

TANULMÁNYOK

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Hebrew Language Knowledge of Christian Hebraists Dealing with Hungarian Linguistics*

ABSZTRAKT

A keresztény hebraisták által írt, latin nyelvű, latinizált héber grammatikáknak köszönhetően a humanizmus korától a héber nyelv az európai nyelvtudomány számára is elérhetővé válik. A 17. század elejétől – a korabeli európai gyakorlatnak megfelelően – a latin nyelvű magyar grammatikairodalomban is egyre inkább elterjed a héber nyelv, a héber nyelvtan felhasználása a nyelv leírásában. A magyar nyelvtan bizonyos részeinek, elemeinek a héberrel való összevetése tehát nem hungarikum a korban: a héber számos, többek között rokon finnugor nyelvleírás számára is forrásként szolgál. A szent héber nyelvvel való összevetés és a héberből való eredeztetés a finnugor nyelvek, így a magyar esetében kettős célt lát el: egyrészt a latinból le nem vezethető nyelvi jelenségeket magyarozza, másrészt a nyelv presztízsét, tekintélyét növeli. Tanulmányomban a latin nyelvű magyar grammatikairodalomból Tótfalusi Kis Miklós helyesírási kérdéseket tárgyaló *Ratiocinatiojának* (1684), valamint Révai Miklós etimológiai tárgyú *Antiquitatesének* (1803) hebraisztikai vonatkozásait mutatom be, különös tekintettel a szerzők héber nyelvi kompetenciájára.

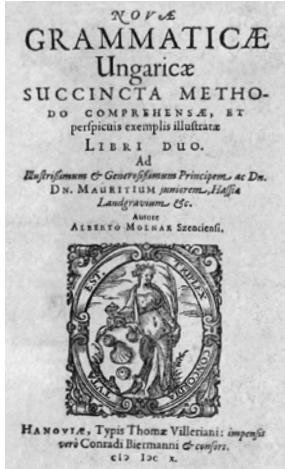
I. Introduction

The analogy of Hebrew grammatical characteristics (phonology, morphology) and the application of Hebrew terminology to describe Hungarian linguistic features can already be considered a tradition as early as the 2nd half of the 17th century. The *Novae Grammaticae Ungaricae* of 1610 by Albert Szenczi Molnár, the *Hungaria Illustrata* of 1655 by György Komáromi Csipkés, and the *Grammaticae Linguae Ungaricae* of 1682 by Pál Pereszlényi are all examples in which the writers seek an analogy with the Hebrew language.

For the select scholars who were educated at universities abroad, it was clear that exclusive reference to the classical Latin language, and the application of Latin categorisation do not suffice to describe all the linguistic features of the Hungarian language. Still, the Hebrew language does not only serve as a reference to describe the Hungarian language, but it is used to describe the related Finno-Ugric languages as well. By comparing the Finno-Ugric languages to the ancient, sacred Hebrew language, or even describing them as deriving from the Hebrew language, “would lend prestige and dignity, which [...] these languages that were constantly suspected barbaric were definitely in need of”¹

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¹ Quote from Zsuzsa C. Vladár, a researcher of the (early) Hungarian grammars written in Latin language, who wrote this sentence in connection with the *Hungaria Illustrata* by Komáromi. C. VLADÁR: Komáromi Csipkés György: A magyar nyelv magyarázata – *Hungaria Illustrata*, 18.



Szenczi Molnár, Albert:
*Novae Grammaticae
Ungaricae* (1610)

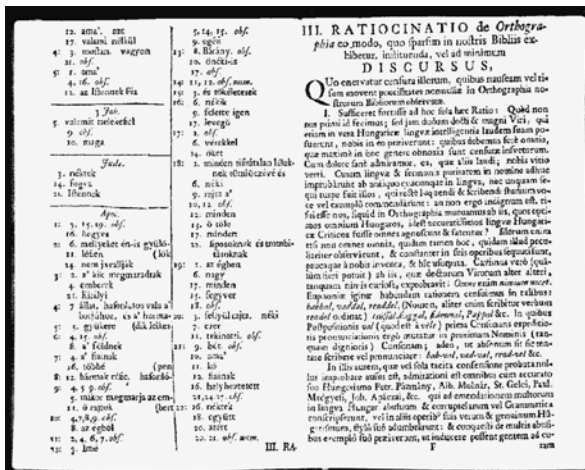


Komáromi Csipkés, György:
Hungaria Illustrata (1655)

