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## THE HABSBERG'S ON THE HUNGARIAN THRONE IN BABAI'S EPIGRAMS

*This article is focused on an imprint by the university press of the old university of Trnava in 1773. The imprint contains an epigrammatic work of Jesuit priest Franciscus Babai (1742–1777) Hungariae Reges, in which its author, who worked in Trnava as a director of spiritual library, decided to offer 48 poeticized portraits of Hungarian kings starting from St. Stephan and ending with Maria Theresa. As a model he used a work of Ladislaus Thuróczi Ungariae suis cum regibus, printed and published in Trnava in 1729 and 1768. The author focuses his attention on the Habsburg monarchs and points to the specificities of their portraits in poetry collections.*

**Key words:** epigrammatic poetry, baroque literature and style, Habsburgs, Universitas Tyrnaviensis, Franciscus Babai

Epigrammatic poetry has an irreplaceable significance in the Slovak literature. This literary genre was preferred in the poetic works written by several baroque authors.<sup>1</sup> They were certainly inspired by Marcus Valerius Martialis, the originator of an epigram and its grandest representative in the ancient times, as well as later authors, such as the Welsh epigrammatist John Owen. In the environment of Baroque ideas, the epigram offers a space for processing diverse topics. A historical epigram, which followed the major historical events or the fate of their personalities, is also not so rare in this context. Therefore the aim of this paper is to highlight – within the epigrammatic genre – the depiction of destinies of the important rulers. Our main focus and analysis will be aimed at an epigrammatic collection written by Franciscus Babai *Ungariae Reges*, which was developed as a poeticization

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<sup>1</sup> The topic of epigrammatic poetry in Neo-Latin literature has been recently addressed by Miloslav Konečný. More details about his research may be found in KONEČNÝ (2011, 2013).

of meticulously selected places from the work *Ungaria cum suis regibus* written by the Babai's contemporary Ladislaus Turóczi. The analysis shall focus on epigrams dedicated to the Habsburg representatives, since due to their range this historic topic may be observed within a broader context.

The role of the historical discipline in the 18th century Hungary can be studied from different aspects. The Jesuit historiographic school successively worked on establishing critical historiography by collecting transcripts of the historical sources. Although there were no established independent historical centers, the members of the Society of Jesus dedicated their work to the church and secular history.<sup>2</sup> Historical work of the University of Trnava (1635–1777) is based on the publications of the historians such as Stephanus Katona (1732–1811), a professor of history and the dean of the Philosophical faculty, who contributed to the formation of the critical historiography by his monumental work of 42 volumes on the history of the Hungarian kingdom: *Historia critica regnum Hungariae*. In his research Samuel Timon (1675–1736), whose historical works in Latin belong to the most important works in this study field, focused on the processing of the history of the Hungarian kingdom and its chronology. In 1714 his work was published in Trnava under the name *Synopsis novae chronologiae Regnorum Hungariae*. Nevertheless, the works *Imago antiquae Hungariae, repraesentans terras, adventus et res gestas gentis Hunnicae*; and *Imago novae Hungariae, repraesentans regna, provincias, banatus et comitatus ditionis Hungaricae* published in Košice in 1733 and 1734 have a significant value, too. His student Stephanus Kaprinai (1714–1785) completed Timon's collection of document transcripts. Franciscus Kazi (1695–1759), who was a university professor at the University of Trnava, published several historical works, however, his three-volume work *Historia regni Hungariae* is a crucial work concerning critical historiography. Georgius Pray (1723–1759), a professor of apologetics and historian, who excelled in a remarkable criticism in his historical works, studied the origin of the ancient Hungarians and he processed and published a catalogue of the university library that was transferred from Trnava to Buda in 1777. In 1764 Pray's work *Supplementum ad annales veteres Hunnorum, Avarum et Hungarorum, ab anno ante natum Christum CCX. ad annum Christi 997* was published in the University of Trnava press. Franciscus Karol Palma (1735–1787), a university professor and historian, wrote a textbook on history and geography of Hungary, which was published in several editions, and its short version was used as a textbook for the secondary schools. We would like to mention two more names among the important historians of

<sup>2</sup> MARSINA (2002: 33–35).

that time. First of them is Carolus Wagner (1732–1790), the founder of Hungarian diplomatics, genealogy and heraldry, who taught church history and oratory at the University of Trnava between 1771 and 1773. He published *Analecta Scepusii sacri et prophani I–IV*, the essential Spiš diplomatarium, which was followed by *Diplomatarium comitatus Sarosiensis*, the diplomatarium from Šariš. And Matthias Bel (1684–1749) is the author of *Notitia Hungariae novae historico-geographica divisa in partes quatuor* (1735, 1736, 1737, 1742), the monumental work of a great importance not only for the historical study of the Hungarian regions, but also for the geographical and historical research of Slovakia and its settling.

Franciscus Babai's (1742–1778)<sup>3</sup> debut *Ungariae reges eorum genealogia, acta item illustriora et fata, compendio metrico deducta a Francisco Babai presbytero* published in 1773 is a proof that history can be served in different ways – even in verses. The author decided to poeticize a selected part – dedicated to the kings – from a geographical and historical work *Ungaria suis cum regibus compendio data* written by the Jesuit Ladislaus Thuróczi (1682–1765). The work was first published in 1729 and this edition consisted of 245 pages. In 1768 (thus three years after the author's death) it was republished. Together with the author's name and the title, Zelliger also shortly informs that this work was revised by Nicolaus Schmidt<sup>4</sup> and the theme was complete to the year of release.<sup>5</sup> The above mentioned Stephanus Katona contributed to the revision as well, thus the number of pages increased to estimable 631 – also due to a smaller size of the pages.

The edition from 1768 not only changed the size, but it also widened the content. On one hand it deals with queen Maria Theresa, on the other it describes a lot of interesting information about the royal life. In the beginning of this edition, there is a prologue for the reader, supposedly written by Stephanus Katona.<sup>6</sup> Presumably he and Nicolaus Schmidt are the authors of the new sections. The work consists of two books – in the similar way as

<sup>3</sup> More information about Franciscus Babai: ŠOTKOVSKÁ (2009: 254).

<sup>4</sup> Nicolaus Schmidt was professor at University of Trnava, doctor of philosophy. He is the author of *Panegyricus Franciscus Xaverius dictus* (1740), *Archiepiscopi Strigonienses* (1752), *Institutiones theologicae dogmatico-scholastico-morales* (1755).

<sup>5</sup> ZELLIGER (1931: 83, 137).

<sup>6</sup> The assumption that the author of the speech is Stephanus Katona is based on the following sentence: „Ex Autoribus porro, quorum eruditus lucubrationibus viximus, ea solum decerpimus, quae propius ad verum accedere videbantur; annotatis ad marginem, ubi de Regibus Austriacis agitur, annis verisimilioribus, quo et memoriae imbecillitate et temporum veritati quam maxime serviremus.“ From the available sources we learn that Stephanus Katona was the author of *Synopsis chronologica Historiarum ad sublevandam memoriam Historiophilorum concinnata*, Tynnaviae, 1771.

the first edition. The first book contains geographical data and the second deals with the kings. In the beginning of the second book there is a name list of the Hungarian kings. Besides other things, the second book was also supplied with detailed information on the kings' activities, their genealogy, their military encounters and their success in diplomatic negotiations. These supplements are marked by commas. Sometimes they follow directly after the original text, other times they are inserted into the text. In the second book of this edition – starting from 1540, the reign of Ferdinand I – there are marginalia with arabic numerals indicating the most probable year of the beginning of the reign of the given emperor, important milestones in his life and the year of his death. Before 1540, the years were expressed in Roman numerals directly in the text. The list of Hungarian kings begins with Saint Stephen – as in the first edition – but it ends with the queen Maria Theresa. Hence, the work informs about 48 Hungarian rulers.

