

**From Apocalyptic Prophecy to Political Discourse: The  
Relationship between the *Theological* and the *Political* in  
Reformed Funeral Speeches in Mid-Seventeenth Century  
Principality of Transylvania**

By

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## Abstract

The relationship between the Reformed Church and the Transylvanian government provides a unique and controversial manifestation of the confessionalization-paradigm. Although the Reformed Church appeared to be in close alliance with princely power; the formal connections between *Church* and *government* were limited, which in certain cases resulted in the discontent and anxiety among many members of the Reformed clergy. The aim of this paper is to show how the theological convictions and religious concerns of Transylvanian Reformed preachers shaped their stance in imagining the relationship between religion and politics, and how was this reflected in their funeral speeches written over rulers and magistrates.

The death of princes and nobles were interpreted as signs of imminent divine judgment. In different funeral speeches, orators expressed their concerns about this in the form of unraveling prophetic revelations. Because most of the clerics had political concerns (regarding both ecclesiastical politics and everyday politics) and were in many cases in close contact with the rulers, whose death later they preached upon, the way they articulated their rhetorical-homiletical discourse seems to have not only theological and religious motivations, but it also entails political repercussions. This paper is meant to analyze the relationship between the Reformed Church and the Transylvanian government from a new perspective, hoping to shed a new light on the intertwining of the *Theological* and the *Political* in the period of confessionalization.

In order to obtain the most adequate results possible, I constructed a multilayered analysis of the chosen material. Therefore as a first step, I am providing a short theoretical and methodological assessment, in order to illustrate the way I imagine approaching these sources through the lenses of confessionalization and political theology. On a second level, after giving a brief survey of the main turning points of the Reformation in the Principality of Transylvania, I am presenting a possible classification of contemporary (political) public spheres in the principality, which I am supplementing by a short primary source-based analysis of the dominant political philosophy, in order to highlight some main aspects of the discourses about religion and politics prior to the death of György Rákóczi I. This part basically provides a sort of prelude to the actual analysis of the main source material. The examination of the selected corpus aims to assess the extent to which the views expressed in funeral speeches conformed to contemporary ideals on the relationship between the *sacred* and the *secular*. This all culminates in the conclusion of the thesis.

I believe this research project will enrich the scanty studies on funeral speeches in seventeenth century Hungary and the Principality of Transylvania, filling in some crucial gaps in their investigation, and hopefully highlighting certain directions this research might be carried on.

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## Introduction: The Funeral Speech<sup>1</sup> as a Unit of Historical Analysis

“And what the dead had no speech for when living/ They can tell you being dead: the communication/ Of the dead is tongued with fire beyond the language of the living” – to evoke the words of T. S. Eliot. These thoughts perfectly reflect on the main driving force of this paper, namely that a funeral speech uttered over the departed encapsulated a multiplicity of “voices”, thus representing not just a certain image of the dead, but also a palimpsest of their epoch. But by what means could the voice of the dead be transferred into the voice of the living? To what extent did the *persona repraesentata*<sup>2</sup> of the dead correspond to his or her actual *persona*? What was actually “voiced” in the communication of the living? And to begin with: How can one possibly approach this very intricate form of communication and thinking? When it comes to analyzing the period of the sixteenth-seventeenth centuries these questions are becoming even more prominent.

It is undeniable that during this period the funeral pomp in its entirety represented a public performance, and a special form of religious and political dialogue. Let us not forget that mediality was one of the essential factors in shaping the relationship between religion and politics in sixteenth-seventeenth century Europe. Various texts, images, and monuments all carried within a “figurative” power that enabled them to represent religious and/or political “realities” alike. But how could the boundaries between religious and

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<sup>1</sup> I am borrowing the term of *funeral speech* from Hungarian scholarship, where it is used to denote a blend of genres between *funeral sermons* and *funeral orations* (see Chapter 3 for more elaboration). I find this term the most adequate to employ, since it perfectly reflects on the idea that these sources that are available to us as written “texts” were first and foremost oral performances.

<sup>2</sup> Dario Gamboni, “Composing the body politic. Composite images and political representation, 1651-2004” in Bruno Latour and Peter Weibel (eds.), *Making Things Public. Atmosphere of Democracy*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2005), 162-196.

political discourses be articulated and maintained, but also dissolved in various types of discourses? Even if the audience was a seemingly passive constituent of funerals, these participants were never entirely silent – they “spoke” through their presence. Still, there was one particular element of these events that actually spoke with words – these were the funeral speeches.

It has become a rather general claim that “public speeches are living experiments in bringing people together and making them affiliate or disaffiliate with the positions held”.<sup>3</sup> This assertion is not only applicable in our present day, but it also had its special function in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In the present case one can claim that funeral speeches constituted a perfect media through which the abovementioned issues could become articulated. One should not regard these speeches as simple utterances through which a particular preacher could address the community. They were a lot more than that. They were a special amalgamation of different voices, where the individual tone of the preacher was conflated with the latent voice of the family of the dead, the voice of the Church and the voice of the congregation. One should consider these sources as parts of religious and political communication that were born in a two dimensional dialogue: on a vertical level they were in dialogue with their context (audience, historical and political circumstances, theological convictions and motivations, etc.), and on a horizontal level they were in dialogue with other “texts”. Due to this peculiar position, funeral speeches occupy a special place in the field of early modern studies.

Seventeenth century Europe in general and the Principality of Transylvania in particular are filled with sources on the borderline between history and literature. Funeral speeches perfectly illustrate this peculiarity. When it comes to such type of material however, the unease about choosing an adequate methodology becomes even more

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<sup>3</sup> Lorenza Mondada, “Becoming collective. The Constitution of Audience as an International Process” in Latour and Weibel (eds.), *Making Things Public*, 876-84, 876.

enunciated. Can these sources be suitable for both historical and philological analysis? This question has definitely been one of the major concerns of Hungarian scholars, specializing in this field, with the result that almost exclusively philologists are dealing with this corpus.<sup>4</sup>

The literary and cultural-historical relevance of the genre of funeral speeches had first been discovered in Germany in the 1960s. The aim of this research project was to explore the extant funeral orations in different sixteenth and eighteenth century German repertoires. As a result of this systematic research project one can know that the number of printed funeral sermons in these centuries has reached approximately the number of 250.000. One of the most prominent features of these texts is that they might serve not only as literary, but also as historical sources, since they offer an insight into the accepted emotions and attitudes of the period, reflecting on different factors that shaped the intellectual and spiritual life of the epoch: life ideals, moral ideals, attitudes towards death, mentalities, etc.<sup>5</sup> Besides Germany however, one cannot encounter another program in Europe that would deal so systematically and with such a multifarious adaptation of various disciplines with the exploration of funeral speeches; however, for England, the Early English Books Online database provides ample documentation as possible control material.

In Hungary the situation was similar to other European countries: there was no synthetic work that would have elaborated on the problem of the funeral speech as a distinct

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<sup>4</sup> The works (funeral speeches, sermons, rhetorical handbook, etc.) of Pál Medgyesi have long been a favorite topic of philologists in Hungary. Without trying to establish any kind of hierarchy concerning the relevance of the works of these scholars, here I would just mention the name of István Bartók, who has devoted long years of research to the study of the history of rhetorics during in sixteenth-seventeenth century Hungary and the Principality of Transylvania in general, and of the first Hungarian work on rhetorics written by Pál Medgyesi in particular. See István Bartók, "Medgyesi Pál: Doce praedicare: Az első magyar nyelvű egyházi retorika [Pál Medgyesi: Doce predicare: The first Hungarian homiletical work], *ItK* 85(1981): 1-24, idem, "Régi és új elemek a reformáció prédikációelméletében" [Old and new elements in the sermon theory of the Reformation] in István Bitskey, Szabolcsné Gomba, and Pál Varga (eds.), *Eszmei és stilisztikai kérdések a régi magyar prózában [Conceptional and stylistic questions in old Hungarian prose]*, (Debrecen: KLTE, 1978), 20-26. Katalin Luffy also has a number of works analyzing Pál Medgyesi's works, with a special focus on his funeral speeches. See for e.g. Katalin Luffy, "Műfajhasználat és reprezentáció főúri temetéseken" [The use of genres and representation at noble funerals] in *Szöveggyománny és íráskultúra a korai újkorban* [Textual tradition and writing culture in early modernity], (Kolozsvár: Egyetemi Műhely Kiadó, 2007), 37-75.

<sup>5</sup> Gábor Kecskeméti, *Prédikáció, retorika, irodalomtörténet. A Magyar nyelvű halotti beszéd a 17. században* [Sermon, rhetorics, literary history. The Hungarian funeral speech in the seventeenth century], (Budapest: Universitas, 1988), 9-18.

group with unified genre characteristics. The scant number of publications mostly focused on presenting the content of the texts and their historical context. The organized research program of exploring funerary texts in the territory of Hungary started in 1981 at the department of Old Hungarian History of Literature at Eötvös Loránd University, under the direction of Katalin Péter and Andor Tarnai. The project focused on the exploration of funeral sermons and orations between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, highlighting their historical, literary and sociological aspects. The research program lasted for six years, and even though only two works were published during this period, one article by Katalin Péter<sup>6</sup> and one critical edition of twelve funeral speeches<sup>7</sup>, without this research project neither the historical nor the literary scholarship would have become aware of the relevance of these sources.

One of the main obstacles that somehow hinder the progress of funeral speech studies in Hungarian scholarship is mainly attributable to the conviction that the significantly lower number of funerary texts in Hungary would not allow the conduct of the same type of research projects as one can encounter in Germany.<sup>8</sup> It is certainly true that there are a number of research areas (e.g. historical demography, sociology, statistical analysis, etc.) that would not be possible to aim at with the available control material. In his inquiry Gábor Kecskeméti – using one hundred Hungarian first-print editions published between 1599 and 1711 – has discovered that there are sixty-seven prints that contain 354 funeral speeches, out of which 319 are Reformed. The two examined Lutheran prints consist of four speeches, the Unitarians are represented by one print with one speech, and there are thirty Catholic prints with thirty speeches. I think that even this number is representative,

<sup>6</sup> Katalin Péter, “Die Leichenpredigt in Ungarn vom 16. bis zum 18. Jahrhundert: Der besondere Quellenwert der deutschen Predigt” in Rudolf Lenz, *Leichenpredigten als Quelle historischer Wissenschaften*, (Köln 1975-1984). 347-360.

<sup>7</sup> Gábor Kecskeméti and Hajnalka Nováky (eds.), *Magyar nyelvű halotti beszédek a XVII. századból* [Hungarian Funeral Orations from the Seventeenth Century], (Budapest: MTA Irodalomtudományi Intézet, 1988).

<sup>8</sup> Interestingly, among the many research areas in German scholarship, including genealogy, historical demography, medical history, etc. the literary approach brought the least significant results.



and one should not approach this corpus from a quantitative perspective. Otherwise, this can result in overshadowing the value of these sources as viable units of both literary and historical analysis. The lack of interdisciplinary approach can also lead to tackling certain phenomenon more in a descriptive rather than in an analytical way. In case scholars choose to explore this corpus, they either focus on a limited number of sources, generally concentrating on one preacher or style of preaching<sup>9</sup>, or on the contrary, deploying an enormous number of sources, mostly for the sake of exemplifying already preconceived theories.<sup>10</sup>

This issue has also been addressed recently in the field of English Sermon Studies. In that case as well the attitude of concentrating on certain preachers and styles and theories of preaching was prevalent in sermon studies. English scholars have also argued that sermons and orations should be part of both literary and historical studies.<sup>11</sup> Similarly to the new approaches of English scholarship, I consider these sources viable units for historical analysis. Even if within the scope of this research my main focus will fall on the analysis of the printed version of these sources, I will also reflect on their performative value, keeping in mind that these textual sources were primarily performances for their contemporary audience. Therefore the politico-theological “realities” these sources presented were

<sup>9</sup> I am not considering these approaches as being inadequate, but when it comes to examining just one preacher the usual tendency is to focus on the style, rhetoric, genre characteristics, etc., and even if other aspects also come to be mentioned (for e.g. theological, political, historical, etc.), they remain somehow subordinated to the rhetorical analysis. For e.g. Katalin Luffy provides an extensive and well-built rhetorical analysis of most of Pál Medgyesi’s works.

<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless one should not disregard the relevance of these publications, since some of them successfully manage to underline certain characteristics inherent to this genre. I would like to stress two works that helped me formulate my research topic. One of them is Gábor Kecskeméti’s above referenced work on the history of rhetorics of seventeenth century funeral speeches, and the other is a historical monograph written by Graeme Murdock. See Graeme Murdock, *Calvinism on the Frontier 1600-1660. International Calvinism and the Reformed Church in Hungary and Transylvania* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000). Even though, Kecskeméti has a literary focus, he also provides perspectives that might set new directions in analyzing these texts as historical, historico-philosophical, politico-historical, etc. sources. Murdock’s contribution should also be applauded, since he is among the few scholars who made these sources accessible to a wider academic public.

<sup>11</sup> Keith A. Francis, “Sermon Studies: Major Issues and Future Directions” - <http://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199583591.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199583591-e-37>. Accessed on [15.02.2014].

overarching social and cultural boundaries. The relationship between *Religion* and *Politics* came to be articulated within the confines of a public (performative) discourse.

The gaps in the research of funeral speeches in Hungary are still numerous. Through the exploitation of some of the available material, I would like to provide a new reading through which the correlation between *Politics* and *Religion* might be interpreted.<sup>12</sup> Since such an extensive study would not be feasible within the confines of an MA thesis without narrowing the corpus of analysis, therefore I would only like to concentrate on Reformed texts, moreover I would also restrict my analysis on funeral speeches written for rulers and politically involved noblemen (with a special focus on Pál Medgyesi's lament over György Rákóczi I, Zsigmond Rákóczi, and István Bethlen, István Czeglédi's sermon over György Rákóczi II), since from a politico-theological and historical point of view these works are truly representative. Of course, other types of primary sources will also be considered. The time frame of the research will embrace the reign of the Rákóczi princes. Thus, my thesis will revolve around the following main problematic: Considering preachers as vectors in the shaping of public opinion, by what means could they express various concerns about the political situation of the country and the church, having religious and theological motivations, whilst trying to conform to various rhetorical and representational requirements? What do these texts tell us about their perception on the relationship between the Calvinist Church and the Transylvanian Government and about the place of religion within contemporary political thought? Where could one place these speeches in the web of

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<sup>12</sup> Of course, the examination of the relationship between religion and politics is not a novelty in the field of Transylvanian studies. One of the most prominent experts of this field is Katalin Péter, who has devoted long years of research to the study of Gábor Bethlen and the Rákóczi princes. Katalin Péter, 'Two Aspects of War and Society in the Age of Prince Gabor Bethlen of Transylvania' in J. M. Bak and B. K. Király (eds.), *War and Society in Eastern Central Europe. 3. From Hunyadi to Rákóczi: War and Society in Late Medieval and Early Modern Hungary*, (New York: Brooklyn College Press, 1982). *Papok és nemesek. Magyar művelődéstörténeti tanulmányok a reformációval kezdődő másfél évszázadból (A Ráday Gyűjtemény tanulmányai, 8)* [Priests and nobles. Essays on Hungarian cultural history from the one and a half decades of the Reformation], (Budapest, 1995).

(political) public spheres? Just to name the most essential aspects one is bound to touch upon, if one wants to comprehend as thoroughly as possible the intention of these preachers, and the role of their works in the formation of politico-theological discourses.

## **1. Theoretical and Methodological Considerations**

### **1.2. The Place of Transylvania within the Paradigm of Confessionalization**

The curious case of “multi-confessional” Transylvania has long been subject to scholarly analysis, but the applicability of the confessionalization paradigm to the Principality has been highly contested. This is especially relevant when considering that one of the main tenets of this paradigm pertains to the issue of religious uniformity and its strong interrelation with the process of state building. The basic assumption of this approach is that certain coercive initiatives – whereby a particular state employed confessional reforms as means of maintaining political unity and stability – could lead to the formation of the early modern state.<sup>13</sup> The problem however arises, when one turns her attention to such “multi-confessional states” as Transylvania.<sup>14</sup>

The concept of “confessionalization” has been pervading German historiography ever since the 1980s. Before Heinz Schilling and Wolfgang Reinhard set down the main

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<sup>13</sup> On social discipline see: R. Po-chia Hsia, *Social Discipline in the Reformation: Central Europe, 1550-1750*, (London: Routledge, 1992 (c.1989)). Stefan Ehenprise, “Teaching Religion in Early Modern Europe: catechisms, emblems and local traditions” in István György Tóth and Heinz Schilling (eds.), *Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Europe*, Vol. 1, (Cambridge: CUP, 2006), 256-73.

<sup>14</sup> In the case of the Principality of Transylvania (and not just) using the term “state” might lead to certain misconceptualizations, therefore I will use the term “government” throughout the thesis in order to avoid confusions.

principles of the “confessionalization-paradigm”<sup>15</sup>, Ernst Walter Zeeden had already coined the term of “confession-building”, which he had defined as “the spiritual and organizational consolidation of the various Christian confessions that had been diverging since the religious split into more or less coherent ecclesiastical systems with respect to their dogma, constitution and form of religious and moral life”.<sup>16</sup> Zeeden’s new methodology had practically functioned as a catalyst for Reinhard and Schilling in capturing the consequences of “confession-building”, and in developing a macro-historical paradigm by exploiting the results of social history along a structural-functional axis. Assuming interplay among state, church and society (practically imagining them as the agents of a hermeneutical circle), where the role of the players is shifting according to the socio-cultural and political circumstances, the process of confessionalization aims at describing political, religious and social transformations (corollaries of *Konfessionsbildung*) affecting most European territories during the sixteenth-seventeenth centuries, and having divergent results (re-sacralization of the state, state-building, subversion of cultural and social boundaries, etc.). The notion has been subject to scrutiny, it has suffered severe attacks and criticisms, and still it does not cease being one of the mostly employed interpretative categories of the study of religion, politics, and society in Early Modern Europe.

It is self-evident that regarding the Principality of Transylvania the paradigm cannot be applied without certain adjustments. In this case the model of confessionalization might

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<sup>15</sup> On the background of the concept of *confessionalization* see: Wolfgang Reinhard, "Konfession und Konfessionalisierung in Europa," in idem, ed., *Bekenntnis und Geschichte. Die Confessio Augustana im historischen Zusammenhang* (Munich: Voegel, 1981), 165-189, idem, "Zwang zur Konfessionalisierung? Prolegomena zu einer Theorie des konfessionellen Zeitalters," *Zeitschrift fuer historische Forschung* 10 (1983): 257-277, idem, "Gegenreformation als Modernisierung? Prolegomena zu einer Theorie des konfessionellen Zeitalters," *Archiv fuer Reformationsgeschichte* 68 (1977): 226-252, Heinz Schilling, "Confessional Europe," in T. A. Brady, H. O. Oberman, J. D. Tracy (eds.) *Handbook of European History* (2. Vols. Leiden, 1995), 641-670, idem, "Confessionalization: Historical and Scholarly Perspective of a Comparative and Interdisciplinary Paradigm," in J. Headley, H. Hillerbrandt, and A. Papalas (eds.) *Confessionalization in Europe, 1550-1700—Essays in Honor and Memory of Bodo Nischan* (Ashgate, 2004), 21-36.

<sup>16</sup> Quoted in Jörg Deventer, "'Confessionalization' – a Useful Theoretical Concept for the Study of Religion, Politics, and Society in Early Modern East-Central Europe?," *European Review of History* 11 (2004): 403-405. 406.

be employed as a heuristic tool in order to open up new research directions. This attitude has been prevalent lately in early modern scholarship. Various scholars have started to reevaluate the model modifying it according to local circumstances, and proving the usefulness of the category for approaching the relationship among religion, society, and politics in sixteenth-seventeenth century Europe.<sup>17</sup>

The Principality of Transylvania with its four ‘received religions’ has long been characterized as a counterexample of the confessionalization paradigm.<sup>18</sup> Various case studies however have shown that even in the case of German territories one does not encounter a homogenous pattern of *Konfessionalisierung*.<sup>19</sup> The aim of this paper is not to illustrate whether a multi-confessional territory can be evaluated according to the model of Reinhard and Schilling or not. What I am aiming to do within the scope of this short research is to highlight that – rather than trying to present the reasons the Principality of Transylvania is a counterexample of the paradigm or is an example of an ‘imperfect confessionalization’<sup>20</sup> – an actual analysis and contextualization of certain processes/phenomena might bring one closer to the understanding of the special character of multifaceted Transylvania. This is not to say that I deem the model and testing its

<sup>17</sup> See Alastair Duke, Gillian Lewis, and Andrew Pettegree (eds.), *Calvinism in Europe: 1540-1620*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), Tijana Krstić, *Contested Conversions to Islam: Narratives of Religious Change and Communal Politics in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011), Gábor Kármán, "[A konfesszionalizáció hasznáról és káráról: Egy paradigma margójára](#) [On the advantage and disadvantage of confessionalization: Notes on the margin of a paradigm] in Anikó Lukács (ed.), *Felekezeti társadalom - felekezeti műveltség: A Hajnal István Kör 2011. évi győri konferenciájának kötete* (Rendi társadalom - polgári társadalom, 25.) [Denominational society – denominational culture: The volume of the 2011 conference of the István Hajnal Circle], (Budapest: Hajnal István Kör, 2013), 27-40, Graeme Murdock, “Principatul Transilvaniei în epoca confesională” [The Principality of Transylvania in the Confessional Period]. *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai – Historia* 1-2(2008), 59-75, Edit Szegedi, “Politica religioasă a principilor reformati” [The religious policy of the Reformed princes], *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai – Historia* 1-2(2008): 76-99.

<sup>18</sup> See Krista Zach, “Politische Ursachen und Motive der Konfessionalisierung in Siebenbürgen” in Volker Leppin, Ulrich A. Wien (Hrsg) (eds.), *Konfessionsbildung und Konfessionskultur in Siebenbürgen in der Frühen Neuzeit*. (Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte der östlichen Europa 66), (Stuttgart, 2005), 57-70.

<sup>19</sup> See Marc R. Forster, *Catholic Revival in the Age of the Baroque: Religious Identity in Southwest Germany, 1550-1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), Bodo Nischan, “Confessionalism and Absolutism: the Case of Brandenburg” in Alastair Duke, Gillian Lewis, and Andrew Pettegree (eds.), *Calvinism in Europe: 1540-1620*, (Cambridge: CUP, 1996, c1994), 181-204.

<sup>20</sup> Gábor Kármán, *Erdélyi külpolitika a vesztfáliai béke után* [Transylvanian foreign policy after the peace of Westphalia], (Budapest: L’Harmattan, 2011), 41.

applicability to various territories superfluous, but to emphasize that one should not start with probing the limits of a paradigm, and turn a research into a self-fulfilling prophecy. Therefore I approach the ideal-type of ‘confessionalization’ more like a “new scholarly attitude” that opened up new ways to explore religious and political phenomena within the same interpretative framework.

