

DÓBÉK ÁGNES

**THEATRE PLAYS IN FERENC BARKÓCZY'S
ENVIRONMENT¹**

Introduction: Ferenc Barkóczy, patron of literature and the arts

Ferenc Barkóczy (1710–1765), bishop of Eger and later archbishop of Esztergom, was a prominent figure of his time not only through the role he played in the church, but also through his activities promoting culture.²

Barkóczy emerged among the ecclesiastical intellectuals of his age. His patronage helped the publication of a literary works, especially works in Hungarian language. Dozens of writers have dedicated their books, poems, speeches, and plays to him, thanking him for supporting Hungarian literature,³ which began to appear in greater numbers at the end of the century.⁴

Rich sources related to Barkóczy also extend to other forms of the representation. We must also take into account his private library, which, according to the record, contained 517 books and manuscripts and testified to a deep understanding of contemporary European culture.⁵

During his tenure as bishop of Eger, between 1745–1761, several measures connected to him defined the culture of Eger and that of the whole of the diocese. He was the first prelate in Eger who embraced the role of a patron, who supported poets, artists, as well as publications. He had a printing house set up, which printed several Hungarian-language publications. His constructions reshaped the image of the city, and he also introduced innovations to the education of priests.

In recognition of his accomplishments, Maria Theresa appointed him archbishop. Continuing his work for cultural development, he founded a printing house also in Esztergom and wanted to transfer the archdiocese from Nagyszombat (today: Trnava) and Pozsony (today: Bratislava) to Esztergom. His premature death in 1765 prevented him from carrying out this large-scale plan, as he could spend only five years in the Archdiocese.

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² BITSKEY 1974.

³ DÓBÉK 2013.

⁴ SZILÁGYI–VADERNA 2010, 313–315.

⁵ DÓBÉK 2021.

His interests and taste were defined by the years he had spent in Rome. He studied at the Collegium Germanicum et Hungaricum in Rome between 1729–1733,⁶ and the cultural life of the city determined his patronage, taste and book-collecting.



Lukas Huetter (?–1760): *Noli me tangere* (1753) In the background of the painting is the Fuorcontrasti castle.

The present form of the Collegium was established in 1580. The institution was founded with the goal of training educated priests of Catholic spirituality. The new students also had to take an oath that after completing their studies, they would return home and serve in their home country. The aim of studying in Rome was for young ecclesiastic intellectuals to conduct high-level theological studies, to become well-versed in the issues of European politics and culture, and to establish contacts and connections in the papal court.⁷ It is an important fact that half of our

⁶ VERESS 1917, 146.

⁷ STEINHUBER 1895; SCHMIDT 1984; VILLOSLADA 1954.

eighteenth-century diocesan bishops studied in Rome. The young clerics, upon their return home, played an important role in the revival of the Hungarian Catholic church and faith. The importance of the Collegium Germanicum et Hungaricum, as well as its role in the training of the best professors of the Jesuit order, can also be measured in the constant presence of young Hungarian aristocrats in Rome during the throughout the eighteenth century.⁸

Barkóczy, upon his return to Eger, employed Italian master craftsmen for his building constructions, for example, he also built his Felsőtárkány manor house based on an Italian model. It is therefore no coincidence that Barkóczy gave his castle an Italian name, that is *Fuorcontrasti*, thus marking the isolation of his residence from the conflicts of the diocese.⁹ The manor has not survived, it has been preserved for posterity by two paintings. Both are the work of Lukas Huetter, a painter from Eger.

The bishop also maintained a rich correspondence with his Roman followers and papal agents. Barkóczy's direct contacts with Italy and the Collegium Germanicum et Hungaricum did not stop even after his return to Hungary, as shown, for example, by ten unpublished letters, preserved in the Archives of the Archdiocese of Eger, sent to Barkóczy from Rome.¹⁰

Plays in honor of Barkóczy, Bishop of Eger

In addition to occasional works of various genres, a number of plays were performed in honor and greeting of Barkóczy during his tenure as bishop and archbishop, and he personally attended the performance of these as well. Most of the plays were school dramas, which were performed in public for a particular illustrious events, such as induction as bishop or archbishop, visiting a school, name days or birthdays.

In this paper, I present plays dedicated to Barkóczy or performed in his presence. Some of them have already been presented in the existing literature, however, several new pieces have emerged during my research.