It is obvious from the facts, that the poet was inspired by the second edition of *The short history of Hungary*. His prologue to the reader is very similar to the prologue in the edition of the Hungarian kings from 1768. All his poems have marginalia with a year of the accession to the throne and a year of death or removal from the throne. Babai's epigrams also state information from the supplemented sections, which do not appear in the first edition of Thuróczi's Hungarian kings.

The title page informs that Babai's poetry on the Hungarian kings was published thanks to generosity of the Reverends Andrej Simon, Michael Kunna and Stephanus Csorba, as well as other masters of arts and philosophy or bachelors' instructors. Dedication is followed by articles about logic, general and special physics, metaphysics and anamastics. Then, there is author's prologue, in which he explains that he wants to poeticize the work of Ladislaus Thuróczi, the venerable man, who taught secular history and oratory at the University of Trnava.<sup>7</sup> Babai is afraid, that it is a difficult task to capture so many facts in several verses and he uses Horace's verse „*Brevis esse laboro, obscurus fio.*“ When it comes to the style the author claims to have decided to use a clear language and avoid majestic phrases that would discourage youth, who „has not eaten three measures of salt in Muse's company“ so far.<sup>8</sup> This idea comes from Cicero's *De amicitia*.<sup>9</sup> Babai's text is enriched by frequent notes in the end of page, which – according to him – serve the reader for better understanding of the historical context.<sup>10</sup> As

<sup>7</sup> BABAI (1773: A 2<sup>r</sup>).

<sup>8</sup> BABAI (1773: A 3<sup>r</sup>).

<sup>9</sup> Cic. Laelius 67.

<sup>10</sup> BABAI (1773: A 3<sup>r-v</sup>).

already mentioned, the poetical texts are supplemented with years marking the beginning and the end of kings' reign in the page margins.<sup>11</sup>

Babai was successful in poeticizing biographies of all 48 kings who ruled between 983–1743 and who are listed in the second Thuróczi's edition. As he himself explains he divided kings into three groups according to their origin, as it was common to the contemporary historians.<sup>12</sup> The first part called *Periodus I. sive domestica* represents kings of Hungarian origin, the second part *Periodus II. sive mixta* lists the kings of partially Hungarian and partially foreign origin, and the third part *Periodus III., sive Austriaca*, which is to be analyzed in detail in this paper, lists the kings of Austrian origin. Likewise in the edition he was inspired in, the first poem follows after the lists of kings, who are described in individual sections (*series Ungariae regum*) and after poem's dedication to Saint Stephan, the first king of Hungarians.

As in his other book of poetry<sup>13</sup> Babai chose epigram as his literary genre. The metric quality of the book does not suggest that it was author's debut. On the contrary, there are only few spots in the verses, which would need correction at the first glance. In fact it is an intentional imitation of the ancient authors. It is worth mentioning a false iambic shortening in the hexametric clause *factio regnum: Morte Ladislao sublato, factio regnum*.<sup>14</sup>

Babai's method of poeticizing a prosaic text was relatively logical and legitimate. It must be admitted that it was not an easy task at all. He was able to aptly characterize the ruler. The first verses of the epigram consist of the facts about the king's origin and the circumstances of succession to the throne. In the following verses he – partially subjectively – selected some facts from Thuróczi's kings. The selection of these facts is based on Horace's recommendation „*Aut prodesse volunt, aut delectare poetae: aut simul et iucunda et idonea dicere vitae*.“ He could not hide a poet in himself in several parts of the epigram, where he floridly describes the last days of the king. It is interesting how he used relatively frequent poetic questions, which point to delicate topics of his days, and how he used them in construction of the final hyperboles.

The third part of Babai's collection dedicated to the Habsburg kings on the Hungarian throne starts with the epigram on Ferdinand I who ruled between 1527 and 1564. All the facts that we get from the poem could be easily found in any available historical literature not to mention Thuróczi's handbook about Hungarian kings. The author dedicates almost one hundred

11 BABAI (1773: A 3<sup>v</sup>).

12 BABAI (1773: A 2<sup>v</sup>).

13 BABAI (1777).

14 BABAI (1777: 20).

pages to the kings who ruled in Hungarian Kingdom before Ferdinand. This is followed by 210 pages, where he described the period of the reign of 11 Habsburgs and thus he focused on the events that happened during 250 years after the Battle of Mohacs.

*REX FERDINANDUS I. IMPERATOR*

*Maxmilianus\* avus Fernandi rexque Philippus\*\**

*Hispanus genitor, frater erat Carolus.*

*Nata Wladislai\*\*\* quindenis prolibus auxit*

*Anna Virum, in celsum sustulit Alba Thronum*

*Reginam viduam pugnat dum pellere Buda,*

*eripit incauto Turcus utrique locum.*

*Nil intentatum Patriae studiosus omittit;*

*subiugat Ungaricas Turcus at usque plagas.*

*Foedera cum Turco pangit reprimitque Bohemos*

*ac Lutherigenas, qua valet arte, domat.*

*Vindobonae moritur, Pragae rex sanctus humatur.*

*Tunc patuit, reges quid sit habere duos.*

\* *Primus.*

\*\* *Primus*

\*\*\* *Ludovici II. germana.*

We can rightfully say that even here Babai's verses make up a structured selection of information from Thuróczi's work. In the first two elegiac couplets Babai analyses Ferdinand's origin and family background. We are informed who his ancestors were and how many children he had with his wife Anna Jagellonica. On the contrary, Thuróczi also informs about their engagement in 1515 and their wedding six years later.<sup>15</sup> While Babai considers sufficient to mention his fifteen children, Thuróczi states their dates of birth and he frequently mentions brief information about their lives. The historian ends this part with some facts about the death of queen Anna in 1547 and the decease of king Ferdinand in 1564. Only later he describes the important events in his life.

Our poet follows the proven outline even in this epigram: he first mentions Ferdinand's attempt to banish a widow Isabel from Buda, the act which contributed to the Turkish conquer of Buda. He puts into contrast king's

<sup>15</sup> THURÓCZI (1768: 412).

vain endeavor to defend Hungary against constant Turkish infiltration into Hungarian territory. The tension is relieved in the next couplet by statement that Ferdinand concluded agreements. In several passages of his book of poems we have an opportunity to notice how Babai observes king's counter-reformation efforts. In this case the poet says that Ferdinand restrains Luther's descendants by the art he masters. This can reflect king's purposeful strategy to fight reformation by legislation. In 1548 Hungarian assembly issued a strict law against Anabaptists and Calvins and Ferdinand I ordered the visitors to find out what religion is in the parishes and to punish all apostates of the Catholic Church. This is linked to *Confessio Pentapolitana*, the first Protestant movement in our territory. It was professed in five towns in Eastern Slovakia and it was based on the approved Augsburg Confession *Confessio Augustana*.<sup>16</sup>

Babai does not mention any particular battles concerning the king recorded by historians, although in Thuróczi's text, which served as a model, he mentions several battles in which Ferdinand's army was involved. Such was the siege of the Siget castle (Hungarian Szigetvár) in 1556. This event is also described in *Obsidio Zigaretiensis* from 1558 by Ioannes Sambucus (1531–1584), a great Latin poet and philologist and a native from Trnava. In the end of his short work of 10 pages, there is an ode *In optatissimum divi caesaris Ferdinandi Viennam reditum*. Ioannes Sambucus even wrote an epitaph in Ferdinand's honor titled *Oratio cum epigrammatis aliquot epitaphiis in obitum imperatoris Ferdinandi primi*, which was published in Vienna in 1565.