If one does not start with the so-to-say “final definition” of the confessionalization thesis, and leaves aside the “illusion” that “the paradigm “confessionalization” embraces a universal perspective that encompasses all of society”<sup>21</sup>, certain considerations of Reinhard and Schilling can be conducive in the further molding of the analytical connivance one calls the barrier between *religion* and *politics*. Let us recall Heinz Schilling’s statement considering one of the peculiarities of confessionalization in early modern Europe: “the ecclesiastical and secular political order, were [...] not divided into separate spheres, but were structurally connected and functionally related”.<sup>22</sup> As the subsequent analysis of the aforementioned sources will further enhance, this idea was certainly prevalent in the Principality of Transylvania during Reformed princely dominance. And what is even more revealing than this structural-functional parallelism is the theological and political philosophical conception and justification behind it. The extreme awareness these funeral speeches were composed with shows that these preachers had a definite idea in mind concerning the role of the prince in the church and in the society. Moreover they also succeeded in articulating their view on the place and role of religion within the sphere of contemporary politics. As the case of Pál Medgyesi will show, the correlation depicted between the *sacred* and the *secular* was a projection of an imagined Reformed world order. The works of István Czeglédi on the other hand will present a different attitude towards the prince and the issue of *religio*. Even if one cannot assess the actual role these

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<sup>21</sup> Schilling, “Confessionalization”, 24.

<sup>22</sup> Schilling, “Confessionalization”, 27.

“performances” played in the religious shaping of the people, what is truly relevant here is that they were perfect means to verbalize critical reflections on the *social order*, the *political order* and the *theological order*.

Since this thesis is also meant to provide new insights into the intricate relationship between the Reformed Church and the Transylvanian Government through the prism of funeral speeches and along the axis of *Politics* and *Theology*, my perception of a ‘contextual confessionalization’ will be supplemented with a contextual *political theology*. One of the critiques that have been formulated against the ideal-type of confessionalization pertains exactly to the problem of theological truth.<sup>23</sup> Reinhard and Schilling have been reproached for disregarding this factor when approaching different phenomena through the lenses of confessionalization. Both Protestant and Catholic theologies might be regarded as “explanatory tools” whereby one cannot only express tenets directly pertaining to faith, but also interpret the arrangement of the world and the role of man in it. Moreover, theology can provide an interpretative framework for political thinking. “Political differences, or differences in views regarding the good of the country and the people, became differences between true and false views, one leading to salvation, the other to damnation, both in this world and afterlife”.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Ute Lotz-Heuman, “The Concept of “Confessionalization:” a Historiographical Paradigm in Dispute”, *Memoria y Civilización* 4 (2001): 93-114.

<sup>24</sup> Hanna Orsolya Vincze, “Piety and Industry: Variations on Patriotism in Seventeenth-Century Hungarian Political Thought” in Balázs Trencsényi and Márton Zászkaliczky (eds.), *Whose Love of Which Country. Composite States, National Histories and Patriotic Discourses in Early Modern East Central Europe*, *Studies in the History of Political Thought* 3, (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 333-51, 341.

## 1.2. *Politics and Theology*

Religion and politics have been indissociable since Ancient times. The battles between temporal powers have always taken place within a religious context, where even the spiritual realm was filled with political players.<sup>25</sup> In this continuous encounter the theory of *political theology* tried to provide possible answers to the various challenges and crises (be that religious, political or social) of a particular epoch.<sup>26</sup>

The aim of this new explanatory mode was “to identify the exchanges, pacts, and contests that obtain between religious and political life, especially the use of sacred narratives, motifs, and liturgical forms to establish, legitimate, and reflect upon the sovereignty of monarchs, corporations and parliaments”.<sup>27</sup> Thus *political theology* critically re-evaluated and re-interpreted the relationship between spiritual and secular organizations, and provided a new codification of religious and political (and therefore also social) arrangements.

“Political theology is a contextual theology. It addresses itself to a particular situation at a specific time. This is one reason for the diversity of political theologies: since each is rooted in a particular context, they have different agendas and emphases. And despite its concern with the context, political theology is theology i.e. it endeavours to relate the classical Christian theological tradition to a modern situation. Both the classical and contextual are necessary. The local needs to be related to the universal, the particular to the unchanging”.<sup>28</sup>

From this enfolding of the *political* and the *theological* “early modern and modern concepts, forms of government, and views of history are born.”<sup>29</sup>

During the confessional age the theological underpinning within various political theories was significantly strong.<sup>30</sup> “Protestant historicism and prophetic revelation

<sup>25</sup> Michael Hoelzl and Graham Ward (eds.), *Religion and Political Thought*, (London: Continuum, 2006), 1.

<sup>26</sup> My concept of *political theology* does not follow the philosophical tradition of Carl Schmitt or Erik Peterson. I am employing the term in a “contextualized” way, like for instance Ernst H. Kantorowicz in his crucial study on medieval political theology or more recently Raymond Plant in *Politics, Theology and History*, (Cambridge: CUP, 2001).

<sup>27</sup> “Introduction” in Hammil and Reinhard Lupton (eds.), *Political Theology and Early Modernity*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 1.

<sup>28</sup> Duncan Forrester, *Theology and Politics*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988), 150.

<sup>29</sup> “Introduction” in Hammil and Reinhard Lupton, *Political Theology*, 1.



confirmed that the Pope was the Antichrist in a Romish Babylon, and discussion of Protestant diplomatic alliances was often tinged with a spiritual enthusiasm which inclined towards millenarianism”.<sup>31</sup> The providential and apocalyptic overtones permeated Reformed political discourses; for e.g. this was the case with the conversion of Elector John Sigismund of Brandenburg. In his study Bodo Nischan convincingly illustrated, focusing on the relationship between Reformed political thinking and Calvinist apocalypticism, that the question of the right doctrine was inextricably interwoven with the question of the “right” politics.<sup>32</sup> Of course, it always remains an issue of interpretation and reinterpretation to determine the extent to which confessional perspectives were in concordance with political “realities”, or to put it in another way to assess the extent to which political (confessional) theory coincided with political praxis.

The ““providentialist” vision of determining responsibility for the decline of “ancient glory” and meditation on the punitive instrument of God were at the root of both Catholic and Protestant narratives of history that emerged in the sixteenth century”.<sup>33</sup> The Principality of Transylvania was dominated by various discourses of Hebraic patriotism. This paradigm was not only prevalent in the principality, but it also pervaded the theological and political discourses of the other Reformed territories of Europe (e.g. England or the Dutch Republic).<sup>34</sup> “Above all, Hebraic patriotism, which was already current among humanists, was used by reformers to fashion Calvinism’s confessional identity”.<sup>35</sup> Adherents of Reformed ideals perceived the history of Israel as a mirror that reflected on

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<sup>30</sup> Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King’s Two Bodies. A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 19.

<sup>31</sup> Murdock, *Calvinism on the Frontier*, 258.

<sup>32</sup> “the struggle for right doctrine – John Sigismund’s attempt to turn the principality’s Lutheran into a Reformed church – was simultaneously a conflict over the right political order”. Nischan, “Confessionalism and Absolutism”, 183.

<sup>33</sup> Balázs Trencsényi, “Patriotism and Elect Nationhood in Early Modern Hungarian Political Discourse” in Trencsényi, Zászkaliczky (eds.), *Whose Love of Which Country*, 499-544, 499.

<sup>34</sup> See Graeme Murdock, “The Importance of Being Josiah: An Image of Calvinist Identity”, *Sixteenth Century Journal* XXIX/4 (1998): 1043-59, 1044.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 1044.

their past events, their present conditions, and their future expectations. The characteristics particularly dominant in this context were the identification of the principality with the biblical Israel, and the perception of the fate of the Hungarian “nation”<sup>36</sup> as a reiteration of the fate of the Jews.<sup>37</sup> The Jewish-Hungarian providence parallel linked together the history of the “nation” and the *historia sacra* of the Bible.<sup>38</sup> The Hungarian-Jewish fate parallel, the different topoi of “elect nationhood”<sup>39</sup>, the providentialist, then Tridentine conception of history all endorsed the articulation of meta-theological discourses.

The history of God’s covenant with Israel became an imperative source for Hungarians in understanding the unfolding of their fate during the early sixteenth century.<sup>40</sup> In 1538 András Farkas wrote a history of the Jews, drawing a parallel between their exodus to the Promised Land and the wanderings of the Hungarians from Scythia to the land of Pannonia.<sup>41</sup> “By the early seventeenth century, the Reformed community of Transylvania saw itself as a new chosen people living under divinely inspired princes and worshipping in a true church with a reformed and pure communion.”<sup>42</sup>

This co-mingling of the Transylvanian Reformed Church and the princely government, made Reformed preachers portray their princes as wardens of true faith and justice, comparing and appropriating them to the biblical kings of the Old Testament. “The princes of Transylvania as Christian politicians were suitable rulers and on the basis of a patriarchal point of view, characteristic of the Old Testament, their military/political

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<sup>36</sup> Within the confines of this thesis I am not going to touch upon the issue concerning different conceptualizations of “nationhood” in seventeenth century Hungary.

<sup>37</sup> The word to word translation of the Hungarian term „sorspárhuzam” is fate-parallel, but I find the composite “providence-parallel” more nuanced, since the conception behind this motif is that Hungarians are the new chosen people of the God of Israel, and therefore they are parts of a new covenant.

<sup>38</sup> Pál Acs, „Az idő ósága”. *Történetiség és történelemszemlélet a régi magyar irodalomban* [“The aging of time”. Historicity and historical approach in old Hungarian history], (Budapest: Osiris, 2001), 157.

<sup>39</sup> See Balázs Trencsényi, “Patriotism and Elect Nationhood”, 499-544.

<sup>40</sup> Murdock, “The Importance of Being Josiah”, 1045.

<sup>41</sup> See András Farkas, *Cronica de Introductione Scytтарum in Vngariam et Iudeorum de Aegypto*, (Krakkó, 1538), RMK I., 11.

<sup>42</sup> Murdock, “The Importance of Being Josiah”, 1045.

victories legitimized both the people of their lands and their religion”.<sup>43</sup> From this perspective the death of a Reformed prince in Transylvania came to be regarded as a decisive turning point in the life of the principality; “both for the ruling noble family, anxious to secure a smooth transition of power and win the election of a nominated successor as prince, and an opportunity to the Reformed Church to affirm divine sanction for continued Calvinist princely governance”.<sup>44</sup> Therefore the funeral services of Transylvanian princes, with funeral speeches in their core, bore important representational functions on a politico-theological level.

## **2. *Theatrum Politicum* – The Conflation of Political and Religious Discourses in the Principality of Transylvania**

### **2.1. Introduction - The Reformation in the Principality of Transylvania**

The Reformation bore diverse connotations in each country, where its ideals had spread, and it was shaped by the peculiarities of different cultures and regions. Since it was determined by various geo-political circumstances, its consequences also diverged. One of the main consequences brought by the Reformation and apparent in almost every country touched by its ideas was the fact that different Christian communities transformed into confessional communities (different confessions were born, each having a new and differentiated

<sup>43</sup> Dávid Csorba, “Frontier existence as the Self-Image of the Hungarian Reformed Church in the Seventeenth Century (1606-1711)” in Ábrahám Kovács. *Calvinism on the Peripheries: Religion and Civil Society in Europe*, (Budapest: L’Harmattan, 2009), 217-239, 218.

<sup>44</sup> Graeme Murdock, “Death, Prophecy and Judgment in Transylvania” in Bruce Gordon and Peter Marshall (eds.), *The Place of the Dead. Death and Remembrance in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, (Cambridge: CUP, 2000): 206-23, 209.

dogmatic system, and the consciousness of belonging to a particular confessional community became more and more enunciated<sup>45</sup>), marking a shift in the socio-political and cultural structures of different societies.

After the devastating losses in the battle of Mohács in 1526, the territory of Hungary became a fertile soil for the embracing of Reformist ideals (see the maps illustrating the spreading of the Reformation in Hungary in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2). “The first preachers of Christian freedom in Hungary were lay people, both men and women. At the very beginning, the new ideas were discussed informally, in places where people were accustomed to meet socially”.<sup>46</sup> In Katalin Péter’s conception this idea of lay people being entitled to spread the message of the Bible reflects the main attraction of the Reformation for the common people: one did not need clerical intermediaries to achieve salvation, since the sole intermediary became Jesus Christ. In the first wave of the Reformation, Lutheran (and later Melancthonian) ideas spread in the German speaking communities of the country (in the German speaking towns of Western Hungary, in Szepes, in the mining towns of Upper Hungary, and among Transylvanian Saxons). From the Transylvanian Saxons the ideas of the Lutheran Reformation quickly found adherents in most parts of the territory of Transylvania. The support of big landowners, towns and boroughs played an essential role in the solidification of the Reformation in Hungarian lands. The other crucial role was played by Protestant preachers, who exerted great influence in all three parts of the country.<sup>47</sup>

The first important step in the formation of an independent Lutheran ecclesiastical system was made in 1542 by the chaplain of Kronstadt and Hermannstadt, who commissioned Johannes Honterus to develop a plan in the Wittenberg spirit of an

<sup>45</sup> Of course, this is just an idea-typical characterization.

<sup>46</sup> Katalin Péter, “Hungary” in Bob Scribner, Roy Porter, and Mikuláš Teich (eds.), *The Reformation in National Context*, (Cambridge: CUP, 1994), 156.

<sup>47</sup> Péter Tusor, *Katolikus konfesszionalizáció a kora újkori Magyarországon* [Catholic confessionalization in early modern Hungary], (Budapest: Egyetemi Jegyzet PPKE, 2008), 35 .

independent church organization for the Transylvanian Saxons. In 1545 at the synod of Erdőd (today Ardud, Romania) the priests of Szatmár and Szilágy counties accepted the Lutheran confession<sup>48</sup>, and in 1547 the synod of Mediasch ordained all Saxons to accept the Lutheran regulation as formulated by Honterus, the *Reformatio ecclesiarum Saxonicarum*.<sup>49</sup> In 1557 the diet called for assembling a synod to reconcile the views of the Catholic and Evangelical clergy, but this initiative soon failed, and by 1558 the diet accepted an independent Lutheran church within the Principality. “Once appeals for unity failed, the diet quickly decided to bolster political stability by permitting religious diversity”.<sup>50</sup> Thus by the time Calvinist ideals penetrated the country, Lutheranism had already formed a solid base.

The spread of Calvinism triggered resistance among the adherents of the *Confessio Augustana*, still they could not hinder the advancement of Reformed thoughts. Here again preachers adhering to the new confessional tenets played a great role in the forming of Calvinist communities. From the late 1550s a Hungarian Reformed Church started to emerge in Transylvania, distinguishing itself by an adherence to Calvinist doctrines of the sacrament. Still, the confessional statements of the synods held in the 1560s “proved to be rather eclectic mixtures of Calvinist, Bezan, Zwinglian, and some Melanchthonian ideas”.<sup>51</sup> In 1567, the Reformed synod held at Debrecen adopted Heinrich Bullinger’s *Second Helvetic Confession*.<sup>52</sup> Antitrinitarian ideas started to be propagated around 1563 when Giorgio Biandrata came to the Principality. Antitrinitarianism was strengthened when

<sup>48</sup> “A többi hitágazatokban egyetértünk az igaz egyházzal, a mint az nyilván látható azon hitvallásban, a mely Ágostában, V-dik Károly mindig felséges győzhetetlen császárnak 1530-dik évben beadott.” (I. Erdődi zsinat, 1545). The quotes are taken from Áron Kiss (ed.), *A XVI. században tartott Magyar református zsinatok végzései* [The orders of Hungarian Reformed synods from the sixteenth century], (Budapest: Franklin-Társulat Nyomdája), 1881, 14.

<sup>49</sup> Tusor, *Katolikus konfesszionalizáció* [Catholic confessionalization], 38-39.

<sup>50</sup> Graeme Murdock, “Multiconfessionalism in Transylvania” in Thomas Max Safley (ed.), *A Companion to Multiconfessionalism in the Early Modern World*, (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2011), 393-416, 401.

<sup>51</sup> Murdock, *Calvinism on the Frontier 1600-1660*, 12.

<sup>52</sup> One of the most relevant synods in the history of the Hungarian Reformed Church. The confession (two confessions were formulated, one in Hungarian and one in Latin) basically strengthened the previously accepted Calvinist and Bezan tenets, and it put a special emphasis on defending trinitarianism. The synod also decreed a new canon law that defined the constitution of the Hungarian Reformed Church for centuries. See the full text of the confession in Áron Kiss (ed.), *A XVI. században tartott Magyar református zsinatok végzései* [The orders of Hungarian Reformed synods from the sixteenth century], 459-613.

Ferenc Dávid, former superindendent of the Lutheran Church embraced the new confession, and started to spread its tenets.<sup>53</sup> Consequently, by the end of the 1560s, five denominations prevailed in the Principality: Reformed, Lutherans, Antitrinitarians, Catholics, and Orthodox.<sup>54</sup>

In January 1568, the Transylvanian Diet convened at Torda (today Turda, Romania) and recognized the constitutional rights of four ‘received religions’.<sup>55</sup> This “political compromise”<sup>56</sup> was the result of many negotiations, and in the end the Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Reformed, and anti-Trinitarian churches were given equal legal status. In 1572 another diet, led by István Báthory, decided to implement a law against doctrinal innovations, thus preventing the emergence of new religious groups.<sup>57</sup> This law basically obliged the newly born confessional communities and the prince alike to become a warden of orthodoxy.<sup>58</sup> “If superintendents failed to act against internal dissent, then the secular authorities were empowered to imprison or execute any clergy who promoted doctrinal “innovation”, as well as to punish those who supported them”.<sup>59</sup> In 1591 a new law was

<sup>53</sup> Tusor, *Katolikus konfesszionalizáció* [Catholic confessionalization], 42-43.

<sup>54</sup> The Orthodox Church had always enjoyed certain privileges in the Principality, but it never acquired an official legal status.

<sup>55</sup> “Urunk ő felsége miképen ennek előtte való gyűlésibe országával közönséggel az religio dolgáról végezött, azonképpen mostan és ez jelen való gyűlésébe azont erősíti, tudniilik, hogy mindön helyökön az prédikátorok az evangeliomot prédikálják, hirdessék, kiki az ő értelme szerint, és az község ha venni akarja, jó, ha nem penig senki kényszerítéssel ne készerítse az ő lelke azin meg nem nyugodván, de oly prédikátort tarthasson, az kinek tanítása ő nékie tetszik. Ezért penig senki az superintendensök közül, se egyebek az prédikátorokat meg ne bánthassa, ne szidalmaztassék senki az religióért senkitől, az elébbi constitutiók szerint, és nem engedtetik ez senkinek, hogy senkit fogsággal, avagy helyéből való priválással fenyőgessön az tanításért, mert az hit istennek ajándéka, ez hallásból lesson, mely hallás istennek ígéje által vagyon.” (1568. Jan. 6-13, A tordai országgyűlés határozatai). The quotes are taken from Sándor Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek, vol.2* [Memories of the Transylvanian Diet], Budapest: Akadémia, 1877, 343. However, as Mihály Balázs has proven, the law of 1568 had not yet contained the legitimization of the four religions, it only confirmed the free propagation of various doctrines, and the freedom of further reforming initiatives. The full legitimacy of the four religions was only declared in 1595.

<sup>56</sup> Graeme Murdock, “Principatul Transilvaniei în epoca confesională” [The Principality of Transylvania in the Confessional Period]. *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai – Historia* 1-2(2008), 59-75, 68.

<sup>57</sup> “ha külömb és új dolognak vallásában találatnak, ő nagysága excommunicáltassa, mely excommunicatióval ha ők nem gondolnak, ő nagyságának autoritása legyen efféléknek megbüntetésére az ő érdekem szerint.” (*EOE, vol.2.*, 528). The reverberations of this decree were strongly felt in the religious politics of Gábor Bethlen and the Rákóczi princes.

<sup>58</sup> Edit Szegedi, “Politica religioasă a principilor reformati” [The religious policy of the Reformed princes], *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai – Historia* 1-2(2008): 76-99, 79.

<sup>59</sup> Murdock, “Multiconfessionalism”, 403.

passed which forbade the nobles to convert their serfs to their own religion. These decrees had been embedded in the political and religious system of the principality. Each ruler made a promise upon their election to defend the “received religions” of the estates.<sup>60</sup> This religio-political heritage had a great impact upon the organization and consolidation of a new form of Transylvanian government pursued by Reformed princes in the seventeenth century.

The ascension to the throne of István Bocskay (21 February, 1605) marked the beginning of a new era in the life of Transylvanian Protestant churches.<sup>61</sup> Even if the religious policy of accommodating religious differences was maintained, during the first half of the seventeenth century the Reformed church gained a dominant position in the principality, which was primarily attributable to the support and patronage of Transylvania’s new rulers. “Reformed religion acquired the status of public orthodoxy in Transylvania during this period, with Reformed clergy, nobles, and princes dominating politics and society”.<sup>62</sup> Reformed princes defended their co-religionists in various disagreements over church buildings, they supported the development of the educational system, they encouraged student ministers to study polemic theology at western universities in order to be able to refute the beliefs of the rival confessions, they were given advice by their court chaplains and other clergy members, and they were great patrons behind the publication of many Reformed texts.<sup>63</sup> Transylvania’s princes also propagated the implementation of the Church’s program of moral and social discipline; for .e.g. Gábor Bethlen introduced a very strict new law code in 1619 at the request of the Küküllő synod.<sup>64</sup> This strong interrelatedness between secular and spiritual spheres perfectly reflected Calvin’s stance on this issue:

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 404.

<sup>61</sup> János Pokoly, “Az erdélyi fejedelmek viszonya a protestáns egyházakhoz” [The relation of Transylvanian princes to Protestant churches], *Protestáns Szemle* 8 (1896): 546-61, 608-24, 608.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Murdock, “Multiconfessionalism”, 405.

<sup>64</sup> In more details see Murdock, *Calvinism on the Frontier*, 246-47.

“The end of secular government, however, while we remain in this world, is to foster and protect the external worship of God, defend pure doctrine and the good condition of the Church, accommodate the way we live to [the requirements of] human society, mould our conduct to civil justice, reconcile us one to another and uphold and defend the common peace and tranquility”.<sup>65</sup>

All this resulted in a close alliance between the Reformed Church and princely power: “A dominant Calvinist confession offered Transylvania’s princes the prospect of shaping a disciplined society in which popular religiosity and behaviour was being tamed and ordered, and a society in which their authority was sanctified by Reformed clergy across their territory”.<sup>66</sup>

The reign of the two Rákóczi princes signaled a new period in the constitutional transformation of the Reformed church: the prince became one of the most important elements in the ecclesiastical conduct and legislation.<sup>67</sup> In some cases, this also led the ruler to assume the role of a *summus episcopus* within the Reformed church, arousing sometimes displeasure and anxiety among the clergy.<sup>68</sup> Therefore, it was in a way unavoidable that within such circumstances the initiative of introducing the presbyterial system into the Principality soon found its adherents among the members of the Reformed church (János Dali Tolnai, and later Pál Medgyesi – see a more detailed elaboration in Chapter 4.4). However, this reform program did not win princely support neither under György Rákóczi I nor Rákóczi II. No one could convince the old Rákóczi about the expediency of the new organization, and as one will see later, Rákóczi II adopted an even more hostile attitude towards the new tenets.

Despite the strong interconnectedness between various clergymen and the prince, the Reformed Ecclesia found itself in a more subservient position towards the Transylvanian government as it had hoped. Still, this did not cease Reformed preachers from regarding their princes as decisive elements in furthering the program of the Reformation. And this

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<sup>65</sup> John Calvin, *On Civil Government* in Harro Höpfl (ed. and transl.), *Luther and Calvin On Secular Authority*, (Cambridge: CUP, 1991), 49.