From Barkóczy's tenure as bishop, we have data on seven theater plays the performance of which he attended in person. We know the text of the plays in two cases: the sources mention one Hungarian and one Latin-language performance. We do not know the text in four cases and only know about the performance from the *historia domus* of the orders or from the playbill. The edition of the drama of Ferenc Kunics dedicated to Barkóczy, but we have no information that the bishop attended the performance.

⁸ BITSKEY 1991; BITSKEY 1996a; BITSKEY 1996b.

⁹ DÓBÉK 2019.

¹⁰ DÓBÉK 2020.

Title	Year	Author	Location	Occasion	Lang.	Text	Collection
[?]	1745	[?]	Eperjes (today: Prešov, Slovakia)	Celebration of Barkóczy, as a new bishop	[?]	[?]	Historia Domus of Jesuit order
<i>Constantinus Porphyrogenitus</i>	31 July 1754	Ferenc Faludi	Eger, Jesuit school	In honor of Ferenc Barkóczy	Hung.	full text	Budapest University Library, Cod. H. 20.
<i>Sedeciás</i>	1751–1755 [?]	Ferenc Kunics	Eger	[?]	Hung.	full text	National Széchényi Library
<i>Virtus Amore et Timore fortior sive Alanus tragoedia</i>	1756	[?]	Podolin (today: Podolíneec, Slovakia)	Visit to the Piarist school	Latin	full text	Cathedral Library of Esztergom, Coll. II. 80. 5
<i>Cyro Persarum Rege</i>	13 and 27 November 1757	[?]	Felsőtárkány	For Barkóczy's guests	Ital.	[?]	Cathedral Archives of Eger, AEV E. 3345, 254, 256.
[?] – Roman-themed musical play with dance	1759	[?]	Eger, Bishop's Palace	For Barkóczy's guests in the Bishop's Palace	Latin?	[?]	Cathedral Archives of Eger, HistJes. II. K. 124–125.
<i>Boldizsár király (King Balthasar)</i>	1761	[?]	Eger	at the end-of-year ceremony of the Jesuit school	Hung.	only playbill	Székesfehérvár, Bishopric Archive

First, the students of the Jesuit school in Eperjes [Prešov] celebrated him as a new bishop in 1745. The performance is listed in the database of Hungarian Jesuit plays, but the manuscript and the title are unknown.¹¹

Ferenc Kunits Jesuit published his play *Sedeciás* translated from Italian dedicated to Barkóczy.¹² It was performed in Hungarian while Kunics occupied the rector's

¹¹ STAUD III, 426.

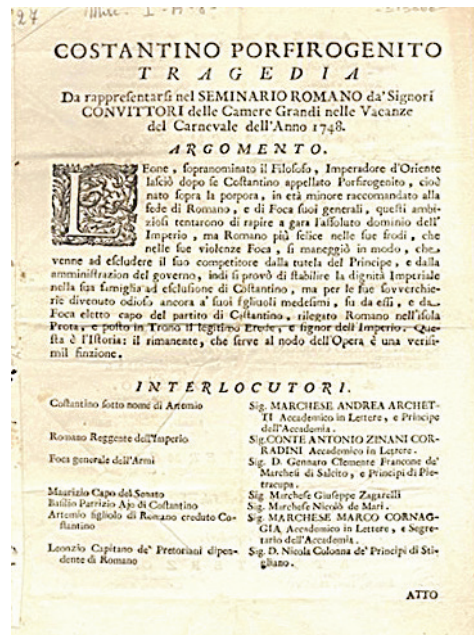
¹² KUNICS 1753.

office in Eger between 1751 and 1755, but we have no more precise data on the performance. The writing the translation is based is the work of the Jesuit author Giovanni Granelli.¹³

Barkóczy played a major role in the rebuilding of the Jesuit school in Eger, which also housed a banquet hall and a stage. In 1754, the students of the school dedicated a play to Barkóczy to thank him for his support. The performance took place on 31 July 1754, at the festival of Saint Ignatius of Loyola, on the elaborate stage that Barkóczy had had built for the school plays.¹⁴ The title of the play is *Constantinus Porphyrogenitus*, and it was written by Ferenc Faludi. It focuses on the time before Constantine the purple born came to power, the period when Romanos governed the Byzantine Empire for a long time instead of Constantine, the legitimate ruler. Examining the forces driving the plot of the play and the aspirations of the actors, the literature emphasized the decisive role of the dramatic artifice.¹⁵

Just like Barkóczy, Faludi also lived in Rome, and the five years he spent there defined his oeuvre as a writer, and he was also admitted among the members of the Academy of Arcadia.¹⁶ Researchers have been unable to identify the original version or model of the play performed in Eger, but they are unanimous in thinking that it was written based on an Italian text, as one of its manuscripts includes the entry „translated from Italian”.

