

## The aristocrat as a heros at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Funeral sermons over Ferenc Nádasdy and György Thurzó

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**Abstract** | The texts bidding farewell to members of the Nádasdy and Thurzó families show how the practice of family representation that overarches centuries influences both the commissioning of funeral orations, as well as their structure and content. Beside the roles and virtues inherited from the family, individual merits appear in the three texts to varying degrees and emphasis. The latter are linked to the activities of the deceased to defend the faith and the homeland depending on the author and the context of publication.

Although the Latin-language funeral oration primarily uses the rhetorical devices of humanist laudations, the authors assume the position of an orator commemorating historical truth. The orators continue the sixteenth-century Protestant tradition in which funeral orations can be read as outlines of the history of the church, documenting the development of the Protestant church in Hungary. The novelty of the texts created at the beginning of the seventeenth century is that they place more emphasis on the state of the homeland (*patria*), as well as rescuing it, creating the memory of the deceased along the image of the heros.

**Keywords** | funeral sermons, early modern biography, Latin sermons, Hungarian Kingdom

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The Nádasdy and Thurzó families were prominent Protestant patrons in the Kingdom of Hungary during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, both in terms of the extent of their support and how well-organized it was. The major influence these two aristocratic families had as a result of their military and political achievements also indicates what an influential role they played during this time period. Their activities as patrons are documented by dedications, sermons addressed to members of the family, texts that document their life, and publications that are associated with funerals and weddings.<sup>1</sup> When funerals started to play a more important social role, especially in the case of ruling and aristocratic families, they took advantage of the newly emerging tools of representation.<sup>2</sup> The present study examines two groups of funereal publications that are linked to the already existing frameworks of representation these two families had consciously developed in several ways.

Ferenc (II) Nádasdy, who was called the “black bey,” died in 1604. He is primarily known as an important general of the fifteen-year war. At the end of the century, he was commissioner of Transdanubia, then became advisor to the royal governor in 1601. The Hungarian-language sermons at his funeral were delivered by István Magyari, a Lutheran preacher and Nádasdy’s court priest. Two of his eight texts were published in print. In addition to these Hungarian-language publications, three Latin-language volumes of funeral poems and a Latin-language funeral oration also preserve the aristocrat’s memory.<sup>3</sup> A similarly diverse collection of publications also accompanied György

- 1 On the link between pre-reformation humanist networks and the Thurzó family’s practice of patronage, see: CSEPREGI Zoltán, “Die Rezeption der deutschen Reformation in ungarländischen Städten und Herrschaften,” in *Exportgut Reformation. Ihr Transfer in Kontaktzonen des 16. Jahrhunderts und die Gegenwart evangelischer Kirchen in Europa*, eds. Ulrich A. WIEN and Mihai-D GRIGORE, Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Europäische Geschichte Mainz 113, 161–189 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2017).
- 2 HANÁK Béla and SZABÓ András Péter, eds., *Keresztvíztől sírkeresztig. Családi eseményekre szóló meghívólevelek Kassa város levéltárában (1526–1700)* [From water baptism to the memorial cross. Letters of invitation for family events in the city archive of Košice (1526–1700)], Magyar történelmi emlékek. Okmánytárak (Budapest: Bölcsészettudományi Kutatóközpont Történettudományi Intézet, 2021), 86.
- 3 Georg HARTLIEB, *Carmen heroicum spectabili et magnifico domino Francisco de Nadasd, perpetuo terrae Fogaras et comitatum Castriferrei et Soproniensis comiti, sacrae caes. regiaeque maiestatis consiliario, agasonum regalum per Hungariam magistro, nec non cis Danubiarum partium supremo capitaneo, qui pie et placide in Christo 4. Ianu. anno supra millesimum sexcentisimo quarto Sarvarini expiravit* (Kereszturini: Manlius, 1604); MAGYARI István, *Az tekintetes, nemzetes, nevezetes vitez urnac, az nagysagos Nadasdi Ferentz nec, Fogaras földenc örökös, Vasvar es Sopron varmegyek nec fő ispanyanac, az felesége II. Rudolphus romai czaszarnac ... kit az Ur Isten ... magához vöt 4. Ian. An(n)o 1604 Sarvarat, teste felet es temetese kor löt ket praedikatioia Magyari Istvannac* (Kereszturat: Manlius, 1604)., Critical edition: MAGYARI István, “Halotti beszéd Nádasdy Ferenc fölött (Keresztúr, 1604)” [Funeral sermon over Ferenc Nádasdy], in *Magyar nyelvű halotti beszédek a XVII. századból* [Hungarian funeral sermons from the 17<sup>th</sup> century], eds. KECSKEMÉTI Gábor and NOVÁKY Hajnalka, 47–112 (Budapest: MTA Irodalomtudományi Intézet, 1988); NAGY Benedek, *Naeniae, quae in obitum spectabilis ac magnidomini domini comitis Francisci de Nadasd perpetuo terrae Forgaras[!] nec non commitatum Castriferri et Soproniensis comitis, agazonum regalum in Hungaria magistri sac. caes. regiaeque maiest. consil. et partium cis Danubianarum generalis capitanei, qui hoc anno currente 1604 Ianuarii 4 die, inter 3. et 4. horas pomer. placide in Christo obdormivit, gratitudinis*