<sup>66</sup> Murdock, *Calvinism on the Frontier*, 249.

<sup>67</sup> Pokoly, “Az erdélyi fejedelmek viszonya” [The relation of Transylvanian princes], 618.

<sup>68</sup> See also Pokoly, op. cit., 608.



agenda of the reformers was meant to leave an imprint on religion, culture, politics, practically on all areas of everyday life. This implies that these preachers also developed a particular type of “political thinking”<sup>69</sup> that was guided by their religious and theological concerns. They projected a Biblical ideal-type onto the current ruler, and this way draw a sacral aura around the realm. Within this theologico-political constellation the Reformed Church in a way instrumentalized princely power, and considered it as a perfect means to culminate the ultimate goal of the Reformation. But what kind of “political thinking” could these preachers develop? And more importantly, what were the forums where they could actually “give voice” to their opinion?

The death of the ruler or a magistrate could create such a communications space. Through their representational and performative value funeral speeches could become parts of a (political) public sphere, and let us not forget that these speeches were not just parts of an oral form of communication, but they were also elements of an aural and a written type of communication.<sup>70</sup> The special cultural, social, religious and political circumstances the Transylvanian Principality was embedded within contributed to an enmeshing of divergent models of public sphere and political discourses – a phenomenon that in Western Europe could have hardly been possible.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> During this time the political thinking (by which I mean the way certain preachers imagined the relationship between the civil government, to use the Calvinian term and the Calvinist Church, and the way they visualized their role in society) of Reformed preachers was dependent on a variety of factors. Let us bear in mind that most of them studied at foreign universities for a shorter or longer period of time, which perfectly enabled them to get acquainted with the current political trends in Europe. They could also witness the different modes the program of the Reformation was furthered or on the contrary, hindered by magisterial power.

<sup>70</sup> On the categorization of various forms of communication see more in Leindulf Melve, *Inventing the Public Sphere. The Public Debate during the Investiture Contest (1030-1122), Vol. 1*, (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2007), 7-11. From this perspective it would also be interesting to determine whether this particular genre (both as performance and “text”) with its characteristic discursive techniques might have shaped a new, distinct type of (political) public sphere.

<sup>71</sup> Bene Sándor, “A történeti kommunikációelmélet alkalmazása a magyar politikai eszmetörténetben – A kora újkori model” [The application of historical communication theory in the history of ideas of Hungarian politics – The early modern model], *ItK* 3-4(2001): 285-315, 288.

## 2.2. *De administrando Transylvaniae* – The Political (?) Public Sphere

The Reformation had truly signaled a breakthrough in means of expanding the public sphere and enriching the genres suitable for religious and political propaganda. Of course, this so-to-say *public sphere* had never existed as one unified, homogenous entity. To be even more precise, one can say that during this time one should reckon with multiple communicative spaces that were in a continuous formation and alteration. Their role can only be evaluated by scrutinizing the discourse and motivations of the agents, who “constructed” them. The public sphere of religious polemics opened up a new communications space where questions pertaining to political issues that had already intertwined with dogmatic problems, could become parts of public disputations.<sup>72</sup> But what sort of communications space could funeral speeches open up?<sup>73</sup> In order to get closer to answering this question, first one has to look at the possible contemporary models of the public sphere.

The ideal of a (*political*) *public sphere* in contemporary Hungary and the Principality of Transylvania developed from three types of previous discourses: from the communication practices of the Middle Ages chronicles and chancery charters, from the forms of communication of humanist literary publicity, and from the public discourse of various religious polemics.<sup>74</sup> Certainly, all three types of discourses had a broader “imagined audience” through the media of literacy, printing, and the emergence of the vernaculars.<sup>75</sup>

<sup>72</sup> Bene, *Theatrum politicum*, 332.

<sup>73</sup> Gábor Kecskeméti has already attempted to introduce methodological innovations in the study of old Hungarian literature in general and of funeral speeches in particular. He realized this by employing the model of historical communication theory as a concept of history of ideas. See Gábor Kecskeméti, “A történeti kommunikációelmélet lehetőségei” [The possibilities of historical communication theory], *ItK* 99 (1995): 561-76.

<sup>74</sup> Bene, *Theatrum politicum*, 330.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

Audiences were “mentally produced as an otherness within one’s own discourse”.<sup>76</sup> According to the classification of Sándor Bene, during this time both in Hungary and the Principality of Transylvania one could encounter two models of public sphere that determined the forms of political discourse: the courtly one and the model defined by the estates.<sup>77</sup> The political discourse defined by these patterns was organized along the current models of state theory and political organization; the Principality of Transylvania and Hungary were both characterized by interference between absolutist, centralizing endeavors and aspirations towards estate autonomy; by a *ragion di stato* conceptualization of politics and a humanist, Ciceronian ideal of the *respublica*.<sup>78</sup> However, even in the case of the estates one could not speak of homogeneity in their pursuits. In the case of the Transylvanian Principality, it is important to note that the ambitions of the nobility were mediated by a political culture that still bore the imprint of the traditions of the medieval Hungarian Kingdom.

“The principality’s single chamber diet had its origins in a 1459 pact between Transylvania’s Hungarian speaking nobles, German-speaking urban magistrates, and the lords of militarized Szekler communities [...] The role of the diet was further enhanced in 1566 when János Zsigmond Szapolyai obtained the Sultan’s agreement that the diet should hold elections to decide their ruler”.<sup>79</sup> Usually, two or more diets were held a year. During the reign of Gábor Bethlen however, this number decreased to one, and the sphere of affairs to be discussed was significantly narrowed down.<sup>80</sup> The diet was composed of the princely council and the members of the princely board, some royal officers, as well as members of high nobility who were invited by the prince. Even if the estates were represented at the

<sup>76</sup> Melve, *Inventing the Public Sphere*, 11.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 343.

<sup>78</sup> Bene, *Theatrum politicum*, 344.

<sup>79</sup> Murdock, “Multiconfessionalism”, 398.

<sup>80</sup> Teréz Oborni, “Erdély. Abszolutizmus vagy rendi centralizmus?” [Transylvania. Absolutism or Estate Centralism?], *Rubicon* VII, 4-5(1996) - [http://www.rubicon.hu/magyar/oldalak/erdely\\_abszolutizmus\\_vagy\\_rendi\\_centralizmus/](http://www.rubicon.hu/magyar/oldalak/erdely_abszolutizmus_vagy_rendi_centralizmus/) Accessed on [26.04.2014].

diet, most members were chosen by the ruler, which made it possible that he could make them vote most of his proposals.<sup>81</sup> Besides the Transylvanian diet the princely council was the other political forum of the estates.

Similarly to the structure of the diet, the traditions of the Middle Ages also left an imprint on the organization of the council. The royal council of János Szapolyai was a large number corporation, comprising clerical and lay dignitaries, gentry-delegates, and the confidants of the prince.<sup>82</sup> This political body presented a different image under each ruler. After Szapolyai's death its composition had to accommodate to the changes in the social organization of Transylvania. In 1548 the council broke with medieval conventions; the number of its members was decreased to twelve, having four-four delegates from each "nation".<sup>83</sup> At the diets of 1556, and consecutively of 1559 the estates transferred the right of electing councilors to Izabela Jagiellonka and János Zsigmond, therefore the council could no longer be regarded as a representative body of the estates.<sup>84</sup> Still, they kept the right to choose their ruler, but this choice always had to be confirmed by an *athname* from the sultan – only this document could legitimize the new rule.<sup>85</sup> Even if the development of the council was hindered by the troubled reign of Zsigmond Báthory<sup>86</sup> and the rapid change of princes at the beginning of the seventeenth century, the reign of Gábor Bethlen had finally consolidated the council's power.<sup>87</sup> The estates succeeded in including into the conditions of princely elections the rights and duties of the council, thus restricting the ruler's power. Among these conditions were the keeping of *libera uox*, the maintaining of

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> Ildikó Horn, "Az erdélyi fejedelmi tanács 1648-1657" [The Transylvanian princely council 1648-1657] in idem, *Tündérország útvesztői. Tanulmányok Erdély történelméhez* [The labyrinths of Fairyland. Essays for the history of Transylvania], (Budapest: ELTE BTK Történelemtudományi Doktori Iskola, 2005), 232-56, 232-33.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Oborni, "Erdély" [Transylvania].

<sup>86</sup> Reigned between 1588 and 1602, with intermissions.

<sup>87</sup> Horn, "Az erdélyi fejedelmi tanács 1648-1657" [The Transylvanian princely council 1648-1657], 234.

the laws of the country and the franchise of the nobility, and the ensuring of the freedom of the ‘four received religions’.<sup>88</sup>

If one takes a look at the religious distribution of the Transylvanian princely council during the period of Gábor Bethlen and the two Rákóczi princes, one can notice that among the twenty-eight councilors of Bethlen thirteen were Catholic, six Reformed, three Lutheran, three Unitarian, one Sabbatarian, and the remaining two’s denomination is uncertain. During the time in power of György Rákóczi I among the nineteen councilors six were Catholic, seven Reformed, two Lutheran, three Unitarian, and one’s denomination is unknown. Until 1657 György Rákóczi II had twelve councilors, among which four were Catholic, six Reformed, one Lutheran, and one Unitarian.<sup>89</sup> It can be seen that in spite of the fact that these princes were devout Calvinists, they equally assured the participation of members belonging to the four ‘received religions’ in the various decision-makings of the country (even if in many cases this proved to be only a formality). Especially the time of Gábor Bethlen marked a fruitful period for the Catholic elite in having a say in the decisions of the council. As Gábor Bethlen himself formulated it in one of his letters to Péter Pázmány: “I have not contemned anyone for the sake of religio”.<sup>90</sup> However, the stern political and religious views of György Rákóczi I meant a setback for the Catholic cause. He tried to hinder all possible ways through which the Hungarian Catholic church and the Habsburgs could influence Transylvania’s home affairs, therefore he rather accepted the Bosnian Franciscans functioning near Karánsebes (today Caransebeș, Romania), where he saw no threat of Habsburg standing.<sup>91</sup> In any case, the members of the council hoped to become essential factors in shaping Transylvania’s home and foreign affairs alike. Even if

<sup>88</sup> Oborni, “Erdély” [Transylvania].

<sup>89</sup> Ildikó Horn, “Az erdélyi katolikus elit Pázmány Péter korában” [The Transylvanian Catholic elite in the time of Péter Pázmány] in idem, *Tündérország útvesztői. Tanulmányok Erdély történelméhez* [The labyrinth of Fairyland. Essays for the history of Transylvania], 188-200, 190.

<sup>90</sup> “én a religióért eddig senkit meg nem vettem”. Gábor Bethlen to Péter Pázmány, 1625 July 14, Vásárhely (today Târgu Mureș, Romania) in Frankl Vilmos (szerk.), *Pázmány Péter levelezése* [The correspondence of Péter Pázmány], (Budapest: Akadémia, 1873), 445.

<sup>91</sup> Horn, “Az erdélyi katolikus elit” [The Transylvanian Catholic elite], 197-98.

in most cases this aspiration did not come to fruition, the relevance of the council cannot be underestimated. It is not by chance that later Pál Medgyesi, court chaplain of György Rákóczi I and one of the main protagonists of this work lamented upon the loss of good and useful councilors.

Regardless of their influence on princely policy, the Transylvanian diet and the council were crucial in influencing public opinion. Ideally, the public sphere defined by the estates coincided with the political public sphere in terms of public law; the country as *corpus politicum* was one with the diet – but of course in practice the communication space of political discourse was significantly broader (the circle whose opinion was illustrated in different gravamens, pamphlets, pasquinades was comprised of familiares, commoners, soldiers of the “valiant order”, haiduks, etc.).<sup>92</sup> The estates tried to ensure the right of *libera uox*, stressing the importance of the full number of the council; still under the rule of György Rákóczi I this number had been continuously decreasing from 1637 (interestingly this was also the year when the old prince composed his *Princely Parainesis*, to his oldest son, György) until it reached its most critical point in 1644-46, when the number of the councilors was four.<sup>93</sup> No wonder that in such a situation the interests of the estates could no longer be represented in the desired way. Within these circumstances the character of the courtly public sphere had also been altered. Similarly to the political endeavors of the estates, the members of this forum started imagining serving the *bonum publicum* with employing various communication techniques of *simulatio* and *dissimulatio*, but at the same time they considered this public good as a token in maintaining the country, which did not necessarily coincide with the Ciceronian *respublica* imagined by the estates.<sup>94</sup>

Besides the courtly and estate-defined public sphere, contemporary scholarship has been trying to distinguish a third type, namely a “virtually existent bourgeois public

<sup>92</sup> Bene, *Theatrum politicum*, 347.

<sup>93</sup> Horn, “Az erdélyi fejedelmi tanács 1648-1657” [The Transylvanian princely council 1648-1657], 235.

<sup>94</sup> Bene, *Theatrum politicum*, 348-49.

sphere”.<sup>95</sup> The appearance of this new model is considered to be connected to the emergence of Puritan ideologies in Hungarian territories.<sup>96</sup> Although, on a theoretical level the principles of Puritanism would have enabled the widening of the sphere of participants both on a political and on a religious level; practice showed a different and ambiguous image. Despite the great number of publications conceived in a Puritan spirit and the reforming initiatives of such prominent figures as János Tolnai Dali and Pál Medgyesi, Puritan endeavors never gained full legitimacy within the Reformed church (and accordingly, “officially” they did not transform the relationship between the Reformed Church and the Transylvanian government) in the Transylvanian Principality.<sup>97</sup> Nevertheless, Puritan spirituality did play a role in the further development of political public spheres, and as one shall see funeral speeches proved to be excellent channels for this.

Of course, one should not regard these models as independent units, since they were in a continuous dialogue with each other. Therefore, instead of providing a more detailed analysis of these “artificially constructed” schemes, I would like to turn my attention to the analyzing of some main ideals on “good government” permeating religious and political discourses during these times in the Principality of Transylvania.

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 359-63.

<sup>96</sup> Since this thesis is not exclusively focusing on the emergence of Puritan doctrines in the context of the Transylvanian Reformation, here I would just like to focus on the issue of presbyteries, since considering church-princely government relationships I deem this the most significant. This is not to diminish the role of the Puritan doctrinal reform movement in the Principality, but considering the topic this paper is centered on, I deem providing main focus to the Puritan context would have lead the research into a different direction.

<sup>97</sup> Since one of my main actors, Pál Medgyesi is considered to be the epitome of Hungarian Puritanism, advocate of the *semper reformanda*, and propagator of the *praxis pietatis*, one has to count with the possibility that a funeral speech could have also become a channel through which Puritan ideals could enter the scene of public political discourse. Medgyesi translated Lewis Bayley’s *Praxis Pietatis* in 1636, and his work on the presbyterial system appeared in 1650, two years after the death of György Rákóczi I, and two years before the death of Zsigmond Rákóczi.

### 2.3. The Influence of Neostoic Political Philosophy in the Principality of Transylvania

At the end of the sixteenth and first part of the seventeenth century the greatest influence concerning political theory and philosophy in Hungary and the Principality of Transylvania was exerted by the Neostoic works of Justus Lipsius. “Philosophical Neostoicism was not the starting point, but the foundation of political Neostoicism, which constituted the theory behind the powerful military and administrative structure of the centralized state of the seventeenth century”.<sup>98</sup> As I have already alluded to, even if neither the court of the Habsburgs nor the court of Transylvanian princes could be regarded as absolutist without some concessions, there existed a certain type of court ideology and absolutist political theory; despite the apparent lack of a developed bourgeois society and a lower urbanization level, one could still count with a particular form of *respublica* ideology.<sup>99</sup>

In the Principality of Transylvania this interest towards political theory firstly manifested itself in the form of mirror for princes, which was basically a transitory genre between state theory and moral philosophy.<sup>100</sup> The most prominent works from this period were György Szepesi Korotz’s *Basilikon doron* (Oppenheim, 1612), János Pataki Füsüs’ *Királyoknak tüköre* [Mirror of kings] (Bártfa, 1626) and András Prágai’s *Fejedelmeknek serkentő órája* [The exhorting hour of princes] (Bártfa, 1628).<sup>101</sup> The first work concerning

<sup>98</sup> Gerhard Oestreich, *Neostoicism and the Early Modern State*, (Cambridge: CUP, 1982), 14.

<sup>99</sup> Bene, *Theatrum politicum*, 327.

<sup>100</sup> Márton Tarnóc, “Egy ismeretlen magyar nyelvű államelméleti munka” [An unknown Hungarian work on state theory], *ItK* 69, 4(1965): 701.

<sup>101</sup> A general overview on the genre of mirror for princes in Hungary and the Principality of Transylvania: Emil Hargittay, *Gloria, fama, literatura. Az uralkodói eszmény a régi magyarországi fejedelmi tükrökben* [Glory, fame, literature. Sovereign ideals in the mirror for princes in old Hungary], *Historia Litteraria* 10, (Budapest: Universitas, 2001).



state theory and administration relying completely on Justus Lipsius was István Vetési's *epistola cohortatoria* to György Rákóczi I from 1631, prefiguring János Laskai's translations of Lipsius' *De constantia* and *Politica* from 1641.<sup>102</sup>

We do not know much about István Vetési's life, but we know that he was a priest from Mezőtúr, and according to the letter addressed to György Rákóczi I, he was much appreciated at the princely court. Originally, he wanted to dedicate a translation of Xenophon's *Hieron* to Rákóczi I, but unfortunately we are not aware whether this translation was ever made or not.<sup>103</sup> The letter to the old prince however, was written, and it perfectly echoed the VII, VIII and IX chapter of the fourth book of Lipsius' *Politica*.<sup>104</sup> Before turning to a closer examination of Vetési's work, let us recall some of the essential principles underlying Lipsius' Neostoic political philosophy.

What clearly distinguished the Neostoic ideal from its Antique model was the appeal to activity and perseverance in everyday life. This call for will, reason and discipline set the basis for a new political system, where "the patient, obedient subjects would be leading their lives within the framework of changing constitutional forms".<sup>105</sup> Lipsius propagated the idea of an organic concept of the state, claiming that a political community, similarly to nature and human life was prone to the law of change, growth, and decline.<sup>106</sup> The tenets of this new form of political humanism, originating from the Netherlands had spread throughout

<sup>102</sup> The first edition of Lipsius' political tract appeared in Leiden in 1589, with the title *Politicorum sive civilis doctrina libri sex, qui ad principatum maxime spectant*. Its influence and popularity is attested by the fact that until the Thirty Years War the Latin original had been published twenty six times, and according to the extant data they printed about 1000-1500 copies on each occasion. Data taken from Hargittay, *Gloria, fama, literatura* [Glory, fame, literature], 112.

<sup>103</sup> Lately Gábor Kecskeméti has discussed the problematic aspects of this intention to translate Xenophon's work, underlining that one cannot simply regard it as another piece of the literary program expressing Rákóczi I's princely aspirations. See Gábor Kecskeméti, "Fordítani veszélyes. (Vetési István tervezett Xenophón-átültetéséről)" [It is dangerous to translate. On the planned Xenophon-translation of István Vetési] in Tünde Császtvay, Judit Nyerges (eds.), *Humanizmus és gratuláció: Szolgálatomat ajánlom a 60 éves Jankovics Józsefnek* [Humanism and congratulation: Paying tribute to the sixty-year old József Jankovics], (Budapest: Balassi kiadó-MTA Irodalomtudományi Intézet, 2009), 179-188.

<sup>104</sup> Tarnóc, "Egy ismeretlen magyar nyelvű államelméleti munka" [An unknown Hungarian work on state theory], 702.

<sup>105</sup> Oestreich, *Neostoicism*, 35.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

Europe in a relatively short span of time, due to Lipsius' rich correspondence. Within this intellectual framework, Lipsius also formulated a political theodicy that relied on four theses: 1. The dreadful times are sent by God; 2. They are inescapable and determined by fate; 3. They are beneficial for humankind; 4. They are neither severe nor new.<sup>107</sup> "For the Lipsian view of man and the world, carried over into the realm of politics, entails rationalization of the state and its apparatus of government, autocratic rule by the prince, the imposition of discipline on his subjects, and strong military defence".<sup>108</sup>

From this perspective Lipsius identified the source of power in five things: money, arms, council, alliances and fortune. This idea was also one of the organizing elements of István Vetési's letter: "Therefore one speaks about the power of the realm as the Ruler's great force with which he can protect himself and his Country, and his goods and others, with the help of these means: 1. Richness, 2. Arms, 3. Councils, 4. Leagues and alliances, 5. Good fortunes".<sup>109</sup> Vetési also echoed the Lipsian ideal that the realm of the country depended on two principles: *uis* and *uirtus*. These were supplemented with all the characteristics Vetési considered indispensable for the ideal ruler, e.g. gentleness, obedience, perseverance, dignity, charity, etc. This reflected the influence of the Christianized Ciceronian ideal of the commonweal. Moreover, this idea was also in dialogue with Calvin's view, who emphasized that "all magistrates are to take the greatest care not to give in, however little, to their passions [and] [...] must be guided by a concern for the public good."<sup>110</sup>

Vetési also asked the prince to show gentle obedience towards his subjects, and to behave like a father with his son. This motif is especially relevant, since the political

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., 30.

<sup>109</sup> "Az birodalomban való hatalmon / annakokaert értetik itt az Feiedelemnek oli néminemű / hatható hatalmas ereié, meliél mind magát es Orsza-/gát, mind penig maga javait es egiebeketis meg / oltalmazhattia! kire jmez Eött Ezkozok, egiesen se-/gitik 1. az Gazdagság 2. az Fegiver, 3. az Tanacsko-/zasok 4. az frigi kötések es szovedsegek. 5. az jo Szerencsek". I am using Márton Tarnóc's edition of this text. Tarnóc, "Egy ismeretlen magyar nyelvű államelméleti munka" [An unknown Hungarian work on state theory], 706.

<sup>110</sup> Calvin, *On Civil Government*, 64.

metaphor of the family constituted one of the most fundamental elements on the scene of political communication with the rulers,<sup>111</sup> and let us also bear in mind that “in the major Protestant confessions patriarchal authority in the family was, on the one hand, buttressed by the status of the male householder in the community, and, on the other hand, served as the social fabric upholding the confessional state”.<sup>112</sup> Although, in Vetési’s case this ideal of a gentle and devoted prince was detached from the question of *religio*, the aim of maintaining the realm and creating obedient subject was clearly stated. Even if Vetési did not explicitly deal with the issue of religion, his elaboration on constancy was very revealing. In this case, similarly to the political discourse of the estates, he saw the ideal of constancy embodied in preserving the current law, and he argued against novelties. Here again Vetési’s argumentation was similar to John Calvin’s conception, who considered magistrates as the defenders and guardians of the laws.<sup>113</sup>

Considering that Vetési spoke about the laws as one unit, not making any sort of hierarchy among them, one might surmise that he regarded them as equally important. Still, one should pay attention to the fact that the preacher warned the princes that they should not let such people being around them (a clear allusion to the princes’ councilors, and it could also refer to courtly priests), who would propagate the inauguration of novelties. Vetési’s idea can also send us back to the law against doctrinal innovations from 1572. And Vetési could have had fears about doctrinal innovations, and more importantly about changes in the relationship of the Reformed Church and the princely government. In the time Vetési wrote his letter there had already developed an aggressive stance towards the Sabbatharians, but also, already in 1612 György Korotz Szepesi, another Calvinist preacher translated the *Basilikon doron* (King James VI’s instructions on government, written to his son), where he reflected on the hostile attitude manifested against the Puritans: “Protect yourself, my

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<sup>111</sup> See Bene, *Theatrum politicum*, 346.

