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György CSATÁRY

PhD, Associate Professor

Department of History and Social Sciences

Ferenc Rákóczi II Transcarpathian Hungarian College of Higher Education

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7265-1273>

e-mail: csatary.gyorgy@kmf.org.ua

THE RÁKÓCZI WAR OF INDEPENDENCE (1703–1711) AND ITS CULT IN BEREHOVE, TRANSCARPATHIA (UKRAINE)

The details of the history of the Rákóczi War of Independence concerning cities engage researchers even today. The history of the war in relation to cities is a less researched topic. Many open questions regarding the history of Berehove still need to be clarified, including the period of the Rákóczi War of Independence. The aim of our research is to present a section of the historical past of the town of Berehove with the help of new archival sources, which show the uniqueness of the history of our region and the country. The centre of Bereg County was the third scene of the Kuruc flag-unfolding. On the one hand, the modest source base, on the other hand, the unanswered questions raised make our theme topical. In order to reconstruct the contemporary history of Berehove, we used primary sources and contemporary diaries, which are available in the Transcarpathian State Archives. Therefore, we present the events with the help of archive sources and academic literature. Berehove's role in the war of independence is significant as it was the first town to get under the insurgents' rule, Ferenc Rákóczi II also maintained a castle here and many inhabitants of the town became Kuruc warriors. In our study, we processed the transition of Berehove, the first Kuruc town, to the side of the war of independence and the consequences of this. The chief judge of the town, in whose hands the military or police force was not yet concentrated at the time, was among the first to stand by the side of the national liberation war, followed by several residents of the town after the flag-unfolding. The results include a description of the letters written to the prince by the people of the town and the answer given to them, where the most burning problems of the poor city dwellers appear. Furthermore, tracking the fate of the town's chief judge after the war of independence is also described in the paper. Berehove has preserved the cult of the Rákóczi War of Independence for centuries, as many monuments testify to this day and it is revived every year.

Keywords: Ferenc Rákóczi II, the Rákóczi War of Independence, the Rákóczi cult, Berehove, memorial places of the Rákóczi era in Berehove.

Background to the study and its aims. The war of independence led by Ferenc Rákóczi II is perhaps the most popular and researched topic in Hungarian historiography.

A series of volumes have been published with the aim of clarifying the events of 1703–1711. Romantic historiography and the Rákóczi cult, which has strengthened over the centuries, also left their mark on the scientific processing of the Rákóczi era and its evaluation. True, the cult, the tradition, is also very important in the life of a people, but the historian can only draw from these sources in the absence of sufficient data.

Our first impression may be that since Berehove* is the scene of the Kuruc flag-unfolding, a mass of sources testifies to what happened here. The aim of our research is to prove that this statement is far from true. Our historiography has relatively few documents on the initial phase of the war of independence. Not counting the small number of letters, we can only rely on the diaries of the chronicler of the era. Here we have in mind the diary of Sándor Károlyi, lord-sheriff of Satu Mare County¹, Pál Tarpay², and the memoirs of the Great Prince³ himself. With the help of these, the role of Berehove and the county in the liberation struggle of the nation can be traced, albeit sketchily. The first and most important event regarding the role of the town is unfolding the Rákóczi flag, which we start to follow from the events in Tarpa and in Vári the previous day. Tamás Esze⁴, György Bige⁵, Mihály Pap⁶, János Majos⁷ the so-called people's leaders with the people, enthusiastic about the Rákóczi flags, first began their recruiting campaign in Tarpa. As Tamás Esze came from Tarpa, he had a great influence on the inhabitants of the settlement. Here he could persuade 300 infantry and 40 cavalry to join the war of independence. On May 21, 1703, they were already able to appear in this way in Vári, where 62 people joined them. In Vári, one of Rákóczi's flags was hoisted at the gate of the village's judge, András Keresztes, and his Brezán manifesto⁸ was also posted. After Tarpa, Vári was the most significant Kuruc headquarters on the Tiszahát. It was also proven during the Hegyalja uprising in 1697. Unfolding the Rákóczi flag in Vári came at a lucky time. Sándor Károlyi had an agreement with count István Csáky, lord-sheriff of Bereg-Ugocsa County, that the nobility of Szatmár, Bereg and Ugocsa counties, with the support of the Szatmár garrison, would cross the Tisza on May 21 and start against the Kurucs. But at the planned time it was no longer possible to cross the river, there were rebels on the other side. Friedrich Löwenburg, the commander of Satu Mare Castle, ordered his soldiers back and the noble banderium scattered⁹.