Thurzó's death. This aristocrat had an unparalleled career, being appointed palatine in 1609. His court in Biccse was considered a significant cultural centre of the time, and he also participated in organizing the Synod of Zsolna (1610), over which he also presided, and which had important consequences for the Lutheran faith. Texts in Latin, Hungarian, and Biblical Czech were delivered during his funeral, of which the ones in Biblical Czech and Latin were published in print.<sup>4</sup> Two years after the funeral service in 1616, a eulogy was also published in Wittenberg.<sup>5</sup>

Hungarian research has primarily interpreted the prints from the perspective of the funeral service. In Ferenc Nádasdy's case, the Hungarian-language funeral sermon has received more attention, with both a critical edition and an analysis of it available.<sup>6</sup>

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*et memoriae ergo lachrymis rigavit Benedictus Nagy rector Nicopolitanus (Kerezsturini: Manlius, 1604); Virtuti et memoriae spectabilis ac magnifici domini d. Francisci de Nadasd, comitis perpetui terrae Fogaras ac comitatum Castriferrei et Soproniensis etc., sac. caes. regiaeque maiest. consiliar., agazonum regaliū magistri et partium Transdanubinaru(m) in Hungaria supremi capitanei etc., veritatis evangelicae fortissimi defensoris...* (Kerezsturini: Manlius, 1604); Joannes RULAND, *Oratio luctuosa in immaturum obitum ... Francisci de Nadasd, perpetui terrae Fogaras et comitatum Castriferrei et Sopronie(n)s comitis, sacrae caesareae regiaeque maiestatis consilarii, agazonum regaliū per Hungariam magistri nec non cis Danubinarum partium supremi capitanei etc.* (Kerezsturini: Manlius, 1604).

- 4 Isaac ABRAHAMIDES, *Oratio Exequialis, Illustrissimo p.m. Comiti ac Domino, D. Georgio Thurzoni, de Bethlemfalwa, Comiti de Arwa, eiusdemque Comitatus Arwensis perpetuo Comiti, Regni Hungariae Palatino, iudici Cumanorum, Sac. Caes. Regiaeque Maiestatis intimo Consiliario, et per Hungariam Locum tenenti, etc.* (Leutschoviae: Daniel Schultz, 1617); Elias LANI, *Kázánj Pohrébnj. Při Pohřbu Oswjeceneho a Weliko mocného Pána, Pana Giřijho Thurzy z Bethlemfalvy, Hrabete z Orawy, a téhož Orawského. Widěka neywysfŷyho Ysspána, Králowstwj Vherského Palatýnusa, Saudce Kumánskeho, a G. M. Cýsárské Raddy a Námětska: Kteryž Léta Páně 1617. Wěku swého 49. Auřadu pak Palatýnusowského 7. w ten wečer před Wánocy, po hodině 9. pobožně a swatě vsnul* (Praha: Wystisscěná w Starém Městě Prazkém, v Matége Pardubského, 1617); Alexander SOCZOVINUS, *Concio habita in funere illustrissimi comitis ac domini domini Georgii Thurzi de Bethlemfallia, etc. Regni Hungariae palatini anno 1616. die 19. Februarii a reverendo et claris. viro domino Alexandro Soczovino, ecclesiae Vihelien. praeposito* (Prague: Mathias Pardubicenus, 1617).

The literature mentions the latter print from Prague several times, but it has not been examined in depth, and the author's name is also given in several variants. See: GALAVICS Géza, "Egy evangélikus főúr, Thurzó György árvai várkapolnája mint szakrális és reprezentációs tér" [Lutheran aristocrat György Thurzó's castle chapel in Árva as a sacred and representative space], in *Ige-Idők: A reformáció 500 éve. Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum 2017. április 26 – november 5.*, [500 Years of the Reformation. Hungarian National Museum 26.04.2017–05.11.2017.], eds. KISS Erika, ZÁSZKALICZKY Márton, and ZÁSZKALICZKY Zsuzsanna, 1 296–332 (Budapest: Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, 2019), 330, note 24; BÓDAI Dalma, "Reprezentáció és anyagi kultúra Thurzó György nádor biccsei központú udvarában. Doktorai disszertáció" [Representation and material culture in Palatine György Thurzó's court in Biccse. Doctoral dissertation] (Budapest: Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem Bölcsészettudományi Kar, 2023), 182. On the manuscript version of the funeral print, see SZABÓ András Péter, "Egy elveszett gyűjtemény kincsei. Ondrej Czemanka turóci nemes könyvtára" [Treasures of a lost collection. The library of Ondrej Czemanka], *Magyar Könyvszemle* 136, no. 3 (2020): 203–242, 237.