The final couplet in Babai's epigram informs where Ferdinand I died and where he was buried. His reign was marked by constant disputes with János Szapolyai over Hungarian crown, which were on one hand treated diplomatically, on the other in the battlefields. Thus the last verse contains epifonema „*Tunc patuit, Reges quid sit habere duos.*“

While selecting information from Thuróczi's historical text, Babai does not copy the constructions. Historical facts often conform to versification or the briefness of expression which is so typical of epigrammatic poetry. In this case, the poet did not select only literal constructions, but even in presenting Ferdinand's genealogy he looks for synonyms or uses an opposite genealogic perspective. Hence, if Thuróczi talks about *nepos Maximiliani I*. Babai presents *Maximilianus avus*, if the historical text mentions *genitor Philippus*, the poem uses *filius Philippi*, likewise *frater erat Caroli* is in the poem *frater Carolus erat*. The poet followed the same procedure concerning king's wife: he changed Thuróczi's *Anna, Wladislai regis Ungariae filia* to *Nata Wladislai*.

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<sup>16</sup> SUDA (1996).



Reminiscence of the ancient literature in Latin can be observed in the following verses:

*nil intentatum patriae studiosus omittit.*      *nil intentatum nostri liquere poetae*  
Babai, Ung. reg., XXXVIII.                      Hor., De arte poetica, v. 285

*Ac Lutherigenas, qua valet arte, domat,*      *quamvis ingenio non valet, arte valet*  
Babai, Ung. reg., XXXVIII.                      Ovid., Amor., I, XV, 14

The poem includes three explanatory notes. The first two of them relate to the detailed facts on Ferdinand's descendants, while the third one reveals that Anna was a sister of Louis II.

*MAXIMILIANUS IMP. II.*

*Posonii, vivo Fernando patre, corona  
primus praecinctus Maxmilianus erat.  
Ex Caroli patruī gnata, ter quinque Maria  
pignoribus dives, more parentis, erat.  
Magnanimus princeps cum Turcis dimicat ipse,  
vertit et in foedam barbara signa fugam.  
Hocce Comaromium, Jaurinum, vindice salvum  
perstitit, hostilis procubuitque globus.  
Zrinyius, aeternis fastis dignissimus heros,  
istius auspiciis Turcicus horror erat.  
Principis heroi decorata Ratisbona fato est.  
sit princeps heros, mox quoque miles erit.*

\* *Quinti*

\*\* *Nicolaus Zrinyius, is qui in obsidione Szigethana immortalis cum gloria  
Nominis cecidit.*

In the introductory verses of the 39th epigram the poet was inspired by the historical work of Ladislaus Thuróczi. The only difference is the choice of term used for the act of coronation. While the historian used a neutral *coronatur*, the poet chose – perhaps also due to metric purity – a more emphatic *praecinctus erat*. In the Slovak literature written in Latin there are several references to the coronation of King Maximilian, which took place in 1563. Noteworthy is the panegyric poem written by a Slovak humanist Martin Rakovský (?–1579) *Plausus Musarum in coronationem Maxmiliani II.* from 1563, which is a part of a poetic work *De magistratu politico*<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> The texts of the particular poems are found in the scientific edition RAKOVSKÝ (1974: 244–364). More about the life and work of Martin Rakovský in OKÁL (1979).

*dedicated to Maximilian*. The poem consists of monologues of Apollo and nine Muses. The whole poem has a panegyric overtone, and its structure reflects the poet's vision of an ideal ruler.

The second couplet of Babai's epigram on Maximilian II. provides information about his wife Mary, with whom he had fifteen children, thus in a single elegiac couplet we learn the same as we would in Thuróczi's dense text. Babai also notices that Maximilian was one of fifteen children in the family, and he reflects this fact in a brief and perhaps somewhat light statement *more parentis*.

In 1566, the defenders of the above-mentioned modest castle Siget fought for a whole month under the leadership of Nicolaus Zrinyi against the Turkish superiority and they prevented the Turks to advance into Vienna. The Turkish Sultan Suleiman I. died during the siege and he was succeeded on throne in Istanbul by Sultan Selim III. The defense of the Siget castle became a topic of the anonymous historical song from 1566 The Song of the Siget castle<sup>18</sup>. Literary historians have attributed high artistic value to this song and they describe its balladic tone and lyricism achieved by emotional and stylistic means (epithets, apostrophes, parallelism, epizeuxis, anaphoras) as its characteristic feature.<sup>19</sup>

Babai was also interested in this temporary resistance and thus he describes it in three couplets dedicated to the solution of the Turkish issue during the reign of Maximilian II. He also emphasizes Nicolaus Zrinyi's valiance by a superlative *aeternis fastis dignissimus heros*. It is worth noting Thuróczi's text which also describes Zrinyi's valor by a superlative *Nicolaus Zrinyius, heros apud omnes gentes clarissimus*.<sup>20</sup>

Maximilian died on 12 October 1576 in Regensburg. According to our poet, Regensburg became marked as a place of emperor's death. After the king's death the above-mentioned Martin Rakovský published a short poem consisting of three elegiac couplets in honor of the deceased monarch. It appeared in *Divo Maximiliano II. tumuli senatus Trichiniensis sempiternae memoriae fideique constantis ergo*.<sup>21</sup> This book of poems by ten authors was published by Georgius Koppay<sup>22</sup> and his friends from Trencin in 1577. He contributed to it with the introductory poem of 25 elegiac couplets and

<sup>18</sup> The song lyrics found in MIŠIANIK (1964:178–193).

<sup>19</sup> Historical songs in Slovak literature of 16th and 17th century represent semi-folk verse poetry. More information on the topic: MINÁRIK (1985: 140–143).

<sup>20</sup> THURÓCZI (1768: 427).

<sup>21</sup> The collection of the poems is found in the scientific edition KOPPAY (1980).

<sup>22</sup> Georgius Koppay was humanistic poet in 16th century, who wrote occasional poems and published verses of the humanistic poets (Martin Rakovský, Šimon Jesenský,

four other poems in the honor of the monarch. In the introductory poem, Koppay speaks as Maximilian, who bids farewell to his homeland: „*Austria chara, vale, et felix mi patria quondam, / nil mirare meae tela cruenta necis.*“ Four other poems have a character of a laudatory speech on the deceased monarch.

Certainly both poets, Rakovský and Babai had different bases while writing their poems. While Babai attempted to list 48 kings in a chronological sequence, Rakovský owed Emperor Maximilian for a place in the office at the Hungarian chamber and for the donated property in Kvačany in Nitra County. Hence, while Babai expresses his sympathy or antipathy to the king in a very limited extent, Rakovský's text is an ode and this fact is reflected in the choice of vocabulary and stylistic as well as poetic elements. Thus when Babai in the last couplet highlights Maximilian in the epithet *Heros: principis heroi decorata Ratisbona fato est. / Sit princeps heros, mox quoque miles erit*, Rakovský uses a much nobler attribute and he compares the monarch to the sun: *Sol decus est coeli, decus orbis caesar: ut huius / summa polo, istius gloria summa solo est* and equates his death to the moment of sun setting behind the clouds.