* Historical Hungarian name of the town is Beregszász, the official Ukrainian name is Бєpeгoвe, transliterated as Berehove. Throughout the article, Berehove will be used to refer to the town in western Ukraine, near the Ukrainian-Hungarian border.

¹ Walthert I. Károlyi Sándor emlékiratai. Károlyi Sándor emlékiratai a Rákóczi-háború kezdetéről. *Századok*. 1874. N. 8. P. 313–330; Pásztor L. Károlyi Sándor önéletrajzának ismeretlen részlete. 1898–1703. *Magyar Könyvszemle*. 1945. Vol. 64. Issue 1–4. P. 99–121; Köpeczi B., R. Várkonyi Á. Rákóczi tükör. Budapest, 1973. P. 73–128.

² Thomasivsky I. Adatok II. Rákóczi Ferenc és kora történetéhez. *Századok*. 1912. P. 122–205.

³ II. Rákóczi Ferenc fejedelem emlékiratai. Budapest, 1979.

⁴ Esze T. Tarpa és Esze Tamás. Nyíregyháza, 1966.

⁵ Bige György was member of the delegation of the Tiszahát insurgents sent to Rákóczi. Esze T. II. Rákóczi Ferenc breznai kiáltványa. *Századok*. 1954. P. 302.

⁶ Esze T. Kuruc vitézek folyamodványai. P. 421–422.

⁷ János Majos: Noble of Ugocsa County. In the battle of Munkács (1703) he defended Rákóczi, later he became a captain.

⁸ The manifesto is published and processed from the social sciences viewpoint here: Esze T. II. Rákóczi Ferenc breznai kiáltványa. P. 285–316.

⁹ Lehoczky T. (a), A Rákóczy-korszak Beregmegyében (1660–1711). *Bereg*, 29 (19–20). P. 2–3; Lehoczky T. (b), A Rákóczy-korszak Beregmegyében (1660–1711). *Bereg*, 29 (20). P. 2–3.

Review of the academic literature. The people of Vári gathered at the call of the prince. It is characteristic of the Kuruc leaders and recruiters that the contents of the Brezán manifesto issued by the prince were distorted here as well. The text of the manifesto differed essentially from that also circulated in Vári. The dignified text of the manifesto formulated by Rákóczi that moderately promised, and was strictly prohibitive, was turned into great encouragement and frightening threats. The point was this: the prince is on the border with 15,000 men and woe to him who disobeys his commands or is indifferent to them. Judge Keresztes himself reported in written form about the unfolding of the flag in Vári to the commander of Satu Mare, Colonel Löwenburg. According to the Kuruc registers, the population of Vári was also represented in significant numbers on the fronts of the war of independence. Fifty-five Kuruc soldiers from Vári are mentioned in the infantry regiment of Tamás Esze in the soldier roster of 1706¹⁰.

About 500 cavalry and infantry gathered in Vári and spent the night on the outskirts of the village. They knew that the next day, Saturday, May 22, there would be a national fair in Berehove so that they could persuade people who wanted to join the army to stand by their side. The next morning this team arrived at the fairgrounds in Berehove. We have only incomplete data on the total number of the growing teams. The result of the recruitment in Vári became visible in Berehove, because the insurgents from the surrounding villages, together with the traders and buyers, also came here early in the morning. Although there were many onlookers at the square, Esze and his comrades achieved their goal. They tried to get people on their side with both eloquence and threats. Even before the flag was unfolded, Berehove had a reputation for Kuruc. An earlier statement by an officer of the Spiš Chamber «about the town of Kuruc» is well known. The troops moving in the square could not be measured by military standards in terms of order and discipline. But that, too, was enough for county officials to notice and take action. Couriers were sent to the castles of Munkács/Mukachevo¹¹ and Satu Mare to the commanders of the garrisons about the situation in the town¹².