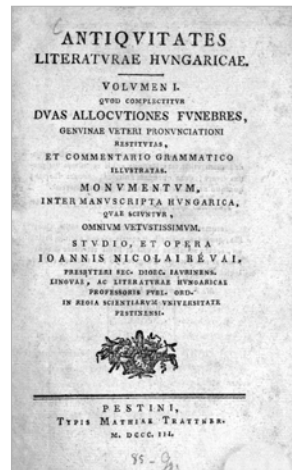


Pereszlenyi, Pál:
*Grammatica Linguae
Ungaricae* (1682)

In my paper I will present the Hebraistic aspects of the *Ratiocinatio* of Miklós Tótfalusi Kis (1684) – a piece on orthography – and of the *Antiquitates* (1803) – a work on etymology – by Miklós Révai, two pieces of the Hungarian linguistic literature written in Latin, with special emphasis on the Hebrew language competence of the authors. Both works are innovative in their seeking an analogy with the Hebrew language, but they differ from each other in their ways of innovation.



Tótfalusi Kis, Miklós:
Ratiocinatio (1684/1697)



Révai, Miklós:
*Antiquitates Literaturae
Hungaricae* (1803)

II. Miklós Tótfalusi Kis, *Ratiocinatio* (1684)

Miklós Tótfalusi Kis was born in 1650 in Misztótfalu (presently Maramaros County in Romania). He studied in the Reformed Church College of Nagybánya, and later in that of Nagyenyed, where he also studied Hebrew. As we know from a letter written in 1673,² he was dissatisfied with his Hebrew lecturer. The letter was written by the students of the Nagyenyed College, and in their letter they complain that their unsatisfactory Hebrew teacher is unable to teach them much even though they have four lessons per week. As a result, they have to resort to the “mute masters”: to Buxtorf, Münster, Forster, Sanctus Pagninus and Junius.³ As usual with students at the time, Tótfalusi compiled his own notes from the linguistic works of these excellent Hebraists.

In 1680 he travelled to Amsterdam to learn printing. At this time he was in personal contact with Athias Press, the most renowned printing press of the age that published in Hebrew.

In 1685 he published the so-called “*Aranyos Biblia*” (Golden Bible) at his own cost, which changed the text of the 1645 *Jansonius Bible* in several instances.



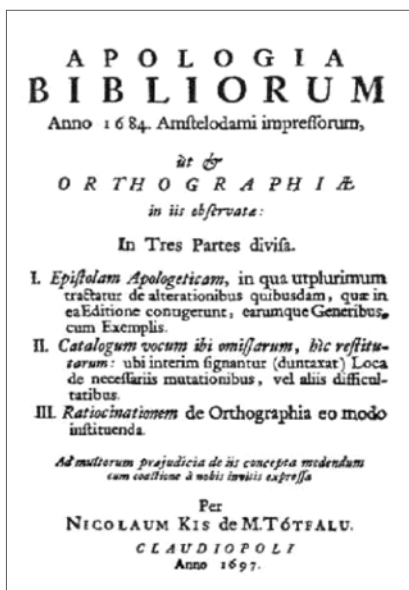
“*Aranyos Biblia*”
[“Golden” Bible] (1685)

The Reformed Church disapproved of the modifications to the text of Károli, and as a result Tótfalusi was exposed to various attacks. He reacted to the attacks from the Church with his publication entitled *Apologia Bibliorum* in 1697. By this time he had lived in Cluj, Transylvania for almost a decade, where he had also founded a printing press in 1693. The number of his enemies only increased when he wrote

² For the publication of this letter, see DÉZSI: “Nadányi történetíró életéhez” [To the life of the historiographer Nadányi], 66–68.