<sup>112</sup> R. Po-chia, *Social Discipline*, 144.

<sup>113</sup> See Calvin, *On Civil Government*, 51.

beloved son from the company and science of those Puritans, like from the carcass of the Ecclesia and the ordinary Civil Society.”<sup>114</sup> Maintaining the law and morals that had already been established – this was the political ideal Vetési imagined the princely realm was supposed to rest on. Nevertheless, he did not completely reject the possibility of innovations, but he underlined that these must be done slowly and carefully.

In Vetési’s conception the proper government had to be directed with severity, constancy, and it had to be dependent on the prince only. “Therefore the form of the reign should be with severity, constancy, and should only be attached to the Prince”.<sup>115</sup> The rule with sternness it was necessary for maintaining the common good: “Thus the sternness in the reign is necessary for maintaining the common good, because without it no Country or even a city could be governed”.<sup>116</sup> The prince therefore had to show gentle obedience towards his subjects, but he also had to be a firm hand in order to raise fear. This idea can also recall Calvin’s argument about the right to kill of the ruler: “The Law of God prohibits killing. But in order that murders shall not go unpunished, the Lawgiver himself puts the sword into the hands of his ministers, to be used against all murderers”.<sup>117</sup> It is also interesting to note that even if Vetési recalled the Ciceronian ideal of the *respublica*, he did not speak about the estates. The only “estate” whose relevance Vetési acknowledged was the “valiant order” (“vitézlő rendek”), but only as long as they were protecting the prince.

<sup>114</sup> “Megh oyjad annakokaert magadat szerelmes Fiam attol az Purtianusoknak tarsasagától, szerzetektől, és tudományoktól, ugymint az Anyaszentegyháznac, és az közönséges Polgári tarsaságnac döghitől.” György Korotz Szepesi, *Basilikon dorón*, (Oppenheim, 1612) quoted in Tamás Gergely Fazakas, “A könyörgő uralkodó reprezentációi és az alázatosság beszédmódja a 17. század első felében” [Representations of the Praying Prince and Discourse of Humility in the Early Seventeenth Century] in Gergely Tamás Fazakas, György Miru, and Ferenc Velkey, “*Politica philosophiai okoskodás*”. *Politikai nyelvek és történeti kontextusok a középkortól a 20. századig* [“Politico-philosophical reasoning”. Political languages and historical contexts from the Middle Ages to the twentieth century], (Debrecen: Debreceni Egyetem, 2013), 99-117, 104.

<sup>115</sup> “Az birodalomnak azért formaia kevantatik 1. hagi ke- / menseggel légien, 2. Alhatatossaggal, 3. hagi csak az Feie-/delemhez kapcsoltatot légien”. Tarnóc, “Egy ismeretlen magyar nyelvű államelméleti munka” [An unknown Hungarian work on state theory], 705.

<sup>116</sup> “Jgi tehát az birodalomban való / kemeniség az közönséges jónak meg maradásáért szükséges, /meli nekul nem hagi egi Ország sot csak egi varosis / haznoson nem jgazgattathatik.” Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> Calvin, *On Civil Government*, 60.

Lipsius deemed princely rule to be “the oldest, most natural, most reasonable and most common form of government”, one that can assure *pax* and *Concordia*.<sup>118</sup> In spite of the fact that Lipsius demanded that, preferably there should be only one religion in the state, in order to avoid discord and continuous revolts; he also underlined that in case of unfavorable circumstances the ruler should compromise, and wait for a better opportunity.<sup>119</sup> Vetési did not argue here in favor of one religion, but he did emphasize the fact that the prince should be Christian and pious, and he should behave in such a way with his subjects, that they would feel as if they were working next to God. This idea can be interpreted as an attempt to legitimize a theocratic type of rulership. As Calvin himself formulated it: “The first duty of subjects towards their magistrates is to hold their office in the highest possible regard; that is, to recognize it as a commission delegated by God, and on this account to revere them as God’s ministers and representatives.”<sup>120</sup> But towards the end of his work Vetési made a rather startling remark: “[The subjects] endure more easily the injustice of such Princes whom they believe to be a god-fearing and holy man. They do not even dare to viciously prey upon them, knowing that God put up his holy hands for their protection and providence”.<sup>121</sup> Here, Vetési found a way to incorporate injustice into a Christian-Ciceronian type of moral and political philosophy.

The letter of István Vetési marked an important step concerning the development of Neostoic “state-theories” in the Principality of Transylvania. This initiative was brought to completion by the translations of Lipsius’ *De Constantia* and *Politica* by János Laskai. But István Vetési and János Laskai were not the only ones who wanted to shape contemporary political thinking, by propagating the politico-philosophical ideals of Justus Lipsius.

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<sup>118</sup> Oestreich, *Neostoicism*, 43.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, 45-46.

<sup>120</sup> Calvin, *On Civil Government*, 74.

<sup>121</sup> “Sokkal konniebben / szenvedik penig az ollian Feiedelmekteol az jgassagtalan / dolgokatis, az kit Isten félőnek es szfent] embernek tudnak / lenni. Nemis mernek az ollianok után gonozul lesel-/kedni, tudván hogi az Isten azoknak oltalmára es / gondviselésére sz[ent] kezeit fel húzta”. Tarnóc, “Egy ismeretlen magyar nyelvű államelméleti munka” [An unknown Hungarian work on state theory], 707.

## 2.4. *Non est currentis neque volentis sed est miserentis Dei* – György Rákóczi I's *Princely Paraenesis*

As the above presented have shown in the first part of the seventeenth century political theory and philosophy in the Principality of Transylvania strongly relied on the Neostoic political ideals of Justus Lipsius. These principles however, had to be adapted to the local socio-political and religious contexts, in order to become integral parts of a (public) political discourse. By the time György Rákóczi I came to power the erudition concerning state theory had already acquired a solid foundation. Consequently, this must have also contributed to the shaping and re-shaping of models of public sphere that determined the forms of political communication.

The letter of István Vetési practically coincided with the beginning of the reign of György Rákóczi I. It would be the task of a further research to analyze the extent to which the old prince adapted the ideals presented by Vetési to his governance principles. However, I would already preface here that the way Rákóczi I led the Transylvanian Diet and tried to organize his counseling bodies bore the imprints of the tenets expressed in István Vetési's work. But what I consider more relevant to be emphasized here is the fact that György Rákóczi I himself composed a work where he reflected on the main principles of the good princely governance. This work was his *Princely Paraenesis* written in 1637, six years after István Vetési's letter, and the same year a new chaplain came to princely court.

Rákóczi I addressed this exhortation to his oldest son, György in order show him the path he should follow in order to maintain the current state of the principality. In Vetési's

case one could see that he considered that the realm should only be dependent on the prince, who should also “shine” in the realm. This view came to be perfectly encapsulated in Rákóczi I’s assertion: “I am the example [to follow]” (“az példa is magam vagyok”). Connected to this aspect it is important to recall that Vetési also highlighted that the relation of the leader towards his subjects should mirror the relation of the father towards his children. As the subjects follow the example of their ruler, so does the son follow the steps of his father. Or to reconstruct Rákóczi I’s reasoning, if the son pursues the principles of his father, his subjects will respect and follow him.

Still, in Rákóczi I’s case there was a slight shift from Vetési’s conception in the way they perceived the relevance of the prince having faith in God, and more importantly the way they “assessed” the place of *religio* within the sphere of politics. Rákóczi I warned his son: “your reason, judgment, morals, life should be dedicated above all to the praising of his big name, to the building and improving of his Ecclesia, to the faithful serving and welfare of my dear nation and patria, [...] to the spreading of your good name and reputation”.<sup>122</sup> It is clear from this reasoning that the old prince regarded the improvement of the *Church* (which from Rákóczi I’s perspective could not have been other than the Reformed Church), the *nation* and the *patria* as equally important and correlative.

Similarly to Vetési’s cautions to the prince, Rákóczi I warned his son that he should be very careful and considerate in his decision makings, always ask for advice, and never make hasty choices. The old prince also emphasized that György should be extremely careful in choosing his words: “Be perseverant, perfect and secret in your speech, do not

<sup>122</sup> “értelmedet, ítéletedet, erkölcsödöt, életedet mindenkben az ő nagy nevének dicsíretére, anyaszentegyházának épületére, nevelésére, az én édes nemzetemnek s hazámnak hűséges szolgálatjára, javára, nekünk örömünkre s becsületünkre, másoknak jó példájokra, magadnak jó előmeneteledre s dicséretedre, jó hírednek-nevednek terjedésére, idvösségedre izgassa, vezérelje”. György Rákóczi I, *Fejedelmi Parainesis* [Princely Paraenesis] in Márton Tarnóc, *Magyar gondolkodók 17. század* [Hungarian Thinkers Seventeenth Century], (Budapest: Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó, 1979), 133-137, 133.

give opportunity to anyone to speak ill of you with your prating and telling secret things”.<sup>123</sup> This passage is particularly revealing if one considers the above presented characteristics of contemporary models of political public spheres. Even if the old prince did assign a role to religion within the sphere of politics, he still wanted to keep supreme control over church affairs, and did not want the Church to gain more independence than had already been given to it (this concern was even more enunciated when it came to the issue of presbyteries). Rákóczi I did not want to expand the lines of the courtly public sphere, this is why he highlighted the importance of being secret in one’s speech. Thus György Rákóczi I already wanted to assure in his life that his son would follow his ideals of good princely governance.

### ***3. Ante mortem ne laudes hominem***

#### **3.1. The Funeral Pomp**

It is unquestionable that the funeral pomp of a ruler or a politically significant nobleman was among the few instances when various members of the Transylvanian society could become part of a common politico-religious discourse. Even if during a funeral procession each group or person had its own assigned place, the death of a prince or a magistrate meant that they were supposed to partake in a collective grief. There were no “silent” elements of a funeral; each of them could have found a way “to communicate” in one way or another. The people spoke through their presence, their clothes, and their ranking. The decorative constituents spoke through their representational power. And of course, there were those actors who could communicate using the actual power of their words. The funeral pomp in

<sup>123</sup> “Beszédedben állhatatos, tökéletes, és titkos légy, ne adj senkinek szólásodra alkalmatosságot csacsogásoddal és titkos dolgoknak kibeszélésével.” Rákóczi I, *Fejedelmi Parainesis*, 133.



its entirety constituted the perfect medium for the articulation of a particular type of public sphere, which one should imagine as a multi-layered structure. First of all one has to count with the latent (and seemingly silent) presence of the members of the court and the estates. Second, one has to reckon with the public sphere as constructed by the funeral service itself (allowing at least the presence of members who could have never become parts of a (political) public sphere under ordinary circumstances. And third, there was the voice made sound by the preacher as a sort of superstructure on all this.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries there were an abundance of competing views regarding the legitimacy and necessity of the funeral pomp, and the way all this pompousness can be reconciled with the humility demanded by true faith.<sup>124</sup> Although, in some cases the testators made it explicit in their testimonies that they do not want a sumptuous funeral, the families usually disregarded this wish. This was especially relevant when it came to rulers and members of high nobility, since in these cases the funeral service had a “representational obligation”.<sup>125</sup> For this reason the noble funeral service was preceded by a set of arrangements. First of all the dead laid in state for some days. If the person in question had not died in the city where his burial place was meant to be, then first he was transported to the respective city, and then put in a temporary tomb.<sup>126</sup> There were also instances when the dead was not buried in the family vault, which could have many kinds of motivations, (the most important from this research’s perspective is the political one). This kind of attachment to the family tomb signaled the strength of family

<sup>124</sup> Kecskeméti, Nováky, *Magyar nyelvű halotti beszédek* [Hungarian funeral speeches], 10

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> Péter Apor, *Metamorphosis Transylvaniae* in István Bitskey (ed.), *Magyar emlékirók 16-18. század* [Hungarian memorial writers. Sixteenth-eighteenth Century], (Budapest: Szépirodalmi könyvkiadó, 1982), 658-66.

ties and the fact that the asset will belong to the family for time immemorial. Thus the burial place bore many significant connotations.<sup>127</sup>

The other important element of the funeral pomp was connected to the funeral procession, which by the seventeenth century had already acquired a more or less established order.<sup>128</sup> The extant descriptions of funeral processions belong to the members of the higher social classes.<sup>129</sup> These accounts are especially relevant if one aims at reconstructing the participants of these services, and consequently one could also approximately recreate the audience of the funeral speeches uttered over the dead (see the record of the funerals of the Rákóczi princes in Appendix 4 and Appendix 5). The processions were the most impressive and effective regarding their representational force.<sup>130</sup>

The center of the funeral pomp was the *castrum doloris*, an edifice that “welcomed” the dead body for the time of the funeral service.<sup>131</sup> The *castrum doloris* equally bore a liturgical and a triumphal function within the confines of the service.<sup>132</sup> After the funeral, the epitaph of the departed was placed above the tomb. These epitaphs could be of various sort, some of them were more ornate (these were generally painted and carved epitaphs or coat of arms), and others more modest. Usually the knightly weapons were also hung on the

<sup>127</sup> The funerals of Sr. István Bethlen and his youngest son, Péter Bethlen are representative from this perspective. In the subsequent chapter I will draw on this aspect, however the main focus will remain on the speeches.

<sup>128</sup> Kecskeméti, Nováky, *Magyar nyelvű halotti beszédek* [Hungarian funeral speeches], 14.

<sup>129</sup> Regarding the focus of this research it is very important to note that fortunately the description of György Rákóczi I's funeral it is known to contemporary scholarship thanks to the exploratory work of Ildikó Horn. See Ildikó Horn: “Ismeretlen temetési rendtartások” [Unknown funeral procedures], *ItK* 1998(5-6): 760-772.

<sup>130</sup> Unfortunately it would not be feasible within the confines of this thesis to devote a more detailed analysis to describe in great details each of the constituting elements of a funeral service. This does not mean that I consider them as being less relevant than the funeral speeches. Since those sources that strengthened the visual force of a service belong to material culture, it would also require an art historical methodology to treat them in an adequate way. An outstanding elaboration on these aspects see: Péter Szabó, *A végtisztesség. A főúri gyászszertartás mint látvány* [Funeral rites. The aristocratic funeral as a spectacle]. Magvető: Budapest, 1989. Also Ildikó Horn, op. cit.

<sup>131</sup> Apor Péter, *Metamorphosis Transylvaniae*, 665-66.

<sup>132</sup> Contemporary reckons with the existence of three *castrum doloris* from the seventeenth century, one of them belonging to the four members of the Esterházy family who lost their lives at Vezekény (1652), the other *castrum doloris* is Eszter Bossányi's (1661), and the third one is Ádám Czobor's (1692).

coat of arms.<sup>133</sup> One must also note that regarding the differences between Catholic and Protestant funeral pomp, the only distinction that can be made is that the Protestant funeral was less pompous so-to-say; Protestant mourners did not light torches or candles, and the *castrum doloris* was also less sumptuous.<sup>134</sup> In any case all these objects of the funeral were meant to keep the dead in remembrance.

### 3.2. The Rhetoric of Funerary Utterances

The most important stage of the funeral service was connected with different genres of religious literature, the most prominent among them being the *funeral sermon*, the *funeral oration*, and the *funeral poem*. The Catholics usually sang psalms and celebrated the mass next to the lay out body; the Protestants said prayers and sermons.<sup>135</sup> When the funeral procession started and when the body was put in the grave the Catholics held masses, and said sermons or orations, whilst the Protestants commemorated the death with prayers, sermons, orations and poems. All these parts could be delivered in Hungarian, Latin, and possibly also German or some Slavic language; in case the orators delivered more than one they could use different languages.<sup>136</sup> The most representative one concerning the focus of this research was the *funeral speech*.

As I have already prefaced this in the introductory part of the thesis, contemporary scholarship distinguishes between the genre of *funeral sermon* (a type of sermon that could be preached over any member of the community, held by a legitimate member of the clergy,

<sup>133</sup> In more details see Péter Szabó, “A fegyverzet szerepe a főúri gyászszertartásokon” [The role of weaponry at aristocratic funerals], *Ars Hungarica* (1986): 115-24.

<sup>134</sup> Kecskeméti, Nováky, *Magyar nyelvű halotti beszédek* [Hungarian funeral speeches], 17.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>136</sup> Kecskeméti, Nováky, *Magyar nyelvű halotti beszédek* [Hungarian funeral speeches], 18.

and usually focusing on religious issues) and that of *funeral oration* (also referred to as lay speech that was preached over members of noble origin, usually held by a lay orator, and besides religious concerns, also drawing on Antique and mythological motifs, whilst commemorating the deeds of the dead). From the beginning of the seventeenth century these two genres had started to blend, and the preacher also became a lay orator. This new form of oration had to harmonize the homiletic conventions of funeral sermons and the rhetorical requirements of funeral orations.<sup>137</sup> Due to this peculiar position it was very problematic to conceptualize such new type of speech. Hungarian scholarship introduced the generic term of *funeral speech*, “halotti beszéd”, to denote this blend of genres.

As I have already pointed out the largest number of extant funeral speeches are located in Germany. The printing of these texts was most spread among the Lutheran communities in the Northern territories of the Empire during the sixteenth century. Reformed communities only joined this tradition with a significant delay, and Catholics with an even bigger one.<sup>138</sup> In contrast to the abundance of German Lutheran printed funeral speeches, the printing of funeral speeches was accepted much later in the case of the adherents of the Swiss Reformation.<sup>139</sup> Until the expansion of the Heidelberg Catechism (the Bullinger-version) the Swiss Reformation’s prohibiting views on funeral sermons had also been prevalent in Hungary.<sup>140</sup> Still, from the second half of the sixteenth century the Protestants (especially the propagators of Reformed ideals) were the ones who started defending the grounds of funeral sermons and orations (both orally and in writing) in Hungarian territories.

The earliest extant Hungarian sacramentaries (“szertartási segédkönyv”) that provided a detailed guideline of employing funeral sermons were compiled by

<sup>137</sup> See also Kecskeméti, *Prédikáció, retorika, irodalomtörténet* [Sermon, rhetorics, literary history], 168-177.

<sup>138</sup> Kecskeméti. *Prédikáció, retorika, irodalomtörténet* [Sermon, rhetorics, literary history], 10.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, 140.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, 141.

Protestants.<sup>141</sup> The oldest Hungarian agenda, epitomizing the liturgical practices from the first decades of the Reformation, was the *Agenda*<sup>142</sup> of Gáspár Heltai from 1559 (though scholars believe that there must have been an earlier edition<sup>143</sup>), written yet in a Lutheran spirit. In the part describing the burial of the dead, Heltai highlighted that the funeral service was not meant for the dead but it served the community, so they could repent of their sins, contemplate on the resurrection, etc. The first Hungarian Catholic handbook appeared only in 1583 in Nagyszombat (today Trnava, Slovakia).<sup>144</sup>

Turning back to the Protestant use of funeral sermons, the Confession of Egervölgy from 1562 clearly stated that the aim of these creations was to fulfill didactic purposes (*docere*), and this statement was often echoed in the sermons themselves (for e.g. János Dajka Keserői, Ferenc Verécsi, Miklós Hodászi, etc).<sup>145</sup> Thus they “proved to be lively instruments for Reformed preachers to instruct their living noble congregations on the need to follow the model characteristics of the deceased, and aimed to stimulate religious piety and moral behavior.”<sup>146</sup> According to Miklós Hodászi<sup>147</sup> a good funeral speech should consist of five compositional units: exhorting the contemplation over death, remembering the resurrection, consoling with the hope of the resurrection and eternal life, enumerating of the good deeds of the dead, and regarding the honorable burial as an ornate manifestation of

<sup>141</sup> Ibid., 142.

<sup>142</sup> Heltai Gáspár, *Agenda az az Szentegyházi Chelekedetec, Mellyeket ko<sup>e</sup>uetnec ko<sup>e</sup>zenségesképpen à Keresztyeni Ministerec es Lelkipasztoroc. Vyonnan nyomtatott. Cum Gratia et Privilegio Serenissimarum Maiestatum Regiarum Hungariae etc.*, (Kolozsvár, 1559), RMK I, 37.

<sup>143</sup> See Kecskeméti, *Prédikáció, retorika, irodalomtörténet* [Sermon, rhetorics, literary history], 142.

<sup>144</sup> On the history of sacramentaries from the Middle Ages to the Early Modern period see: Dániel Bárh, *Esküvő, keresztelő, avatás. Egyházi és népi kultúra a kora újkori Magyarországon* [Marriage, baptism, initiation], (Budapest: MTA-ELTE, 2005).

<sup>145</sup> Kecskeméti, *Prédikáció, retorika, irodalomtörténet* [Sermon, rhetorics, literary history], 144.

<sup>146</sup> Murdock, “Death, Prophecy and Judgment in Transylvania”, 209.

<sup>147</sup> The speech I am referring to was preached over Zsófia Daróczi and published in the collection of sermons, *Temetési pompa* [Funeral splendour] commemorating the death of Péter Bethlen. Whole title: *Temetési pompa melly az tekintetes és nagyságos néhai gróf Iktári Behtlen Péternek, Hunyad és Máramaros vármegyéknek örökös főispánjának, 1646 esztendőben, kis-asszony havának harmadik napján, Bánban meghidegedett testének Lisszafalváról Nyírbátorban, temetésének helyére való megindításától fogva, az földben eltakarításáig, celebráltatott*, (Várad: Szenci Kertész Ábrahám, 1646), RMK I, 787.

brotherly love.<sup>148</sup> Doubtlessly, this homiletic didactics became even more enunciated in the printed version of these speeches.<sup>149</sup>

This does not mean, of course, that these texts did not have to meet the other two rhetorical requirements of *movere* and *flectere*, it simply means that Protestants tended to put teaching in the center of their funerary utterances. And this was what differentiated them from the Catholic practice, the latter being more keen on embellishing the text with a huge arsenal of tropical figures. Even if a particular preacher accentuated that the funeral speech was meant for the improvement of the living congregation, he also enhanced the importance of trying to gain testimony of one's own salvation, while one was still alive. The best way to acquire this testimony came through the detailed knowledge of the Scripture. This was a dominant motif of Protestant funerary discourse, and as one will see in the subsequent chapter it was also one of the main motifs of Pál Medgyesi's funeral speeches, and it was also prevalent in István P. Czeglédi's works. In these creations it was also often stressed that the word of the preacher ought to be regarded as if God were speaking through him.<sup>150</sup> This was a relevant aspect, since in such communicative situations the aim of the preacher could only be achieved if he acted like a divine agent.

While assuming this role of a mediator the preacher also had to accommodate to the intellectual and spiritual needs of his audience. As one can observe for e.g. in Pál Medgyesi's speeches the main moral and doctrinal messages were always formulated in a more concise and brief way. This conformity, however did not entail the obliteration of theological doctrines, moreover, these creations could have the same expressive force as a theological dispute.<sup>151</sup> However, when it came to the funeral service of a ruler or a member

<sup>148</sup> Kecskeméti, Nováky, *Magyar nyelvű halotti beszédek* [Hungarian funeral speeches], 18.

<sup>149</sup> Kecskeméti, *Prédikáció, retorika, irodalomtörténet* [Sermon, rhetorics, literary history], 159. This was especially the case with speeches uttered at the funeral of princes or members of the high-nobility and then published, sooner or later, after the funeral.