- 5 Jeremias SPIEGEL, *Iusta illustrissimo comiti ac domino Dn. Georgio Thurzoni de Bethlemfalwa, Comiti de Arwa eiusdemque Comitatus Supremo et perpetuo Comiti, Regni Hungariae Palatino, Cumanorum Iudici, Sac. Caes. Regiaeque Maiest. Consiliario intimo, et per Hungariam Locumtenenti etc. etc.* (Wittenberg: Ex Officina Typographica Johan. Richteri, 1618).
- 6 BENCZE Imre, *Magyari István sárvári prédikátor élete és munkái* [The life and works of István Magyari, a preacher from Sárvár] (Budapest: Evangélikus Országos Múzeum, 1995).

György Thurzó's funeral has become the focus of research as a social event due to the wealth of related sources and its trend-setting nature. The palatine's funeral order of service was published at the end of the nineteenth century,<sup>7</sup> which serves as quite a good reference point as to how a memorial service worthy of the office of the palatine was planned, how much it cost, and what parts it consisted of. The latest research projects focus on these issues,<sup>8</sup> examining the funeral service itself and its role of representation. Saint James' church in Lőcse is the other main location of the Thurzó family's funereal records;<sup>9</sup> the funereal texts that were published in print have been examined from the perspective of the genre of genealogy.<sup>10</sup>

The texts published for the funeral refer to the rest of the pieces associated with the service to varying degrees. For example, István Magyari mentions that he delivered several sermons, but he does not talk about the texts that were delivered in other languages or the Latin-language memorial services written in verse.<sup>11</sup> The situation is similar with Johann Ruland: the sermon quite clearly refers to another text, but it does not mention any additional details.<sup>12</sup> However, with György Thurzó's memorial service, neither Abrahamides' Latin-language oration nor the Wittenberg publication mentions parallel or previous services.

Johann Ruland was a physician, who was originally from Regensburg and received his qualifications in Wittenberg. He then practiced in Pozsony, where he also received Hungarian nobility. He came from a family of physicians, so his oeuvre has mainly

7 RADVÁNSZKY Béla, *Magyar családélet és háztartás a XVI. és XVII. században* [Hungarian family life and household in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries], Vol. III. (Budapest: MTA, 1896), 366–373.

8 GALAVICS, "Egy evangélikus főúr ..."; BÓDAI, "Reprezentáció és anyagi kultúra ..."

9 ZUZANA LUDIKOVÁ, MIKÓ ÁRPÁD, and PÁLFFY GÉZA, "A lőcsei Szent Jakab-templom reneszánsz és barokk síremlékei, epitáfiumai és halotti címerei (1530–1700)" [The Renaissance and Baroque tombs, epitaphs, and funeral coats of arms of the St. James church in Lőcse], *Művészettörténeti Értesítő* 55, no. 2 (2006): 327–410.

10 SZÓKE Kornélia, "Genealogia variabilis. Tanulmány a genealógia műfajáról a Thurzó család példáján keresztül" [Genealogia variabilis. Study on the genres of genealogy based on the example of the Thurzó-family], PhD dissertation (Miskolc: Miskolci Egyetem Bölcsészettudományi Kar, 2017). Going beyond the biographical approach of previous research, this dissertation describes the characteristics of genealogical thinking with the help of the group of texts connected to György Thurzó's funeral. Its conclusions have drawn attention to the similarities and differences between the genealogical units of funereal texts, as well as the way individual and family virtues are depicted in the texts.

11 "Secondly because I did not want to leave those requests wanting that asked me to publish among the Christians some of the sermons that were said within a month over the body of his Highness. Although the others would also be worth publishing, e.g. on death and the preparation for it, the many crosses to bear in this world, their causes and the consolations against them, about resurrection, eternal life, and justification and similar things, but since expenses are slim, we left the rest behind and wanted to publish these two to abide by the request." MAGYARI, "Halotti beszéd Nádasdy," 54.

