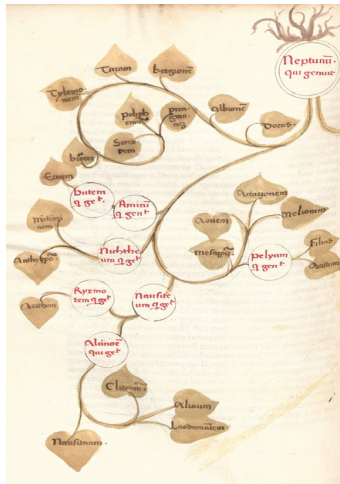


DOCTORAL THESIS

**GENEALOGIA VARIABILIS**

**Study on the Genres of Genealogy Based on the Example  
of the Thurzó-family**



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# I.

## AIMS OF RESEARCH

Our recent knowledge about genealogy is primarily of historiographical kind, and we usually refer to genealogy as one of the auxiliary sciences of history, which analyzes genealogical relationships. However, genealogy provides several meanings and possibilities of interpretation beyond its historiographical aspect.

According to the assumption proved in the dissertation genealogical thinking is such a complex approach, the roots of which go back to antiquity and its set of narrative resources was in permanent change quite till the modernity beginning in the 18th century. This set of resources contains heterogeneous texts, toposes, sometimes such elements of tradition that are not fixed in writing at all – yet show the signs of a somewhat agreed convention. From these thought constellations mainly remained concealed the domination, the coming into prominence of each element of tradition or idea characterizes genealogical discourses in particular epoches.

The dissertation wishes to point at the genre variegation, the variability of genealogy in such a way that it examines the different components of genealogical way of thinking and their textual representations through the example of only one family, the Thurzós, who lived in Felvidék (Highland). Which are the dominant elements of tradition in genealogical discourses? What causes that genealogical dialogues are characterized by the domination of some elements in particular epoches, while other elements fall out?

The dissertation devotes emphasized attention to the history of genealogy before modernity that makes up more than two thirds of the study's content. It focuses on the thought that genealogy is a concept – located at the border of natural and cultural sciences –, the status of which was fundamentally changed with modernity beginning in the 18th century. The universal meaning of the concept neglected at the differentiation of the specialized sciences, the previous complex meaning bifurcates to a biology related theory on the one hand (the earlier meaning of *generatio* in the sense of '*generation*'), and to

a unit-concept with cultural-social involvement (the earlier definition of *genos* in the sense of '*genus*').

In some sense by means the biologically fixed abilities of human genealogy genealogical narration suggests that it is trouble free, and it prefers to be seen simple and unquestionable in the practice of human activities, supporting its position as a natural science by this as well. It uses the indisputable arguments of nature with the force of evidence from strategic causes. However, it becomes questionable straightway, when its argumentation – being a mythical or logical argumentation – is applied to describe or legitimate a particular situation, in a situation, to which it can thank its own existence as well. This is precisely why it remains a cultural system and its cultural character surmounts when it offered different forms of expression as answers to the mainly legitimational challenges that it strived to correspond to during history. The forms of expression of genealogy, the elements of genealogical arguing reflect the questions of our age, so we can regard them as elements of the collective genealogical consciousness, of the genealogical way of thinking.

The dissertation has a double aim of research, it strives to rethink our conceptions of genealogy, respectively of the genealogical way of thinking on the one hand, and to enlarge our knowledge about the Thurzó-family on the other.

## **II. THE ANALYSIS CARRIED OUT, SOURCES, METHODS**

The dissertation regarded its aim to enrich, to tone our conceptions of genealogical way of thinking. Just for this reason, the marking out of the texts for analysis is not without trouble. Since we cannot surely state that particular texts are suitable for analyzing an approach, while others are not. The texts chosen – although many of them was created not for serving genealogical aims – are speaking about the origin of the family, using genealogical data, moreover, that is more important than these: the parts discussing genealogy play an impor-

tant role in the structure and argumentation of the text. I have focused on the content of the texts while choosing the sources and I tried to analyze texts that speak about the genesis, origin of the family. The sources analyzed are written mainly in Latin, in some cases in German language.