The war of independence was greatly helped by the fact that Sámuel Kemsey, the chief judge of Berehove, was already among the Kurucs at the time of the flag-unfolding, so he proved to be much braver than András Keresztes. At that time, a garrison of 50 Austrian and Hungarian troops was stationed in Berehove, who did not show any resistance. The county nobility and senior officials, led by lord-sheriff count István Csáky, crossed the Tisza long before to join the Satu Mare Castle Guard, which provided security for them. Meanwhile, mostly unarmed insurgents arrived and headed for the flag-unfolding scene. One of the armies from Vári surprised István Kajdy*, the county judge of nobles, who left Bene early in the morning starting from István Maróthy, chief

Lehoczky T. (c), A Rákóczy-korszak Bereg megyében (1660–1711). *Bereg*, 29 (21). P. 2–3; Esze T. A tiszaháti felkelés. Budapest, 1952.

¹⁰ Esze T. II. Rákóczi Ferenc breznai kiáltványa. P. 309; Hegedüs I. Esze Tamás ezerében, a Felső-Tisza-Vidéki Vármegyék Hadfogó nemesének 1706. évben készült lajstroma. *Helytörténeti tanulmányok*. 1993. No 9. P. 275–340.

¹¹ Historical Hungarian name: Munkács, official Ukrainian name: Мукачево, transliterated Mukachevo.

¹² Csatóry Gy. Beregszász és környéke a Rákóczi-szabadságharcban. 1997. *Kárpátaljai Szemle*. 1997. No 5 (4). P. 15–17; Csatóry Gy. A Rákóczi-kor emlékhelyei Kárpátalján. Beregszász; Ungvár, 2020. P. 30–36.

* István Kajdy – he later fights till the end of the war of independence beside Rákóczi as captain.

notary, to Berehove. A struggle broke out between the 40 armed Hajdús who provided protection and the insurgents with only rods. As a result, Kajdy was captured together with seventeen of his men and forced to take an oath of allegiance. Kajdy was reluctant at first but eventually gave in to the violence. He was sworn that after Rákóczi's arrival he would become his follower himself, but until that time he would stay at his house in Borzsova. He then joined Rákóczi under oath, and then served as a military judge in the army with Senyei and Buday at the head besieging Satu Mare. In the summer of 1704, the prince appointed him to captain instead of the executed Albert Kis. He was on many battlefields. Rákóczi characterized István Kajdy this way: «It is true that he has the mind and heart of common people expressed in his language».

In the market square of Berehove it was rumored that Rákóczi was coming to Berehove, he had already started. Esze and Albert Kis also proclaimed the Brezán manifesto in Berehove, unfolding the remaining flags. The flags were red in color, announcing Rákóczi's name and rank, as well as the slogan «With God for the country and freedom» (*Cum Deo pro Patria et Liberate*). In the market square of Berehove, the insurgents became involved in an organization of military character. The so-called people's leaders took an oath, after which they also approved military ranks among themselves. Tamás Esze, Albert Kis¹³, István Móricz¹⁴ were elected infantry captains; Mihály Pap¹⁵, János Majos and Márton Nagy (who was later killed in the Dolha battle) were elected cavalry captains. Sworn troops toured the entire area. The manifesto was proclaimed, troops were recruited for the war of liberation¹⁶.

Tivadar Lehoczky¹⁷ mentions that after the unfolding of the Rákóczi flag, noble courtyards were looted, which was not welcomed by the calmer elements of the town¹⁸. However, Sándor Károlyi himself wrote more leniently to István Koháry in a letter dated May 25, 1703, that the town had hosted the Kurucs, who had not committed any forceful violations in the town, but that food, drink, and weapons were taken away, and the horses too. From there, they marched on to meet Rákóczi in the mountains that day. According to the entries of Károlyi's diary, Bereg and Ugocsa were completely covered by the insurgents, but the people of the land were also waiting for them in Satu Mare¹⁹. Károlyi was informed about the unfolding of the flag in Berehove by the local Reformed priest, who reported to his superiors on this basis. According to historian Tamás Esze, the Catholic priest of Berehove fled when the Kurucs wanted to take him to their camp*.

¹³ Albert Kis was a Bereg County peasant, leader of the Hegyalja uprising. Rákóczi promoted him to be captain, but because of his disruptions he was executed in 1704. Walthor I. Károlyi Sándor emlékiratai. P. 313–330. Kovács A. Károlyi Sándor. P. 29–35. Esze T. Kuruc vitézek folyamodványai. P. 150.

¹⁴ Móricz I. Móricz István. P. 79–102.

¹⁵ Esze T. Kuruc vitézek folyamodványai. P. 421–422. Esze T. II. Rákóczi Ferenc breznai kiáltványa. P. 302–303.