<sup>150</sup> Kecskeméti, *Prédikáció, retorika, irodalomtörténet* [Sermon, rhetorics, literary history], 144.

<sup>151</sup> In more details see Kecskeméti, *Prédikáció, retorika, irodalomtörténet* [Sermon, rhetorics, literary history], 145-59.

of high nobility, the polemical overtones, reflecting on confessional differences had to be restrained. From this perspective, it will be interesting to look at the funeral speech over György Rákóczi I, where the preacher explicitly declared the involvement of the ruler in confessional polemics, or in the case of Zsigmond Rákóczi's speech, where the opposition between orthodox Calvinism and Puritanism was made explicit. In all of these instances the didactic intention was the most prominent organizing element.

Besides the various parts that were aiming to the accomplishment of *docere*, the other relevant compositional unit of funeral speeches was the *laudatio*, the praise of the dead. This type of laudation was intensified by the glorification of the ancestors of the dead in the genealogy part of the speeches. These genealogies were especially relevant since this way the figures of the predecessors were mirrored in the figure of the departed and vice versa. The exaltation of the dead was strongly connected to the *lamentatio*, the grief over death. In Reformed speeches written over rulers and members of high nobility the preachers usually fashioned themselves as Jeremiahs, and from this position expressed their sorrow. Besides having a strong representational value, the *laudatio*, the genealogy, and the *lamentatio* also played a great role in deepening the feelings of loss and pain of the mourners.<sup>152</sup> But these means of *movere* also had to offer relief. This was expressed in the *consolatio* part of the speeches, where the preachers had to assure their audience that the earthly death was only the start of a new heavenly beginning. In some cases these speeches could have another compositional unit, that of a *funeral poem* where the preacher made the dead itself address the audience, and say farewell to his mourners, relatives, etc.<sup>153</sup>

Besides the above mentioned thematic compositional units the other commonality of the funeral speeches of the era pertained to their bound structure. This was characteristic of Catholics and Protestants alike, however the Protestant speeches (especially the Reformed

<sup>152</sup> Kecskeméti, Nováky, *Magyar nyelvű halotti beszédek* [Hungarian funeral speeches], 23.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

ones of the second half of the seventeenth century) presented an even stricter structure.<sup>154</sup> The parts of such works were: the text, the short description of the context, the division of the text, the explanatory section, the things one can learn from all these, the didactic, reproving, admonitory, refuting, and consoling gains, the conclusion, the adaption to the current occasion, the genealogy, and the funeral poem (if there was one).<sup>155</sup> It is also important to note that the printed texts tried to imitate the oral one, therefore the punctuation of these texts usually did not conform to grammatical rules, but they tried to mirror the acoustics of the speeches (e.g. one can find a comma before the emphatic words).<sup>156</sup> Thus, even if it would be almost impossible to determine the extent to which the printed texts were identical with their spoken counterpart, one can still extract from a meticulous analysis of the written version those elements that were considered to be indispensable for the preacher to emphasize. Moreover these texts also served as means of communication among noble courts; through their author, structure and message they provided an insight in the cultural and social life of the court.<sup>157</sup>

### 3.3. The Politico-Theological Image of King Josiah

As I have already highlighted in the methodological part of my thesis, one of the main characteristics of Reformed political theology in the Principality of Transylvania pertained to a rediscovery of Hebraic patriotism, which manifested through the reiteration of the fate of the Jews encapsulated in the Jewish-Hungarian providence parallel and through the motif

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<sup>154</sup> Ibid., 25.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

<sup>156</sup> Kecskeméti, Nováky, *Magyar nyelvű halotti beszédek* [Hungarian funeral speeches], 25.

<sup>157</sup> Luffy, “Műfajhasználat és reprezentáció főúri temetéseken” [The use of genres and representation at noble funerals], 50.



of portraying the principality's rulers as Old Testament kings. The most prominent one among them was King Josiah.

The Old Testament king Josiah was one of the most well-known images of godly monarchy at the disposal of Calvinist rulers across Europe.<sup>158</sup> Josiah became king of Judah when he was eight years old, and ruled for thirty one years.<sup>159</sup> During his reign (641-609 BC), Josiah restored Israel to its original glory, and it reformed Judah's religion by destroying the idolatrous practices of his father, Amon. Josiah succeeded in renewing the covenant between God and Israel, however - as the prophetess Huldah predicted – his reforms and reconstruction only delayed the arrival of divine judgment as a consequence of the earlier break of the covenantal relationship by Josiah's predecessors. By his act of continuing to install religious reforms despite knowing that he cannot evade the upcoming doom of Judah, Josiah's rule became a perfect model of godly rulership for Calvinists.<sup>160</sup> The figure and accomplishments of Josiah were frequently projected onto Europe's princes in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, "and the way this imagery of Protestant kingship was used by Calvinists demonstrates much about the ideology of the second reformation and about the political impact of Calvinism in early modern Europe."<sup>161</sup> Besides the image of Josiah, the other Old Testament kings frequently reoccurring in the various portrayals of rulers were David, Solomon, Hezekiah, Jehosaphat, etc. As one shall see in the upcoming chapter, using the examples of Old Testament kings became a central motif of Reformed funerary discourses.

As the concerns and disquiets of some members of the clergy grew about the furthering of the Reformation and its establishing of stronger connections with the Transylvanian government, the didactic tone of the sermons started to hinge on different

<sup>158</sup> Murdock, "The Importance of Being Josiah", 1047.

<sup>159</sup> See 2 Kings 21: 23-26.

<sup>160</sup> See also Murdock, "The Importance of Being Josiah", 1047.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

factors from the late 1640s. The already mentioned parallel between Transylvania and biblical Israel had become more prominent, and preachers started to deploy more and more events from the history of the Old Testament, giving a privileged position to Deuteronomy in order to show how the continuous displeasing of God can lead to catastrophes. “Such concerns provided the context within which the deaths of princes, noble and leading churchmen came to be widely understood as signs of impending divine judgment”.<sup>162</sup> The way Reformed preachers articulated their rhetorical-homiletic discourse shed a new light on the intertwining of the *Theological* and the *Political* in the confessional age.

## **4. The Role of Reformed Funeral Speeches within Contemporary Politico-Theological Constellations**

### **4.1. Introduction - Pál Medgyesi and the *Many Woes of Hungary***

On 11 October 1648, after eighteen years of reign prince György Rákóczi I died, leaving the principality in the hands of his oldest son, György Rákóczi II. The court chaplain, Pál Medgyesi<sup>163</sup> was commissioned to speak at his funeral on the 10 January 1649.

In 1653 his three orations uttered at the funerals of György Rákóczi I., Zsigmond Rákóczi and István Bethlen were published as *The Three Woes of Transylvania and the Whole Hungarian People* and dedicated to György Rákóczi II. Correlating contemporary events to Isaiah’s prophecy about Israel’s six laments, Medgyesi conceptualized these three deaths as the three woes of Hungary, interpreting them as a fulfillment of his previous

<sup>162</sup> Murdock, “Death, Prophecy and Judgment in Transylvania”, 215.

<sup>163</sup> Pál Medgyesi (1604-1663) was one of the most prominent figures of the Hungarian Calvinist Reformation. In 1638 he became the court chaplain of György Rákóczi I, and occupied this position until the death of the prince (1648). After this he left Gyulafehérvár with the widow of Rákóczi I, Zsuzsanna Lórántffy and moved to Sárospatak, where he served until his death.

prophecies. He believed that due to the fact that the program of the Reformation had not been completed and brought to perfection, more woes were about to afflict the Principality, with further death of leading rulers and nobles, potentially ending in a military disaster.<sup>164</sup> “Medgyesi seemed to gain early confirmation of the accuracy of his prophecy, with the deaths of three of György II Rákóczi’s most prominent councillors, Ferenc Bethlen, Zsigmond Barcsai and Mátyás Huszár”.<sup>165</sup> Johann Heinrich Bisterfeld, one of the most experienced theology professors and diplomats of the Rákóczi court also died in 1655. Many *woes* were afflicting the Principality.

In the end of July 1657, the army of György Rákóczi II, the new Transylvanian prince, got into Tatar captivity. The preparations for the risky campaign of Rákóczi II had been arising anxiety both among the subjects and among the members of the clergy.<sup>166</sup> It seemed that Medgyesi’s prophecies were gaining more and more credence. By that time not being a court chaplain in Gyulafehérvár, due to the hostile relationship that had developed between him and György Rákóczi II over the issue of reforms concerning ecclesiastical organization (i.e. the presbyteries, discussed in the subsequent parts of the chapter), the only medium to express his discontent were his speeches. In 1658 his collection of sermons, entitled *The Many Woes*<sup>167</sup>, was published in Sárospatak, marking a climax in the development of his attitude towards religion and the country. What is truly significant about this collection is the fact that it was consciously put together in order to create a theology of history of the Hungarian nation. It started with the *Three Woes* of Hungary and it ended with the apocalyptic vision of the destruction of the nation. The recontextualization of *Three*

<sup>164</sup> Murdock, “Death, Prophecy and Judgment”, 218-19.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid., 219.

<sup>166</sup> See also Dávid Csorba. *A zászlós bárány nyomában. A magyar kálvinizmus 17. századi világa* [Tracing the flagged fleece. The world of Hungarian Calvinism in the seventeenth century]. (Debrecen-Budapest: Kálvin kiadó, 2011).

<sup>167</sup> Whole title: Sok jajokban, s bánatos szívvel ejtett könnyhullatásokban merült és feneklett, szegény igaz Magyaroknak egynéhány keserű Siralmi. Melyeket tétettek véle, ez utolban elmúlt nyolc, kilenc, de mindenek felett, tavalyi esztendőbeli, s attól fogva való megbecsülhetetlen Kárvallási s Romlási. Medgyesi Pál írta. Sárospatak 1658. RMK I. 934.

*Woes* shed a new light on the events preceding the tragedy of 1657, also referred to as the Mohács of Transylvania and Partium.

#### **4.2. Constructing the Image of the Proper Princely Rule – The Figure of György Rákóczi I in the Light of his Funeral Speech**

As I have already alluded to, Pál Medgyesi became the court chaplain of György Rákóczi I in 1637. In this function he might have preached at most relevant events that were related to the everyday life of the Principality. The old Rákóczi very much enjoyed listening to the speeches of Medgyesi, and when he could not be present at the service, he asked for a written copy of it.<sup>168</sup> Medgyesi's funeral speech performed on the occasion of Rákóczi's death not only provided great testimony of Medgyesi's attitude towards the role of the prince in the *politia ecclesiastica*, but it also gave a powerful insight into their relationship that made it more understandable, why the preacher considered him as the model of the pious ruler, whose loss would entail devastating consequences.

The written version of Pál Medgyesi's speech was preceded by a dedication to György Rákóczi II, dated 25 January 1653, Sárospatak. Even if this dedication appeared in the printed version of these speeches, one might surmise that the way Medgyesi rhetorically constructed this "text" aiming to persuade in the most effective way possible, must have been very close to the way he would have addressed the prince in case he was present. Medgyesi started this dedication by reflecting on the tragic loss of three pillars of the Hungarian nation, the death of György Rákóczi I and count István Bethlen in 1648, and the

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<sup>168</sup> Károly Császár, *Medgyesi Pál élete és működése* [The life and work of Pál Medgyesi], (Budapest, 1911), 85-86.

death of Zsigmond Rákóczi, the old prince's youngest son in 1652. The preacher emphasized that these tragedies could truly be regarded as woes and miseries for the principality; there was no need for justification since "the times and conditions bear witness to this".<sup>169</sup> Despite the fact that by the time of these speeches got to be published Medgyesi was not anymore a court chaplain in Gyulafehérvár, he still had hopes in the young prince: "My gracious Lord, your Excellency soothed our woes, and after this, still your Excellency remains the one, who can wipe the tears and laments from the eyes of our Nation".<sup>170</sup> Medgyesi, assuming the role of the parakletos, addressed the young prince in the name of the whole community (embracing not only the Reformed congregations, from the principality, but also those communities from Upper Hungary that were basically under the rule of the Rákóczi).<sup>171</sup> Through this invocation, Medgyesi identified the young Rákóczi with a potential savior of the nation. Within this context "saving the nation" entailed a twofold enterprise: it referred to the actual protection of the country and to its spiritual salvation. Did he really believe that the young prince could be the one who redeems the country? This question can hardly be answered, especially because it would be very hard to separate the Medgyesi, who had such a close relationship with the old prince, and the Medgyesi, who putting aside all his personal discontents, would approach the young ruler with the same sort of enthusiasm. Medgyesi and many other preachers looked at György Rákóczi I as a godly prince, and often compared him to Old Testament kings, such as King David. Since György Rákóczi II was his legitimate heir, it is not surprising that his ascension to the throne was interpreted as a continuation of godly rulership, (reminiscent to

<sup>169</sup> "mert az idő és az állapotok magokkal hordozzák ennek bizonyosságát". RMK I. 934, A2.

<sup>170</sup> "Kegyelmes Uram, nagyságod enyhítette meg nekünk e Jajjainkat, s ezután is a Siralmakat, a könyhullatásokat Nagyságod törölheti el, megkeseredett Nemzetünknek szeméről". RMK I. 934.

<sup>171</sup> On the image of György Rákóczi II and the way he was depicted and addressed in other genres, see Gergely Tamás Fazakas, "Bűnös-e a fejedelem? Imádságok és versek az 1657 utáni Rákóczi-propaganda kontextusában" [Is the prince guilty? Prayers and poems in the context of the Rákóczi propaganda after 1657] in Gábor Kármán and Péter András Szabó (eds.), *„A szerencsének elegyes forgása”. II. Rákóczi György és kora* [György Rákóczi II and his era], (Budapest: L'Harmattan, 2009), 425-449.

the traditions of the Middle Ages, and at the same time relating to the Calvinist conception of a theocratic rule).

After addressing “poor Transylvania and the wasted handful of Hungarian nation”, Medgyesi identified Rákóczi I as the head of the country (*patria*): “You, miserable Country, who are groaning under the yoke of the bitter changes, the ornate crown of your Head has fallen down, yea the one is gone who was your own, sweet Head”.<sup>172</sup> In this perspective, the body of the prince was transubstantiated into the body of the country. The head as *pars pro toto* came to symbolize the whole *patria*. This idea was also in a dialogue with István Vetési’s Lipsian thought expressed in his *epistola cohortatoria* to György Rákóczi, namely that a successful government should only be dependent on the prince. As Katalin Péter argued, in spite of the dismemberment of the medieval political community, there was a certain consciousness of a common nation and a common patria.<sup>173</sup> Being an advocate of the *semper reformanda* principle of the society, Medgyesi imagined the nation, the patria and the *religio* as forming one unit, and so did the old prince himself, as it was attested in his *Princely Paraenesis*. From this point of view Rákóczi I was not just the head of a political community, but he was also the head of a spiritual one.<sup>174</sup>

In order to illustrate the character of Rákóczi I’s rule, the preacher enumerated a number of biblical examples (e.g. Samson, Samuel, David, Gedeon, the prophets, etc.) from where he extracted ten elements that were required for a righteous rule: defending countries, being righteous, taking promises, making lions silent, tempering the power of fire, escaping arms, etc. All these aspects were connected to the proper form of governance. Even though, Medgyesi did not choose just one particular biblical example in order to present the ideal

<sup>172</sup> “Tenéked, keserű változások alatt nyegő nyomorult Haza, talán nem is fontolod, Fejed ékes koronája esett el, sőt aki saját, édes fejed vala a vagyon oda.” RMK I. 934, 6.

<sup>173</sup> See Katalin Péter, *Papok és nemesek* [Priests and nobles], (Budapest: Ráday Gyűjtemény, 1995).

<sup>174</sup> This idea is still subject to certain reconsiderations and clarifications. It is unquestionable that on a theoretical level Medgyesi could have regarded the entire Hungarian nation as a Reformed community, but it is another question how he imagined getting this realized in practice.

rulership, the ten characteristics he drew on were perfectly embodied in Rákóczi I's rule. Medgyesi also highlighted that only those could truly bring these "acts" to perfection who had already gained true faith.

Following this line of argumentation, Medgyesi gave a short elaboration on the proper way one should acquire true faith. Obtaining true faith was generally one of the central elements in Protestant sermons, regardless of what occasion they were uttered. These texts continuously echoed the famous slogan of Protestantism, *sola fide, sola scriptura, sola gratia*. According to the new theology, the only way for a person to get a share in divine grace was by faith; there was no need for ecclesiastical mediation. Given the ecclesiological view that the existence of the church depended on the cooperation of secular and religious leaders<sup>175</sup>, it does not come as a surprise that Medgyesi depicted Rákóczi I as the most suitable example to follow: "Truly, he had benefited from it [true faith], and made it visible. Though I could elaborate on this, but time is short, and the other thing is that still in his lifetime he proclaimed commands about this and forbade it, rejoicing in its truth, rather than in its publicity: though it cannot be otherwise".<sup>176</sup> Even if Rákóczi I was righteous, faithful, benign, even tempered, he could not be without flaws:

"Every human is blind in his wicked, mad state; most of all the Kings and Rulers, who have to hear and see with the ears and eyes of others, not their own: as beggars they are led by others, and they are also deceived by others. No one would be in such circumstances praiseworthy and worthy to be kept in good memory, except those who were living without sins. Even those, whose faith is being so highly praised by God and ordered to be followed in the eleventh part, were not without big sins. How come you do not think of the goods within, which value more? We just cannot thank enough that he secured in time that, who will succeed him. Otherwise how would you live, you wretched men? The miserable fate of neighboring Poland shows this quite well".<sup>177</sup>

<sup>175</sup> Dávid Csorba, "Frontier existence as the Self-Image of the Hungarian Reformed Church in the Seventeenth Century (1606-1711)" in Ábrahám Kovács (ed.), *Calvinism on the Peripheries: Religion and Civil Society in Europe*. (Budapest: L'Harmattan, 2009), 231.

<sup>176</sup> "Valóban hasznát is vötte, s láttatja volt. Mely felől sokra terjedhetnék ugyan, de az idő is rövid hozzá, másik az, hogy még élteben sokszor parancsolt efelől s megtiltotta, valóságában gyönyörködven inkább ennek, hogy nem hirdetésében : noha ugyan nem lehet különben." RMK I. 934. 18-19.

<sup>177</sup> "Minden ember az ő vétke, veszett állapotjában vak; és leginkább a Királyok, Fejedelmek; kiknek nem a magok szemekkel, fülükkel, hanem a másokéval kell látniok, s hallaniok: mint a koldusokat más vezeti őket, s veremben is gyakrabban más ejti. Nem volna hát így senki dicséretre s jó emlékezetre méltó, hacsak azok kik bűn nélkül vannak érdemlenék azt. Tulajdon azok is, kiknek Hiteket Isten e 11-ik egész részben annyira dicséri, s követnünk parancsolja, nem voltak nagy bűnök nélkül. Hogy nem gondolod más részről a benne való sok jókat, melyek többet nyomnak. Csak azt nem tudnók eléggé meghálálni, hogy oly jó idején gondot

Considering the performative value of this speech, it is very telling that Medgyesi felt the need to include such an apologetic sequence in his discourse. Here I would like to highlight again that audience of these events was very divergent. Medgyesi was particularly witty when it came to accommodate to the needs of his public. Even without entering an extensive rhetorical analysis of this work, one can assess that Medgyesi was well aware of the modes one could address a particular segment of the society. The politics of Rákóczi I was not without imperfections either (let us just think of the various peace treaties with the Habsburgs that were in many case received with suspicion<sup>178</sup>), and even if Medgyesi seemed to overshadow these aspects, choosing not to explicitly blame him for any misfortunes, the fact that he enhanced that humans are blind in their sinful state, especially rulers, can mean that he did not completely absolve Rákóczi I from his misjudgments. It was also perfectly described how Medgyesi imagined the responsibilities the ruler had to assume when it came to various techniques of ruling the country – *to hear and see with the ears and eyes of others*. Although, it was not explicitly stated here whom this *others* referred to, considering Medgyesi's stance on the society of all believers one might surmise that he wanted a rule where the prince would have a view of every segment of the society. This did not mean that Medgyesi would have advocated an absolutist-centralized rule; it simply meant that he was in favor of a form of governance, where the ruler was a true father of his territory. And what is even more relevant here is that the preacher emphasized the relevance of Rákóczi I securing princely succession. He even placed this problem in a comparative perspective, reflecting on the troubles surrounding the royal elections in the Polish kingdom.<sup>179</sup> This was a curious shift in the development of Medgyesi's ideas.

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viselt volt, ki uralkodék utána. Egyébként mint volnánk most anélkül is igen galibás természetű emberek? Szomszéd Lengyelországnak, mostani hó közben való nyavalyás sorsa, eléggé megmutatja”. RMK I. 934, 20.

<sup>178</sup> See Gábor Kármán, *Erdélyi külpolitika a vesztfáliai béke után* [Transylvanian foreign policy after the peace of Westphalia], (Budapest: L'Harmattan, 2011), 73-119.

<sup>179</sup> 1648-1657: the period of the Cossack uprisings.



Up to this point the preacher put an emphasis on creating a structural-functional parallelism between biblical sacred narratives and the history of the Principality, following the tradition of the Wittenbergian conception of history. In this case, however Medgyesi brought the significance of the “active individual”<sup>180</sup> to the forefront. It is certainly true that in a funeral speech the orator was “obliged” to praise the merits of the dead. But here Medgyesi did not simply glorify the dead, but actually implied that the prince could have a role in shaping the history of the country. The fact that Rákóczi I ensured that his son should replace him in the princely chair, meant that the old prince was an agent who assumed responsibility (both in terms of politics and religion) for his realm.<sup>181</sup> The way Medgyesi interpreted particular historical events can give some peculiar insights into his “political thinking”. Even if he was continuously emphasizing the importance of acquiring true faith, since not even wars could be won without its “operation”, he was also aware of the relevance of contemporary historical occurrences. In the case of the above quoted example I would suggest that Medgyesi drew on the example of Poland not just for the sake of strengthening the “sacred value” of the unfolding history of the principality, but also to provide a comparison whereby he could illustrate the consequence of lack of faith and taking (political) responsibility.

This also shed a new light on the fact that Medgyesi addressed the young Rákóczi as a potential savior of the country in his dedication. Although Medgyesi had pragmatic reasons in mind when addressing either of the princes in his speeches, this did not adumbrate that he advocated a radically different view when it came to judging the politics and personality of the young ruler (as we shall see it in the *Fourth Woe*). Let us remember that in his *Paraenesis*, Rákóczi I also fashioned himself as the proper example to follow

<sup>180</sup> Balázs Trencsényi, “Államrezon – állam nélkül” [Reason of state – without a state] in idem, *A politika nyelvei. Eszmetörténeti tanulmányok* [The languages of politics. Essays on the history of ideas], (Budapest: Argumentum Kiadó-Bibó István Szellemi Műhely, 2007), 139.

<sup>181</sup> On the difference between sacred and secular conception of history see Trencsényi, “Államrezon – állam nélkül” [Reason of state – without a state], 138-41.

(“az példa is magam vagyok”). Medgyesi followed the conception of this work, and argued that pursuing the ethical and moral principles set down by the old prince will serve to uphold the principality. In this respect the funeral speech over György Rákóczi I might have also assumed the function of a *speculum principum*.

