior died and by 1622 Jacob Klöss junior came of age and was able to take over his father's office. Only four years of Klöss senior's activity took place in the 16th century, but even these first years brought significant works. The inhabitants of the town Bártfa were mainly Germans and of Lutheran confession. So were the Hungarian population and the city council as well. Although Klöss' establishment was a private one, his activity was supported and in agreement with the town council.

Younger Klöss, similarly to his father, was a prominent figure in the town administration of Bártfa. He was again, like his father, several times elected magistrate of the free royal town. His activity as a printer-publisher is marked by 70 Hungarian-language books. With these Hungarian books – among which a number of prominent works can be found, like translations and adaptations of Justus Lipsius<sup>7</sup> and Antonio de Guevara,<sup>8</sup> the translation of Lewis Bayly's *Practice of Pietie*<sup>9</sup> being very popular among Hungarian Protestants – he did much service to Hungarian culture and literature.

He also published polemic writings by Hungarian Calvinists, not only Lutherans, as one of the most popular in its genre, the polemic work against the Pope by János Kecskeméti C.<sup>10</sup> It is very likely that the earliest edition of *Sacred Song* of the great Hungarian lyric poet Bálint Balassi was also published here.<sup>11</sup> The careful printing and high level editorial work, his good contacts to the neighbouring nobility and to the scholars all contributed to the prosperity of the press.

In the almost seventy years of its existence the Klöss office could gain the support of several noble families resident in the vicinity of the town Bártfa. Contemporary correspondence and dedicatory letters prove that the costs of several publications were covered by the Várday, Nyáry and Telegdy families.<sup>12</sup> The publications of Klöss senior include works dedicated to the Révay brothers,<sup>13</sup> to other magnates of Lutheran confession or sympathizing with Protestantism and also polemic works on Lutheran side sometimes dedicated to the town and senate of Kassa.<sup>14</sup>

Although we do not know much about the relationship of author and printer in Hungary in the early centuries, judging from the choice of books published in the Klöss office one can feel a high degree of consciousness on behalf of the printer in selecting the works he decided to print.

The own editions of the printer were those that the printer thought worth printing, easy to sell and without loss, like text-books, sermons, prayer-books and

<sup>7</sup> RMNy Nr. 1347; RMK Vol. I. Nr. 709.

<sup>8</sup> RMNy Nr. 1400.

<sup>9</sup> RMK Vol I. Nr. 709.

<sup>10</sup> RMNy Nr. 1214A.

<sup>11</sup> RMNy Nr. 1519.

<sup>12</sup> KOVÁCS-KULCSÁR 1966: 331–338.

<sup>13</sup> RMNy Nr. 852.

<sup>14</sup> RMNy Nr. 790; RMNy Nr. 824.

song books for both Germans and Hungarians of Lutheran confession, the Gospels and Epistles, and Hungarian calendars compiled by David Frölich year by year. The materials printed by the Klöss office also include publications for special purposes (funerals, weddings, inaugurations). In this case the printer was only commissioned with producing a certain number of copies and was paid for the work and for the paper, while he had nothing to do with sales. This was of course very advantageous to every printer of those times and assured the printer a safe income.

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There are two misunderstandings in connection with Klöss that should be corrected at the very start. One of them is that he was not the successor of Gutgesell:<sup>15</sup> it was not his printing office that he took over and continued. It can be very easily proved if one compares the products of the Gutgesell and the Klöss presses from the three overlapping years. The two printing equipments, ornaments and other decorations are entirely different and easily distinguishable.<sup>16</sup> Of the 35 books produced to our knowledge in these three overlapping years 18 were issued by Gutgesell (mostly bearing his name) and 17 by Klöss, who, in the first years of his activity, preferred to omit his name from the title page.