In the first chapter I focused on the analysis of the panegyric poem titled *De antiquissima nominis et familiae Thurzonum origine* by Valentin Eck, published in 1519 in Cracow. In this chapter I further discuss the testimonial of the poem written by Rudolph Agricola and I briefly touch upon the epigrammes of contemporary humanists, panegyricizing the Thurzós. Speaking about the literary application of the topos of *Hercules in bivio* I show examples for the Transylvanian presence of this topos, and point out thematic and textual parallels with the work of János Petki, titled *Az Virtusnak és Voluptasnak egymással való vetekedések* [The Rivalization of Virtus and Voluptas with each other] (1610).

The analyzed group of texts in chapter two are the funeral speeches created for the burials of the Thurzós. The three orations in Latin language (the speeches of Isaacus Abrahamides, Elias Ursinus and Jeremias Spiegel), a sermon in German language (Peter Zabeler) and a Latin collection of death poetry (Stephanus Xylander) all contain genealogic data. The family reached significant political positions by this time wished to meet the customs and requirements of the age as well, and also took over in their texts of genealogical subject the phrases and topics present in the political discourse of the era.

The most important source of the third chapter of the dissertation is a work of Károly Wagner titled *Analecta Scepussii sacri et profani*, I–IV (1774–1778). We regard the Thurzó-chapter of the fourth volume of *Analecta* as the first genealogy written with scientific demands. First I summarized Wagner's principles of how to treat historical sources on the basis of the statements of the preface of his work, then I introduced the helpmates of Wagner from Highland. I was led to the conclusion while reviewing the correspondence of Sámuel Dobai Székely and Károly Wagner that Dobai Székely was of assistance to Wagner in the procurement, copying and transmitting the narrative sources and chronicles present in *Analecta*. As the ending of this

chapter for the examination of the reception of *Analecta*, I surveyed the articles of the Viennese periodical titled *Allergnädigst-privilegirte Anzeigen*, which had reviewed the Wagnerian work.

### III. RESULTS, USEFULNESS

In the first chapter of the dissertation (*Thurzó-genealogy in the age of humanism*) I dealt with a panegyric poem addressed to Elek Thurzó. This poem was written in 1519 about the sources of the family and the ancient name of the Thurzós by a humanist of German origin, Valentin Eck. In this chapter I wrote longer about the momentum of the poem that I judged the most important: about the meeting of the young Elek Thurzó with Gyönyör (Pleasure) and Erény (Virtue). The commitment of Elek Thurzó to Virtus is important not only because it shows the right decision in an ethical sense – principally supplying thus the function of guide –, but also because the decision in the poem bears with concrete political actuality. The poem was born in the moment of Thurzó's political coming on the scene and testifies the lord's commitment to the mother country. Speaking about the genealogical proceedings of the era (*16th century genealogy*) I stated that etymological conclusions coming on the basis of names is a typical method of the age of humanism, but it can belong to two different scientific argumentations at the same time: to the verification lying on mythic bases (Giovanni Nanni) and to the argumentation of philology with humanist intellectuality (Beatus Rhenanus).

In the second chapter (*The genealogical parts of the 17th century death valedictories*) I analyzed the funeral textes made for Thurzó-burials. All of the profane orations made for burials of lords contain genealogical chapters, thus they are primary sources of genealogical researches regarding this era. Although scientific research has several times called the attention to the family-historical significance of the funeral orations, it has valued them primarily as *personalias*, and has seen the genealogical accounts significant mainly from a biographical viewpoint. In contrast, the way of approach of the dissertation is a

novelty compared to the previous tendencies, as it reads out of the funeral orations the principles and criteria of genealogy-writing as well (*The rules of laudation of the genus*). At the end of the subsection I concluded that the notes, which can be found in the funeral orations and which I regarded as being methodological, had met the demand that referred to the form and content of genealogy-writing of the era.

Another important conclusion of the subsection *Teology and genealogy* was that the genealogical argumentation seem to act upon the ecclesiastic thesis of passing over the apostolic power, upon the arguments of *apostolica successio*, namely that the thought of the apostolic office-succession shows itself in the question of genealogy of the genus in the course of genealogical narration. By the help of examples from Pázmány-texts I briefly touched upon the fact that this argumentation had worked vice versa (thus proceeding from the ecclesial side towards the profanic one) as well: for the sake of making *apostolica successio* plain the texts with theological topic repeatedly mentioned historical, genealogical phrases.