12 "Certe Viri Magnifici si in commemorandis Magnifici Comitibus diutius vellem occupari illae nunc mihi tot tantae subeunt, ut altera oratio exordienda esset, cui enim, ut paucis agam, non notissimum fuit, tanti viri modestia singularis? In fortissimorum Heroum congressibus quod vix ex eius facie quisquam credidisset, affabiles et iucundi mores? Fales temperati et urbani ex eius lingua melle dulciores saepe fluebant, huius autem gratiae et lepori summa adiuncta fuit autoritas, digna tanto Viro." RULAND, *Oratio luctuosa in immaturum*.

been discussed in research on the history of medicine.<sup>13</sup> According to the text, he was asked to deliver a funeral oration about Nádasdy by Ferenc Dersffy, chief royal cup-bearer in the Habsburg court at the time, rather than a family member. The texts saying farewell to György Thurzó were written by people who had received his support. Ižak Abrahamides said farewell to the palatine in his Latin-language oration as one of the leaders of the Lutheran superintendences created at the Synod of Zsolna in 1610. He owed his position in the church directly to Thurzó.<sup>14</sup> Jeremias Spiegel, on the other hand, was the tutor of the palatine's son, Imre Thurzó, when he lived in Wittenberg. He took over the teaching of rhetoric at the university from Adam Siber around the time of the eulogy.

Praising the family is a typical part of the Latin-language funeral orations, as is an overview of the ancestry of the deceased. The biographical part includes their childhood, education, and the achievements of their adult life, rounded off by a description of the death scene. The authors placed great emphasis on depicting measuring up to God, which was followed by consolation and soothing the mourners' emotions, which was how these texts usually ended. In some cases, these were of course left out, and the orators were free to modify the structure. Another trend was that the biography and remembrance was created within a theological framework, with typological parallels being the most popular rhetorical devices, be they of a mythological, biblical, or historical nature.

#### *Ferenc Nádasdy's depictions in the Latin-language texts*

From the elements mentioned above, it is what is missing that is worth examining in Johann Ruland's work. The length and content of the speech indicate that court preacher Magyari's Hungarian-language sermon played a much more important role in the funeral service. The brief oration, which only consists of a few sheets, lacks a biography, and the author focuses on grief, listing the virtues of the deceased, and the laudation.

The funereal text depicts Nádasdy as a wartime heros and focuses on the struggles against the Turks and the Tatars from his career. The virtues of the deceased aristocrat are listed in the form of rhetorical questions, which gives the impression that there is no need for further arguments, and the statements presumably do not need any additional support or evidence.

13 FEKETE Ilona, "Family at the Fringes: The Medico-Alchemical Careers of Johann Ruland (1575–1638) and Johann David Ruland (1604–1648?)," *Early Science and Medicine* 17, no. 5 (2012): 548–569.

14 CSEPREGI Zoltán, *Evangélikus lelkészek Magyarországon (ELEM). Proszipográfiai rész I. A reformáció kezdetétől a zsolnai zsinatig (1610) I/1: A–L* [Lutheran pastors in the Hungarian Kingdom] (Budapest: MEDiT, 2014), 3.

Sive continentiam in vivendo, sive prudentiam in administrandis rebus bellicis, sive misericordiam erga pauperes, sive clementiam erga subditos, sive pietatem erga omnes, sive denique bona animi et corporis Universa ac mille alias virtutes contemplare.<sup>15</sup>

The virtues associated with Nádasdy, from being content with his fate to having compassion towards those who are poorer, match the elements of Protestant catalogues of virtues found in contemporary texts. The oration favours an interpretation of virtue that primarily associates this concept with military virtues. It is also interesting to compare the wording used in the funeral sermon and the collections of poems. Ruland associates virtues with Nádasdy as a military man, calling the deceased pious (*pius*) and wise (*sapiens*) within this framework. Georg Hartlieb was one of the authors of the poems. He studied at the university in Tübingen, then continued his career in the territory of the Kingdom of Hungary as a Lutheran priest. His *carmen heroicum* published in 1604 uses similar devices to the ones used in Ruland's oration, describing Nádasdy's life in hexameters.<sup>16</sup> One parallel is that Hartlieb does not want to include the whole biography in the *carmen*, the only aspect that is emphasized is that of Nádasdy as a soldier. He calls the deceased aristocrat a *heros* and describes his ancestors as *semideus*. ("Saepius ardescens irarum fluctibus Heros, / Semideis generosus Avis Franciscus in h\* / Se tullit: et medio stantes vocat agmine Turcas")<sup>17</sup> The closing of the poem clearly identifies Nádasdy as *miles Christianus* ("nostro mileti Christiano"), which does not happen in the funeral oration. The poem has features of contemporary Neo-Latin poetry, of which I would like to highlight two. One is the powerful nature of the attributes depicting Nádasdy's military enthusiasm: Hartlieb describes the deceased as an enthusiastic soldier, while the *heros* depicted in the text is characterized by a rage felt against the Turkish enemy and a passion for the battle (*irascens ... excitus stomacho*). Achilles, Hercules, Odysseus, and Hector are mentioned from the mythological heroes, although not in the context of the Trojan mythology.<sup>18</sup> Nádasdy, as one of the mythological heroes, also appears in a similar list in Ižak Abrahamides' eulogy. The piece, which also praises György Thurzó, draws a parallel between these contemporary aristocrats and the well-known heroes of Greek mythology.