#### RUDOLPHUS IMPERATOR II

*Rex fit Posonii, vivente parente, \* Rudolphus  
ac Carolostadium condit in Illyrico.  
Ungara committit germano bella Mathiae,  
ipse mathematicus maximus astra notat.  
Hoc duce Strigonio, Neogrado Wissegradoque  
excutit Odrysii pondera dura iugi.  
Hoc duce servasset Iaurinum, ni modo claves  
Hardegus\*\* Turcis ultro tulisset heris.  
Deseruit Pragae rex doctus et innubus auras.  
Innubus a Musis vivere doctus erat.*

\* *Maximiliano II.*

\*\* *Iaurini Praefectus, capite plexus ob hoc facinus postea Viennae.*

Babai's view of Rudolf II – the contradictory Habsburg monarch, who was brought up at the Spanish court, and who chose Prague for his seat – could be described as rigorous. In five introductory elegiac couplets dedicated to Rudolf, he considers important to mention the coronation of Em-

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Mikuláš Mader, Ladislav Kubína a i.). His *Vita aulica* belongs to the most important works. It is a criticism of the life of the ruling class in the feudal society.

peror Rudolf II held according to the Habsburg habit during his father's life, he also briefly mentions how Rudolf founded the Croatian town of Karlovac. This information comes from Thuróczi's work where this event is dated in from 1576.

In the second couplet the poet cannot avoid mentioning Matthias, who was Rudolf's younger brother and who led military campaign as the highest military commander against the Turks and reported several successful operations. Babai artfully applied the pentameter in this couplet to reveal Rudolph's greatest passion – watching the stars. Compared to the informative value of the following couplet it sounds at least as the monarch's caprice. Author's designation of the king by the word *mathematicus* may sound pretentious at the first sight, however, it is likely to mean astrologer. This designation can be already found in the work of the Old Christian scholar and theologian St. Augustine (354–430) *De diversis quaestionibus octoginta tribus*, which was written between 388 and 396. In the section *Adversus mathematicos* he was opposing the astrologers. In this epigram, Babai portrays military actions of the following emperor Matthias II. It is a bit paradoxical that he does so in two elegiac couplets, especially when considering the shortness of the entire poem. The author's attitude to Rudolf is also expressed in the following verses where the term *dux* is used twice, although it is not attributed to Rudolf but his successor Matthias. He highlights these sections by a poetic language as he introduces them by anaphora *hoc duce*. However, in assessing Rudolf he used twice the word *doctus* and the adjective *innubus*. In comparison to other poems, this epigram is marked by a reduced interest in the king. Short space within the Habsburgs was given to Ferdinand IV, who died young at the age of twenty, thus he did not have many opportunities to experience an independent reign. As shown, poet's sympathy or antipathy is reflected in the number of verses.

Although Thuróczi's text offers a detailed look at the evolution of events during the reign of Rudolf, our poet mentions only one event which is the fall of Rab into Turkish hands in 1594, as Ladislav Thuróczi dates in his work.<sup>23</sup> One could say that two final verses briefly state that King Rudolf died in Prague and throughout his life he did not marry anyone. The poet attributed this fact to his strong passion for the arts and "science". In the final pentameter the used term *Musis* is understood as a poetic plural. In fact, the poet had in mind the particular muse of astrology, Urania. The attribute *innubus* – unmarried, used twice in the last couplet, may be associated with the ancient literary tradition. Here, we can perhaps perceive a subtle

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23 THURÓCZI (1768: 436).

allusion to the great Roman poet Virgil (70–19 BC), who – likewise Rudolf – remained *innubus* throughout his life.

Despite Babai's strict attitude, there is a panegyric speech *De corona serenissimi Rudolphi regis Hungariae oratiuncula* associated with the king Rudolf II in early Slovak literature written in Latin. In 1572 it was Ioannes Sambucus<sup>24</sup> tribute to the king. Besides that, in 1591 the personal doctor of Matthias II, Ioannes Iessenius (1566–1621) also dedicated a document *De divina humanaque philosophia progymnasma peripatheticum* to the emperor Rudolf. Babai's distinct view perhaps reflects the author's attitude to the emperor's weaker religious views, although Ioannes Sambucus the emperor's contemporary was not as critical about this fact as Babai. As for Iessenius, the fact that he was involved in a good relationship to the Emperor as well as to his patron played a considerable role.

#### MATHIAS II. IMPERATOR

*Lustra fere septem gestum diadema Rudolphus  
abdicat, armata fratre petente manu.*

*Nec mora: Posonii charum gens Hunna Mathiam  
concordi regem deligit ore suum.*

*Rex fortis, mitisque simul: perterruit hostes,  
Pannonium tenero fovit amore genus.*

*Nemo palatinus cum quadraginta per annos  
sexque foret, \* priscum reddidit ille decus.*

*Archiducis soboles Fernandi, regia consors  
Anna, parens nullo pignore facta fuit.*

*Ex animi subito vixit languore Viennae.*

*Eius erat gnome: Rex, ut ametur, amet.*

*\* Ab Comite Thoma Nádasdio usque ad Comitem Stephanum Illyésházium tunc Palatinum creatum.*

As already mentioned above, the selected verses of the epigram dedicated to Rudolf II pointed quite clearly to the primacy of Matthias who succeeded to the royal throne in 1608. Highlighted, in particular, were his military achievements, which were in fact also supported by diplomatic negotiations with Hungarian nobility. Perhaps also because Babai had already borrowed a few verses for Rudolph, in the 41<sup>st</sup> epigram he manages to find more words for a more detailed view of the reign of King Matthias II.

<sup>24</sup> VANTUCH (1975: 213).

In the opening verses, Babai for the last time mentions Matthias' predecessor, pointing out that he gave up the throne after 35 years of reign, and only when his younger brother threatened to launch a military conflict. The following couplet is dedicated to Matthias' coronation. At this point, the reader finds it hard to resist the impression that Babai kept a special liking to this King. Its overtly, although objectivized presentation can be seen in three places in this couplet: firstly it is a coronation *nec mora* hidden in the dactyl, which expresses poet's restlessness; second is a strong expression indicating the method of the king's election *concordi ore*, which the poet referred to the support for the monarch by the nobility of Hungary, and the third time we can notice author's positive attitude in the use of epithets highlighting Matthias' character and personality features. These can be also found in the following verses: *charum Mathiam; rex fortis mitisque; tenero amore*, while very contrast and, therefore, very impressive attributes *fortis* and *mitis* occur in Thuróczi's characteristics of the ruler.<sup>25</sup>

Detailed description of Matthias' coronation was published in 1609 in Vienna in the panegyric *Regis Ungariae Matthiae II. coronatio*. Its author was no one else but the king's personal doctor Ioannes Iessenius. As Iessenius declares for the reader: „*Habes, Lector, Mathiae II. coronationis a spectatore descriptam historiam*, “, it is a very detailed description of the monarch's coronation from the contemporary perspective. The Czech literary historian Albert Pražák highlights Iessenius' document in his work *Dejiny slovenské literatury I*. especially for its exemplary humanistic character.<sup>26</sup> Actually, after the initial dedication, *equus Ungarus* – as Iessenius calls himself – does not spare no citations of ancient classics, especially Horace and Ovid, and describes in great detail – over the course of 40 pages – the course of Hungarian Assembly, which Matthias II summoned in Bratislava in October 1607, and subsequent coronation. King Matthias is compared to Alexander the Great for his military achievements and according to the habit of a panegyric tradition, Iessenius in his address increasingly used *epitheton ornans* as a superlative adjective (*serenissimo potentissimoque principi; domino meo clementissimo*). He also quotes the coronation vow of the new king and the prayer beginning with the following words: „*Omnipotens, aeterne Deus, Creator omnium, Imperator Angelorum, Rex Regum, Domine Dominantium, qui Abraham fidelem servum tuum, de hostibus Triumphare fecisti*.<sup>27</sup> At the end of the file, he adds a brief overview of the Kingdom and the Kings of Pannonia titled *Regni regumque Pannoniae*

<sup>25</sup> THURÓCZI (1768: 445).