During my research, I was able to find the work that formed the basis of Faludi's translation. A four-sheet playbill from 1748 can be found in the Augusta library in Perugia, titled *Costantino Porfirogenito*, which includes the title, the summary of the plot, and the characters of the play, as well



First page of *Costantino Porfirogenito's* playbill, the source of the drama of Ferenc Faludi (Biblioteca Augusta has contributed to the publication of this image.)

¹³ ALSZEGHY–CZIBULA–VARGA 1992, 851–906.

¹⁴ STAUD 1981, 309; STAUD III, 145. Edition of the text of the school drama: ALSZEGHY–CZIBULA–VARGA 1992, 151–210.

¹⁵ NAGY 2011. For a artifice in historical dramas, see PINTÉR 2019a, 139–146.

¹⁶ SÁRKÖZY 2005; For the poetry of Faludi, see KOLTAY–KASTNER 1922.

as the characters of the particular acts and scenes.¹⁷ The author of the play is not listed on the print, and the cover suggests that the play was performed during the carnival period of 1748 in the central Roman Jesuit college, Collegium Romanum [Collegio Romano]. The texts of specific acts have unfortunately not survived, so it is impossible to conduct a critical comparison of the two texts.

However, even based on the available source, we can conclude that Faludi must have used this script as the source for his translation. The Italian preface (*Argomento*) is a brief summary of the plot, and the same summary text introduces Faludi's drama (*Elöljáró beszéd*). The translation of Faludi closely follows the Italian original, but his own style is also reflected in the text. The individual acts and their scenes as well as the names of the persons in them are the same as in the Italian original.¹⁸ According to the playbill, the Italian drama was performed in 1748, when Faludi was no longer in Rome. However, the play may have been performed during Faludi's stay in Rome at the Collegium Romanum, but no documentation has survived about. Faludi probably got to know the play in Rome and then translated it into Hungarian. His other play, the *Caesar Aegyptus földjén* (*Caesar in the land of Egypt*) is also a translation from Italian. The author of the Italian original is Giulio Cesare Cordara, who was a teacher at the Collegium Romanum and a good friend of Faludi. Thus, beyond his personal connections Faludi could easily get to know the script through him or through the Hungarian students studying at the Collegium Romanum. It is also possible that they sent it to him to Hungary.

The play also has another, Italian-language version. This version was published in 1746, and the play was performed in the Palermo Jesuit college.¹⁹ The full text of this variant has survived and shows several differences compared to the 1748 Rome version, which was the basis of Faludi's work. The various versions of the text show that it was a popular play in Jesuit colleges in Italy.

The next time we have data about celebrating Barkóczy with a play from 1756. Barkóczy was greeted in Podolin [Podolíneč] by the students of the Piarist school staging the Bible-themed tragedy *Virtus amore et timore fortior* (*Virtue is stronger than both love and fear*).²⁰ István Kilián mentions the title of the play based on a Slovak

¹⁷ Costantino, 1748. Collection: Augusta Library, Perugia, Misc. Ant. A 8. 27.

¹⁸ The „Argomento” that survives in the Italian original has several Hungarian textual versions. The 1750 program of the drama was published by Andor Tarnai (TARNAI 1968, 563–564). The revised text of Faludi was published twice by Miklós Révai (FALUDI 1787a; FALUDI 1787b). We have several manuscript copies of Faludi's drama left over from the years before Révai's edition. A significantly revised text was prepared for the theatre play performed in Eger in 1754 in honor of Barkóczy. See ALSZEGHY–CZIBULA–VARGA 1992, 147–148, 208–210. The text of the earliest version from 1750 follows the Italian original most closely, this supports the claim in the literature that Faludi later reworked the drama.

¹⁹ Costantino, 1746. Collection: Biblioteca Comunale Leonardo Sciascia, Palermo, CXXXVI A 96 2.