The second misunderstanding accepted by some other historians is, as if Klöss established his office entirely from the equipment of the famous Vizsoly press (famous for the first complete Hungarian Bible issued there).<sup>17</sup> This assumption was based partly on certain ornaments shared both by the Vizsoly press and by Klöss and partly on the coincidence of the close and opening of the respective printing shops.<sup>18</sup>

The latter statement can be easily denied, because there have come to light several products of the Vizsoly press from the years following the establishing of the Klöss press in Bártfa, proving that, although at a modest rate, the press at Vizsoly was still at work until 1599. As to the similar or identical ornaments of the Vizsoly and the Klöss press, the question is more intricate. In fact there are similarities between the two equipments at the very start, but these are rather common pieces of ornaments that occur in a number of other contemporary offices as well. On the

<sup>15</sup> It was Lajos KEMÉNY (1889: 600–608) who first published contemporary documents proving some relationship between the families of Gutgesell and Klöss. From these he concluded that Klöss must have been the successor of Gutgesell. His opinion was adopted by Pál GULYÁS (1931: 230–231.) and Erzsébet SOLTÉSZ (1956: 231). Unlike József FITZ who was right when observing that Klöss did not use Gutgesell's equipment (1967: 257). Neither did Július VALACH accept the idea that Klöss bought Gutgesell's equipment (1987: 98).

<sup>16</sup> Neither in her study about the ornaments used in Bártfa (SOLTÉSZ 1956: 230–244) nor in her comprehensive work about 16th century book decoration in Hungary did Erzsébet SOLTÉSZ (1961: 107–110) separate the equipment of the two Bártfa offices.

<sup>17</sup> József FITZ was of the opinion that the press of Klöss was founded entirely from the remains of Valentin Mantskovit's office from Vizsoly (1967: 257). According to Pál GULYÁS Klöss took the equipment from Vizsoly to Bártfa and began to work with it, while after the death of David Gutgesell he united the two offices under his own name (1931: 230–231.)

<sup>18</sup> Historians agree that Klöss was the companion or assistant of Mantskovit at Vizsoly (GULYÁS 1931: 230; FITZ 1967: 257; REPČÁK 1968: 24, etc.)

other hand, there are undeniable identities among the types, ornaments, fleurons and other decorations, but these are not present in the first ten years of Klöss' activity: strikingly they appear only around 1608. (By the time the printing office of Vizsoly had long ceased work.) As we have seen it before, Klöss had his own, individual equipment and with this he was able to work from the very outset (1597).

The statement of former bibliographers and historians whether Klöss was originally the companion or helper of Mantskovit at Vizsoly while the Hungarian Bible was being worked on should be likewise examined. It is very likely that Klöss did in fact work together with Mantskovit in Vizsoly and he married Mantskovit's daughter. Mantskovit's daughter was probably the first wife of Klöss and the mother of his daughter Elisabeth, while his second wife was very likely Gutgesell's daughter from whom Jakob Klöss the younger was born.<sup>19</sup> Whether Klöss – before setting up his own office – was working for a time together with Gutgesell or not, one cannot positively declare.

As to the family relations of Klöss, as said above, we have knowledge of a daughter and a son. His son was born in 1601, while his daughter Elisabeth must have been some years his elder, as in 1608 she married the printer Johann Fischer. Fischer was two years later recommended by his father-in-law to the town council of Kassa as printer and in fact he settled there (1610) and opened his own printing office.<sup>20</sup>

If one examines the pieces of the press at Vizsoly and that of Klöss one by one it appears that about half of the letters and the majority of the initials and ornaments, tail-pieces came from Vizsoly into the possession of Klöss in 1608–1609, but not earlier. This transaction must have happened in connection with the marriage of Klöss' daughter Elisabeth when Klöss' property was divided in order to give his daughter her maternal inheritance. It was at that time that both the name of the long deceased Gutgesell and that of Valentin (presumably Mantskovit) occur in the property lists of Klöss.<sup>21</sup>

These legal actions documented in contemporary sources happily coincide with the changes in the printing equipment as it appears in the printings of those years. That is, this re-division of property (printing equipment in this case) can be followed in the same way in the changes of printing types and ornaments – representing valuable properties at the time. (Fig. 4 displays decorative pieces coming to Klöss from Vizsoly in 1608–1609).