³ For details, see DÁN: “Tótfalusi Kis Miklós és a héber filológia” [Miklós Tótfalusi Kis and Hebrew Philology], 31–40.

his polemical essay entitled *Mentség*, meaning Excuse. Assaulted, “broken in body and soul” he died in 1702 in Kolozsvár.



Tótfalusi Kis, Miklós: *Apologia Bibliorum* (1697)

I. Part: *Epistolam Apologeticam*...

II. Part: *Catalogum vocum ibi omisarum*...

III. Part: *Ratiocinationem de Orthographia*...



Tótfalusi Kis, Miklós:

Mentség [Excuse] (1698)

The *Apologia Bibliorum* of 1697 consists of three parts: the first contains the motives and principles of adjustments made to the Bible, the second part the modified words, verses, and problematic sections to be examined. The third part, entitled *Ratiocinatio* contains the principles of orthography.⁴

As it was customary at the time, the *Ratiocinatio* of Miklós Tótfalusi Kis, summarising the principles of orthography, includes numerous references to the Hebrew language. On the one hand, it offers the classical Hebrew parallel of many features of the Hungarian language, on the other, it often uses the linguistic terminology of Hebrew.

However, Tótfalusi is an innovator in that – as opposed to earlier practice – he does not give an explanation to certain expressions, but uses them naturally, almost routinely. An example for this occurs when he describes inflexion in the morphology section of his work, and incorporates the Hungarian possessive suffix into the relation of the possessor-possession, the *status constructus*.

⁴ For the source edition with introduction and detailed explanations, see C. VLADÁR–KOLTAI–FEKETE: Tótfalusi Kis Miklós: Számvetés a helyesírásról – Ratiocinatio de orthographia. Hasonmás kiadás.

Examples of the possessive suffix and the possessor-possession construction
(the Hebrew *status constructus*) based on Tótfalusi's examples

beszéde – fiúnak a beszéde
דְּבַר הַנֶּעֶר – דְּבָרוֹ
[his speech – the boy's speech]

Pieces of literature on Hebrew grammar discuss the structures expressing possession and the possessive suffixes together, since the relative root of a noun is mostly the same as the possessive stem of the *status constructus* structure featured in one morpho-syntactical unit.

Tótfalusi presents the two morphological features comparing them against each other, but he does not offer an interpretation of where his model is originated. He does not even mention the coincidence with Hebrew morphology or the coincidence of the linguistic description. He treats the discussion of the two side by side as something evident.

In addition, Tótfalusi postulates that the possessive suffix originates from pronouns, which is also parallel to a feature of Hebrew grammar. In Hebrew the possessive suffixes are originated from pronouns. The difference from Tótfalusi's explanation is that these are personal, rather than possessive pronouns. Thus, Tótfalusi's procedure can be regarded as a derivative method customary in Hebrew linguistics as far as the status of the *pronomem affixum* is to be interpreted in its relation to the *pronomem separatum*.

Example of the change of Hungarian possessive pronouns → to
possessive suffixes (*grammaticalization*) based on Tótfalusi's examples
miénk beszéd → beszéd-ünk
[ours / our speech]

Example of the change of Hebrew personal pronouns →
to possessive suffixes (*grammaticalization*) based on Tótfalusi's examples

אֲנַחְנוּ → דְּבָרֵנוּ
[we / our speech]
pronomem separatum – pronomem affixum

Tótfalusi treats the so-called base word as a root, a phenomenon that was widespread to a certain extent with other Hungarian linguists as well. The term in question is the used base form of the Hebrew words traced back to three root consonants in Latinised Hebrew grammars, which is to denote the third person singular of the present tense indicative verb according to the Hungarian grammar tradition.

Not only do his innovations manifest in the analogical usage of Hebrew morphological features and terms that have already gained ground, but also in the way he operates with Hebrew verb stems and Hebrew verb stem terminology.