²⁰ *Virtus Amore et Timore fortior sive Alanus tragoedia*, [20] p. Collection: Esztergom Cathedral Library, Coll. II. 80. 5.

manual, but he has no knowledge of its manuscript.²¹ I have found the manuscript of the play in the Cathedral Library of Esztergom. The *Dedicatio* addressed to Barkóczy is followed by the characters, although the names of the persons who played them are not listed. Following a brief presentation of the plot of the play, they wrote ten anagrams in praise of Barkóczy, and these were likely read out before the play or in the intermissions between the acts. Based on the cover, Andreas Moszczinsky attended the event, representing the local nobility, as did János Okolicsány, vice comes from Zemplén.

There were two opera performances in 1757 in the lobby of the Fuorcontrasti mansion in Felsőtárkány, on 13 and 27 November. The piece performed was *Cyro Persarum Rege, et Tomyri Massagetarum Regina* (*Cyrus, king of Persia and Tomrys, the queen of the massgeta people*). The performers included Italian singers.²² The name of the author was not included in the *historia domus*. Its protagonist is the great king of Persia, the founder of the Persian empire, who became a popular operatic hero especially through Metastasio's script (*Ciro riconosciuto*). The Metastasio reception in Hungary gained ground in different cultural settings; we encounter Metastasio plays in both secular and ecclesiastic environments.²³ Regarding the Cyrus plays, it is not certain that we are dealing with Metastasio's *Ciro riconosciuto* in every case, since in drama literature we often encounter the archetype based on the biblical story of the shepherd who became king. We indeed have information on a Cyrus-themed performance in 1727 in Szatmár (Satu Mare), before the 1736 premiere of *Ciro* in Vienna. During this period, Andreas Friz's Cyrus play was also very popular, which is often mentioned as a Metastasio adaptation, although it was definitely considered an independent work at the time. His text was created in 1752, so we cannot definitively consider performances staged after this date Metastasio receptions.²⁴

The Jesuits' *historia domus* recounts a 1759 event, when Barkóczy and his guests had lunch in good spirits, followed by the students of the grammar and poetry classes staging a Roman-themed musical play with dance inserts for their entertainment.²⁵

Barkóczy was last celebrated in Eger in 1761, with the play *Boldizsár király* (King Balthasar): the dedication of the play was staged at the end-of-year ceremony of the Jesuit school, and it addressed his appointment to archbishop. The Eger playbill

²¹ KILIÁN 2002, 145.

²² *Producta hodie post Stam bore meridiana fuit in Aula Episcopali Opera (ut vocant) Italice per Castratos Suae Excellentiae Musicos de Cyro Persarum Rege et Tomyri Massagetarum Regina, cui operae invitatus interfuit P. M. Guardianus cum P. Andrea Concionatore. Liber inventarii conventus Agriensis Minoritarum.* Collection: Cathedral Archives, Eger, AEV E. 3345, 254., 256. The literature also mentions the event: BÁRDOS 1987, 17.

²³ ZAMBRA 1919; SÁRKÖZY 2003; BAGOSI 2011.

²⁴ CZIBULA 2016, 84.

²⁵ BÁRDOS 1987, 137.

was unearthed from the Episcopal Archives of Székesfehérvár, and the print was presented by István Kilián. The playbill includes a summary of the plot of each scene as well as a drama scheme printed with the cast. According to this, the residents of Eger became acquainted with this historical play in 1761. This also proves that scripts in the Hungarian language may have become common in Eger in the second half of the 18th century. The Jesuit school had a richly equipped set of scenery and costumes, technical equipment to create the perfect color illusion, and a rich drama production.²⁶

Plays in honor of Barkóczy, Archbishop of Esztergom

The 1761 Eger premier was already followed by plays from his time as archbishop. From the years following his induction as archbishop, we know five additional pieces dedicated to him, three in Latin and two in Hungarian.