Gutgesell died apparently without anyone to continue his printing work. His types, the letters still in a very good condition, never appeared again: they were possibly melted. But his ornaments, that is that part of his equipment which could not be melted because it consisted of wooden blocks, found their way later to the newly erected press of Klöss' son-in-law, Johann Fischer. No wonder that reconstructing

<sup>19</sup> GULYÁS 1931: 231; VALACH 1987: 97–98.

<sup>20</sup> About the first printing office founded in Kassa by Johann Fischer see FARKAS–V. ECSÉDY 1986–1990 (1994): 351–382.

<sup>21</sup> VALACH, 1987: 98–99.

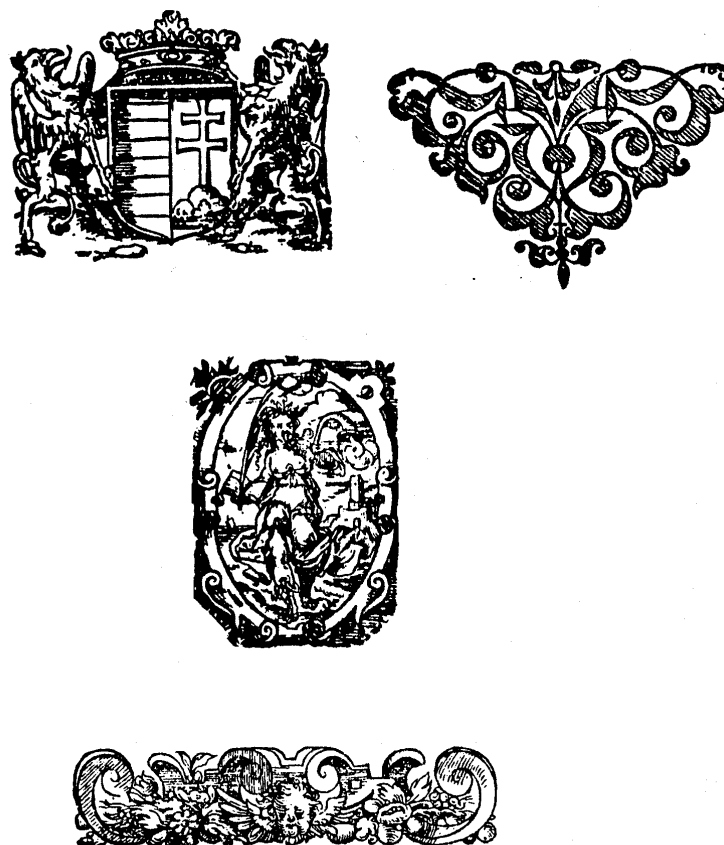


Fig. 4. Ornaments from Vizsoly in Klöss' printing shop (slightly diminished)

Fischer's equipment it appears that it is made up partly of his father-in-law's types and partly of the one-time Gutgesell ornaments.<sup>22</sup> Klöss himself never used any of Gutgesell's ornaments.

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When dealing with Decsi's works printed in Hungary one should not neglect the question, why all the three books<sup>23</sup> of the author were printed by different presses?

Theoretically both the press of Heltai and that of Fabritius in Szeben were able to print *Adagia*, because both possessed (apart from Roman and Italic text-types) lower-case Greek types as well, which were also necessary for the three-language text of *Adagia*.

<sup>22</sup> The reconstruction of Fischer's equipment see FARKAS-V. ECSÉDY 1986–1990 (1994): 351–382.

<sup>23</sup> RMNy Nr. 719, RMNy Nr. 786 and RMNy Nr. 815.



For some reason, that we shall closer examine, the press owned by Jakob Klöss senior was chosen to print Decsi's third book appearing in Hungary. Klöss' printing office was a rather new establishment, it was only in its second year. The question arises why just Bártfa, this relatively distant town was the place where *Adagia* was printed and again, why just this newly erected press? The other office, that of David Gutgesell, had twenty years prosperous activity behind it and surveying the production of the two presses one can see how very similar their profiles were. Neither is there a great difference in the technical levels of the two presses: both were among the best in Hungary.