In Medgyesi’s conception the other force that had contributed to the perseverance of the country came from the eradication of sins, which was only attainable through the embracing of the law of God. The preacher recalled the Paulian principle that “the knowledge of sins comes through the law, which is said to be a mirror”.<sup>182</sup> The Calvinist view on this aspect, following Cicero and Plato, regarded the laws as “the strongest sinews of the commonwealth, [...] the soul without which magistracy cannot survive and vice versa, [...] the law is a silent magistrate and the magistrate a living law”.<sup>183</sup> According to the Calvinist theocratic conceptualization of the government, the law of God “which we call moral law is acknowledged to be none other than the testimony of natural law and of that conscience which is engraved in the souls of men by God”.<sup>184</sup>

After this line of argumentation, Medgyesi turned his attention to the evoking of the so-to-say “public performances” of the old prince. Medgyesi portrayed the old Rákóczi as a righteous ruler, a devotee of *praxis pietatis*, who had also acquired a detailed knowledge of the Scripture, which enabled him to assume the role of a preacher when it came to religious polemics: “if there were discussions about confessions (which he many times initiated at the table, or in a cart, and especially in front of people who were of other denominations) he immediately brought such evidence one after the other”.<sup>185</sup> This idea was in dialogue with the views of Huldrych Zwingli, who claimed that “there are shepherds in the Church, and

<sup>182</sup> “Mert a törvény által vagyon a bűnnek esméreti, honnan tükörnek mondatik”. RMK I. 934, 14.

<sup>183</sup> Calvin, *On Civil Government*, 65-66.

<sup>184</sup> Calvin, *On Civil Government*, 68.

<sup>185</sup> ha midőn valamely Hitágazat felől szó indult, (indított is ő mindjárt Asztal felett, Szekérben és kiváltképpen Ellenkező Vallású Emberek jelenlétében) mindjárt ugyan egymásra hordta efféle bizonyságokat.” RMK I. 934, 20-21.

amongst these we may number princes, as may be seen from Jeremiah and it is evident that without civil government a church is maimed and impotent”.<sup>186</sup> But Medgyesi’s assertion was even stronger here, since not only did he characterize the ruler as an integral element for the existence of the church, but he also depicted him as being an arbiter of true faith, a defender of pure doctrine. In this respect Pál Medgyesi’s politico-theological tenets were very close to the ones propagated by Philip Melanchton. According to Melanchton worldly power:

“‘is obliged for the good of the Church to supply necessary offices, pastors, schools, churches, courts and hospitals.’ Beyond that, indeed rulers are ‘obliged to accept the holy gospel, to believe, confess, and direct others to true divine service.’ They must also ‘prohibit, abolish, and punish’ such offences as ‘external idolatry, blasphemy, false oaths, untrue doctrine, and heresy.’ [...] rulers ‘are obliged to have knowledge of the Christian doctrine and to pass judgment on false doctrines’”.<sup>187</sup>

By the recalling of this “public performance of piety” of the old prince, Medgyesi touched upon a very sensitive point considering the composition of his audience. In the previous chapter I have already pinned down that even if funeral speeches were a perfect means for conveying the same sort of message as a theological dispute, when it came to the funeral service of rulers, preachers had to play down to a certain extent their “confessional anxieties”. But Medgyesi chose the exact opposite direction. He fashioned the prince as being a one and true representative of the Reformed confession.

This idea was further corroborated by other evidence which testified that besides being an apt military leader by the power of his faith (as it was attested in the battle of Szalonta, or during the rebellions of the Wallachian rulers) Rákóczi I was a devout ruler who had contributed to the furthering of the Reformation. Before Medgyesi started elaborating on the other merits of the old prince, he had made a rather startling remark: “I cannot recall any occasion when he [Rákóczi I] would have stood up against me, (however I

<sup>186</sup> Uldrych Zwingli, “An Exposition of the Faith” in G. W. Bromiley (ed.), *Zwingli and Bullinger*, (London-Philadelphia: S. C. M. Press, The Westminster Press, 1953), 266.

<sup>187</sup> Francis Oakley, “Christian obedience and authority, 1520-1550” in J. H. Burns (ed.), *History of European Political Thought, 1450-1700*, (Cambridge: CUP, 2008), 159-193, 174.

have scorned him many times, and not once in front of the Country [meaning, the Diet])”.<sup>188</sup> As one could see above, Medgyesi considered the old prince as being equally apt to take part in theological debates, thus becoming a full member of the Reformed Church. But, similarly to the conviction of Huldrych Zwingli, Medgyesi also believed that rulers and magistrates needed the guidance of a prophet. From this perspective Rákóczi I’s funeral was a perfect occasion for Medgyesi to promote himself as practically one of the highest councilors of the prince.

Medgyesi presented the reign of György Rákóczi I as a flourishing period in which the number of Reformed churches had increased and the country experienced peace, both on a religious and social level. When Medgyesi talked about the “nice agreement in Hungary” (“Magyarországban szerzett szép megegyezés”), the “peace in Religion” (“békesség a Religiókban”) and “the Churches that were retrieved” (“a sokszámú visszaadott Templumok”), he was referring to the Peace of Linz from 1645. The treaty was signed by György Rákóczi I and Ferdinand III, and its main point was to assure religious tolerance (this time also for the serfs), together with the return of illegally taken Protestant churches. It is understandable why Medgyesi considered this peace beneficial for the country. However, one should not overlook the fact that this decision from the part of Rákóczi I was not received with total enthusiasm by his allies.<sup>189</sup> When he spoke about the gained freedoms, he asserted that Rákóczi I acquired them “putting at stake all his nice goods, his honorable quiet Principality, moreover his beloved Children, and his devout spouse, after God”.<sup>190</sup> Medgyesi again justified the background of a political decision with a religious motivation. Rákóczi I was indeed the head of his family, but more importantly he was the

<sup>188</sup> “Nem tudom soha (noha számtalanszor kedvezés nélkül megfeddettem, sokszor Ország hallatára is) hogy szemből szökött volna velem, ámbár a dorgálás méltatlannak tetszett is előtte”. RMK I. 934, 21.

<sup>189</sup> On this particular aspect and other elements of Rákóczi I’s foreign policy see Kármán, *Erdélyi külpolitika* [Transylvanian foreign policy], 33-119.

<sup>190</sup> “Mellyeket mindenféle sok szép javainak, méltóságos csendes Fejedelemségének, sőt nagy reménységű szerelmes Gyermekeinek, s istenfélő házastársának kockára vetésével szerzett meg, Isten után”. RMK I. 934. 22.

head of his principality, whose ultimate fate was in the hands of God. Thus Medgyesi emphasized that the success behind Rákóczi I achieving all these freedoms and prosperity for his country lied in the ruler's renunciation of worldly values. This is why his death was an extremely sorrowful time for the country.

The year of 1648, as Medgyesi presented it, was not just full of crucial tragic events in the life of the principality, but it also distorted the life of many other countries: "Oh, miserable condition! Oh, truly sorrowful times that we are living in! Indeed the year 1648 consumed many in gust; the Orient should know that the bright Crown of the North has fallen".<sup>191</sup> On a marginal note, Medgyesi also enumerated the death of other rulers from this year, such as the Turkish Sultan Ibrahim, the Polish king Vladislaus, count István Bethlen, Zsigmond Kornis, etc. What was really peculiar about this enumeration was the fact that this time Medgyesi placed himself above denominational differences, and created a so-to-say meta-confessional apocalyptic narrative, interpreting the death of leaders belonging to different confessions as bad omens. "It is rarely a signal of good things, the death of useful good people"<sup>192</sup> Medgyesi reaffirmed in his speech over count István Bethlen, who also died in 1648.

#### **4.3. The Bethlens and the Rákóczis – Funeral Services and Courtly Propaganda**

István Bethlen died on 10 January 1648 in Ecsed, and he was buried on 29 March 1648 in Gyulafehérvár. Despite his short reign as prince of Transylvania, the figure and relevance of István Bethlen was crucial on the scene of Transylvanian politics. It is not by chance that

<sup>191</sup> "Oh, keserves állapot! Oh igen siralmas idők, melyekre jutánk! Valóban íziben eszék sokaknak az elmúlt 1648-as esztendő, napkeletnek tudnia-illik, Északnak, melyeknek hasonlóképpen fejek ékes Koronája oh elesett!". RMK I. 934, 23.

<sup>192</sup> "ritkán jegyez jól a hasznos jó embereknek halálak". RMK I. 934. 54.

upon his death Medgyesi portrayed him as St. Jacob or King Josiah. Nevertheless, the relationship of the Bethlen court with the Rákóczi was full of intrigues. The battle of Szalonta, also referred to by Medgyesi in his speech over Rákóczi I was especially relevant from this perspective, since this was the time when István Bethlen tried to reclaim the Transylvanian throne with Turkish help.<sup>193</sup> After reconciling the tensions brought by this war, it seemed that the power struggles between the Bethlens and the Rákóczi had been restored. Nevertheless, the Bethlens never ceased from continuously reasserting their higher prestige in front of the Rákóczi.

In 1631 – the year that marked the beginning of the reign of György Rákóczi I – the young István Bethlen (son of count István Bethlen) made a gesture that strengthened the emblematic relationship between the Bethlen and the Báthory families at the court of Nyírbátor (for the map, see Appendix nr...). The young István Bethlen commissioned the erection of a family tomb, thus symbolizing the common salvation of the two families.<sup>194</sup> By this act the Bethlens wanted to demonstrate that in spite of the fact that old István Bethlen could not keep his position as prince of Transylvania, the Bethlen family still had a higher prestige compared to the Rákóczi. The Neostoic spirituality of the Bethlen court of Várada (today Oradea, Romania) came to be transferred to the funerary symbolism of the Nyírbátor court.<sup>195</sup>

When the young István Bethlen died, Rákóczi I initiated him to be buried at the princely seat in Gyulafehérvár (today Alba Iulia, Romania) next to Gábor Bethlen, as an attempt to reconcile the hostilities between the two families.<sup>196</sup> According to Péter Szabó the funerary poem uttered over the young Bethlen by János Laskai in 1632 was not in

<sup>193</sup> A detailed description of this source: Imre Lukinich, *Bethlen István támadása 1636-ban* [The attack of István Bethlen in 1636], (Budapest, 1910).

<sup>194</sup> Péter Szabó, “A kihelyezett fejedelmi udvarok az Erdélyi Fejedelemség hatalmi harcaiban” [The outplaced princely courts during the power struggles of the Transylvanian Principality] in G. Etényi Nóra, Ildikó Horn (eds.), *Idővel paloták... Magyar udvari kultúra a 16-17. században* [Castles in time...Hungarian courtly culture in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries], (Budapest: Balassi kiadó, 2005), 314-22.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid., 321.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid., 323.

concordance with the reconciling initiatives of Rákóczi I, but it contained allusions that only deepened the enmity between the two families.<sup>197</sup> One cannot know whether Rákóczi I interpreted this particular gesture as an offensive act or not, but when the other son of count István Bethlen, Péter died in 1646, there was no proposal from Rákóczi I's part to get him laid to rest in Gyulafehérvár like it had been the case with Péter's brother, István. Péter Bethlen was buried in Nyírbátor. But let us not forget that Rákóczi I had good reasons, however for his distant attitude. In 1635 Péter Bethlen killed one of his noble principals. Rákóczi I wanted to take judgment into his own hands, so count István Bethlen turned to the sultan, and waged war against Rákóczi I the next year (the already mentioned battle of Szalonta).<sup>198</sup> Bethlen's onset was unsuccessful, and it appeared that the two families had finally arranged their differences. Still, the latent tensions did not cease to exist between the two families.

Even if Péter Bethlen's death occurred ten years after the attack of count István Bethlen, his death gave rise to a sort of reawakening of underlying strains. With his loss it had become very clear that the Bethlen family was about to die out. The preachers of the funeral speeches uttered over Péter Bethlen reflected on this anxiety, and they also made hints that were rather explicit critiques towards the prince.<sup>199</sup> I would stress here just one: "*It is better to trust God than men. It is better to trust God than the Princes. Why? Because*

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<sup>197</sup> See Ibid. Unfortunately, within the confines of this analysis I cannot devote a detailed analysis to this poem, but I found this gesture from Laskai's part worthy for further examination. Especially, because chronologically it succeeds István Vetési's letter to György Rákóczi I. It might be an interesting research direction to look at the reverberations of Neostoic philosophy in different genres, and try to determine certain re-contextualizing patterns.

<sup>198</sup> See Márton Tarnóc, *Erdély művelődése Bethlen Gábor és a két Rákóczi György korában* [Transylvanian culture in the time of Gábor Bethlen and the Rákóczi princes], (Budapest: Gondolat, 1978), 127-49.

<sup>199</sup> Péter Bethlen died in Bán (today Slovakia), from where he was brought to Nyírbátor. Nine speeches were said in total along the way and in Nyírbátor, which appeared in print in the same year together with speech uttered over the widow of Miklós Zólyomi, Zsófia Daróczi. The preachers who spoke over Péter Bethlen were Miklós Lázár Szatmári, István Selyei Balog, Bálint Gácsi Dobrai, Miklós S. Hodászi, Ferenc Veréczi, and György Csulai.

*damned is the Lord, the man, who trusts men, and places his strength in the body*".<sup>200</sup> These lines were uttered by Bálint Dobrai<sup>201</sup>, drawing on the words of David. Dobrai was very subtle here in terms of argumentation, because he managed to veil a political judgment with theological evidence (everything connected to the body and earthly wealth was doomed to perish). As the printed version of Bálint Dobrai's work attested, this speech was said while the body of Péter Bethlen was taken into the church in Nyírbátor, but let us bear in mind that during the funeral service György Csulai<sup>202</sup>, court preacher of the old prince also made a speech. Thus one can see that Rákóczi I still wanted to create the impression of having a peaceful relationship with the Bethlens. In Csulai's speech the death of Péter Bethlen also came to be interpreted as a loss of a crucial pillar.

This idea was also enhanced in Ferenc Verécsi's speech<sup>203</sup>, where he brought in the motif of the death King Josiah and the fact that the death of Josiah preceded the miserable fate of the Jewish community.<sup>204</sup> It is interesting to notice how the preacher projected the connotations of the death of Josiah onto the death of Péter Bethlen. In Verécsi's view his death already signaled that the Hungarian nation has reached its *fatalis terminus*.<sup>205</sup> The theory of *fatalis periodus* was a prevalent element of contemporary homiletical and historiographical discourses, and from Pál Medgyesi's reference we are aware that the theory was borrowed from Gregorius Richter's *Axiomata Politica*. The loss of Péter Bethlen

<sup>200</sup> "Jobb az Istenben bízni, hogy sem mint az emberben. Jobb az Istenben bízni, hogy sem mint a Fejedelmekben. Miért? Mert átkozott az Úr, a férfiú, ki bízik az emberekben, és erősségét helyhezveti a testben". RMK I. 787, 70.

<sup>201</sup> I did not find any information concerning the birth and death of Bálint Dobrai, but what is certain is that he was a Calvinist preacher from Ecsed, the residence of the Báthorys.

<sup>202</sup> György Csulai (d.1660) was a Reformed court preacher of György Rákóczi I from 1635.

<sup>203</sup> Ferenc Verécsi (1607-1660) was a Reformed preacher in Sárospatak. He studied in Leiden and in England. He was very much against Puritan reforming initiatives.

<sup>204</sup> "Amaz síró Próféta is a Jeremiás midőn megértette volna, a kegyes Jósiás Királynak reméltelen szomorú halálát, és abban az egész Zsidó népnek következendő keserves sorsát". RMK I. 787, 95.

<sup>205</sup> "Bizony, volna itt miről gondolkodni a mi holdfogytára jutott, és *fatalis terminus*ához, utolsó veszedelméhez közelgető Magyar nemzetünknek; mert a többi között ez a három féle lelki moly emészt meg minket, és ezek azok a terhes vétkek, *propter quae venit ira Dei super filios contumaces*, amelyért leszállott az Istennek haragja mennyből a vakmerő engedetlen, háládatlan fiakra". RMK I. 787, 103.



basically put an end to all the hopes placed in the Bethlens, and this despondency was further corroborated with the death of count István Bethlen.

In his speech, Medgyesi tried to overshadow the tensions between the two families, by continuously emphasizing Bethlen's loyalty to Rákóczi I. Of course, this argumentation also signaled that Bethlen actually needed such sort of justification. Just as in the case of Rákóczi I, Medgyesi pointed out those characteristics that were essential for a devout magistrate (e.g. reading the Bible, leading a sober life, being a patron of churches and schools, etc.). Thus István Bethlen also became a good role model to follow. Medgyesi continued arguing that the death of Bethlen marked the removal of a major column of support from the principality, and exhorted his audience to recognize that these deaths were the signs of imminent divine judgment: "When I think of the state of the nations of Israel and Judah, before their captivity in Assyria and Babylonia, I see as if in a mirror the frightening state of our own nation. Oh Lord, favor your people!".<sup>206</sup> This is why everyone should repent of their sins.

One more thing should be highlighted here. It is certainly true that the interpretation of various omens was connected to contemporary events, but it is still a rather curious parallel that the death of Péter Bethlen and Zsigmond Rákóczi were both interpreted as signs of impending divine judgment. Considering that Péter Bethlen was the last offset of the Bethlen family, the constructing of such a narrative seems perfectly justified. Zsigmond Rákóczi presents a more problematic case, since he was far from being the last member who could have carried on the proud lineage of the Rákóczi family, but for Pál Medgyesi his death still came to be interpreted as a crucial turning-point.

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<sup>206</sup> "Mikor az Izrael s Júda nemzetének, az Asszíriai és Babilóniai fogság előtt való állapotjokat szemlélem és gondolom, abban mint valami acél tükörben élőben láttatom én magamnak, nemzetünknek félelmes állapotját nézni". RMK I. 934, 59.

#### 4.4. Politico-Ecclesiastical Hopes and Disillusions – The Death of Zsigmond Rákóczi

The Peace of Westphalia completely rearranged the political map of Europe as it marked the closing of the age of religious wars and the realignment of power politics. György Rákóczi II ascended to the Transylvanian throne, an event that marked the beginning of a new period for the Principality. Instead of continuing the tradition of his father, who had usually put confessional interests in the foreground of his policy, he became a ruler who regarded them as secondary elements and used them only for legitimizing purposes.<sup>207</sup> Pál Medgyesi's stay in the princely court was in danger, but he still had great hopes in Zsigmond Rákóczi, the old ruler's youngest son.

After the death of György Rákóczi I, Zsuzsanna Lorántffy and Zsigmond Rákóczi left the court of Gyulafehérvár, and moved to Sárospatak. Zsigmond was an erudite young man, interested in philosophy, but he also proved to be a skilled diplomat. Just like his mother, he was closely connected to Pál Medgyesi, and he was also touched by the ideas of Puritanism. The extant letters between Pál Medgyesi and Zsigmond Rákóczi bear witness that the preacher regarded Zsigmond as a true friend and that he was also hoping that through Zsigmond's mediation he might be able to convince the young Rákóczi of the necessity of presbyteries. At the beginning it even seemed that the young György Rákóczi showed some inclination towards the new reforming ideals, but his openness soon transformed into complete rejection. Rákóczi II remained unswerving in his opinion, and in one of his letters addressed to his mother, Zsuzsanna Lorántffy, he even declared that he would take serious actions in case the question of the presbyteries came up again: "So help me God, you [Zsuzsanna] will not bring the Medgyesi-presbitery here [Transylvania]; he

<sup>207</sup> See Kármán, *Erdélyi külpolitika* [Transylvanian foreign policy], 119-383.

must not teach others, because so help me God, if he does so, I will get him thrown in the Maros [river], or get him thrown down from the tower”.<sup>208</sup>

This issue of reorganizing the Reformed church government had been a prevalent topic of the Calvinist synods in the middle of the seventeenth century. In spite of the fact that the Reformation faced great successes in the Principality, there were many clergy members, who were dissatisfied with its achievements, and expressed their unease about the stagnation of Reforming initiatives. Besides being anxious about the reformation of the society, their major concern was connected to the hierarchical organization of the church. Having encountered more suitable Calvinist church governments in other European countries, their conviction that the Reformation in the Transylvanian Principality had not yet come to completion became even stronger. “Conservatives meanwhile wanted to silence internal debates which threatened to destabilize the church and undermine its close relationship with Transylvania’s princes”.<sup>209</sup> The Nyírbátor synod in 1631 and the Debrecen synod in 1638 tried to restrict student ministers to go to foreign universities, especially to England, since the ideology of Puritanism seemed to carry the most threatening subversive power concerning church- (princely) government relationships.

At the beginning of his career at the princely court, Pál Medgyesi was not an ardent supporter of reforming church government<sup>210</sup>, but he was very much in favor of propagating an intense form of personal piety and godliness through his works conceived in a Puritan spirit. Since the term “puritan” was used to denote outrageous behavior and attitude towards the Calvinist Church and princely rule, Medgyesi distanced himself from being identified with this group. However, from the 1640s the problem of reorganizing the government of

<sup>208</sup> “Isten engem úgy segéljen, a Medgyesi-presbitériumot ide be nem hozza ked; mást ne tanítson, mert Isten engem úgy segéljen, valaki mást tanít a Marosba vettetem, vagy a toronyból hányatom le”. Császár, *Medgyesi Pál* [Pál Medgyesi], 80.

<sup>209</sup> Murdock, *Calvinism on the Frontier*, 171.

<sup>210</sup> The most prominent figure in this respect was János Tolnai Dali. A detailed elaboration on his initiatives see in Murdock, *Calvinism on the Frontier*, 172-180.

the Reformed Church became one of his major concerns as well. The change in his attitude was also fuelled by the measures taken against János Dali Tolnai.<sup>211</sup> According to Medgyesi and other zealous reformers the current ecclesiastical organization of bishops and superintendents had no scriptural basis, therefore “each congregation should appoint its own ruling lay elders, [and] [...] local presbyteries should at least be set up alongside the existing system of church government”.<sup>212</sup> Medgyesi was able to convince even the bishop, and at the synod of Nagyenyed (today Aiud, Romania) on 3 June 1646 the majority of the clerical body expressed their will of setting up presbyteries in Transylvania.<sup>213</sup> However, this type of “presbyterial system” would not have abolished the office of deans and bishops, and this was far from the ideal of true presbyteries propagated by Medgyesi and other ardent Puritans. Despite the close relationship between Medgyesi and the old prince, Rákóczi I could not be convinced of the necessity of this new ecclesiastical organization. The division in the Reformed Church between the Orthodox Calvinists and Puritans was very strong, and Rákóczi I was also surrounded, and consequently influenced by the representatives of the conservative wing (e.g. György Csulai or István Katona Geleji). The old prince wanted to preserve his authority over church matters, continuing the well-established tradition of his predecessors.

In 1650 Medgyesi published his views on ecclesiastical organization, entitled *Dialogus Politico-Ecclesiasticus*, which he dedicated to Zsigmond Rákóczi, reflecting on Zsigmond’s support for the presbyterian cause.<sup>214</sup> In the preface of this treatise Medgyesi claimed that the refusal of not wanting to accept the presbyterial system, this divine institution will bring God’s wrath upon the country. Whilst the death of some of the

<sup>211</sup> An extensive elaboration on Puritan reform initiatives in Upper Hungary and the Principality of Transylvania see Jenő Zoványi, *Puritánus mozgalmak a magyar református egyházban* [Puritan movements in the Hungarian Reformed church], (Magyar Protestáns Irodalmi Társaság: Budapest, 1911).