¹⁶ Esze T. A tiszaháti felkelés. P. 6.

¹⁷ Csatóry Gy. A Lehoczky hagyaték. Ungvár, 2001.

¹⁸ Lehoczky T. (a), A Rákóczy-korszak. P. 2–3.

¹⁹ Országos Széchényi Könyvtár, Fol. Hung. 1389.

* The parish priest Mátyás P. Sárhegyi of Berehove reported the events related to the unfolding of the flag in a letter to Mihály Dul, who wrote about the events in Berehove to István Koháry on 16 June 1703. Kálmán Thaly quotes from this letter. Thaly, A székesi gróf Bercsenyi család. P. 482.

The person of Sámuel Kemsey and the events related to him should be specifically mentioned here. First of all, the judge from Berehove was the first man to hold a public office in Bereg County, who joined Kis and Esze. The letters of György Orosz, vice-ispán of Bereg County, and those of count Löwenburg, imperial colonel, testified about it. They considered the judge, along with Esze and Kis, to be the third leader of the uprising and ordered their arrest and interrogation under harsh proceedings. According to the *Protocollum Rákócziánum* of the National Archives: «Rákóczi, in gracious and dignified respect, proved to us many times his faithful service to our well-remembered ancestors and this generous cause at first, redeemed and strengthened his vineyards on December 31, 1705, his house in Berehove on August 26 and his two barren lands in the village of Bucsu»²⁰.

Folk tradition also perpetuated the unfolding of the Rákóczi flag in Berehove. The shortened story below has little basis in reality, but it is rather the fruit of folk imagination. We must also remember these sources when discussing the events of the flag-unfolding.

«Unusually feeling one, waiting for one, the troops came quietly from Vári, ten, a hundred, a thousand. They felt the spring, the desire for freedom woven into flags and the Austrian yoke. No matter how famous the markets in Berehove were, so many people never gathered. And what a strange people it was as if they did not want to sell and buy. The Austrian sneaks sniffed in horror and the clerks at the county hall frowned. There was news of what had happened in Vári. County officers have already been sent to Satu Mare Castle for help. On May 22, the notable day count István Csáky, lord-sheriff convened the lords of the county to meet. He summoned Judge Kemsey to report on the incidents. Kemsey appeared as late as possible in front of the lord-sheriff, who asked him:

“What’s out there, Judge?”

“Fair,” Kemsey replied. “I apologize, please, it’s a bad fair because you can’t even collect taxes”.

“So why don’t they buy and sell?”

“There is nothing left to sell, nothing to buy”, was the answer.

As long as the town judge held back the gentlemen, a great cheer was heard from the outside. The Kuruc leaders proclaimed the manifesto and the troops greeted it loudly. Kemsey, who was explaining things at the county hall, fell silent, and the lord-sheriff slapped the table.

“So that is what the fair is like here?”

“It seems so”, the judge replied with relief»²¹.

Let us return now to the real events. After the unfolding of the Rákóczi flag, Kemsey kept with the Kurucs till the time, Rákóczi later appointed him captain. After the fall of the War of Independence, he could no longer hold office, living on his humble Búcsu estate until he was appointed manager of the former Rákóczi and Krucsay vineyards in Berehove by officers of the former Rákóczi estate that now belonged to Count Schönborn. He received a salary of HUF 150 per year. Due to his poor condition, in 1732 he was forced to sell his house to the manor, which was opposite the Catholic church. He finally died in poverty in 1736²².

²⁰ MNL OL *Protocollum Rákocziánum* II. 38. *Urbarium et conscriptionum* Fasc. 19. No 14. Thaly, II. Rákóczi Ferenc kora, 12. *Lehoczky, A Rákóczy-korszak*. P. 2–3.

²¹ Esze Tamás csodálatos vására Beregszászon. *Kárpáti Magyar Gazda*. 1940. 16 (46). P. 1–2.

²² Csatóry Gy. Beregszász és környéke a Rákóczi-szabadságharcban. P. 15–17.

We must also remember the Kurucs from Berehove, who joined here as soldiers, several during the flag-unfolding process: cavalry Mihály Virág and István Csók, János Csoma, Ferenc Darmay, János Egri, Pál Kopasz, Pál Szabó (passed away) hajdús, András Verbőczy András Rácz, György Szabó Zsámbokréti, János Batta (passed away) hajdú, András Kántor rider, István Mokcsai Hajdú, Philip Péter rider in Transylvania, Pál Seres, András Szabó (passed away), György Csörke Hajdú, János István Nagy, Samu Talicska, István Vőző, Ferenc Pócsay and János Magyar served as hajdús. Rákóczi had a butler of Berehove origin, who was called Mózes Ötvös²³.