Quis adeo rerum est imperitus, qui ignoret, Hungariae nostrae res tum etiam laborasse, cum adhuc (ut ex innumeris unum atque alterum tantum nominem) in fasciis et cunis ageret, vel Illustrissimus ille, et admiranda auctoritate et iudicio exactissimo celeberrimus

15 RULAND, *Oratio luctuosa in immaturum*.

16 On Georg Hartlieb's biography, see: Kiss Farkas Gábor, ed., *Companion to Central and Eastern European Humanism* (Berlin: De Gruyter, forthcoming).

17 HARTLIEB, *Carmen heroicum spectabili*, A4v.

18 "Hoc et Regalis fortissima turribus Alba: / Hoc et laurinae statio insuperabilis Urbis, / Et quae stant reliquae defensae saepius arces / Testantur, ducuntque tuum super aethera nomen / Fortiter ad Troiam felix pugnabat Achilles: / Inclyta Dulichius sibi, nomina fecit Ulysses / Iliacos inter: quis fortior Hectore? Quis nam/ Hercule maiores subiit cum laude labores? / Tu quoque praeclare rebus, Comes Inclyte, gestis, / Nobile perpetuus meruisti nomen in annos." HARTLIEB, *Carmen heroicum spectabili*, B2r.

Comes Regnique Palatinus, p.m. Stephanus Illieshazi, de Illieshaza, sui seculi Hungariae consultissimus quidam Nestor? vel nunquam fatis laudati illi, immortalisque memoriae proceres; Comes Nicolaus de Zrinyo, et Franciscus Dobo, de Ruzka, vere duo belli fulmina, ille sui seculi Hungariae quidam Hector: hic murus et Achilles: vel Zelotes ille pro patriae libertate, Balthazar Batianus Baro Inclytus, sui seculi Hungariae quidam Ulysses; vel proles illa Martia, Franciscus Nadasdi de Nadasd, Turcarum terror et horror: Vel denique; hic ipse, cui hodie iusta facimus, proter molem solitudinum et curarum Palatinalium, quas pro publico bono unus fuis gestabat humeris, Hungariae quidam Atlas.<sup>19</sup>

The heroes of the Trojan War were popular literary parallels during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.<sup>20</sup> Enumerating the pantheon of deceased noblemen places György Thurzó among his contemporaries, even though Abrahamides did not attach a mythological parallel to him, and it also visualizes the loss and slow destruction of the homeland, using the idea that the nobility is also an organic part of the state, and the death of its members means the destruction of the body of the homeland.

#### *György Thurzó in the Latin-language texts*

In terms of form, the sermon in Lőcse differs from Ruland's publication in several ways. This is the only sermon delivered at the palatine's funeral that was also published in print, although this is not the only print that preserves György Thurzó's memory. The fact that one of the texts delivered at the funeral service was selected provides a prominent place for Abrahamides' Latin-language oration, in contrast with the prints related to Nádasdy's funeral, where it was the Hungarian-language sermon that played this prominent role. The publication was edited meticulously. A quotation from Augustine was placed on the cover, and the accompanying poem by Elias Ursinus is followed by a dedication to the heir, Imre Thurzó. Where and when the sermon was originally delivered can also be read before the oration, and the author indicated the thematic units (*Propositio, Ortus, Genealogia, Educatio, Vitae Institutum, Res praeclarae gestae, Vitae exitus*), the citations, as well as the authors and events he considered important, on the margin. A revised version of this structure can be seen in the sermon Elias Ursinus prepared a decade later, where an outline of the speech was also attached to the funeral oration, presenting the basic elements of the laudation in a table, according to Ramist principles.<sup>21</sup>

19 ABRAHAMIDES, *Oratio Exequialis, Illustrissimo ...*, C1v.

20 SZÓKE, "Genealogia variabilis. Tanulmány," 100.

21 ELIAS URSINUS, *Laudatio funebris Stanislai Thvzronis de Bethlemfalva, regni Hungariae palatini tristissimo Hungariae fato die 1. Maij anni 1625. pie beateque defuncti, in publico luctu, quo corpus ejus exanime magna cum solennitate in templo Germanico Leutschoviensi cum aliis terre mandaretur, die 12. Januar, anni 1626. conscripta et dicta a m. Elia Vrsino Delit. Misn. ecclesiae Neocomiensis in Scepusio pastore* (Cassovia: Daniel Schultz, 1626).