<sup>26</sup> PRAŽÁK (1950: 129–130).

<sup>27</sup> IESSENIUS (1609: C<sub>3</sub>).

*brevis chronographia*, which he wrote according to Bonfini's work *Rerum Ungaricarum decades quattuor* (1568). Babai also introduced the king as a valiant soldier threatening his enemy. In the fourth couplet he does not forget to mention, that Matthias restored the Palatine's office, which remained vacant for 46 years, and he also adds an explanatory note setting out the name of the last palatine Thomas Nadasdi and the newly elected palatine Stephanus Illésházy.

Babai – somewhat unconventionally with respect to other epigrams – dedicates only penultimate couplet to king's wife Anna. He informs about her origin and that she was childless. Thuróczi says that Anna died on 14 November 1618, and King Matthias died in Vienna of infatuation on 20 February 1619.<sup>28</sup> Perhaps this time proximity of the death of both spouses caused the poet to mention Anna and her childlessness with the monarch's death only in the last two couplets.

*FERDINANDUS II. IMPERATOR*

*Archiducis Caroli Fernandus filius, unctus  
Posonii Rex est bisque maritus erat.  
Sustulit e prima\* bis ternas coniuge proles;  
intrepidus, toto pressus ab orbe, stetit.  
Betléni Gabriel,\*\* Svecus Danusque Bohemusque  
et belli, et palmæ causa fuere suae.  
Nempe legit palmas, cui, Non te desero, victrix  
in cruce suffixi spondet imago DEI.\*\*\*  
Una tela manu librabat, sparsit at una  
in sacros auri vim sine fine viros.  
Cumque Deo sacrisque viris toto struxerit aedes,  
tantis in bellis haud erat aeris inops.  
Vindobona petit Graecensem mortuus urbem.  
Huic Constantino crux quoque praesto fuit.*

\* *Maria Anna, filia Guiliemi V. Ducis Bavariae*

\*\* *Princeps Transilvaniae.*

\*\*\* *Extat adhuc, riteque colitur celebre illud Christi Cruci affixi Simulacrum, quod inter summas haereticorum insectationes precanti regi Ferdinando auxilium distinctis his verbis sponndit.: Ferdinande, non te deseram.*

<sup>28</sup> THURÓCZI (1768: 445).



Epigram on Ferdinand II, the nephew of the previous ruler Matthias II, returns to the traditional structure. We learn in the opening verses about his origins, the place of his coronation and that he was twice married and had six children with his first wife, who was, according to the explanatory note, Maria Anne, daughter of the Bavarian Duke Wilhelm.

Emperor Ferdinand began to rule under relatively difficult circumstances in the escalating religious conflict, which resulted in the Thirty Years' War. After the genealogic information, the poet as well as the historian turn to this side of Ferdinand's reign, when in the pentameter of the second couplet he says *Intrepidus, toto pressus ab orbe, stetit*. At this point we see the impact of Thuróczi's historical text as we read: „*Coniuratum in se orbem terrarum, impavidus excipit Ferdinandus*,” or at different moment „*Stat immotus, motis omnibus provinciis*.”<sup>29</sup>

Later Babai names king's enemies, whom he defeated. Babai points out the fact that Ferdinand experienced many victories on two levels. The first is a somewhat mystical explanation of the ruler's victory that is ensured by the image of crucified Christ, who promises him help. According to the author's note, this picture had been preserved to his days. The second plane is the King's generosity, which was proved by his financial support of the clergy and the building of temples, although, Ferdinand II had always enough money to conduct war. A similar statement is found in Thuróczi's work: „*Illud sane in miraculis Ferdinandi est: in ecclesiam, religiosorum domos, iuvenum seminaria immensam pecuniae vim profudisse; nec tamen tot, tamque in longum protractis bellis sumptus defuisse*.”<sup>30</sup>

Besides, in the last couplet Babai reveals that a place of the monarch's eternal rest is his birthplace, the city of Graz, he also equates Ferdinand II to the Roman Emperor Constantine. He ruled from 306 to 337 and according to the legend, he defeated Maxentius thanks to Christ monogram, which decorated soldiers' shields. Later, in 313 he issued the Edict of Milan, which improved the status of Christians in the Roman Empire. This comparison, which made the King a savior of the Catholic faith, only proves the significance of the monarch's relationship to the church in the poet's eyes. It is evident especially in comparison with the evaluation of the King Rudolf II.

It is interesting that in the Slovak literature there is a much more critical look at the reign of Ferdinand, namely in the semi-epic historical work *Píseň o bídné uherské krajině*. Jozef Minárik attributed this work to Matúš Roškovec, who was also the author of the song *Zpustatění uherské země pod Turky*. Both are written in a similar style, but while in the first German, Spanish

<sup>29</sup> THURÓCZI (1768: 448).

<sup>30</sup> THURÓCZI (1768: 448).



and Walloon mercenaries of Ferdinand II are responsible for plundering and killing, in the second it is the Turks.<sup>31</sup> In the fifth stanza, impoverished Hungarian people directly address the ruler Ferdinand and blame him for the terrible situation in the country. This view appears to be similarly biased this time perhaps because of his enthusiasm for Bethlens as was the view of the poet blinded by his sympathy to the King.

*FERDINANDUS III. IMPERATOR*

*Sopronii natus Fernandi, \* patre tuente,  
Pannonicae sumpsit frena regenda plagae.  
Connubii terni dotatus fructibus octo  
extitit ac ternis; duraque multa tulit:  
Bellipotens Svecos adolescens saepe premebat,  
hostibus ab ternis rex agitatus erat.  
Francigenae, Sveci, Rakoczi, \*\* robore iuncto  
trudere Fernandum trans voluere fretum.  
Catholicis raptas Luthero cessit ut aedes  
nonaginta sacras, \*\*\* desiit ille furor.  
Vindobonae princeps pacis studiosus obivit.      1657  
Aedes per caedes non nisi Luther emit.*

\* Secundi.

\*\* Georgius maior Rakoczi Princeps Transilvaniae heterodoxus.

\*\*\* Lutheranis et Calvinianis Ungaris in foedere pacis, cum Rakoczio summa ex necessitate icto.

Ferdinand III was the third son of Ferdinand II. As we learn from the introductory couplet, he was born in Sopron, and he was already crowned during his father's life. Thuróczi claims Sopron as a place of coronation, which he said took place on 8th December 1625, although he began to reign after his father died in the 1637.

The structure of the poem follows the distribution of the prior epigram, thus besides the fact that he had three wives (not named) and eleven children we also learn in the second part of the couplet that during his life he was very militarily active. In the next four verses Babai explains several fights that Ferdinand III conducted against the Swedish Army, although the situation was neither calm in Hungary, where Juraj I. Rákóczi, Prince of

<sup>31</sup> MINÁRIK (1985: 93).

Transylvania, occupied the strategically important cities – once by joining forces with the Swedes, other times supported by Louis XIII. The carnage stopped on 24 August 1646 when Ferdinand III summoned the assembly in Bratislava, which confirmed religious freedom and according to his decision the churches commandeered after 1608 were returned to the protestants. It is very likely that it was the Linz peace treaty that our poet has in mind when talking about returning 90 churches. The expression *sacrae aedes* and the exact number is also found in Thuróczi's text, which evaluates this condition for peace as *conditiones gravissimae*.<sup>32</sup> Babai surely agreed with the historian's argument and in the epigram's conclusion he uses an exaggeration in the form of hyperbole, paronomasia and a double negative in the last pentameter *Aedes per caedes non nisi Luther emit*.