According to our documents, in 1704 two Berehove hajdús, András Szabó and János Balla, fell during the siege of Szatmár Castle. Berehove's residents are also mentioned in the Contemporary List of soldiers. Among them was Sándor Erdődi's sergeant, who fought in 1706 in the corps of Sándor Károlyi, at the age of 30. Ferenc Dasaki and János Bujdosó also served with Károlyi, like Erdődi, with a sword and a rifle. György Gönczi and a hajdú named Lóczy also came from the town. According to the state of 1706, we cannot find Berehove residents in the regiment of Tamás Esze, but the inhabitants of the surrounding villages are popularly represented here.

During the war of independence, Rákóczi took care of the Kurucs injured in the battle, as well as their widows. On September 25, 1706, Márton Nagy²⁴ approached the prince. He joined the insurgents on the day of the flag-unfolding in Berehove. By this time he had lost his eyesight in the fighting, so he asked for his dismissal from the prince. Rákóczi personally instructed him to get himself examined by the competent chief officer, as this was the only way to dismiss him. On December 22, 1705, the widow of István Tibor Kismarjai, a cavalry soldier from Berehove, asked Rákóczi for help. He lived in Ardó Street, according to the petition, he joined the insurgents in the camp in Klimiec. From there he was sent to Diószeg by the Prince. The task entrusted to him was to deliver a message to the Diószeg people ready to rise. Rákóczi ordered eight Rhenish guilders for his widow²⁵.

Research results. The documents available in the Transcarpathian State Archives (Berehove) are very concise about the city and the county, their number barely reaches ten. According to one document, the «Humble Believers and Servants of the Town of Berehove and its Residents» first approached the prince in May 1705 to settle the town's debts. The article is about repaying and possibly releasing loans taken from individuals²⁶.

In 1706, Rákóczi instructed the town leadership on the use of the income of a mill rotating on three stones. He also took care of preachers here, the Schola Master, students, and millers²⁷. We can also learn that in 1704 the Reformed priest and school enjoyed part of the income of the three-stone mill called Csiga in Berehove. However, after the fall in 1711, the Spiš Chamber took this annuity and gave it to the Catholic pastor.

In 1709, in addition to the mill income, the prince decreed about the right of the lordship for wine tax, the manner of its use, and the provision of the Reformed persons of the Church²⁸. In the same year, according to the petition, «The poor inhabitants of the

²³ Lehoczky T. Bereg vármegye monographiája. Ungvár, 1881. Vol. I. P. 215.

²⁴ Esze T. Kuruc vitézek folyamodványai. P. 346–347.

²⁵ Ibid. P. 263–264.

²⁶ DAZO. Fund 10, Archival List 1, Storage Unit 366. P. 1.

²⁷ Ibid. Storage Unit 372. P. 1.

²⁸ Ibid. Storage Unit 375. P. 1.

town of Berehove» under the heavy burden of indebtedness approached the prince. While taking on the tax burden of the struggle for freedom, representatives of the population pointed to the situation in the town, saying that «many of us would be scattered and go elsewhere every day, only a few will remain in our poor place»²⁹. From these documents, one can also feel the difficult economic situation of both the town and the whole country. The burdens of warfare became unbearable, far exceeding the country's ability to perform, which was also evident on the battle fields and led to the consequences we are well aware of. During the war of independence, Rákóczi stayed in Berehove several times. On December 21, 1705, he ordered a personal uprising from here so that all armed bearers of nobles would appear at Rakamaz by January 15, 1706, to serve their homeland. The memory of the issued manifesto is preserved today by a plaque.

On January 29, 1709, in Beregújfalú, where he hunted, the prince made his way to the quarries. On April 16, he had lunch in the Bereg forests between Kovászó and Bereg after spending the night in Berehove. On April 17, the prince dealt with the affairs of the war of independence, in the afternoon he visited his vineyards in Berehove. On the morning of the 18th he went hunting in the woods and had lunch in Beregújfalú³⁰.