Psalm 60 provides the theological framework of the sermon, which is noted on the margin along with the notation *Oratio gemiscentis Ecclesiae*. The first passage of the text depicts a time that is characterized by people's lack of faith and sins.<sup>22</sup> This premise constitutes the backbone of the laudation, as a result of which making the Synod of Zsolna happen and making it succeed becomes the central element of Thurzó's oeuvre, with the text already referring to this before presenting Thurzó's family background.<sup>23</sup> The orator uses this context throughout the sermon: György Thurzó's death is a loss that also matters for the church, and the family's private grief becomes a communal event. The synod, which played a prominent role in the history of the Lutheran church, was also a turning point in the career of the clergymen who operated around the Thurzó family or with their support. Abrahamides was elected superintendent of the Bajmóc district in 1611, while a few years later, at the synod of Szepesváralja, Peter Zabeler was tasked with leading the five royal free cities, and Stephanus Xylander became leader of the Szatmár-Sáros diocese. All of them actively influenced the Thurzós' remarks regarding church policy, and Xylander converted Kristóf Thurzó, who had been Catholic, in 1613. The event that occupied a central place in the narrative of the oration was probably not chosen randomly by Abrahamides.

Communis quidem nobis sit luctus cum Illustri domo Thurzoa, cum inclyta hactenus aula Palatinali: cum illustrissima Domina Comitissa, Vidua Palatinali; cum illustrissimis visceribus Palatinalibus, adeoque tecum, Generose flos, Comes Emerice, tanti Genitoris, nominis, virtutis fortunarumque heres unice: Publice autem, cum Ecclesia et Republice.<sup>24</sup>

Other rhetorical solutions Abrahamides chose can also be linked to the central role played by the Synod of Zsolna, for instance when he interprets losing György Thurzó as a punishment for their sins:

Unde sat manifestum evadit: Decessum magnorum et sanctorum Virorum, certissimam esse peccatorum poenam. [...] Nequaquam ergo extra omnem culpam, o cives, nos esse putemus, ut qui peccatis nostris hanc Solis domus Thurzonicae Eclipsin, ruinamque capitis et columnis Reipublicae: non attraxerimus.<sup>25</sup>

22 "Hoc seculum impios fert mores et ferrea corda: Nemo est, qui curet, sive poenis affligas, sive beneficiis demulceas. Tyranni et hypocritae in veritatem crudeliter saeviunt; impii quotidie nobis novas accersunt calamitates." ABRAHAMIDES, *Oratio Exequialis, Illustrissimo*, A4v.

23 "Vidimus, amplissimi cives, et quidem, tantum non sanguinem plorantibus oculis hisce vidimus, ante annos circiter duodecim, sepultas Patriae leges, proculcatam disciplinam omnem, mille prophanatam modis Religionem, Populum terrae, tot caedibus, necibus, rapinis, explicationibus, captivitatibus, et ab ipsa, fortassis, prima rerum origine inauditis carnificum cherematibus et eviscerationibus, superstitem misere balantem, instar ovium Pastore carentium." ABRAHAMIDES, *Oratio Exequialis, Illustrissimo*, B2v.

24 ABRAHAMIDES, *Oratio Exequialis, Illustrissimo*, B3r.

25 ABRAHAMIDES, *Oratio Exequialis, Illustrissimo*, 33.

For the biblical parallels, the author similarly chooses Christian church fathers with whom posterity associates some kind of reorganization of the church or fundamental changes of major significance, such as King David, Josiah, Constantine, or Theodosius.

Lucabant et micabant in hoc Gubernatore virtutum scintillae, quas credas non nisi ex Schola Spiritus Sancti proficisci potuisse, quibus olim David, Iosias, Constantinus, Theodosii, aliique pii et sancti Pastores populorum fuerunt clarissimi.<sup>26</sup>

In the funeral oration, Thurzó's figure is a heros who exhibits the military virtues that defined Nádasdy, but the palatine's memory is defined by the achievements associated with his political activities. Abrahamides conveys the significance of this with the help of various versions of the metaphor of light, which was popular with Protestant authors.<sup>27</sup>

Jeremias Spiegel's eulogy, which was published in Wittenberg in 1618, places the memory of the deceased in a slightly different context.<sup>28</sup> The publication of the text was not directly linked to the funeral service, it was rather the occasion of Imre Thurzó receiving his inheritance that inspired the author to write the oration. Spiegel was the Thurzó heir's tutor during his stay in Wittenberg, so he also uses the eulogy to remind the heir of his years as a student, going beyond evoking György Thurzó's figure. The first few words of the dedication already reference this: "Memini comes illustrissime, domine benignissime...". In line with the genesis of the sermon, although the author still wants to create the memory of the deceased, the change in the social status of the one-time student is foregrounded, and the text mostly talks about Imre Thurzó as a potential patron. Two dedications can be read in the publication, one addressed to Imre Thurzó, and another to the rector of the university of Wittenberg, Daniel Sennert. The oration is followed by farewell poems, mostly written by professors from Wittenberg.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>26</sup> ABRAHAMIDES, *Oratio Exequialis, Illustrissimo*, 28.