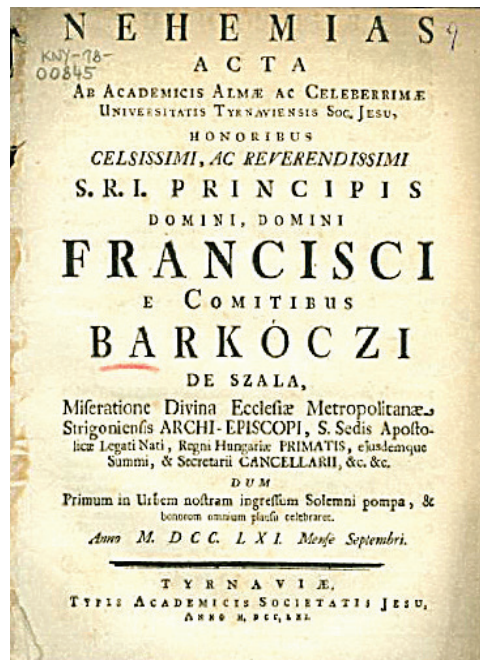
Title	Year	Author	Location	Occasion	Lang.	Text	Collection
<i>Nehemias</i> (<i>Nehemiah</i>)	1761	[?]	Nagyszombat (today: Trnava, Slovakia)	on the occasion of archiepiscopal inauguration	Lat.	Only playbill	University Library, Budapest KNYt KNY. 18. 00845
<i>Monumentum pietatis quod supremo suo praesidi musae Tyrnavienses</i>	after 1762	[?]	Nagyszombat (today: Trnava, Slovakia)	Barkóczy's visit to the Nagyszombat college	Lat.	full text	Cathedral Library of Esztergom, Coll. I. 39. 23.
<i>Play with music: Festis honoribus celtissimi a reverendissimi S. R. I. principis Francisci e comitibus Barkóczy de Szala [...]</i>	1763	[?]	Esztergom	Barkóczy's name day	Lat.	full text	Cathedral Library of Esztergom, Coll. I. 39. 17.

²⁶ KILIÁN 1974.

<i>Salamon</i> (<i>Solomon</i>)	1764	János Illei	Nagyszombat (today: Trnava, Slovakia)	[?]	Hung.	only playbill	Cathedral Library of Esztergom, Coll. II. 97. 5
<i>István, szomorú játék</i> (<i>Stephan, tragedy</i>)	1765	[?]	Nagyszombat (today: Trnava, Slovakia)	[?]	Hung.	full text	Cathedral Library of Esztergom, Coll. II. 97. 5

The Esztergom Primate Archives hold a description that is a summary of the 1761 September minutes of the commissary on Barkóczy's induction as archbishop.²⁷ It reports on the staging of the play *Nehemiás* (*Nehemiah*) after the ceremony, which was performed by the students of the Jesuit school. The topic of the school play befits the event: Nehemiah was cupbearer to the king of Persia. He always stayed loyal to his king and participated in the construction of the walls of Jerusalem. A printed version of the playbill also survived. Here we can read the names of the characters and a summary of the scenes of the five acts.²⁸

In the manuscript description of the event, the commissary briefly presents the biblical topic of the play, and he emphasizes the fact that the cast included the students of the poetry class and the older students of theology. The play was followed by a closing celebration, which was quite spectacular with dancers who were trained by a dance master from Pozsony [Bratislava]. This closing show



The title page of the play *Nehemiás* (*Nehemiah*), performed in honor of Barkóczy

²⁷ Primate Archives, Esztergom, AEV 1326/14/1.

²⁸ *Nehemias* 1761.

is when the poems saluting Barkóczy that have also resurfaced from the Esztergom archives may have been read.²⁹

Another script was written on the occasion of Barkóczy's visit to the Nagyszombat [Trnava] college.³⁰ Its author is unknown and, it does not contain a date, but it is dedicated to Barkóczy, the superintendent of the country's educational institutions, so it is certain that the text was created after 1762. Based on the manuscript, the salutation dedicated to Barkóczy was accompanied by two elegies, one ode, one play, and a short poem accompanying the play. The elegies, odes, and play are in Latin, but a shorter, German-language salutation and a Hungarian poem also formed part of the celebration, thus also increasing its representative character. The longer odes preceding the play display the characteristics of Baroque occasional poetry: they use ancient verse forms and an extensive Baroque mythological apparatus, to salute Barkóczy. They list all his previous deeds and present him as an example to follow in the poems, as a person who is also a „friend of the Muses”, is a patron of the arts, and fights a lot for suitable education for noble young men.

The play following the poems was meant to be a school play, and the names of the characters invoke Virgil's shepherds. It consists of five acts, and the poetic rivalry of the shepherds, Megacles and his sons Alexis and Menalcas, Thoas, priest of Apollon, as well as Amynthas, sets Nagyszombat [Trnava], the location of the acts, in a bucolic setting. The names of the performers were not listed, but students must have played the roles. The play is followed by a Hungarian-language poem: the poem was the text of the shepherds' chorus, and it belonged to the plot of the play. The text of the chorus is followed by short farewell phrases written in Latin finishing the celebration with two epigrams related to the play. Barkóczy was celebrated with poems or plays on many occasions, but few similar manuscripts have survived based on which the whole process of the celebration can be reconstructed.