*FERDINANDUS IV. IMP.*

*Angelicum gessit septem diadema Decembres,  
 Posonii quondam quo decoratus erat.  
 Iamque dies Caesar vicinos ante creatus,  
 ver ubi vicenum vixit, in astra volat.  
 Ad Dominum nostrum propero, Dominamque Mariam,  
 catholica, dixit, me comitante fide.  
 Virgineus vulgo rex dictus, fata parentis\*  
 praevertit. \*\* Natus flos iste polo.*

\* *Ferdinandi III.*

\*\* *Obiit ex variolis Viennæ, ibidemque in Augustissimo Domus Austriacae Mausoleo repositus, in quo alii Caesares et Reges eiusdem Sanguinis fere quiescunt.*

Forty-fourth epigram is among the shortest in this part of the collection. King Ferdinand IV of Hungary died early of black pox on 9th July 1654, as Thuróczi states in his work.<sup>33</sup> The historical pattern – as well as our author in one of the couplets – mentions that Emperor Ferdinand died at the age of twenty, only twenty days after his succession to the throne. The historical text inspires Babai in the last two couplets, too: *Ad Dominum nostrum propero Dominamque Mariam / Catholica, dixit, me comitante fide* je totožné s Thurócziho výrokom zomierajúceho cisára: „*Eundum mihi est ad nostrum Dominum et Beatissimam Matrem, Dominam nostram, cum*

<sup>32</sup> THURÓCZI (1768: 462).

<sup>33</sup> THURÓCZI (1768: 466).

*catholica fide.* “<sup>34</sup> Via alliteration he stressed the expression *virgineus vulgo rex*, which he borrowed from the historian (*virgineus passim rex*). However, Turoci does not mention – perhaps for the first time – the place of death of the ruler. Despite this fact, Babai informs about it, as well as about the cause of the death and place of rest of Ferdinand IV, in the notes.

*LEOPOLDUS MAGNUS IMPERATOR*

*Fernandi Quarti frater, Leopoldus in urbe  
Posonia Rex est iussus apostolicus.  
Tres thalami socias, soboles bis censuit octo  
Aac toto magni nomen ab orbe tulit.  
Ter fortis, sanctus, ter felix, terque benignus,  
malleus Odrysiis Pannonibusque pater.  
Bis vicena ciet, septenaque praelia, victor  
fit toties: Budae Turcica vincla levat.  
Quae loca Turcingenae seclis rapuere duobus,  
Ungariae modicis afferit ipse moris.  
Indomitos frangit, populum moderatur amanter,  
capta sacrat vero barbara fana Deo.  
Vindobonae manes victrices reddidit astris.  
Sit magnus reliquis, Maximus ille mihi est.*

Ferdinand III grieved by the untimely death of his youngest only 15-year old son Leopold crowned the King of Germany on 27 June 1655 in Bratislava. This event is captured in the first Babai’s couplet, as well as in the preliminary note of the historical pattern. The following Thuróczi’s engaging and touching story about the fates of the three monarch’s wives, with whom he had sixteen children, Babai expressed only very briefly in dactylic hexameter of the second couplet, where he attributed King with the adjective *Magnus*. Thuróczi comments this attribute as following: „*Leopoldo regni ac impertori magni nomen non assentatio dat, sed veritas tribuit...*“ Later, he demonstrates his heroism in many battles he won and participated in.<sup>35</sup> Although Babai first calls him the hammer for the Turks and the Father of Pannonia, and three times uses the number three to reinforce the superlative overtone of the couplet; he also mentions forty seven battles, won by Leo-

<sup>34</sup> THURÓCZI (1768: 467).

<sup>35</sup> THURÓCZI (1768: 469).

pold and crowned by the victory over the Ottoman power on 2 September 1686 by the conquest of Buda.<sup>36</sup>

Again we can see how Babai creates a sort of summary based on Thuróczy's text, which is loaded with data and which describes in detail the fights against the Turks, Rákóczi, Franciscus Vešeléni, and Imrich Tököli. Babai tries to capture the most important points by an appropriate choice of words. The following verses highlight his achievements in the Ottoman war, but also a conciliatory attitude towards the people. Leopold is known for his opposition to the Reformation and to the active reaction concerning Counter-Reformation. Leopold's involvement in religious matters is expressed by the verse of the poem *Capta sacrat vero barbara fana Deo*, from which we learn that the mosques turned into Catholic churches. The use of the words *magnus* and *maximus* in the last couplet are found in the conclusion of Thuróczy's text dealing with this monarch.

In the Slovak literature written in Latin we can come across the figure of the monarch Leopold Great in the epithalamium *Serenissimae augustissimi imperatoris Leopoldi sponsae Eleonorae Magdalenae Theresiae dominae, dominae clementissimae nuptiale carmen* by Peter Francis Roy from 1676. The poem, composed very nicely, with a use of humanistic and early Baroque elements, we find a multiplication of majesty by the number three – similarly as in our epigram.<sup>37</sup> Krištof Paršický (1632–1713), a poet, historian and educator, who after the suppression of Tököly's uprisings lived in exile, composed in Leopold's honor an epicedium *Ultimus Honor Leopoldo* after his death in 1705.

Interest in the figure of this particular Habsburg on the Hungarian throne was also recorded among the students and teachers of the University of Trnava (1635–1777). In 1687 the university book press published two graduation files dealing with the figure of Leopold, the then ruler. The first one titled *Sacer Ungariae Tricollis felicissimi Leopoldi primi regis potentissimi armis gloriosus*<sup>38</sup> had as a promoter parson Henrich Berzevici (1650–1713) from the Society of Jesus. The second file *Leopoldus I. pietate in Deum, clementia in subditos, arte et Marte, in toga et sago tot gloriosissimorum antecessorum suorum corona*<sup>39</sup> was written by Reverend Ján Zanger, the doctor of arts and philosophy from the Society of Jesus, on the occasion of the graduation celebration of the fresh bachelors on 29 April 1687. Both

<sup>36</sup> KOHÚTOVÁ (2008: 69).

<sup>37</sup> PRAŽÁK (1950: 228).

<sup>38</sup> ZELLIGER (1931: 25).

<sup>39</sup> ZELLIGER (1931: 25).

files are not too long, each has just over forty pages; however, they show great skills of the graduates in the stylization of a Latin text.

Three years later the Trnava university press issued the file *Prosopopeia terrae sanctae ad Leopoldum magnum Romanorum imperatorem et augustum eius filium Iosephum Romanorum et Hungarorum regem directa*<sup>40</sup> was published in the university press. The author was Leonard Gastenauer, who chose for his work literary means, which was popular already in antiquity with the effect of giving voice to the abstract or unrealistic figure, in our case *Terra sancta*.

After Leopold's death in 1705 two funeral speeches were issued in Trnava: *Funebris Leopoldo magno caesari* and *Epitaphium magni Romanorum imperatoris Leopoldi I.*<sup>41</sup> Except for the monarch's most important acts, the epitaph portrays his birth, coronation and his last words.

#### IOSEPHUS I. IMPERATOR

*Posonii Ioseph, binos si dempseris annos,  
lustra coronatus quattuor ante fuit.  
Coelitibus mixto Leopoldo patre, gubernat  
Pannonnes eque sua ter pater audit Hera.  
Imperii senos palmis cumulaverat annos  
eximiis, turbas trans maris egit aquas.  
Gallus, Rakoczi\* socio cum milite, regem  
victorem flexo percoluere genu.  
Et quamquam gladio victore exterruit hostes,  
moribus a placidis his quoque charus erat.  
Vindobonæ propere, spectes si tempora vitae,  
si spectes meritum, sero reliquit humum.*

\* *Franciscus iunior Rakoczi Princeps Transilvaniae.*

The first five years of the 18th century were marked by the reign of Leopold Great. When he died in 1705, he was succeeded on throne by Joseph I, who was already crowned in 1687 at the age of nine. In Thuróczi's historical text the first event portrayed is Joseph's coronation, likewise the poem dedicated to this monarch begins with the same information in the first two verses. The only, although significant difference, lies in the date. The historian provides us with an exact date: 9 December 1687. The poet indicates

<sup>40</sup> ZELLIGER (1931: 27).