<sup>212</sup> Murdock, *Calvinism on the Frontier*, 181.

<sup>213</sup> Zoványi, *Puritánus mozgalmak* [Puritan movements], 146.

<sup>214</sup> “Isten után legerősebb gyámola, s előmozdítója volt, ez istenes szent Rendnek, az elmúlt esztendei sok rendbéli hányódásaiban”. RMK I. 831.

country's leaders came to be looked upon as signs of impending divine judgment, rejecting the presbyteries started to be regarded as direct cause of the upcoming doom. In the light of these circumstances certain passages in Zsigmond Rákóczi's sermon gained new significance.

As I have already pointed out Medgyesi portrayed Zsigmond as King Josiah. One could also see that this motif was dominant in Reformed funerary discourses. Still, I would claim that in the case of Zsigmond Rákóczi the motif acquired other connotations compared to the case of István Bethlen or Péter Bethlen. In the latter case the motif was basically employed as a rhetorical-homiletical persuasive strategy tool that endorsed a Calvinist eschatological prophecy. The death of Zsigmond Rákóczi also carried this meaning, but there was a shift in focus when it came to the biblical comparison.<sup>215</sup>

Besides symbolizing the doomed failure, one of the major themes in Josiah's life was connected to the religious reforms he instituted in Judah.<sup>216</sup> This is what Pál Medgyesi reflected on in his speech over Zsigmond Rákóczi, emphasizing that only those were happy for the death of Josiah, who were against reforms, and who wanted the old practices back.<sup>217</sup>

“No doubt, there were many who abused this young Saint King [Josiah], especially since such stray misfortune befell him. First, there were those, depending on their old habits to whom the reformation, improving the Religio (which he instituted in so famous and sumptuous way) was unwanted: look what befell him, they were saying, his attempts to change the regulations and services, to bring so many reforms brought misfortune onto his head”.<sup>218</sup>

I deem these utterances to be direct references to Zsigmond's religious policies. Not only was Zsigmond behind the necessity of presbyteries, but he also supported Medgyesi when it came to the improving of church services. In this view Zsigmond also became an

<sup>215</sup> The installing of new reforms became an increasingly urgent enterprise within the Calvinist Church.

<sup>216</sup> See also Murdock, “The Importance of Being Josiah”.

<sup>217</sup> “Vagy talán végezetre annak örülsz, mint a Jósias vesztén örvendezők, hogy immár az ily istenfélő nagy rendek által kezdődött reformációk, jobbítások sárban romlanak, s megint a régi szokások állnak helyben.” RMK I. 934, 36.

<sup>218</sup> “Nem kell kétleni, sokan mocskolták ez ifjú Szent Királyt is, kiváltképpen, hogy ilyen véletlen veszély esék rajta. Elsőben is ama Régiségessék szokásuktól függők, kiknek a reformatio, a Vallásban való jobbítás (melyet oly nevezetesen s fényesen cselekedék) nem fér vala fogokra: ám szépen jára úgy mondták, mind a szép rendtartásoknak, istentiszteleknek megváltoztatása, a sok újítások hozták az ő fejére a veszedelmet.” RMK I. 934, 34.

embodiment of a destroyer of impurities within the confines of the Calvinist Church. This type of representation was also prominent in the wider European context, e.g. Johann Sigismund of Brandenburg in the early-seventeenth-century came to be depicted as Josiah as well, since he “attempted to introduce a second reformation in Brandenburg to cleanse the church of Lutheran ritual and ceremony, which were perceived to contain remnants of Catholic impurity”.<sup>219</sup>

It would be hard to determine whether Zsigmond’s support would have been conducive enough to re-articulate the relationship between the Calvinist Church and the Transylvanian government or not. What can be ascertained here is that the death of Zsigmond Rákóczi marked a turning point in the shaping of Pál Medgyesi’s perception of church-government relations, both from a politico-ecclesiastical and political perspective.

#### 4.5. 1657

After the publication of the *Dialogus* and Zsigmond’s death, the hostile attitude of György Rákóczi II towards the Pál Medgyesi and the Presbyterian movement became more and more strong. The young prince’s biggest concern was primarily political in nature: he was afraid of the impact of Presbyterianism and Independency on princely authority, which fear was even more intensified with the arrival of Isaac Basire, Charles I’s chaplain to the Transylvanian court in 1655. Basire took part in a public debate held in Rákóczi II’s presence over the issue of church government with János Apáczai Csere, a supporter of presbyteries. Basire drew on the events from England, highlighting Charles I’s execution.<sup>220</sup>

<sup>219</sup> Murdock, “The Importance of Being Josiah”, 1052.

<sup>220</sup> Murdock, *Calvinism on the Frontier*, 193.

This argument could easily heighten the young ruler's anxieties about the possible outcome of Presbyterian and Independent reforms. Soon it had become very clear that the only place of refuge for Medgyesi was in Sárospatak, where he could be under the protection of Zsuzsanna Lorántffy.<sup>221</sup> This place turned to be his permanent residence, and this was the place where he first communicated his laments and prophecies about the tragedy of 1657, brought by Rákóczi II's unsuccessful siege of Poland.

After the Polish army mounted a fatal offensive against the northern part of the principality, and destroyed Munkács (today Mukacheve, Ukraine) and its surroundings, the time had come for Pál Medgyesi to utter his *Fourth Woe* in Sárospatak. Even if the *Fourth Woe* was not meant to be a funeral speech *per se*, its placement after the *Three Woes* and followed by the *Fifth Woe*, signaled that the printed edition of these speeches and sermons was conceived as a funeral speech over the nation and the principality. However, the fact that this sermon was said in the church at Sárospatak created other problems. Unlike in the case of the funeral speeches where one could recreate in a relatively precise way their audience, which as one could see was a numerous one, bringing together the various segments of the society, here one has to assume the existence of a much smaller public.<sup>222</sup> Even so, more than ever before, Medgyesi's stance towards the causes of contemporary situation of the country was expressed in even more direct judgmental terms. Without providing a detailed analysis of this sermon I would just highlight those aspects that I consider indispensable for the further clarification of previously discussed characteristics concerning the relationship of the Reformed Church and princely power, and the way this relationship came to be (re)presented in these discourses.

<sup>221</sup> On the merits of Zsuzsanna Lorántffy see Nóra G. Etényi, "Lorántffy Zsuzsanna politikai és kulturális szerepe hazai és európai tükörben" [The political and cultural role of Zsuzsanna Lorántffy in home and European mirrors], *Teológiai Szemle* 45(2002): 19-26.

<sup>222</sup> Unfortunately, the short research time did not allow me to consult the archives in Sárospatak. The extant visitation records might have information regarding the number and the composition of the audience. At this point I would name this the next step for the development of this research.

The tragedy at Munkács just intensified Medgyesi's anxieties about the final perish of the country. Not only did his prophecies seem to gain credence, but it also became evident that the current power structures of the principality were imbalanced. Thus, he had to find a way to give voice to his opinion, and to be as persuasive and stern as possible. At the beginning of his sermon, Medgyesi drew attention to the fact that God did not punish, before he would give any kind of warnings. Medgyesi gave a rather lengthy elaboration on this issue, which might be considered as a corollary of his prophetic vocation. As an agent of God, Medgyesi himself kept warning his audiences about the signs of impending divine judgment.

As I have previously underlined preachers had to accommodate to the intellectual needs of their audiences if they wanted to achieve persuasion. Medgyesi was probably well aware who he was speaking to, and it was a result of a conscious decision to include so-to-say simpler admonitions about God's punishments, then to bring this idea to a higher level, by drawing on biblical examples, and in the end bringing in the figure of the prince. Medgyesi enhanced that the prince should not be condemned, but the people should learn from his example: "But learn now, though not from us, but from the mouth of truth: These sad events are not meant to be condemned by you; but they are examples, which if you do not learn from, you will perish the same way".<sup>223</sup> This must have been among the most effective statements of Medgyesi's speech.

To make this statement even stronger, he underlined again (similarly to his speech over the old Rákóczi) that the princely office originated from God. Still, by this he did not absolve the ruler from his sins. In this case – being in a sort of in exile in the microcosm of Sárospatak – he wanted to make it explicit that the Hungarian nation should regard itself as a composite entity; the communal feeling should transcend territorial boundaries. Recalling

<sup>223</sup> "De tanuld meg már ám ne mitőlönk, hanem az igazságnak szájától: Nem arra valók e szomorú esetek, hogy te azokat bosszontásra vegyed; hanem példák ezek, melyekből ha nem tanulsz, higyed *el vesz te is hasonlóképpen.*" RMK I. 922, 13.



the ideas of Paul<sup>224</sup>, Medgyesi declared that if one part of the body was suffering, all the other parts were supposed to share in its torment. After giving a very realistic depiction of the calamities at the battles of Munkács and Beregszász, Medgyesi reminded his congregation that they were one nation with the people of these territories, moreover they had one religion with them:

“Think of those on whom this have befallen: like on your own sweet nation and neighbor, the closest one, you could see the smoke and fire of their scourge; yes like on your beloved brothers with whom you are on one religion, [with whom] you have one God, one Lord, one Father, one faith, one baptism, [with whom] you have grown on one bread”.<sup>225</sup>

From this point of view could it be possible that Medgyesi perceived the organization of the Principality along the lines of a confessional (political) community? The confessional character is self evident; the more problematic part pertains to the political aspect. When speaking about the laws, Medgyesi referred to God’s commandments. It was under God’s law he imagined the Hungarian nation to unite. Medgyesi also made it explicit that he imagined the *religio*, the *nation* and the *patria* as entities that had to form one unit. In his conception the people of the country should not be divided on a territorial basis. He made this even more enunciated by elaborating on the fact that the disobedience against divine ordinances had become so high that it started to divide not only cities, but also villages, houses, and even individuals. This sort of resigned attitude also resonated with the tone of the *Preface* of the *Many Woes*.

Medgyesi started the preface with a reaffirmation of the Jewish-Hungarian fate parallel, but in this case he moved a step beyond indentifying the miseries of Israel with the perils of Transylvania. So far Medgyesi had tried to find the reasons for the perishing of the country through the interpretation of individual death. He kept this conception, but it was

<sup>224</sup> 1 Corinthios 12, 25-26: “ut non sit scisma in corpore sed id ipsum pro invicem sollicita sint membra et si quid patitur unum membrum conpatiantur omnia membra sive gloriatur unum membrum congaudent omnia membra vos autem estis corpus Christi et membra de membro”

<sup>225</sup> “Kiken ez eset, gondolándod: úgy mint édes nemzeteden, sőt szomszédidon, s még pedig a legközelebb valókon, kiknek veszedelmeknek füstöt és lángját innen láthattad; sőt veled azon egy valláson lévő szerelmes Atyádfiain, akikkel egy Istened, egy Urad, egy Atyád, egy hited, egy keresztséged, egy són kenyeren neveledtél, terjedtél”. RMK I. 922, 14.

also evident that there were slight alterations. Here he tried to understand the predestination of the Hungarian nation from its providence, the origins of its history, in order to make the contrast between the prosperity of the multicultural Pannonia and the current deterioration of the state of Transylvania more powerful. The preacher attempted to objectivize his perspective through the authority of persons who were witnessing the continuous decay of Hungary:

“One erudite devout could rightly claim, lamenting on this big perishing of Hungary, fifty-sixty years ago (if only he saw it in its current conditions) that barely as many small Cities remained from the big empire, as countries that used to belong to it. *The formerly Eastern kingdom of Hungary, wealthy by the booty of the West, swollen by so many victories, comprising so many kingdoms, where did it fall back? Of so great an Empire, barely as many towns are left, as once (there were) kingdoms.*”<sup>226</sup>

Unfortunately contemporary scholarship cannot give a definite answer about the person of this erudite devout, but it is certain that he was not only referenced by Pál Medgyesi.<sup>227</sup> This perspective became more accentuated when Medgyesi chose to quote the opinion of Sigismund von Herberstein<sup>228</sup> - an “erudite German Politician”- the legate of Ferdinand I. It is almost impossible to attest the real motivation behind Medgyesi’s choice to rely exactly on Sigismund, but it is truly revealing that he felt the need to quote a foreign diplomat in order to strengthen his argumentation. Herberstein was well acquainted with the political situation in Hungary and Transylvania, and due to his familiarity with the state of affairs in other European countries as well, his judgments could have been given credence to:

“One erudite German Politician man, named Sigmond Herbersten [sic!], the legate of king Ferdinand I, among those nicely written words, where he enumerates the visible reasons for the perishing of Hungary, he reports that he heard the following saying from a

<sup>226</sup> “Méltán állatta egy tudós Jámbor, Magyarországnak e nagy pusztulásán óhajtozván, ezelőtt 50-60 esztendőkkal (hát ha még mai állapotjában látná) hogy Városcák is alig maradtak e nagy birodalomból annyik, mint amennyi országok régenten ehhez tartoztak. *Hungariae regnum Orientus olim, Occidentis spoliis opulens, tot victoriis tumidum, tot regna complexum, quo recidit! De tanto Imperio, vix tot reliqua sunt oppidula, quot olim regna!*” RMK I. 934, 3.

<sup>227</sup> On this peculiarity see Gábor Kecskeméti, “Latin humanizmus és anyanyelvű publicisztika egy 17. századi kálvinista prédikációban” [Latin humanism and vernacular publicistics in one seventeenth century Calvinist sermon]. *ItK* 115(2001). 256-261.

<sup>228</sup> Sigismund von Herberstein (d. 1566) was a Carniolan diplomat, writer, historian and member of the Holy Roman Empire Imperial Council. He was famous for his extensive writings on the geography, history and customs of Russia.

witty courtier: *that he has never seen or heard of any kingdom that perished with greater joy and dance than Hungary.*<sup>229</sup>

Herberstein's perspective together with the account of the *erudite devout* offered a historical-political evidence to support the providentialist view about the fate of the principality. Then the usual theological argument came to the forefront again: in case of not conforming to the laws of God, punishment was about to afflict the nation. Medgyesi referred back to the historical calamities that had affected the life of the country prior to 1657. He mentioned here again (just like in the speech over Rákóczi I) the battle of Szalonta from 1636 (this was also the year when János Dali Tolnai and his companions signed the *Formula singularitatis*<sup>230</sup> in England, marking the beginnings of Puritanism in Hungarian territories, which as one could see had very important repercussions in the Principality of Transylvania and Upper Hungary), the uprisings in Wallachia from 1639, and the battles that had occurred between 1644 and 1645. Medgyesi highlighted that God showed his grace in these troubled times and saved the Hungarians, yielding these events to their benefit and glory – but who could predict the end of these miseries: “our sun perished at noon, and our light passed away: there is no Prophet who would know how long these grieves will last.”<sup>231</sup> Nothing could soothe Medgyesi's exasperation.

Turning back to the *Fourth Woe*, the focus of Medgyesi's discourse shifted from the community of all faithful to the community of those who were propagating “the truth”. “The necessary nice ordinance of Christ about the salutary direction of the Ecclesia has been turning in such horrible and ugly vituperation in the last years: many parts of truth have

<sup>229</sup>“Egy tudos Politicus Német ember, Herbersten Sigmond nevő, első Ferdinand Császár legatussa, ama' szép ki-irt szavai között, melyekben Magyar ország veszésének szemmel látható Okait számlálja, jelenti, hogy egy, nem feje lágyára esett Udvaritól hallot volt ily mondást: *Se nunquam vidisse, vel audisse regnum ullum, quod maiore, atque Hungaria, gaudio et tripudio periret.*” RMK I. 934, 4.

<sup>230</sup> The *Formula singularitatis* was a sort of manifesto, where these peregrines declared that after they return to Hungary they will adopt the ideals and principles of democratic church governance. See also Zoványi, *Puritánus mozgalmak* [Puritan movements].

<sup>231</sup> “*délben enyészett el a mi napunk, s aludt el világunk: nincs Próféta, és nincsen, aki megtudhatná meddig lesznek e nyomorúságok!*” RMK I. 934. 7.

been bound, just because of the fear for one free life”.<sup>232</sup> Here again Medgyesi’s attention turned to problem of church organization. Despite all of his efforts to introduce the Presbyterian system into the Calvinist Church, by the claim that it was an ecclesiastical structure with a scriptural basis, all endeavors, dubbed Puritan/Presbyterian/Independent by contemporaries were slowly stifled. As Medgyesi underlined, “the agents of this horrible faction and the accomplices of the tenor against the spiritual King Christ were not just the *Political* order, but also those whose duty would have been to profess and propagate the truth”.<sup>233</sup> Here Medgyesi publicly reprimanded both the political and ecclesiastical orders for the current disharmonious situation. Thus the sermon composed for the occasion of the unsuccessful Polish campaign presented an enmeshing of politico-ecclesiastical, political and religious concerns.

#### **4.6. *Una gerit bellum, pacem manus altera reddit* – The Funeral Speech of György Rákóczi II**

Despite the strong negative propaganda surrounding the personality and competency of György Rákóczi II after the devastating losses brought by the years of 1567 and 1568, the death of the young prince was still interpreted as a sign of divine judgment, and the individual responsibility of Rákóczi II in these battles could not absolve the Hungarian nation from its collective sinfulness. Unfortunately, I cannot undertake the task within the framework of this research to provide an extensive elaboration on György Rákóczi II’s

<sup>232</sup> “a Christusnak az Ekklézsiák idvességes igazgatására kiadott ama szép *Rendelése*, minémő rettenetes rut szidalomban forga ez egy néhány esztendőök alatt: kötve tartódott sok része az igazságnak, csak egy szabados életnek féltéséből”. RMK I. 922, 20.

<sup>233</sup> “Mely szörnyű pártütésnek, s a lelki Király Krisztus Ellen való törekedésnek részessi, cselekedői nem csak a *Politicus* rend, hanem még azok is, akiknek, fejek bé törésével is kellett volna, ez igasságot terjeszteni, s állatni”. Ibid.

political ideals. Since a huge literature has already been written on this topic (and it will be the subject of my future research to re(evaluate) them, here I would just provide a (re)reading of Rákóczi II's funeral speech, said (and written) by István Czeglédi, since not only does this source offer a lament over the young prince, but it also provides a new perspective on the relationship between religion and contemporary political thought.

The funeral service of György Rákóczi II was held on 24 April 1661, on the name-day of the dead prince, with great splendor according to János Szalárdi's report from his *Miserable Hungarian Chronicle* (also see the report of his funeral procession in Appendix 5). Rákóczi was buried in Sárospatak, next to his mother, Zsuzsanna Lorántffy, who only died two weeks before his son. At the funeral service the Calvinist preacher from Kassa, István Czeglédi<sup>234</sup> played the main role, whose funeral speech came to be printed in the same year in Kassa (today Kosice, Slovakia). The funeral report also tells us that besides Czeglédi's speech, János Pósaári said a *peroratio*, and a preacher from Huszt and Bánya also preached at the occasion, but unfortunately, contemporary scholarship is not aware of any printed editions of these speeches.

The prelude of Czeglédi's speech conformed to the tradition of funeral discourses, already seen in the case of Pál Medgyesi's funeral speech over György Rákóczi I. As one could see in Medgyesi's speech, the preacher employed a biblical terminology when he identified the old prince with the head of the country. Medgyesi intensified this imagery in his *Fourth Woe*, where he underlined that in case any part of the body (just to emphasize again that Medgyesi in his *Three Woes* kept addressing Transylvania and the whole Hungarian nation, which attitude became even stronger in the *Fourth Woe*, where he made it explicit that this nation, even though bound to different territories, was one unit, and thus he

<sup>234</sup> István Czeglédi (1620-1671) did his schools in Nagyvárad, Debrecen, and Sárospatak, and after a short teaching period in Sátoraljaújhely, he continued his studies in the Low Countries. After his return (1647), he became the director of the school of Kassa. With the beginning of *persecutio decennalis*, his life, similarly to other Protestant preachers became endangered.

basically also “created” the vision of a unified territory) was harmed, all the other parts should share in its pain. Czeglédi adopted a similar technique. He also depicted the relevance of the prince, using the head-body politico-theological allegory. “What can be more precious than the Head of the Man? Good Princes are instead of *Heads*, because they are the ones, who foresee the upcoming peril, they are the ones, who protect the whole body”.<sup>235</sup> In this theological-political constellation, the young Rákóczi, just like his father was represented as the head of the principality, which should protect every part of the realm. But the prince was not only a protector of the realm, but he was also a servant of God, and thus he became the agent through whom God could bring about his judgment.

Following the Protestant tradition of enhancing the role of patriarchal authority in the government, Czeglédi also portrayed Rákóczi II as the father of his realm, without whom the nation was orphan. As one could see, this was a prevalent political metaphor when it came to defining the relationship of Transylvanian princes towards their subjects. This was the stance of István Vetési when he wrote his letter on good government to Rákóczi I, and this idea was embraced by the old Rákóczi himself in his instructions to his son on leading the principality. Similarly to Medgyesi’s apologetics for György Rákóczi I, Czeglédi also tried to somehow absolve the young prince from at least some of the mishaps of the country, underlining that “the Man does not always fall into peril for his own sins”.<sup>236</sup> It is interesting to note that both Pál Medgyesi’s afore analyzed *Fourth Woe* and Czeglédi’s funeral speech were uttered in Sárospatak, a microcosm from where one could communicate religious, social and political messages alike that bore a so-to-say communal value not just to those who were actual ear-witnesses to these speeches, but on a higher level their

<sup>235</sup> “Mi lehet az Ember *Fejénél* drágább? (e) *Fejek* helyet vadnak a’ jó Fejedelmek, mert űk szokták el-látni eleve, az érkezendő veszedelmet, űk oltalmazták az egész testi-taghot”. István Czeglédi, *Over György Rákóczi II* (critical edition: Kecskeméti, Nováky, *Magyar nyelvű halotti beszédek* [Hungarian funeral speeches]), 178.

<sup>236</sup> “Nem mindenkor maga büneért esik Ember veszélyben”, Czeglédi, *Over György Rákóczi II*, 186.

message was meant to overarch not only social, but also territorial boundaries.<sup>237</sup> Even though Czeglédi's speech was similar to Medgyesi's speech on many points, it also presented significant departure from it.

One can recall that based on the example of biblical kings Medgyesi extracted ten characteristics that were indispensable for upholding a righteous rule. Czeglédi adopted other strategy tools, which added new significance to the persuasive value of the speech (both as text and performance). Czeglédi devoted a significant part of his speech to a discussion on the legitimacy and necessity of wars. Of course, he drew on biblical examples when he turned his attention to this topic, but the application to the actual situation was also very much enunciated. The most important point of this elaboration was the emphasis on the "just war"<sup>238</sup> against the pagans, but Czeglédi also highlighted that one should seek peace with the enemy before entering a battle, pray to God, have faith in God, and repent of one's sins. Pál Medgyesi also reproached the Hungarian nation for turning away from God and abounding in sins, and this came to be echoed by Czeglédi. These were again the circumstances when one could witness the military destruction of the country (the Principality of Transylvania and neighboring territories in Upper Hungary), already foreseen by Pál Medgyesi and materializing in the battle of Munkács, and here all this culminated in the death of the young prince. Still, whilst Medgyesi openly assumed the main role of a prophet, continuously presaging the upcoming doom of the country, Czeglédi was a so-to-say more pragmatic "assessor" of contemporary events that altered the scene of religion and politics.