Finally, the following case can be mentioned as an aftershock of the Kuruc movement fighting for freedom. When Rákóczi spent his exile in Rhodes, the news of his return ran through the country several times, which found a lively echo, especially in Bereg County. In 1730, Antal Behner, commander of the castle in Munkács/Mukachevo, sent a voluminous report to Vienna about an alleged Kuruc conspiracy in Munkács/Mukachevo and Berehove. The Vienna Military Council ordered an investigation into the matter. Several days of interrogations and confrontations followed, during which István Borbély, a landowner from Berehove, was also interrogated. However, there were no significant results³¹.

In today's Berehove area, only a few notable places preserve the memory of the Rákóczi era, which memory we must preserve. They include the Burgundy oak tree in the hospital garden, in the shade of which, according to folk tradition, the prince roasted bacon. The age of the tree does seem to support this claim. The cellars at the bottom of the mountain, in which the prince kept his wine, also remained. There is also the oldest secular building in the town, the so-called Bethlen-Rákóczi Castle, where the Great Prince lived at that time. Today, a marble plaque on the castle wall preserves his memory.

The cult is still alive today: Memorial sites in Berehove

1. The memorial plaque of Tamás Esze

On July 11, 1992, an inspirational ceremony took place in Berehove in Rákóczi square. At that time, a memorial plaque was erected for the unfolding of the Kuruc flag, as well as for Tamás Esze, the hero of the Rákóczi War of Independence and the organizer of Bereg County. In front of the Berehove post office building, in the Ferenc Rákóczi II square the ceremony was opened by Béla Imre playing the Turkish pipe. The speakers recalled the moments of the beginning of the Kuruc War of Independence. On the right side of the memorial plaque is a relief by Tamás Esze, which is the work of sculptor Zsuzsa Ortutay, below the relief, are the life dates of Tamás Esze: 1666–1708³².

²⁹ DAZO. Fund 10, Archival List 1, Storage Unit 366. P. 3–4.

³⁰ Lehoczky T. Bereg vármegye monographiája. Ungvar, 1881. Vol. III. P. 106.

³¹ Bellyei L. A visszatért Felvidék adattára. P. 377.

³² Esze Tamás emléktáblája, Beregszász. URL: <https://karpatinfo.net.ua/erdekes-helyek/esze-tamas-emlektablaja-beregszasz>



Photo 1. Bust of Tamás Esze (1666–1708) in Berehove

The text in the plaque is bilingual: Hungarian and Ukrainian. It says: THE RÁKÓCZI FLAG WAS UNFOLDED IN THIS SQUARE BY TAMÁS ESZE ON 22 MAY, 1703. ERECTED BY THE KMKSZ (TRANSCARPATIAN HUNGARIAN CULTURAL ASSOCIATION) IN 1992.

2. The bust of Tamás Esze (see Photo 1)

The bust of Tamás Esze was inaugurated on May 21, 2011, in Rákóczi Square in Berehove. The work was made for the 300th anniversary of the end of the Rákóczi War of Independence. The monument was donated to their hometown by the Hungarians who emigrated from here. It is the work of the sculptor László Zagyva from Nyíregyháza (Hungary). Representatives of the Foundation for Berehove, the local organizations of the Rákóczi Association, Nyíregyháza and Kisvárd, and the Ruthenian Association of Podkarpatska Rus were present at the ceremony. The audience could listen to the Kuruc songs of the Turkish pipe artist István Martinovszky from Nyíregyháza³³.

The text of the bust: Tamás Esze 1666–1708³⁴

3. Relief and plaque of Ferenc Rákóczi II

On May 19, 1996, in Berehove, on the wall of the Bethlen-Rákóczi Castle, the Hungarian Cultural Association of Beregvidék, with the help of organizations from Hungary, immortalized the memory of the prince in the form of a plaque with a relief. The relief is the work of the sculptor János Pál, which was donated to the town by the principal of Gyömrő Primary School, Mária Szende. Ferenc Kun, a member of the board of the Rákóczi Association in Hungary, Jenő Hajdú, the chairman of the Rákóczi Memorial Committee in Slovakia, and representatives of local organizations gave greeting speeches.

Rákóczi's relief is made of non-ferrous metal. In addition to the inscription below it, the coat of arms of the Rákóczi was inscribed on the plaque.

«In memory of Prince FERENC RÁKÓCZI II 1676–1735, who visited this place several times, and on December 21, 1705, he commanded a personal uprising from Berehove. KMKSZ, 1996»³⁵.