When presenting the complex Hungarian conjugation of verbs, Tótfalusi relies on the role of verb voices, a characteristic feature of Hebrew conjugation. The only verb stems mentioned by him are *qal* and *piél*, but he mentions them just as naturally as he uses the Hebrew parallels of noun inflexion. Even more, he goes as far with the parallel as to use the Hebrew terms for the features of the Hungarian language, and to call the indefinite conjugation *qal*, and the definite conjugation – and also somewhat illogically, the “-ik” verbs – the *piél*.

Examples of verb stems and verb conjugations based on Tótfalusi’s examples

Qal: tanulok, tanulsz, tanul – the stem [*thema*] always ends with *-k*
 [I learn, you learn, he learns something;
 verbal suffix: *-k*]

Piél: tanulom, tanuló, tanulja – the stem [*thema*] always ends with *-m*
 [I learn, you learn, he learns the lesson;
 verbal suffix: *-m*]
fekszem stb. – *ikes* ige
 [I lie; „-ik”-verbs]

Instead of the Latin categorisation, Tótfalusi turns to Hebrew categorisation and terminology in describing the Hungarian language. The system is further complicated by either his failure to precisely identify the function of the Hebrew verb voices or, by his imprecise use of the principle caused by the unsuitability of the system to illustrate the given features of Hungarian verb conjugation. To sum up, instead of the Latin categorisation, he turns to Hebrew categorisation and terminology, as in the Hebrew language the verb voices are responsible for the quality or type of action, and serve a similar purpose as the Hungarian verbal suffixes. At the same time, Tótfalusi considers that the voice of verb is connected with the conjugation. In the Hebrew language the conjugation denotes the aspect rather than the voice of verb.

The introduction of *qal* and *piél* functions to morphological research, and in a broader sense to Hungarian grammar literature by Tótfalusi, is a real innovation. However, he uses the terms incorrectly or mixes them up, which indicates that his picture of Hebrew conjugation is unclear, or even that Hungarian-Hebrew conjugation comparison is not free from anomalies in general.

Although he does not discuss the particles as a separate word class, it is worth mentioning that when discussing conjugation, he spontaneously, – and also somewhat incorrectly – identifies the word *נָא* [*ná*], expressing request, commands with the 2nd person conjugation of the imperative mood. Again this gives us the impression that Tótfalusi knows a lot about Hebrew grammar, but his knowledge is not systematic or complete.

2nd person conjugation of the imperative mood:
 words with *-sza/-sze* suffix and the Hebrew כָּ
 – examples by Tótfalusi:

hozsza (*hotztza*) ← כָּ
 [bring!]
adsza (*atztza*) ← כָּ
 [give!]

After morphology, the following main topic that Tótfalusi mentions in connection with orthography is phonology. Tótfalusi's affinity to Hebrew phonology is more motivated than his relation to the morphological comparison, as his starting point is the transcription of proper names appearing in the Bible translation that have a Hebrew phonetic form. His examples, characterisations of the pronunciation of Hebrew phonemes and of their orthography are proofs that he possesses well-founded knowledge of the Hebrew alphabet and phonology.

Tótfalusi first mentions the so-called *begadkefat* phonemes. He uses the official Hebrew mnemo-technical term (*begadkefat*) to describe the phonological group, but at the same time and somewhat incorrectly he also terms them aspirated sounds. He examines the related phonological rules only in relation to the transcription of proper names.

Undoubtedly, if we are correct in our interpretation of his terminology, he is *generally* aware of the phonological nature of *begadkefats*, and he discusses these in a rather professional manner, using the available terminology.

Let me interject here, that in his *Ratiocinatio* Tótfalusi writes the Hebrew words in Hebrew using Hebrew characters. Since the writing is abjad, that is, it consists of consonants only and no vowel points are provided, the original Hebrew lettering and wording offer no real support in understanding the *begadkefat* phenomenon.

The transcription of proper names is an extremely complex topic, it is to be appreciated that Tótfalusi takes a stand and transcribes these consistently as far as phonology and orthography are concerned.

At the same time Tótfalusi admits that it is very difficult to reach consistency in transcription. He discusses the inconsistencies extensively, giving numerous examples for the existing dissonances.

His knowledge of Hebrew phonology is evident from his categorisation of transcriptions, and he also refers to this knowledge when stating his transcription principles.