<sup>27</sup> The text uses this language in multiple locations: "donemur luce, iustitia, et vita sempiterna, et fruamur dulcissima consuetudine tua..." ABRAHAMIDES, *Oratio Exequialis, Illustrissimo*, 3.; "[...] cur aliquot praecipui nominis familiarum lampas obscurius lumen ad nos spargat." ABRAHAMIDES, *Oratio Exequialis, Illustrissimo*..., 14. On metaphors in more detail, see: FAZAKAS Gergely Tamás, "A tudatlanság homálya és az evangélium világossága. A reformáció emlékezete mint antithetikus beszédmod a kora újkorban" [The darkness of ignorance and the light of the gospel. Commemoration of the reformation as an antithetic rhetoric in the Early Modern Period], in *A reformáció emlékezete. Protestáns és katolikus értelmezések a 16–18. században* [The memory of Reformation. Protestant and Catholic approaches from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> century], eds. SZÁRAZ Orsolya, FAZAKAS Gergely Tamás, and IMRE Mihály, *Loci memoriae Hungaricae VII*, 171–197 (Debrecen: Debreceni Egyetemi Kiadó, 2018).

<sup>28</sup> SPIEGEL, *Iusta illustrissimo comiti*...

<sup>29</sup> In the order of the poems: Augustus Buchner, Leonhardus Coppelius, Fridericus Balduinus, Wolfgang Franz, Balthasar Mentz, J. Seussius, Erasmus Schmidt, Jacobus Martini. Balduin, Franz, and Mentz all wrote several occasional poems for publications of Hungarian relevance during the second part of the 1580s. See MÓRÉ Tünde, *Utazás és hírnév. Wittenbergi magyar diákok latin nyelvű búcsúztatóversei (1560–1600)* [Travel and fame. Latin-language farewell poems by Hungarian students from Wittenberg (1560–1600)], *Irodalomtörténeti füzetek* 185 (Budapest: Reciti Kiadó, 2022), 156, 157, 202, 249–252.

The text, which commemorates the father's devout life, also makes it clear that György Thurzó's laudation can also be read as his son's laudation, and that indeed it should be read as such:

Tum quod par esse credam, Paternarum virtutum Haeredem, etiam laudum fieri participem: Tum quod ea quae parenti debebantur illo iam e rebus humanis exempto, nulli alii exolvi poterant, quam filio.<sup>30</sup>

One typical subject of the funeral texts was the potential to inherit virtues, and the authors often drew parallels between the parents and their children to bolster the didactic tone of the sermon. From the beginning of the seventeenth century, the concept of virtue changed in that individual merits started to play a larger role, as opposed to the positive characteristics inherited from one's family. In Spiegel's work this change can be detected in the structure of his sermon. György Thurzó's biography follows the introduction and the genealogy: his childhood, education, marriage, children, and offices, including a detailed discussion of the struggles against the Turks. This is where the text discusses the palatine's individual merits in detail, in addition to the family tradition. After this, the orator describes how Thurzó prepared his heir for following in his footsteps. This is where the potential to inherit virtues plays a bigger role again, as does religious discourse. Spiegel narrates the biography of the deceased with expressions familiar from funeral orations, such as a marked childhood interest in the doctrines of true religion. In the second part of the sermon, Spiegel calls Lutheranism *pura religio*,<sup>31</sup> but he claims that Thurzó had already soaked up the Lutheran teachings in his childhood, and he did not simply study these dogmas but etched them into his memory.<sup>32</sup> The primary context of the text may provide an explanation for this: by 1618, Wittenberg had long ceased to be a battlefield of doctrines, having clearly become a Lutheran university setting where the eulogy delivered by the outgoing rector framed the laudation of a significant patron.

In contrast with Abrahamides' oration, Spiegel foregrounds the role the Thurzó family played in the fights against the Turks.

Cum tristis ista et utinam nunquam nata vox nostras quoque aures perculit, Thurzonem Palatinum Hungariae obiisse: illum, inquam, qui in Hungaria, Germania muro et propugnaculo, nos nostraque omnia, templa, aras, focos, a vi et crudelitate Mahometica defendisset.<sup>33</sup>

30 SPIEGEL, *Iusta illustrissimo comiti*, A4v.

31 Spiegel clearly identifies "purified" religion as the Lutheran faith: "Zelo vero et defendendae religionis purioris (Lutheranae, inquam) studio, quantum arserit, toti iam Europae innotuit." SPIEGEL, *Iusta illustrissimo comiti*, E1v.

32 "Et pietatem quidem ex Lutherana Catechesi imbiberat fere infans: litteras vero tanta aviditate tantae celeritate addiscebat, ut non didicisse, sed recordatus videretur." SPIEGEL, *Iusta illustrissimo comiti*, C2v.