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<sup>237</sup> From this perspective, it would be beneficial look at the extant contemporary book catalogues to approximately assess the reading public of the printed version of these funeral speeches and other sermons. Since this research also attempted to provide certain directions the ever problematic issue of constructing public spheres can be approached, at this point I would propose a direction that would weigh (if possible) the ear-witness public of these performances against their (hypothetical) reading audience. This would especially be intriguing in the case of Pál Medgyesi, but it could also lead to previously unnoticed aspects in the case of István Czeglédi.

<sup>238</sup> On this topic see Gábor Kármán, "*Bellum-iustum* érvelések II. Rákóczi György háborúiban" [*Bellum-iustum* argumentations in the wars of György Rákóczi II], *Századok* CXL(2006): 939-71.

In Czeglédi's conception the princes were stands, and in case they were removed "there will be oppression among the people. They are strengthening the *Respublica* like Fundamentals".<sup>239</sup> Accentuating the strong interdependence between the ruler and realm came to the forefront of the funeral discourse again, just as one could see in the case of Pál Medgyesi, and let us not forget that this biblical imagery of the leaders being the supporting elements of their territory could also find a common ground with Lipsian neostoic ideals (highlighted here through the work of István Vetési). It is a more problematic issue, however to assess whether the *res publica* as imagined by Pál Medgyesi was the same as the one István Czeglédi made reference to.

At this point I would like to refer back to Sándor Bene's typology of (political) public spheres. I have already provided a brief description on the three models (courtly, estate-defined, civil) he extracted in this study. However, within the confines of the same study he moved a step further, and tried to classify these spheres on the grounds of whether the issue of *religio* (denoting the various churches and their propagated confessions and ideologies) ought to become part of political discourses or not. According to this classification criterion, the two groups would not be necessarily separated according to various denominations, but according to their view about the place of religion within the sphere of politics. Should politics become an autonomous field?<sup>240</sup>

In the present case, as one could see above István Vetési, conforming to the Lipsian Neostoic political philosophy, did not explicitly deal with the issue of *religio*, which can mean that he did not consider it as an essential factor in the organization of the government. In his *Princely Paraenesis*, György Rákóczi I warned his son to value and respect the

<sup>239</sup> "Támaszok ezek; kik, ha el-mozdítottatnak, „nyomorgatás leszen a' nép közöt". Mint Fundamentumok, ugy erősgetik űk a *Respublicát*." Czeglédi, *Over György Rákóczi II*, 185.

<sup>240</sup> See Bene, *Theatrum politicum*, 352-53.



ecclesiastical orders (“egyházi rendek”), and not to be ashamed to learn from them.<sup>241</sup> Rákóczi I did acknowledge the legitimacy of religion within politics, however he did not want to give such authority to the *politia ecclesiastica* as Pál Medgyesi would have hoped. Pál Medgyesi could not have imagined a political forum where the ecclesiastical orders could not exert major influence. István Czeglédi expressed his stance in the following way: “The last time has already arrived a long time ago; in which there are and there will be schisms in faith [...] Disunions are necessary to happen. Leave the matter of *Religio* to God; because this sweet Sunlight will reveal even the Atoms”.<sup>242</sup> Thus the view Czeglédi propagated shifted (again) in the direction of a relatively autonomous political sphere on a theoretical level.

## 5. Reconsiderations

The relationship between the Reformed Church and princely power in the Principality of Transylvania approached through the prism of funeral speeches provides a multilayered and controversial facet of the intertwining of the *Political* and the *Theological* in the age of confessionalization. To return to the initial methodological considerations, one can state that during Calvinist princely dominance the “sacred” and “secular” orders were imagined as structurally and functionally connected.

As the cases of the funeral speeches written over György Rákóczi I, count István Bethlen, Péter Bethlen and Zsigmond Rákóczi have illustrated, these princes and

<sup>241</sup> “Az egyházi rendeket is igen-igen megbecsüljed, oltalmazdad, tápláljad, segítsed s azok között arról is soha el ne felejtkezzél, az ki Isten után az deáki tudományra tanított, mással együtt vigyázott reád, hozzájuk háládatlan ne légy, sőt ne szégyelljed ezután is tőlök érteni s tanulni is.” Rákóczi I, *Princely Paraenesis*, 136.

<sup>242</sup> “Régen „el jött már az utolsó Idő;” melyben hittől való szakadások vadnak, s-lesznek-is [...] „SZÜKSÉG MEG-LENNI AZ HASONLASOKNAK.” Hadd Istenre a’ *Religio* dolgát; mert kit mutattya ez áldott Nap-fény, az *Atomusokat* is”. Czeglédi, *Over György Rákóczi II*, 194.

magistrates were portrayed as crucial elements in bringing the ultimate aim of the Reformation to completion. The so-to-say “resacralization process” of Transylvanian princely dominance also entailed a “reconfiguration” of the role of religion within the sphere of politics. Pál Medgyesi had a composite image in mind considering the collaboration of secular and spiritual authorities. The funeral speeches composed by him bore perfect witness to this. The way he presented the cohesion of these two powers offered great insights into contemporary ideals of Reformed political thinking.

Pál Medgyesi indeed visualized a unified Reformed community under one prince and one God. In order to make his ideas as persuasive as possible he resorted to the most prominent constituents of contemporary Protestant political theology. Conforming to previous homiletical and historical traditions, Medgyesi built up his arguments based on various discursive techniques of Hebraic patriotism and providentialism. However, these elements also acquired an individual coloring. In the case of György Rákóczi I, one could see that besides depicting the old prince as Old Testament kings and identifying the Hungarian nation with the Jews; Medgyesi also drew on the relevance of individual political responsibility. The old Rákóczi assured princely succession during his lifetime, which did not only corroborate the continuation of sacred princely governance, but it also signaled that the responsibility of the individual could actually leave an imprint on the further sequence of historical events that were about to shape the fate of the principality. Being coterminous with Melanchtonian, Zwinglian, and Calvinist ideals and also in dialogue with previous conceptions about the “good government”, Pál Medgyesi regarded princes and magistrates as divine agents, who were meant to assume religious and political responsibilities alike, which in Medgyesi’s view formed one unified, indivisible entity.

Through the evoking of the politico-theological image of King Josiah the death of Zsigmond Rákóczi and István Bethlen were put on a par, and the death of Péter Bethlen also

came to be interpreted within this constellation. Their losses were interpreted as signs of impending divine judgment, thus the speeches uttered over them were conceived as “apocalyptic prophecies”, and they were “performed” accordingly. It is undeniable that the calamities of 1657 intensified the apocalyptic overtone of these works. But what is even more peculiar (and here I am especially referring to the case of Zsigmond Rákóczi) that Zsigmond’s death was not only regarded as a sign of upcoming divine doom, but also as a tragic moment from a politico-ecclesiastical perspective. And since the ecclesiastical and secular order were looked at as functionally related units, a failure in ecclesiastical reforms did not only mean a setback for the clerical bodies, but it also hindered the further “perfecting” of church-princely government relations.

The funeral speeches over György Rákóczi I, Zsigmond Rákóczi, count István Bethlen and Péter Bethlen were not just significant in their role as funerary genres, but also as representations about the views concerning the ground of religion within contemporary political thinking. As the above presented have shown Pál Medgyesi assigned a crucial role for the *politia ecclesiastica* within the sphere of politics. István Czeglédi on the other hand – even though he assumed a great role in the service of the Reformed Ecclesia – in a way proposed the withdrawing of the issue of *religio* out of everyday politics. From this point of view I find Sándor Bene’s above detailed argumentation absolutely convincing, however I would start (re)evaluating the problem slightly differently.

Without denying the intriguing perspectives a research focusing on these two modes of political thinking might offer in case one does not focus on groups or individuals separated by denominational differences, I would argue that it could be just as revealing to analyze the development of forms of political thinking of people belonging to the same denomination. This issue becomes even more prominent when it comes to assessing the political thinking of preachers, especially when they had to give voice to their opinion

within the confines of a public sphere as established by the funeral service. This is what I would consider one of the main directions this research could be carried on.

## Appendices

### Appendix 1

Title: The Spread of the Reformation in Hungary

Source: <http://tudasbazis.sulinet.hu/hu/tarsadalomtudomanyok/tortenelem/magyar-tortenelmi-terkeptar/2/a-reformacio-es-hatasa-magyarorszagon-es-a-katolikus-megujulas/a-reformacio-es-hatasa-magyarorszagon-es-a-katolikus-megujulas-kronologia>



### Appendix 2

Title: Hungarian Culture in the Sixteenth-Seventeenth Centuries

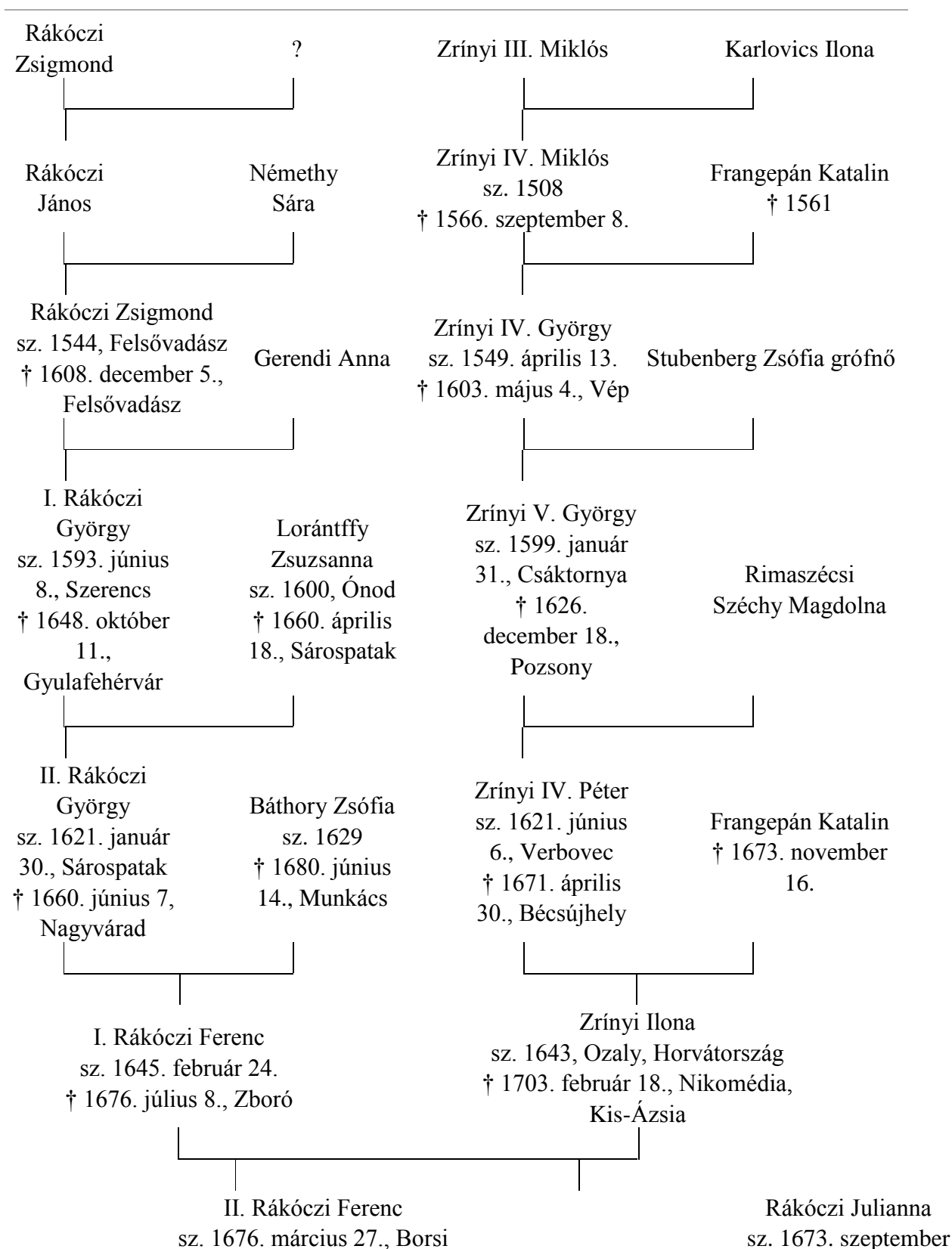
Source: <http://tudasbazis.sulinet.hu/hu/tarsadalomtudomanyok/tortenelem/magyar-tortenelmi-terkeptar/magyarorszag-kulturaja-a-16-17-szazadban/magyarorszag-kulturaja-a-16-17-szazadban-kronologia-2>



### Appendix 3

Title: The Family Tree of the Rákóczi and Zrínyi families

Source: <http://hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rákóczi-család>



## Appendix 4

Title: The Record of the Funeral of György Rákóczi I

Source: "Ismeretlen temetési rendtartások" [Unknown funeral procedures]. *ItK* 1998(5-6): 760-772.

### *I. Rákóczi György temetési rendje*

Az Idvezült Urunk temetésekorbeli processus,  
mely leszen 10. Januar 1649.

01. Az koporso megh inditasakor, Urunk eo Nagysága, es az Ur; bizonyos es csak név szerint oda rendeltetett emberekkel legyenek jelen, akkor, mikor az enekles el keszdetik.

*ezek kik legjenek.*

*egy feleol az iffiak. mas feleol az be jarok az test mellet.*

02. Az koporso előtt legh kezelb az Czimer vitetik, es az hol az tágasságh engedi, az bot, es szablya két felöl mellette. Az hol pedig capacitas nem leszen, az Czimer előtt az zablya, az előtt az bot.

*Az test eleot Rákóczi Sigmond Uram es Rakoczi Ferencz Urt viszik.*

03. Ezek előtt megyen Urunk eo Nagysága küleon.

Hoffmester

04. Czarar keovethe

05. Elotte az Molduvaj, es Radzivil Herczegh keovethe. Havaselj keovet es Vesselieni Ferencz keovethe.

06. Ezek előtt megyen az fel szegezendő Fekete Zászlo.

07. Ez előtt megyen az Orszagh Zaszloia.

08. Ez előtt az Czarzar Zaszloia, kinek

09. Elotte az sirban rontando Zaszlo.

10. Az előtt az fegyverben eolteoztetett Szemely.

11. Az előtt az Fekete bársonnyal eolteosztetett lo, vezeteken.

12. Az előtt az szerszamban eolteoztetett Lovak. Nro 5.
13. Az Dobos, es Trombitasok.
14. Az Urak, mind Erdeljek, es Magiar orszaghiak, es fő rendek.
15. Ezek előtt magyar orszaghi vármegiek.
16. Az Erdelyi vármegyek
17. ....
18. Szekelysegh.
19. Az Szaszsagh.
20. Az magyar orszaghi varosok.
21. Az Erdelyi varosok.
22. Ezek előtt az Egyházi személyek.
23. Ezek előtt az Deakság, es elottok az gyermeksegh.
24. Az Lovas Seregh.

Az Zaszlok az Castrum Dolorison kívül az láb felől fognak allani, az szerszámos személy, es az kik az Czimer, Botot, Kardot viszik, az Castrum Dolorisban állanak kéz felől.

Az Testet fogiák Zolyomi Miklos Uram Haller Gabor Uram Haller Peter Uram Barczai Akos Uram Betthlen Mihály Uram Banffi Sigmond Uram Sombori Janos Uram Szebeni Király biro Uram Redei Janos Uram Keresztessi Ferencz Uram Betthlen Janos Uram Máriassi Istvan Uram. *Banfi Georgj Uram.*

Aszonyunkat fogiák Haller István Uram, és Redei Ferencz Uram

Iffiu Aszonyunkat, Kun Istvan Uram, Serédi Uram

Az Czimert vigye Kornis Ferencz Uram

Az szablyat Kemény Boldisár Uram

Az botot Mikola Uram

Az szerszamban Beldi Pál Uram

Az Eoreg fekete zaszlot Gyulaffi Laslo

Az ország Zaszloiat Kemény Janos Uram



Az Teorök Czászár Zaszloiat Huszar Peter *Uram*

Az sirban rontando Zaszlot Gyulai Ferencz *Uram*

Az Test utan Eoreg Aszonyunk eo Nagysága

Eo Nagysága utan Iffiu Aszonyunk.

Az utan gjazban öltözőth öregbik Aszszonjunk Frau Czimérei,

Iffiu Aszszonyunk Frau Czimérei, kik hol allianak, ordinantiat, Görghej Uramtul, köl kérnj.

Azok utan, az Ur, es Fő Aszszonyomok.

Azok utan, nimet, es Varosi Aszszonyok.

.....

Az szallasokra, kiknek mivel köl gazdalkodni, Orban Ferencz *Uram* el iövén, limitallia el;

Nota Bene; kiknek köl gazdalkodni, arrol Instructiot köl venni;

Az Vajdak, es egieb féle követők gazdaiokat el rendelni,

.....

Gazdák s, gondviselők az mostani Ceremonjára.

Petki Istvan *Uram*, Bánfi Sigmond *Uram*, Dániel János *Uram*, Farkas Ferencz *Uram*, Koncz András *Uram*, Pap András *Uram*, Sebesi Miklós *Uram*, Meszaros Peter *Uram*, Torniosi Marton *Uram*, Czegezj Tamas *Uram*, Daniel Ferencz *Uram*, Radák András *Uram*.

Az palotaban gondviselő;

Gjörőfi *Uram*, s Gyulai *Uram*, es eő kegyelmek mutassanak ülő heliet, az Varmegeek követejnek, szekeli, es szasz Urajmnak,

Az követeknek, Uraknak, és fő embereknek, Petki István *Uram*.

Az Aszszonioknak Banfj Sigmond *Uram*.

Az Papsaghnak, Deakokkal edgjúth Tholdalaghi Ferencz *Uram*, mind az palotabanjs, az Templombanjs, melliet communicálni köl, Püspök Urammaljs.

Castrum Dolorisra, s szekek be vonasoknak gondviselesere, Czimerek es chartak fel szegezesere, kapukon, s ajtokon, Pap Andras *Uram*, es Torniosi Marton.

Templomban hasonlatoskeppen, Koncz Andras *Uram*, Czegezj Tamas; kik az Czimereket es chartakat, Castrum Dolorisra, szekekre, predikallo szekre, es Sanctuariumban föl zeghezenek.

Szenh Mihali lovára, koporso ala valo szekekre, s rudakra, valo gondviselese legien, Ugron Janos Uramnak, es .....

Az templombannis, fellül megh irt gondviselők, mutassanak heliet, mynden felljeb megh irt rendeknek.

Az követeket excipialljak, Petki Istvan Uram, egik gazdaval edgjűth;

Az Processusnak igazgatoj, Daniel Janos Uram, es Farkas Ferencz Uram.

## Appendix 5

Title: The Description of the Funeral of György Rákóczi II

Source: Kecskeméti – Nováky

*II-ik Rákóczg György haláláról Kemény János Erdélyből Magyarországra icl. gr. Csáky István sógorának, amegyesei tábor-ból május 29-én 1660-ban.*

Tekintetes és méltóságos gróf! Nekem bizodalmas uram s sógorom !

Isten kegyelmedet mostani betegeskedéséből gyógyítsa meg egészséges életbe sokáig megtartsa szivből kívánom.

Tegnapi napon érkezének meg kegyelmedhez bocsátott szolgáim az erdélyi liarcznak kimeneteli felől, tudván, bogy az gonosz hir szárnyon jár nem láttam annyira szükségesnek, bogy tudósítsam kegyelmedet, mint annak környül való állási felől : az barcz azért bizonyosan 22 praesentis reggeli 8 óra tájban kez-detett, hamar el is végeztetett Gyalu és Száz-Fenes között, az fejedelem akarván valamely megfordult seregeit téríteni, az nem lehetett, hanem maga választott seregeivel succuralt nekik, azokat az üző ellenség látván az succursust megtért, és valami árok-nak szorulván az hátot adott megszorult ellenség közibe egyvele-dett és ott miglen mellette levők megsegítették, négy seb esett rajta, fején három s vállán egy, ketteji valami kurtáni oláhoktól esett, az ketteji töröktől, az többi gyenge sebek, az egyik fején levő derekas nehéz seb, nehezen vitték Váradig, 26 praesentis még ott volt, ha meg nem nehezedik. Ultima kujus akarták Székely-hidra hozni az fejedelemaszszonyért is elmentenek Munkácsra, eloszlott hadait convocáltatja és Debreczenhez akarja szállíttatni. *(Tovább szakadás miatt olvashatlan.)*

*II-ik Rálcóczy György temetésének rendje.*

A temetésnek rendi :

1. Az mely házban az test volt, az urak, követek és főrendek oda gyiiltenc. Az fejedelem képe előjövén kimentenek az Castrum dolo-rishoz.

2. Az ülések e szerint voltanak mind fent s mind alatt az várban.

1. Fejedelem ő nagysága követe Bánffy Dienes uram.

2. Az lengyel követ.

3. Gr. Csáky István uram 0 nagysága követe.

4. Melith Péter uram.

5. Priny Gábor uram.

6. Kémén Simon uram.

7. Wesselényi Pál uram.

8. Forgács Miklós uram.

9. Bocskay'uram követje.

10. Barkóczy György uram.

11. Priny István uram.
12. Forgács András uram.
13. Priny György uram
14. Bethlen Pál uram.
15. Priny János uram.

Az Magyarországi vármegyéknek követei.

Az Magyarországi városok követei.

Erdélyi vármegyék követei.

Az erdélyi városoknak követei.

Gr. Tököly uram a Castrum doloris mellett.

Károly László uram a Castrum doloris mellett.

Az aszszonyok a fejedelemszöny után ültenek.

Az éneklést elkezdvén predicatio lön, predikáltott Czeglédi uram, azután Posaházi deákul perorált, azután megindítván a testet, énekszó-val fel az várban az processio lön eszerint :

Az deákok elöl, utánna az egyházi rendek, utána a község és populi.

Utána az vármegye lovon, utána a főrend lovon, utána az urak lovon, aszerint amint feljebb van írva. Utána a fejedelem képe hintón. Utána Tököly uram fiastól és Károly László uram az több atyafiakkal, két ló feketében, utána 3 zászló, egy ezüst tábla. Dobos és trombitások. Az test, az özvegy és a siralmasok, az fejedelemszöny 0 nagysága az úrasszonyok és közasszonyok stb.

Felmenvén az várban, a kápolnában predikáltott a huszti pap, perorali magyarul az bányai mester, énekelvén az sírba betették : mind eszerint volt

## Appendix 6

Title: List of Speeches Used

Source: <http://itk.iti.mta.hu/kecskemeti/csv/index.html>

RMK – Old Hungarian Library	Year	Place of Issue	Preacher/Orator	Dead person(s)
I, 873.	1653	Sárospatak	Medgyesi Pál: <i>Erdel s' egész Magyar nep...harmasjajja 's siralma</i>	I.Rákóczi György, Rákóczi Zsigmond, gr. id. Iktári Bethlen István
I, 974	1661	Kassa	Ceglédi P. István	II. Rákóczi György
I, 787	1646	Várad	Szatmári Lázár Miklós 3, Selyei Balog István 2, Dobrai Gácsai Bálint, Hodászi S. Miklós 2, Verécsi S. Ferenc , Csulai György	gr. Iktári Bethlen Péter 9, özv. Albisi Zólyomi Miklósné Daróczi Zsófia

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\_\_\_\_\_. *Igaz Magyar Nép Negyedik Jajja s Siralma* [Fourth Woe]. Sárospatak: 1657.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Sok jajjokban...* [Many woes...]. Sárospatak: 1658.

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