The rules of transcription – Sound and letter correspondences
(Tótfalusi's system)

כ = Ø	ד = d	ח = phonetic value: h, mark: h/ch	ל = l	פ = p	ש = s, but phonetic value: uncertain
ב = b	ד = d	ח = th?	מ = m	פ = p	ש = s
ב = b	ח = h	י = j	נ = n	צ = phonetic value: c, mark: tz	ת = t
ג = g	ו = v	כ = phonetic value: k, mark: k/c	ס = s, but phonetic value: uncertain	ק = k	ת = t
ג = g	ז = z	כ = phonetic value: k, mark: k/c	ע = Ø	ר = r	

We can make a general statement that Tótfalusi gives priority to the form of proper names as they appear in the Hebrew Bible, rather than taking the Septuagint, and based on this the Vulgate transcriptions as a basis. As far as inconsistency in proper names is concerned – with regard to the various occurrences of those names – he states the origin of the variations differing from the Hebrew Bible in only one place, although the inconsistencies are mostly caused by various textual traditions. In the overwhelming majority of the cases Tótfalusi only registers or criticises the existing forms, but he does not attempt to provide an explanation, nor does he name the possible sources of the various forms.

To summarise, we can conclude that Tótfalusi does not intend to present the Hebrew grammatical-phonological references with scientific-philological-systematic precision. At the same time, he has a stable, trustable knowledge of the Hebrew language (which evidently includes the inaccuracies, inconsistencies and anomalies that we can pinpoint looking back after several centuries). He is ready to rely on his stable knowledge of the Hebrew language whenever he wishes to interpret the Hungarian linguistic-orthographic features as parallel or in contrast to the Hebrew language.

The comparison with the Hebrew language in his *Ratiocinatio* evidently serves the description of the grammatical-orthographic rules, and the description of the principles of the Hungarian language. His method is more reliant on intuition and spontaneity, and on a presupposed knowledge of the Hebrew language on the part of his audience. That is the reason for his natural use of Hebrew terminology.

His innovation among 17th century Hungarian Christian Hebraists lies precisely in this: it is not his intention to create a system. Instead, he makes practical use of his existing knowledge of the Hebrew language.

About Tótfalusi's intentions and his Hebrew knowledge:
Conclusions

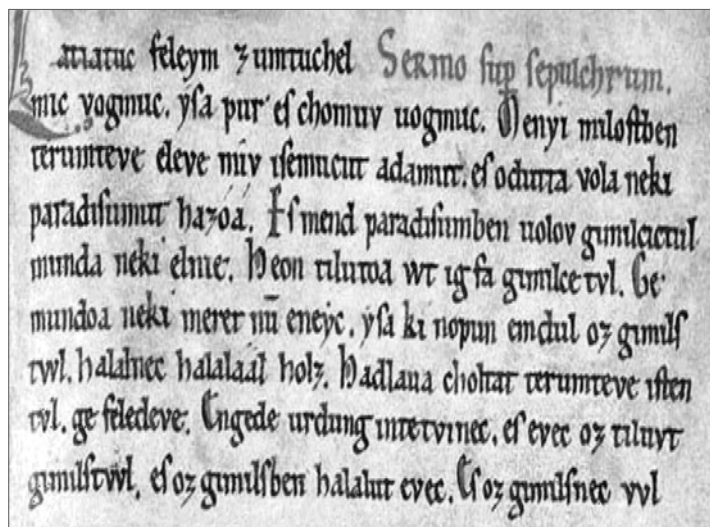
no intention to present the Hebrew grammatical-phonological references with scientific precision
no intention to create a system
stable, trustable knowledge of the Hebrew language
natural use of Hebrew terminology
practical considerations

III. Miklós Révai, *Antiquitates* (1803)

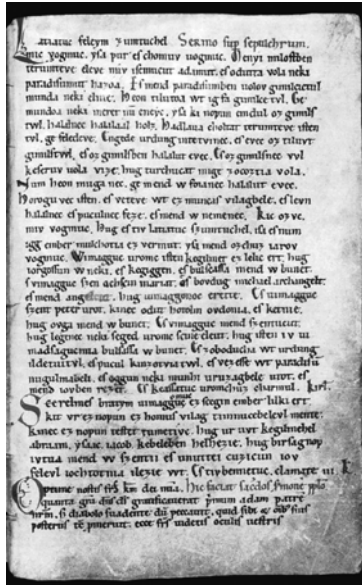
And now let us turn our attention to the evidence provided by the other grammatical work, Révai's *Antiquitates*.