Formerly historians were of the opinion, that after the printing of the Hungarian Bible had been finished, Klöss left Vizsoly for the Transylvanian town, Kolozsvár, to work in the office of Heltai. It was supposed that there he stayed as an assistant of younger Heltai until he started his own press in Bártfa. His stay in Kolozsvár was – according to some historians – sufficiently proved, on the one hand, by a foreword signed by Klöss in an undated Kolozsvár print, on the other hand – strikingly enough – just by the fact that in 1598 Klöss was commissioned to print Decsi's *Adagia*. It was supposed namely that while Decsi's *Syntagma* was in print in Kolozsvár, Klöss stayed there and made acquaintance with the author.<sup>24</sup>

It may have happened so, but those who depict the meeting and acquaintance of the prospective author and the future printer forget that, inspite of this meeting, Decsi had his next book printed in the years between neither in Kolozsvár nor in Bártfa but in Szeben (his *Sallustius*, in 1596).<sup>25</sup> At a closer look, neither the other argument for Klöss' stay in Kolozsvár is convincing enough. The foreword signed by Klöss came to the undated fortuneteller book printed in Kolozsvár simply through taking it over by Caspar Heltai from an evidently earlier Bártfa edition issued by Klöss. That is, it was a re-impression of a book printed by Klöss. The original must have been one of the earliest printings of Klöss.<sup>26</sup> With such popular works as fortune-books re-impressions were by no means scarce. The issue cannot be solved for good, because the supposed original Bártfa edition by Klöss has not survived.

Historians dealing with the Heltai office and those engaged in the history of the Klöss press found it remarkable that while Decsi commissioned Caspar Heltai the younger with issuing his *Syntagma*, five years later he chose another press, a newly erected office in Bártfa – a long distance away – to produce his *Adagia*. They found it startling all the more so, as Heltai was apparently rather generous when offering the author a hundred copies of his printed work as honorary copies.

It should be noted here that historians and bibliographers were far less interested in the question, why his second book, the *Sallustius translation*<sup>27</sup> was not printed likewise by Heltai in Kolozsvár, but in another Transylvanian town, Szeben,

<sup>24</sup> It was Pál GULYÁS who first assumed (1931: 230) Klöss' stay in Kolozsvár, also accepted by Július SOPKO 1977: 12. FITZ had doubts concerning it (1967: 257).

<sup>25</sup> RMNy Nr. 786.

<sup>26</sup> The issue of the Fortune-book was summed up by BORSA 1964: 348–354.

<sup>27</sup> RMNy Nr. 786.

by the town press led at the time by Johannes Fabritius of whom very little is known. It cannot be explained with the author's moving from Kolozsvár to Vásárhely – which took place in 1593 – either.

There is also another circumstance that seems to contradict the assumption of a longer stay of Klöss in the distant Transylvanian town Kolozsvár. Contemporary sources say that in 1596 Jakob Klöss was elected magistrate of the town Bártfa,<sup>28</sup> which could not have happened if he had been away for years.

I think that we should take other circumstances into consideration that more convincingly explain the *Adagia*'s having been printed exactly in Bártfa and by Klöss. To see this, we should return to Decsi's previous books.

Both his works issued in Hungary preceding *Adagia* were dedicated by Decsi to the Transylvanian Prince Sigismund Báthory in the generosity of whom he was disappointed in both cases. In a letter of August 16th 1596 written by Decsi some time after the publication of his *Sallustius* and addressed to Ferenc Hunyadi, the court physician of the Transylvanian Prince and author of a historical chronicle himself, Decsi tells with his own words that he put much faith in the generosity of the Prince. But he did not get a reward equal to his efforts and costs of his *Syntagma*, which was a great loss to him. While according to the hints of this letter for the *Sallustius translation* that he sent and dedicated to the Prince, he did not get any financial support.<sup>29</sup>

No wonder that with his third book, *Adagia*, he made no third attempt to gain the grace of the Prince. It was just the above-said Ferenc Hunyadi who, during his stay in Upper Hungary after returning from Prague in the first half of the same year (1596), recommended Decsi to a Hungarian nobleman – Miklós Szokoli – known for his generous patronage of literature and sciences. Therefore, he proposed Decsi to set out as soon as possible to Upper Hungary to visit Szokoli. Decsi accepted this idea and planned his journey in October, moreover, he was ready to leave Transylvania for good.