In 1763, the archbishop celebrated the feast day of his Patron Saint's in Esztergom. Several of the poems and a play saluting him that were written for this representative occasion have survived.³¹ It was on this occasion that Barkóczy celebrated mass on the occasion of the wedding of János Erdődy, supremus comes of Varasd and Anna Széchenyi in the Barkócz chapel. György Széless wrote a poetic letter (*Hirdető levél*) for the event, which was also presented in the literature.³² In addition to the poetic letter, the literature also presents a play performed on this occasion by students of the Jesuit school.

²⁹ DÓBÉK 2016.

³⁰ *Monumentum pietatis quod supremo suo praesidi musae Tyrnavienses*, 1761, [39] p. Collection: Cathedral Library of Esztergom, Coll. I. 39. 23.

³¹ For example: Witte 1763. Collection: Cathedral Library of Esztergom, Coll. I. 39. 14.

³² HUBERT-SZELESTEI N. 2007.

In the first scene of the play, the muses arrive at the castle hill of Esztergom, then in the second scene, Apollon and Natalis praise Barkóczy and they talk about the wonderful image of Esztergom and the new, magnificent buildings. Scene three focuses on the young couple: Everyone is happy about the marriage between Nicon and Neria, and they build a triumphal arch with their coats of arms, then all the characters praise the archbishop who enters with the young couple. The play also includes songs in German, which might have been accompanied by professional musicians.

Finally, we know of two Hungarian-language historical plays dedicated to Barkóczy. The literature has reported on the play *Salamon (Solomon)*, staged successfully in 1764 at the noble convictorium of Nagyszombat [Trnava].³³ Barkóczy might have attended the performance as well since the manuscript playbill held in Esztergom includes poems addressed to the archbishop after the summary of the play and the list of persons participating in the play. The Esztergom manuscript does not contain the text of the play. The play is the work of János Illei, and we can find its critical edition in volume of *Jezsuita iskoladramák 4/1 (Jesuit school plays 4/1)*, under the title *Salamon király, Lászlónak foglya (King Solomon, prisoner of Ladislaus)*.³⁴ The content, the cast, and the substantive summary preceding the play are the same, but we did not know the poems accompanying the show before.

One more play has survived from the following year, 1765 (*István, szomorú játék/ Stephen, tragedy*), which the Jesuit boarders performed in Nagyszombat [Trnava], in the presence of the archbishop. The manuscript contains the program followed by the poems greeting Barkóczy with the topos of the occasional poems.³⁵

4. Plays in Barkóczy's library

We can conclude that Barkóczy had a particular fondness for theater performances not only from the many theater plays dedicated to him, but also from the significant number of volumes in his library containing plays.³⁶ The playwright Barkóczy had

³³ HUBERT–SZELESTEI N. 2007, 522–525.

³⁴ ALSZEGHY–CZIBULA–VARGA 1992, 299–324. For more information on the drama and János Illei, see PINTÉR 2019a, 269–279.

³⁵ HUBERT–SZELESTEI N. 2007, 529–531.

³⁶ The index of his library can be found in the Esztergom Primate Archives. The book inventory was prepared after the death of the archbishop in 1765, at which time the library was located in Pozsony [Bratislava]. Here it should be noted that the volumes listed certainly did not represent all of Barkóczy's books. In fact, in the list the compilers included the volumes of his private library in his castle in Pozsony [Bratislava], but he could also have kept books in several other places, as Esztergom, Nagyszombat [Trnava], Pest. In the register there are a total of 517 titles (of which 27 are manuscripts) in dimensional groups, but mostly the books were listed without any system. For the identified items in Barkóczy's book catalog, see DÓBÉK 2021.

collected the most was Metastasio, with twenty volumes in total. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Metastasio's works were often the source of Hungarian school plays, so Barkóczy also could have encountered excerpts and dialogs in the performances that he already knew from his previous readings.

His Goldoni series (Venice, 1753) consists of eleven volumes containing all the plays of the comedy writer published till that time. Goldoni became better known in Hungary at the beginning of the nineteenth century when his comedies were imported to Hungarian stages by Italian troops.