Miklós Révai, linguist, university professor, founder of Hungarian historical linguistics was born in 1750, exactly a century after Tótfalusi, in Nagyszentmiklós (Temes County, Romania at present).

He studied at the Piarist School in Szeged. He was admitted to the order, and studied theology in Nyitra. Later, he studied drawing and architecture in Vienna, where he became familiar with the Hungarian linguistic records in the Imperial Court Library. In 1778 he was ordained priest in Nagyvárad. In the collegiate library in Pozsony he copied and scrutinised the first complete Hungarian linguistic record, the twelfth century Funeral Sermon and Prayer.



Halotti Beszéd és Könyörgés
[Funeral Sermon and Prayer]
1st complete Hungarian linguistic record
(between 1192–1195)

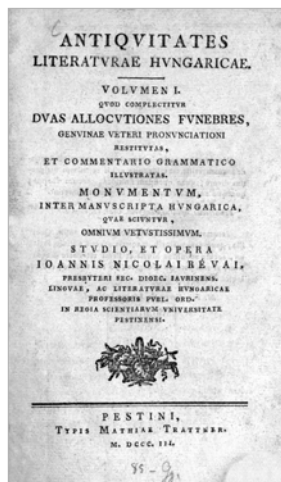


Halotti Beszéd és Könyörgés

[Funeral Sermon and Prayer]

1st complete Hungarian linguistic record
(between 1192–1195)

In 1802 he became the head of the Hungarian Department of the University of Pest. His Latin language work on the Funeral Sermon and Prayer entitled *Antiquitates literaturae Hungaricae* was published in Pest in 1803.



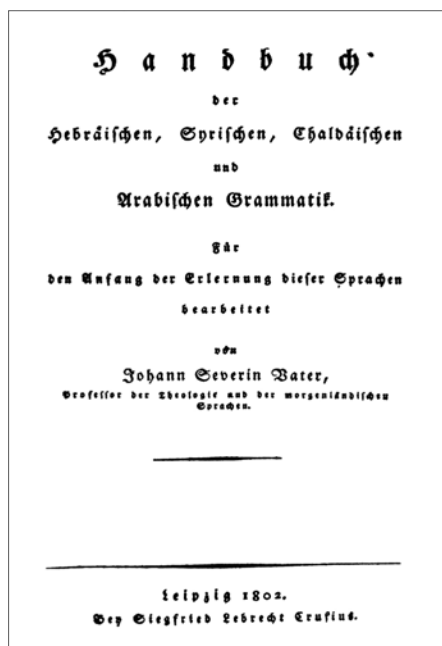
Révai, Miklós:
*Antiquitates literaturae
Hungaricae* (1803)

Between 1803 and 1806 his *Elaboratio grammatical Hungarica*, his most notable piece of work from the point of view of Hungarian historical linguistics, was published. The principle of word analysis that Miklós Révai advocated determines the orthography of the Hungarian language to date. He died in 1807.

In *Antiquitates*, his analysis of the 12th century Funeral Sermon and Prayer, he frequently derives the Hungarian words and linguistic features from the Hebrew and the Aramaic languages, among them at times from Syriac too.⁵

While he takes the Hebrew examples (antecedents, parallels) from the corpus of the Bible and from the Biblical Hebrew grammar, the corpus of the Aramaic examples, or the era of the grammar-linguistic data cannot be determined without ambiguity. In some instances Biblical Aramaic corpus and grammar, and in other instances the grammar of later Aramaic eras (Middle or Late Aramaic) is used for the comparative analysis.