Although the patron who backed (probably financed) his *Adagia* at the end was not the above mentioned Szokoli but Georgius Warkucz (Warkocs)<sup>30</sup> akin to him on his wife's side. One should be reminded that the wife of Szokoli was Katalin Telegdy. The second wife of Warkucz was Borbála Nyáry, her mother-in-law was Katalin Várdai and her sister-in-law Anna Telegdy<sup>31</sup> – all the three latter families and especially the women of the families were later prominent patrons of younger Klöss.<sup>32</sup> One is inclined to believe that this might be the connection explaining the Transylvanian author's book having been printed in Upper Hungary by Jakob Klöss. No other printing dedicated to, or patronized by Georgius Warkucz is known at present.

<sup>28</sup> ÁBEL 1885: 119.

<sup>29</sup> His correspondence with Ferenc Hunyadi was published by KONCZ 1884: 17–29.

<sup>30</sup> RMNy Nr. 815, Alb.

<sup>31</sup> On the family relations of Georgius Warkucz (Warkócs) see SIEBMACHER's Wappenbuch 1891–1892: 702, Taf. 481.

<sup>32</sup> KOVÁCS–KULCSÁR 1966: 331–338.

As mentioned above, similarly to other Hungarian printers Klöss was a printer–publisher. These two activities were not separated in Hungary in the early period of printing, simply because the quantity of book production did not make the mediation of a publisher necessary. They were printer–publishers in the sense that they decided about the books to be issued, they had the responsibility for it and they also cared for their selling. But in most cases the publications were at least partly supported financially by the patron.

We do not know whether Decsi's visit to Upper Hungary was realized at the end or not – one is inclined to think that it did take place with the result that his *Adagia* was issued by Klöss. However, Decsi apparently did not find conditions there so favourable as to leave his home town Vásárhely in Transylvania, for good.

All the same, there are facts that hint at some connection between Klöss and Heltai, respectively Bártfa and Kolozsvár. First of all, historians do not agree in the town where Jacob Klöss senior was born. Very likely one of the place names Sibin and Sabinov is a misunderstanding or a wrong translation of the German or Latin place name to be found in the original documents. It is more likely that he was born in Kisszeben (Sabinov) in Upper Hungary and not in Szeben (Sibiu, in Slovakian Sibin) in Transylvania. The latter being valid (and he was in fact born in Transylvania) throws a new light on the connections of these two regions. However, only a closer survey of archival documents can decide the right place of Klöss' birth. However, there is a positive proof of some connection between the Klöss and the Heltai office at the beginning of the 17th century when, still in the life-time of Klöss senior, a young printer from the Heltai office worked in the office of Klöss. He was János Makai Nyírő, for whom a quittance was signed by Klöss in 1613.<sup>33</sup> He is the person who was later in charge of the Heltai press, when young Caspar Heltai was engaged in town administration. He was sent twice from Kolozsvár to Bártfa: once, when he stayed at Klöss' office for a longer time and once when he was commissioned by the Unitarian church to find a type-founder in Bártfa (which he could not, he learned type-founding himself in Prague instead.)<sup>34</sup>

It must have been a rather common way of Transylvanian printers to continue their studies or perfect their knowledge in Upper Hungarian printing offices, and perhaps starting from there, they could achieve better contacts with Polish, Silesian and Bohemian offices. In the interval after the death of Klöss senior and before Klöss junior's coming of age, Martinus Wolfgang was in charge of the Klöss press, who after returning home took the leadership of the other famous Transylvanian press in Brassó.<sup>35</sup> To sum it up, not denying that there were close connections among Upper-Hungarian Zips towns and the Transylvanian Saxon towns with similarly dominant German-speaking population, until a more convincing circumstance proves Klöss' stay in Kolozsvár, it remains a mere supposition.

<sup>33</sup> REPČÁK 1968: 25.

<sup>34</sup> On the career of János Makai Nyírő see TÓTH 1957: 587–606.

<sup>35</sup> RMNy Nr. 1323; RMNy Nr. 1378.