The books containing dramatic works also include the Bible-themed tragedies of the Franciscan Minorite monk Giovanni Antonio Bianchi who published under the pseudonym Annutini. Italian author Girolamo Gigli's tragedy *Il Ruggiero re di Sicilia* is also listed in the index. The play was performed at the 1729 carnival in Rome. Barkóczy's books also included Moliere's collected works in Italian as well as the plays of Terence and Plautus from the authors of the antiquity. Based on the books' publication dates, he bought some of the books in Rome, and he purchased a smaller part in Hungary when he was already a prelate.

5. Conclusion

Upon their return to Hungary, bishops, superiors, and teachers high in the Catholic ecclesiastic hierarchy primarily supported publishing of the original Latin or the Hungarian translation of the books and plays they had come to know in Italy. As a result, during the eighteenth century, a lot of Italian Pietists' works were translated and published and Italian plays were translated and performed. The three main areas of the diffusion of Italian culture into eighteenth-century Hungary were the ecclesiastic literature, scholastic theater and castle theaters, and libraries. The cultural contributions of Barkóczy, whose taste and cultural interests were greatly influenced by his years spent in Rome is a prime example of this process.

Among the plays performed in honor of Barkóczy, I presented here several that were previously unknown to researchers, but the research cannot be considered complete, and even more manuscripts and prints can be expected to appear. The life of Barkóczy as a prelate was accompanied by theater performances which include several plays in Hungarian, thus exemplifying Barkóczy's preference for Hungarian-language literature.

One common form of saluting ecclesiastic dignitaries was to stage plays. However, a minority of the plays were staged in Barkóczy's closer circle, so watching plays must have been part of his personal interest. Where did this interest originate? In the first half of the 18th century, plays were performed only in the castles of aristocratic families and in ecclesiastical schools for educational purposes or at ecclesiastical

representation events. The language of most performances was Latin. Barkóczy might have encountered monumental, elaborate plays in Rome for the first time. Like in all educational institutions under Jesuit leadership, scholastic theater was also an important forum of education in Collegium Germanicum et Hungaricum and in Collegium Romanum.³⁷

The chronicles of the Collegium Germanicum et Hungaricum show that theater was a popular form of college entertainment in the eighteenth century. Plays were mostly staged at colleges during carnival season, which was preceded by the election of a king. This meant that the students chose a king for the carnival season, who enjoyed privileges during this time. Unfortunately, we know little about the school plays performed at the college, and the titles of the plays were only noted down sporadically. However, several manuscript and printed texts survived in the archive of the institution from the plays performed there.³⁸ Most were from the second half of the eighteenth century, written by Jesuit authors in Rome or being Metastasio adaptations. Barkóczy probably attended theater performances every carnival season during his studies in Rome, and he might have had the opportunity to watch theater plays in the palaces of the families he was allowed to visit during the school holidays.

³⁷ OLDANI–YANITELLI 1999.

³⁸ *Il Gionata, componimento sacro per musica da cantarsi nel Collegio Germanico Ungarico* (Roma: nella Stamperia d'Angelo M. Ansillioni, 1768). Collection: Historical Archives of the Collegium Germanicum Hungaricum (hereinafter referred to as: CGH), Hist. 535.; *Il popolo di guida liberato dalla morte per intercessione della regina Ester [...] da cantarsi nel Collegio Germanico Ungarico* (Roma: per Angelo Maria Ansillioni, 1769). Collection: CGH Hist. 535.; *Gioas Re di Guida, componimento sacro per musica del Sig. Ab. Pietro Metastasio romano da cantarsi nel Collegio Germanico Ungarico* (Roma: dalle Stampe del Casaletti a S. Eustachio, 1777). Collection: CGH Hist. 535.; *Giuseppe riconosciuto, componimento sacro per musica da cantarsi nel Collegio Germanico Ungarico* (Roma: per il Casaletti nel Palazzo Massimi, 1782). Collection: CGH Hist. 535.; *Il trionfo di Mardocheo, componimento sacro per musica da cantarsi nel Collegio Germanico Ungarico* (Roma: dalle Stampe del Casaletti a S. Eustachio, 1778). Collection: CGH Hist. 535.; *Il delinquente onorato, tragicomedia*, 1787. Manuscript, collection: CGH Hist. 530. Other manuscript Latin and German drama texts from the 18th century, staged at the Collegium Germanicum et Hungaricum: CGH Hist. 531 (German), 532, 533, 534 (Latin).