He makes several references to a grammar book: Johann Severin Vater's book, the *Handbuch der hebräischen, syrischen, chaldäischen und arabischen Grammatik* (Leipzig, Crusius, 1802).⁶



Johann Severin Vater,
*Handbuch der hebräischen, syrischen, chaldäischen
und arabischen Grammatik* (1802)

⁵ For the translation with introduction and detailed explanations, see C. VLADÁR–STEMLER–KOLTAI–ZSOM: Révai Miklós, *Antiquitates literaturae Hungaricae – Magyar irodalmi régiségek* [Hungarian Literary Antiques].

⁶ Special thanks to Prof. Stefan Schorch, the Professor of Biblical Studies at Martin-Luther-Universität Theologische Fakultät, Halle-Wittenberg, for making the digital version of the grammar book available to me.

This book serves as a source for the presentation of features of the Hebrew, Aramaic and of the “Eastern” languages. However, my experience seems to disprove it: I have not managed to identify one single concrete example for – mainly phonetic – Hebrew references in Vater’s grammar book.

Révai’s explanations based on the Hebrew language are partly different from the traditions of the Hungarian grammar literature.

The novelty of his point of view and methodology is evident in that he examines several Eastern “sacred languages”: besides the already mentioned Aramaic, the Syriac, Arabic and Ethiopian languages as well.

Révai’s innovation lies in his re-definition of the Hebraising tradition of the Hungarian grammatical literature. He uses Hebrew (and the other “sacred languages”) at lower levels (those of phonemes and morphemes), and at higher levels (those of lexemes) as a basis for comparison, *based on similarities of phonetic forms*. Révai finds the origins of certain elements of the contemporary phonemes reconstructed from the Funeral Sermon and Prayer, and of the major part of words (and suffixes) from Hebrew or from Hebrew and Aramaic (occasionally from Syriac) – as “firstborn languages”. Besides this, he demonstrates the Hebrew and/or Aramaic origin of words with similar meaning and morphology of related Finno-Ugric languages as well. Thus, in his etymological explanations the Hungarian word in question appears together with its Hebrew, Aramaic, Syriac, Finnish, Sami, Estonian etc. “equivalents”. Révai thus follows several centuries of Hungarian and Finno-Ugric comparative linguistic tradition when proving the relation of the Finno-Ugric and the “sacred languages”.

The author of the *Antiquitates* makes the following deductions in his etymological research related to the words, morphemes and phonemes, appearing in the Hungarian language linguistic records from the Middle Ages.

He finds the origins of certain Hungarian phonemes, e.g. *h, k, v, j* in Hebrew phonemes.

The main proof for the relationship is similarity at a morphological level. Just a few examples to illustrate this: in his analysis, he finds a relationship between the definite Hungarian article and the Hebrew -הּ [*ha-*] prefix definite article. He also finds a relationship between our possessive suffix expressing plural possessions, and the Hebrew morpheme ם [*j*] [*jód*], which denotes plural too.

He presents various Hebrew prepositions – e.g. the objective כִּן [*ét*]; the בּ [*b^e-*] meaning “in”; the בֵּין [*bén*] meaning “between” – as etymons of the Hungarian suffixes and postpositions with a similar meaning. He also assumes that the Hebrew הוּא [*hú*] stems from our third person singular pronoun (ő). As an additional example, he considers our number “egy” meaning “one” as etymologically related to the אֶחָד [*eHád*] number of Hebrew-Aramaic-Syriac origin.

Révai also demonstrates the Hebrew origin of nouns and adjectives found in the Hungarian linguistic record. For instance, he reconstructs our word “asszony”, meaning woman, from the – inverted / reading back – Hebrew אִסָּא [*issá(h)*], and our word “hamis”, meaning “fake, false”, as an etymon of the Hebrew חָמָשׁ [*Hámász*] concept. He determines our word “Élő” as an epithet of God, and derives it from the Hebrew אֱלֹהִים [*él*] noun, meaning “God”. He considers our word “Isten”, meaning

“God” as the tetragrammaton: יהוה [pron.: *adonaj*], that appears in the Hebrew Bible as a proper name. However, in his opinion the form that was taken over in Hungarian is another word with the same meaning: the Hebrew שׁוּ [jés], or the Middle or Late Aramaic ܫܘ [ʔit] particle which expresses existence.