As mentioned before, *Adagia* appeared in 1598. Although 18th century literary history registers a Strasbourg and an earlier (1588) Bártfa edition, these statements are based on misunderstandings. *Adagia*'s only edition is that of Bártfa of 1598, by Jacob Klöss. In the case of the "Strasbourg" edition the words of Szenci Molnár's Preface to his *Dictionarium* were misinterpreted, while the date 1588 came into bibliographies through a copy of *Adagia* in a private collection where the year of printing was mistakenly corrected by hand from 1598 to 1588.<sup>36</sup>

As to its typographical characteristics *Adagia* is printed in an octavo of more than 400 pages, its title page is well-known to us all. Its border is made up of one recurring typographic element. Within the border lower-case Italic and Roman types are varying and only the first line of the title is emphasized by larger capitals. The printer's name and the town, year, can be read on the title page, which is rather simple but refined, and so is the whole book, which contains only one decorated initial letter. The main part of the book is printed in lower-case Greek, Roman and Italic types, so that the Greek expressions (if any) are set with a fine small case humanist Greek with accents and breathings, followed by the Latin expression in Italic and finally the Hungarian equivalent in a round humanist Roman. The whole book represents the starting equipment of Jakob Klöss senior.

It should be noted here that the practice was adopted very early among Hungarian printers that Hungarian texts were preferably printed with Roman type, while Italic was saved for Latin. By the time *Adagia* came to press, it had been a practice consistently carried out by printers issuing not only two-language vocabularies or text-books but any other type of book where in a basically Hungarian context some Latin words occurred. (The reconstruction of the three text-types employed in *Adagia* for the Hungarian, Latin and Greek texts is shown in Figs. 5, 6, 7.)

The same border is repeated on the verso of the title page, where the dedication can be found. The preface to the reader (that is the second leaf of the volume) is decorated with a line made up of typographical elements and the only decorated initial of the book – a letter S – can be found on this page. Otherwise the volume is decorated with two other elements of typographic ornament, employed for closing paragraphs.

We have to add some words about the orthography of Decsi's two Hungarian-language printings. By the third quarter of the 16th century a tendency of uniform orthography can be traced in books printed in Hungarian, eminently due to the work of Caspar Heltai. His usage and orthography was adopted and raised to a higher level of uniformity and consciousness by several writers in Upper Hungary and especially by those scholars who under the guidance of Caspar Károli translated the complete Bible to Hungarian. As Jacob Klöss was very likely taking part in the printing of the Hungarian Bible, the printer's role should not be neglected here, either.

<sup>36</sup> The misunderstandings about the supposed Strasbourg and the earlier Bártfa editions were made clear by TOLNAI 1909: 396–403.

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T V W X Y Z A B C D E F G H I

K L L M N O O P Q R R S T V W X Y Z a á ä å b c d e é ê ã ē ě f f ğ g h i ĩ ĵ

k l m n ñ o ó ô õ ö œ p q r s ſ ſ ſ t u ú û ü ű v w x y z ã š & x . : ; ' ' ' (

1 3 3 5 6 7 8 0

minemű népet szeret és választott ő magának: M  
által: Maradékul hadgyok re közötrőd fegény és  
zek bíznak az W rnak neuébe. Ez az kúczin serege  
dön az Isteneleneknek nagy serege el vez, finte  
rik az vesedelemtől, mint az V izözönnek v deién  
reczke, mint Sodoma vesedelmekor Loth patriarc  
meg azért atiamfai, az Istennek alázatos gyűleköz  
mindenben az alázatóságot követuén, S. Pálnak  
lattia ferint: Mert mondom az nekem adatot keg  
az, annira nyuítom csak elmémet ranításomban, á  
építettem, nem magamtól, hanem az ő ranítása ála  
dennek az kí rú közötrötők vagyon, hogy felyeb r  
hanem az mint kel érteni, az az, fel ne fualkodgy  
mindennél iobnak magát ne alicza, mert azis cza  
ő néki adattatot: de érczen vgy, hogy mértéklen  
meg ímerie abban az Isteni áiadékbán őis az ő  
fölsőbb való eseskódése miat meg ne bolondúll  
kinek Isten osztogattia az hűtnek mértékét, azzal é  
Mely keresztiení mind belső mind külső alázatós  
abrázattiát hogy viselhefsűk, segitsen minket az  
igéie az Fiu, és ezektől származó S: Lélek Isten, k  
refeg, dúczölég, és birodalom, mind öröckön öröc

Fig. 5. Hungarian letters employed in *Adagia*

Although in respect of orthography printers were bound to use the characters they had in the fount, still, careful printers who did much Hungarian printing made efforts to acquire sets of types completed with specific Hungarian accents and marks – and Klöss was among these.