In the chapter *Historia and genealogy* I analyzed the connection between the texts and history writing and paid my attention to the role that the two arguments, origin (*origo*) and antiquity (*antiquitas*), play in the genealogical narrative. At the end of the chapter after comparing the antique and biblical citations of funeral texts and quoting texts of contemporary authors (Zrínyi- and Gyöngyösi-prefaces) I concluded that these recurring text-elements, toposes are building elements of the generally used conventional, but undocumented genealogical discourse.

The third chapter (The beginnings of scientific genealogy in the 18th century) analyzed the sources of the historical interest in the Thurzós. The effect of source criticism had already forcefully prevailed during the 17th century in the case of genealogy writing. The genealogical discourse working on etymological basis became outdated, and although the representational language using mythological allegories is existing, but the development of historical etymology in the 18th century, and later the results attached with the development of medicine put it to death for good and all. In the course of the turn

in the 18th century the geneological thoughtway bearing fundamentally mythical characteristics got rid of its linguistic patterns that worked with antique allegories and later during the 17th century were theologized and legendarized, and from the 18th century it is mentioned only in the context of science history. In the chapter I discussed the first scientific genealogy written about the family. The author, Károly Wagner dealt with the family that died earlier out more than century in the last volume of the four-volume enterprise, *Analecta Scepusii sacri et profani*.

It can be regarded as a philological result of the dissertation that it analyzed sources that were slightly or never known by literature. It completes our knowledge about the family by reviewing the texts of foreign archives (like the collections of Biccse and Cracow) and by presenting of sources (the funeral poems of Kristóf Thurzó) believed to be lost for the literary common knowledge. However, the most important result of the dissertation is perhaps the novelty of the viewpoints of investigation. Primarily in the fact that it is the first to attempt a complex investigation of genealogy and draw its longitudinal section according to genres. The hoped aim of this dissertation was to get closer to the development of scientific genealogy as well by analyzing the pre-modern state of genealogy.

#### IV.

### LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

#### Presentations

1. 13. November 2007. Miskolc: **Doktoranduszok Fóruma**. [Forum of Doctoral Students] Title of presentation: *A történetiség kérdése a XVIII. század elején. Egy kutatás lehetőségeiről* [The Question of Historicity at the Beginning of the 18th Century. On the Possibilities of a Research]

2. 29. August 2008. Debrecen: **Mozgásban Irodalomtudományi PhD Konferencia.** [Moving – PhD Conference on Literary Studies] Title of presentation: *Szöveg és szövegváltozat értelmezési lehetőségeinek vizsgálata a narráció történeti aspektusának kiemelésével [Study of Text and Text Variation with Emphasis on the Historical Aspect of Narration]*
3. 13. November 2008. Miskolc: **Doktoranduszok Fóruma.** [Forum of Doctoral Students] Title of presentation: *Egy 18. századi tudós barátság története. Dobai Székely Sámuel és Johann Balthasar Bernhold [History of an Erudite Friendship from the 18th-Century. Sámuel Dobai Székely and Johann Balthasar Bernhold]*
4. 5. November 2009. Miskolc: **Doktoranduszok Fóruma.** [Forum of Doctoral Students] Title of presentation: *A 18. századi magyarországi családtörténet-írás elméleti kérdései [Theoretical Questions of Writing Family History in the 18th Century]*
5. 26–29. May 2010. Körmend: **Szolgálatomat írom Kegyelmednek: Misszilis és fiktív levelek; naplók, emlékkönyvek, dedikációk és alkalmi feljegyzések a régi magyar irodalomban.** [„Szolgálatomat írom Kegyelmednek”: Missile and Fictive Letters; Diaries, Albums, Dedications and Occasional Notes in the Hungarian Old-time Literature] Title of presentation: *„Vita nostra militia est” Dobai Székely Sámuel külföldi katonaevei album amicorumának bejegyzései alapján [Years of Soldiering of Sámuel Dobai Székely in Foreign Countries on the Basis of the Notes of his Album Amicorum]*
6. 27–28. April 2012. Pécs. **Mikro & Makro. Fialat kutatók konferenciája.** [„Mikro & Makro” Conference of Young Researchers] Title of presentation: *Prodigiumok Stephanus Xylander lőcsei krónikájában [Prodigiums in the „Lőcseian” Chronicle of Stephanus Xylander]*
7. 21. September 2012. Miskolc: **Úr és szolga viszonya a történettudomány egységében. Tudományos konferencia Vári András (1953–2011) emlékére.** [Relation of Lord and Servant in the in the Unity of History] Title of presentation: *(H)ósalakok az antik*