33 SPIEGEL, *Iusta illustrissimo comiti*, B3v.

According to the orator's reasoning, the audience and the readers owe gratitude to the deceased for this, and the medium of this gratitude is the sermon itself. If they did not document the memory of these heroic deeds in some way, they would be ungrateful and unworthy of this sacrifice. These criteria are recurring elements in the rhetorical works from Wittenberg, in that writing, printing, listening to and reading orations and poetry was typically considered an expression of a devout life. Emphasizing military virtues invokes the influential narrative of the sixteenth century according to which the role and significance of the Kingdom of Hungary in Europe came from its fight against the Turks.<sup>34</sup> The enemy threatening the Hungarians was a danger to all of Christianity, and the oration depicts this with rhetorical devices and topoi that fit this subject.<sup>35</sup>

### Summary

The texts bidding farewell to members of the Nádasdy and Thurzó families show how the practice of family representation that overarches centuries influences both the commissioning of funeral orations, as well as their structure and content. Beside the roles and virtues inherited from the family, individual merits appear in the three texts to varying degrees and emphasis. The latter are linked to the activities of the deceased to defend the faith and the homeland depending on the author and the context of publication.

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- 34 Numerous studies examined the *Türkenfrage* and *Türkenliteratur*, as well as the tropes they use. For an overview of previous research, see: Bodo GUTHMÜLLER and Wilhelm KÜHLMANN, eds., *Europa und die Türken in der Renaissance, Frühe Neuzeit* 54 (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 2000). The more recent research explore the question in the form of case studies: GULYÁS Borbála, "»gegen den Bluedthunden und Erbfeindt der Christenheit«. Thematisierung der Türkengefahr in Wort und Bild an den höfischen Festen der Habsburger in der zweiten Hälfte des 16. Jahrhunderts," in *Türkenkriege und Adelskultur in Ostmitteleuropa vom 16. bis zum 18. Jahrhundert*, eds. Robert BORN and Sabine JAGODZINSKI, *Studia Jagellonica Lipsiensia* 14, 217–236 (Leipzig: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 2014); LÖKÖS Péter, "Balthasar Knellingers Türkenpredigt über die Krönung von Joseph I. zum Erbkönig in Ungarn (1687)," *Jahrbuch der Ungarischen Germanistik*, 2013, 51–65; KASZA Péter, "Camerarius und die Türkenfrage," in *Camerarius Polyhistor. Wissensvermittlung im deutschen Humanismus*, ed. Thomas BAIER, *NeoLatina*, 325–334 (Tübingen: Narr Francke Attempto Verlag, 2017); LÖKÖS Péter, "Das Türkenbild in dem »Siebenbürgischen Würgengel« von Mathias Miles. Ein Beitrag zum Mechanismus der Stereotypenbildung," in *Mittlerin aus Europas Mitte. Fundamente und Perspektiven der deutschen Sprache und ihrer Literatur im ostmittel- und südosteuropäischen Raum*, eds. Carolin SOLLFRANK and Johann WELLNER, 111–119 (Dresden: Thelem, 2017); LÖKÖS Péter, "Das Türkenbild in Christian Schesäus' *Ruina Pannonica* (Buch IV) und in seinen Quellen," in LÖKÖS Péter, *Ungarisch-deutscher Kulturtransfer in der deutschsprachigen Literatur des 16. bis 20. Jahrhunderts*, 11–25 (Berlin: Frank & Timme, 2020); PAPP Júlia, "»Türkengräuel.« The Depiction of the Cruelty of the Ottomans in European Pictorial Propaganda in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century," in *Kniha 2023. Zborník o problémoch a dejinách knižnej kultúry. Výskum dejín knižnej kultúry na Slovensku a v stredoeurópskom priestore*, ed. Daniela ŠKULOVÁ, 48–68 (Martin: Slovenská národná knižnica, 2023).
- 35 "Nemo ab iniuria liber, nemo intactus a contumelia, nisi qui crudelitate latronis pretio mitigarat: caede ac sanguine cruentata, repleta tandem omnia. Uno verbo, conclamata iam erat Hungariae res, et tantum exspectabatur qui exequias iret." SPIEGEL, *Iusta illustrissimo comiti*, D2r.

Although the Latin-language funeral oration primarily uses the rhetorical devices of humanist laudations, the authors assume the position of an orator commemorating historical truth. The orators continue the sixteenth-century Protestant tradition in which funeral orations can be read as outlines of the history of the church, documenting the development of the Protestant church in Hungary. The novelty of the texts created at the beginning of the seventeenth century is that they place more emphasis on the state of the homeland (*patria*), as well as rescuing it, creating the memory of the deceased along the image of the heros.