If one compares the orthography of Decsi's two Hungarian-language printings, the conclusion can be drawn that the orthography of Decsi's book printed in Szeben respectively in Bártfa is almost the same, only in the Bártfa printing it is more consistent. However, what makes the great difference between the two is the almost complete lack of vowels with Hungarian accents in the Szeben printing, which makes the

subvertere potuisse, Nunc animadverto, validâ hac regia via, quæ recte ad legitimam ac infallibilem veritatis cognitionem trivissima, communissimaq; via semper fuit habitâ, lubricam quandam ac salebrosam Differentiorem sibi delegisse, per quam Lector non ad terminum duceretur sibi præfixum ac optatû, cognoscendæ scilicet veritatis, sed suspensus circumdiceretur fune æquivocationum ac Sophismatum, per dumeta literarum,

Fig. 6. Latin letters employed in *Adagia*

ὅτι ἐβαν τοὶ μισαροὶ ἐμῶν οὐρανῶν ὁδόντας,  
 ἐξ ἡσκανεν ἀνθρώπων ἔξα πόντος καλῆς  
 Διὸς πόσιος ταχέως, καὶ πακτίξει σαπιγόν.  
 ἄνελ ἡμῶν διελθὼν τῶν ἡίστοφίς.  
 ἡμῶν

Fig. 7. Greek letters employed in *Adagia*

reading of the very compact text, almost without divisions, rather difficult. A favourable change can be found in this respect in the *Adagia*, because the printer in Bártfa had, and correctly used all the letters with Hungarian accent. From the point of view of Decsi's proverb collection one cannot help thinking that it was to its advantage that it was not printed in Szeben.

\*

After the death of Klöss junior without a heir, the press was taken over by the town (according to the practice of the age) and continued its activity as a town press. It ceased to prosper and its equipment was left to decay, although it never abandoned its activity as a town press until, at the very beginning of the 18th century, the

leaders of Rákóczi's war of national independence moved the press to Kassa, and employed it for producing the "War Journal" and other printings for the prince. The name of the office now working in Kassa remained unchanged: "the press of town Bártfa" and legally it continued to belong to Bártfa. In these transitional years the press was equally working for Prince Rákóczi, for the Protestants and for the Catholics. Five years later the printing office of Bártfa was purchased by the Jesuits resident in Kassa.<sup>37</sup>

A product of this rather unusual transitional period – when the printing office of a town is located and working in another town – is especially remarkable from our aspect. In 1713, among the last products of the Bártfa town press, the second Hungarian proverb collection, that of Péter Kisviczay was issued here.<sup>38</sup> The imprint on the title page "Bartphae, typis Civitatis" does not reveal the fact that the Bártfa town press was at that time in Kassa and the proverb collection of Kisviczay, a Hungarian Lutheran pastor in Kassa was not produced in Bártfa, but Kassa. To put it short: although the title page bears "Bártfa", the book was printed in Kassa.

To be sure, it happened by chance that the chronologically second proverb collection in Hungary was also issued by the press of Bártfa, still it is remarkable that there are some old typographical ornaments and initials from the original set<sup>39</sup> that one can meet equally in Decsi's and in Kisviczay's *Adagia*, although more that a century passed in the meantime.

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<sup>37</sup> About the afterlife of the one-time Klöss office in Kassa in the 18th century see PAVERCSEK 1993: 105–118.

<sup>38</sup> KIS VICZAY, Petrus 1713. (see PETRIK 1980: 401.)

<sup>39</sup> The 17×17 mm decorated initial letter and two of the typographical ornaments employed in Decsi's *Adagia*.

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