*korból. A humanista panegyricus mint a szolgálat egyik módja [Heroes and Archaic Figures from the Antic Age. Humanist Panegyricus as a Mode of Serving]*

8. 27–30. May 2015. Szeged: **A felvilágosodás előzményei Erdélyben és Magyarországon (1650–1750). Tudományos tanácskozás.** [The Antecedents of Enlightenment in Transilvania and in Hungary (1650-1750)] Title of presentation: *Dobai Székely Sámuel és az altdorfi egyetem [Sámuel Dobai Székely and the University of Altdorf]*

### Studies

1. SZŐKE, Kornélia, *D'anciens et nouveaux fous: L'adaptation du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle de l'oeuvre de Sébastien Brant La Nef des fous* (In print)
2. SZŐKE, Kornélia, *Régi és új bolondok: Sebastian Brandt Bolondok hajójának 18. századi átdolgozása* [Old and New Fools: The Adaptation of Sebastian Brandt's Ship of Fools from the 18. Century] (In print)
3. SZŐKE, Kornélia, *Dobai Székely Sámuel és az altdorfi egyetem* [Sámuel Dobai Székely and the University of Altdorf] = *A felvilágosodás előzményei Erdélyben és Magyarországon 1650–1750* [The Antecedents of Enlightenment in Transylvania and in Hungary (1650-1750)], ed. BARTÓK, István, Szeged, SZTE Magyar Irodalmi Tanszék, 2016, 109–119.
4. SZŐKE, Kornélia, *Thurzó Kristóf halotti versei* [The Funeral Lyrics of Kristóf Thurzó], MKSz, 3(2015), 326–334.
5. SZŐKE, Kornélia, *Wagner Károly, a modern genealógus* [Károly Wagner, the Modern Genealogist] = *Stephanus noster: Tanulmányok Bartók István 60. születésnapjára* [Studies for the 60th Birthday of István Bartók], ed. JANKOVICS, József, Bp., Reciti, 2015, 409–421.

6. SZŐKE, Kornélia, *Kliens és patrónus – Ősök és hősök a mitikus-időből: Valentin Eck Thurzó Elekhez írt dicsőítő költeménye* [Client and Patron – Ancestors and Heroes from the Mythical Ages: an Encornia from Valentin Eck to Elek Thurzó] = *Úrés szolgál a történettudomány egységében: Társadalomtörténeti tanulmányok* [Lord and Servant in the in the Unity of History: Studies in Social History], ed. GYULAI, Éva, Miskolci Egyetemi Kiadó, Miskolc, 2014, 68–78.
7. SZŐKE, Kornélia, *Prodigiumok Stephanus Xylander lőcsei krónikájában* [Prodigiums in the „Löcseian” Chronicle of Stephanus Xylander] = *Mikro&Makro: Fiatal kutatók konferenciája: Tanulmánykötet* [Conference of Young Reserchers: Studies], ed. LOVAS, Borbála, Bp., 2013, 257–269.
8. SZŐKE Kornélia, *A 18. századi magyarországi családtörténet-íráselméleti kérdései* [Theoretical Questions of Writing Family History in the 18th Century] = *Miskolci Egyetem Doktoranduszok Fóruma* [Forum of Doctoral Students at University of Miskolc], ed. SZŐKE, Kornélia, of an Erudite Friendship: Sámuel Dobai Székely and Johann Balthasar Bernhold] = *Miskolci Egyetem Doktoranduszok Fóruma* [Forum of Doctoral Students at the University of Miskolc], ed. SZŐKE, Kornélia, Miskolci Egyetemi Kiadó, Miskolc, 2009, Miskolc, 2009, 41–46.
9. SZŐKE, Kornélia, *Egy tudós barátság történetéhez: Dobai Székely Sámuel és Johann Balthasar Bernhold* [To the History of an Erudite Friendship: Sámuel Dobadi Székely and Johann Balthasar Bernhold] = *Miskolci Egyetem Doktoranduszok Fóruma* [Forum of Doctoral Students at the University of Miskolc], ed. SZŐKE, Kornélia, Miskolci Egyetemi Kiadó, Miskolc, 2008, 29–33.