<sup>41</sup> ZELLIGER (1931: 52).

the date in a complicated way by testing the reader's attention and forcing him to subtract two years from twenty. The result is not very difficult, but number 18, the result of the subtraction, does not say much. We only get the exact date of coronation when we subtract 18 from 1705, i.e. from the day when Joseph began to rule after his father's death.

Then the historical text mentions Joseph's wife, Vilma Amalia, date and place of their wedding. It also notes their three daughters and gives exact dates of their births and deaths; in case of two daughters, Maria Josephine and Maria Amalia, he also notes a date of their wedding day and the origin of their bridegrooms. The poet manages to put all this into less than a single verse: *eque sua ter pater audit Hera*. Thuróczi continues with a dense list of the young emperor's military crusades. Thus while in Thuróczi we read that Joseph fought in Gibraltar, Lisbon, Catalonia, Darmstadt and many other places, the poet informs about his excellent victories only briefly. Among the enemies, he mentions the French, positively meaning the French king Louis XIV, and Franciscus II Rákoci. In the next two verses he contrasts his military victories on one hand and Joseph's characteristic kindness with which he treated his enemies on the other hand. In the same unexpected way as the Emperor Joseph I dies on 17 April 1711 in Vienna, the poet concludes his epigram on this monarch.

In 1698 the university press in Trnava issued Andrea Bossány's (1673–1730) file *Vaticinium felicitatis Iosephi I. augusti regis*. Its promoter during the graduation ceremony was Reverend Gothard Gelb from the Society of Jesus.<sup>42</sup>

### CAROLUS III.

*Hispano Carolum solio gens evocat Hunna  
 extinctique vices fratris\* obire iubet.  
 Imperii primum, post Ungara sceptrum capessit  
 cumque Anglo et Gallo fortia bella gerit.  
 Turca Temesvaro, Belgrado pellitur armis  
 eius et Ungariæ pristina forma redit.  
 Extruit Ungariæ Themidi penetralia septem,\*\*  
 iustitiam labes nequa notare queat.  
 Impensis Caroli stat Bibliotheca Viennæ,  
 cui frustra toto quaeris in orbe parem.  
 Ex Elisabetha\*\*\* suscepit pignora quatuor:  
 Vindobona meritis plenus in astra migrat.*

<sup>42</sup> ZELLIGER (1931: 42).

*Praestitit Ungariae rex summus maxima; sed nil  
te potuit maius, diva Theresa, dare.*

\* *Iosephi Imperatoris, qui sine mascula prole decesserat.*

\*\* *Dicasteria, ut vocant, quaterna: Tyrnaviae, Ginsii, Eperjesini, Magnovaradini, cui suffectum jam est Debreczinum, Pestini Tabulam Regiam et Septemviralem. Posonii Consilium Regium Locumtenentiale.*

\*\*\* *Ludovici Rudolphi Brunsvico, Quelpherbitani filia sanctissima.*

The epigram on the following king Charles III who was Joseph's younger brother must explain several important points. In the introductory verses the poet informs the reader that Hungarian people insisted on Charles III to take over the post of his deceased brother. He also indicates that before he accepted the Hungarian crown, he had become the Holy Roman Emperor. After these events, the fact that he fought several wars against England and France seems almost trivial. Moreover, in the next couplet the poet stressed out that the monarch expelled the Turks from Timisoara and Belgrade and Hungary acquired its original shape.

Likewise in the other epigrams of the collection, besides the military success, the poet includes king's reformation efforts and his attitude to education system and culture. Directly after succeeding to the throne, Charles III decided to stabilize the country and to eliminate bad economical and social conditions. To achieve this he needed a good and effective legal and financial system. Charles' judiciary reform, which was described before, was also mentioned by Babai in a brief notice *extruit Ungaricae Themidi penetralia septem*, however, he completes it with a note and explains that it is in fact a system of four courts: in Trnava, Kőszeg, Prešov and Oradea; then a Royal board in Pest; Men's board of seven members and the Governor's royal council in Bratislava. Then the poet portrays Charles' attitude to education mentioning the imperial library, for which he ordered to build a construction at Josephplatz<sup>43</sup> in Vienna in 1722. Only the last couplet dedicated to king's family says, that his wife was Elizabeth, daughter of Luis Rudolph the prince of Brunswick and Wolfenbüttel, and that they had four children. Charles' death is not specifically described except for a comment that he reached heaven with many credits. The last couplet is already directed to queen Maria Theresa and the conclusion of this poem is a rhetoric hyperbole *sed nil te potuit maius, diva Theresa, dare*.

On the occasion of Charles' coronation, the university press in Trnava issued a school theatre play of 24 pages *Carolus I. superatis aemulis Hungar-*

<sup>43</sup> Today, the building is a seat of Österreichische Nationalbibliothek.

*iae rex electus. In scenam datus.* The author was a literary active professor and playwright Adam Fitter (1679–1741), who was a rector of University of Trnava in 1733–1735.<sup>44</sup>

*MARIA THERESIA IMPERATRIX*

*Abneptis, proneptis, neptis, filia, coniux,  
 mater, magnorum caesarum et altus honor.  
 Progenies Caroli, Francisci caesaris uxor,  
 Iosephi genitrix caesaris, orbis amor.  
 Ter foecunda parens, proles enixa novennas  
 et senas, hosti ter trepidanda tuo.  
 Posonii vix dum redimiris, ab hoste frequenti  
 cingeris, ast animi robore firma viges.  
 Borussus, Bavarus, Gallus, Sabaudus Iberque  
 Austriaco Generi fata suprema parant.  
 Stat tamen Ungaricus fida pro principe miles  
 seque cruore probat, diva Theresa, tuum.  
 Caedit is hostiles acies, tu matris amorem  
 testaris, patrias excolis usque plagas.  
 Vindobonae illustri nova ponis tecta iuventae,  
 Tyrnaviae reparas, aedificas Vacii.  
 Vindobonae Musis famosa palatia condis,  
 Tyrnaviae instauras Hippocratique struis.  
 Militiam fundas heroam, nomine signas  
 ipsa tuo, meritis quo suus extet honos.  
 Nobilium turmam iuvenum, cui credere vitam  
 ausis, instituis perpetuamque iubes.  
 Erigis et divi Stephani sub nomine coetum  
 illiusque refers in sua regna manum.  
 Oppida Scepusii recipis tria denaque, perges  
 ab Mahumethaeo solvere regna iugo.  
 Cetera quid memorem, totum cantata per orbem?  
 Obruimur meritis, diva Theresa, tuis.  
 Incolumem longo superi te tempore servant,  
 o mater Patriæ, vita decusque tuae!  
 Fulserat ut quondam Stephanus lux normaue regum,  
 sic modo tu regum normaue luxque nites.*

<sup>44</sup> HOLOŠOVÁ (2009: 78).



*O(mne) A(d) M(aiorem) D(ei) G(loriam).  
Et magnae Hungarorum dominae honorem.*

The poet's sympathy to Habsburgs on the Hungarian throne culminates in the epigram dedicated to Maria Theresa. In 1773 when the collection was written, Maria Theresa had been the queen for 33 years. By this time she implemented a number of reforms and patents. Only in this poem, the poet addresses the monarch and the use of the second person of singular gives an impression of familiarity.