Examples for Révai’s deductions:

About phonemes:

Hungarian *k* [k] ← ק

Hungarian *v* [v] ← ו

About morphemes:

Hung. def. article: *a/az* [the] ← ה

Hung. objective suffix: *-t* ← ת

About lexemes:

Hung. S/3. pers. pronoun: *ő* [he] ← הוא

Hung. cardinal number: *egy* [one] ← אחד

Hung. noun: *asszony* [woman] ← אשה

Hung. adjective: *hamis* [fake/false] ← שקר

Hung. adjective as an epithet of God: *élő* [alive] ← חי

Hung. noun: *Isten* [God] ← Aramaic existence-particle: ܫܘ

When discussing verbs and their conjugation, Révai refers to concepts, features already traditional in Hungarian grammar literature.

He mentions the *pi`él*, *hif`il* and *hof`al* verb voices as known terms. He presents the last two as the ancient forerunners of the Hungarian causative and circumstantial passive voices, respectively. Révai demonstrates the behaviour of various Aramaic active and passive verbs through examples. He regards the Aramaic verbal prefix transforming an active verb into passive the original representation and form of the Hungarian passive verbal suffix.

Révai draws a parallel between Hungarian conjugation and inflexion, and Hebrew verbal personal suffixes. He also traces back the grammaticalization of Hungarian personal pronouns into suffixes to the Hebrew language. (Naturally, he does not use the expression “grammaticalization”.) His conclusions about the nature of Hebrew verb voices and conjugations, even if a little imprecise, testify to his expertise.

Looking at Révai’s transcription it is apparent that he consistently writes the *begadkefat* without diacritical points, just like Tótfalusi. It is as if he denoted the spirant allophone. However, looking at the transcription of the *names* of letters it is visible that he follows the so-called academic pronunciation. With his representation of Hebrew words with Hebrew letters, and their Latin letter transcription Miklós Révai diverges from Tótfalusi, but not from the practice of the majority of grammar writers.

To summarise, we can conclude that Révai feels at home with the Hebrew and the Aramaic languages, and the grammar of these “sacred languages” – but his knowledge of phonology is perhaps a little more different from the point of view of our times. At the same time, his etymological research is special insofar as he compares the phonological form of 12th century Hungarian morphemes, words to the original Hebrew-Aramaic (occasionally Syriac), and he deduces various phonological changes from the differences. Then, he also describes these deduced phonological changes – within his own associative system – from the supposed earliest Hebrew-Aramaic (Syriac) phonological forms. He does the same with the eventual changes in meaning.

Since his etymological method is not based on systematic correspondences, but on the phonological similarities between the historical words of Classical Antiquity and Early Middle Age in the Hebrew-Aramaic-Syriac linguistic records, and those of the words of the Funeral Sermon and Prayer, as well as on ideological principles, it is far from the scientifically acknowledged norm of our times. His deductions of phonological changes are arbitrary, and lack scientific evidence. He also fails to support his results with comparative results.

About Révai's intentions and his Hebrew knowledge:

Conclusions

deep knowledge of Hebrew/Aramaic etc. grammar – different from the point of view of our times
associative system
etymological method is not based on systematic correspondences – far from the scientifically acknowledged norm

Still, the innovation of *Antiquitates* remains undisputed from both a Hungarian language history and a Hebraistic point of view.

IV. Conclusion

From the standpoint and methodology of the *Ratiocinatio* and the *Antiquitates*, two excellent grammatical writings presented in this paper, we can conclude that from the age of Humanism, the social strata with classical education was characterised by a firm knowledge of the language of the Hebrew Bible and of Hebrew grammar, just as much as by the knowledge of Latin and Greek language and literature.

Thus, among Hungarian scholar the knowledge of the classical Hebrew language – the reading, translating of the Hebrew Bible, and a deep knowledge of the Hebrew grammar – became widespread.

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