This poem is composed of 15 couplets and thus it is the longest in Babai's collection. Nevertheless, it follows a rigid structure. In the beginning it covers genealogy: the queen is a descendant of great emperors, mother of the emperor and wife of Francis I. Babai borrowed this almost verbatim formulation from Thuróczi's work, where we can find an expression *Magna magnorum caesarum neptis, proneptis, abneptis, immo ac filia ac coniux et mater*. Then he highlights the queen as a mother by stating a number of her children.

Later he stresses her mental resilience and in a group of verses he lists her war enemies, who tried to gain influence in the country such as Prussian, Bavarian, French, Savoy and Spanish: *Borussus, Bavarus, Gallus, Sabaudus Iberque / Austriaco generi fata suprema parant*. At the same time he highlights the loyalty of the Hungarian soldier, who does not hesitate to sacrifice his life for the queen's interests: *Stat tamen Ungaricus fida pro principe Miles / seque cruore probat, diva Theresa, tuum*. His reward is her maternal love – as the poet denotes it – which is manifested in the regional development. The verses with these information are then completed with decisions taken by the queen during her reign by 1773.

Franciscus Babai covers relatively in detail the reformation efforts of Maria Theresa in education. He mentions a formation of a base for 10 Hungarian noblemen at the Viennese academy Theresiana in 1749. He probably refers to the reform of the Viennese university and to the formation of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Trnava mentioned in Babai's verses *Vindobonae Musis famosa palatia condis, / Tyrnaviae instauras Hippocraticae struis*. The poet considers important to give some information on the formation of Hungarian noble guard, which served as the queen's personal guard, riding convoy and guard of honor of her parade during important ceremonies: *Nobilium turmam iuvenum, cui credere vitam / Ausis, instituis perpetuamque iubes*. Noteworthy is a formation of the organization called *Erigis et divi Stephani sub nomine coetum / illiusque refers in sua regna manum*. Listing of the queen's deeds is concluded by mentioning thirteen towns of Spiš which were given as a deposit in 1412 by king Si-

gismund to the Polish king Vladislaus II together with the castle of Liblou before the war against the Republic of Venice. More information about this event is given in the commentary of the 30th epigram dedicated to Sigismund. Queen Maria Theresa joined them to Hungary on 5 November 1772.

At this point Babai concludes the list of the queen's deeds by a topic question: *Cetera quid memorem, totum cantata per orbem?* It is followed by a greeting *Incolumem longo superi te tempore servant, / O mater Patriae, vita decusque tuae!* The last couplet of the epigram and actually of the entire collection of poems is *Fulserat ut quondam Stephanus lux normaue regum, / sic modo tu regum normaue luxque nites*. Here Babai links more than 770 years of the reign of the Hungarian kings – beginning with Saint Stephen I, to whom he dedicates his collection and he presents him as a king, who has blessed his country for many centuries and he gives advice: *In patriam fuerit tua quam pia largaque dextra, / tot post lustra manus non labefacta docet*, he ends with Maria Theresa, who he sees almost as a saint and he considers all her deeds more than positively. He only wants to underline – as in other places in the book – that Hungary has developed and progressed thanks to the saints. They gave Hungary power to stand up and fight for freedom during Turkish aggression.

Somehow contradictory may sound his positive attitude to the educational reform that forced University of Trnava move to Buda in 1777. In his later book of poems titled *Epigrammatum miscellaneorum, sacrorum et profanorum libri III*, which was issued in the university press in the same year, we find the epigram *Regia Universitatis Tyrnaviensibus decreto regio Budam transfertur*, in which the author reflects the event and although he entrusts it to Lord's hands, he expresses an obvious disappointment from the development of events.

In the book production of the University of Trnava (1635–1777) we can find several different files that choose the queen's deeds, virtues, character as a topic and they portray her in the best way. One of those is a graduation print from 1750 *Theresias*<sup>45</sup> written by Ladislaus Csapodi (1729–1801) a theologian and rector of University of Trnava, who taught grammar at the college in Trnava at that time.<sup>46</sup> The promoter of the graduation ceremony was Nicolaus Muska (1719–1790), the university professor. Also *Oratio, qua redditam Mariae Theresiae Augustae valetudinem* from 1767 can be considered as an occasional work.<sup>47</sup> Its author was Anton Majlát (1739–1801), a university professor, who worked at that time in Trnava as

45 ZELLIGER (1931: 112).

46 HOLOŠOVÁ (2009: 114).

47 ZELLIGER (1931: 136).

a professor of philosophy and as a reverend. Two years later the university press issued a congratulatory poem *In natalem Mariae Theresiae augustae elegia*,<sup>48</sup> which was written by Franciscus Kirina from the Association of St. Adalbert. In the same year *Odae honoribus Mariae Theresiae augustae reginae apostolicae*,<sup>49</sup> a short print by Iosephus Rajnics was published on the occasion of the queen's visit to Trnava.

We can conclude that Babai's text is rich in various kinds of figures of speech. These, together with excellent elegiac couplets transform the epigrams about the kings of Hungary, at first glance a stodgy historical text, full of facts, into an adventurous reading with an interesting feature. The events, that Babai chose from Thuróczi's prose for his verses and transformed them into a literary text do not tell the entire history nor describe the most important historical moments, nevertheless, they enchant the reader with the history and attract their interest in its further study. Providing that the readers were also students of humanities in the 18th century, this work must not only be considered from a literary and historical point of view but also from a didactic perspective. There is no doubt that Franciscus Babai's pertracted work combines history with verses and facts with art. Although at first glance, it may seem that the artistic form acts as a significant determinant when working with historical data, Babai's poetry convinces us of the contrary. Boring history is processed with the utmost interest in the fate of its creators, resulting in a continuous series of well-delivered epigrams. Such an achievement requires not only a thorough knowledge of history, but also abundant talent in poetry (and versing) and appropriate use of artistic means of expression that accompany the poetic text. It is therefore a person of the author himself that acts as a modifier of the epigram, giving it a specific dimension.

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<sup>48</sup> ZELLIGER (1931: 138).

<sup>49</sup> ZELLIGER (1931: 138).

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## RESUMÉ

Epigramatická poézia má v slovenskej literatúre nezastupiteľné miesto. Tento literárny žáner uprednostňovali vo svojich poetických dielach aj viacerí barokoví autori. Vzorom im pritom bol celkom iste Marcus Valerius Martialis, pôvodca epigramu a jeho najskvelejší predstaviteľ v antike, ale aj neskorší autori, za ktorých spomeňme waleského epigramatika Johna Owena. (Johna Owena ako svoj vzor uvádza aj František Babai, ktorého dielom sa budeme hlbšie zaoberať.) V prostredí barokových námetov sa otvára v epigrame priestor pre spracovanie rozmanitej tematiky. Ojedinelým v tomto kontexte nie je ani historický epigram, ktorý v predmetnej dobe sleduje závažné historické udalosti alebo osudy ich dejateľov. Cieľom nášho príspevku bude teda poukázať v rámci epigramatického žánru na vykreslenie osudov významných panovníkov. Predmetom nášho záujmu a analýzy bude epigramatická zbierka Františka Bábaia *Ungariae reges*, ktorá vznikla ako prebásnenie s veľkou starostlivosťou vyselektovaných miest z diela Bábaiovho súčasníka Ladislava Turócziho *Ungaria suis cum regibus*. Analýze budú podrobené epigramy venované predstaviteľom Habsburgovcov, kde sa dá historická látka vzhľadom na ich rozsah sledovať v širšom kontexte.