³³ Dénes I. Esze Tamás-mellszobor. URL: <https://www.kozterkep.hu/19631/esze-tamas-mellszobor>

³⁴ On the back of the pedestal of the bust: «Erected by: Dr. Báthory Katalin, Benda István, Dr. Borkó László, Dalmay Árpád, Dr. Dalmay Klára, Dobainé Ignácz Anna, Dr. Duzsej Miklós, Dr. Forgón Pál, Harsányiné Dr. Kerényi Katalin, Ignácz Gizella, Kiss Imre János, dr. Koncz Lajos, Dr. Lódár Györgyné, Dr. Meisels Erzsébet, Schober Ottó, Sebi László, Szepesi Attila, Dr. Szepesi György Antal, Dr. Szürös Mátyás, Tóth Antal József».

³⁵ II. Rákóczi Ferenc emléktáblája, Beregszász. URL: <https://karpatinfo.net.ua/erdekes-helyek/ii-rakoczi-ferenc-emlektablaja-beregszasz>

4. Memorial plaque of Kelemen Mikes

The plaque is made of black marble and can be found on the wall of the Bethlen-Rákóczi Castle in Berehove. It is the work of Zsuzsa Ortutay, it was erected in 1991 by the Transcarpathian Hungarian Cultural Association. On the left side of the plaque, there is the relief of Kelemen Mikes, below this one can see his years of birth and death: 1690–1761. The plaque is bilingual (Hungarian-Ukrainian):

«The well-known Hungarian writer and loyal companion of Prince Ferenc Rákóczi II KELEMEN MIKES stayed in this building in April 1709. 1690–1761».

In October 1995, the copper relief on the marble plaque was probably stolen by non-ferrous metal thieves. The relief was later replaced³⁶.

5. The Bethlen-Rákóczi castle in Berehove

The castle of Rákóczi is considered to be the oldest secular building in Berehove. It was built by the Transylvanian prince Gábor Bethlen around 1629. Ferenc Rákóczi II stayed here several times during the years of the war of independence.

In 1997, a memorial plaque was inaugurated in the presence of Hungarian and local public figures, organized by the Hungarian Cultural Association of Beregvidék, in the upper part of which the historical coat of arms of the town of Berehove can be seen.

«BETHLEN-RÁKÓCZI CASTLE (Count's court) MONUMENT Built in 1629 by the Transylvanian prince Gábor Bethlen. Restored by Ferenc Rákóczi II. It was remodeled in a classicist style by Count Schönborn in 1857. BMKSZ 1997»³⁷.

6. Rákóczi's tree in the garden of the Berehove District Hospital

The Rákóczi tree in the Berehove District Hospital garden was inaugurated on October 24, 2019, organized by the Ferenc Rákóczi II Transcarpathian Hungarian College of Higher Education in connection with the Rákóczi Memorial Year announced by the Hungarian government. The Burgundy oak is about 600 years old, according to hospital garden records. The attendees were greeted by dr. György Csatóry, director of the Tivadar Lehoczky Institute of the College, who said that according to tradition, the Great Prince rested several times in the shade of this tree. He stressed, «In this garden, we want to create a memorial place where we can pay tribute to the Great Prince». The memorial plaque tied to the tree was erected together with Iosyp Bubriak, a representative of the Berehove District Hospital.

Text on the plaque in three languages (Hungarian, Ukrainian, and English): «**Rákóczi tree** This plaque was erected by the Ferenc Rákóczi II Transcarpathian Hungarian College of Higher Education».

7. Equestrian statue of Ferenc Rákóczi II (see Photo 2)

The history of the Berehove Rákóczi statue started about 128 years ago. At the time of the 190th anniversary of the beginning of the Rákóczi War of Independence (1893), there was a generally desired will for Bereg County to erect an equestrian statue in memory of the Great Prince. Our ancestors wanted to erect an eternal memory of the unfolding of the Kuruc flag in Berehove on May 21–22, 1703, during which the infantry and equestrian regiments could be formed in this town. Our ancestors knew well that the

³⁶ Mikes Kelemen emléktáblája, Beregszász. URL: <https://karpatinfo.net.ua/erdekes-helyek/mikes-kelemen-emlektablaja-beregszasz>

³⁷ Bethlen-Rákóczi-kastély. URL: <http://muemlekem.hu/hatareset/Bethlen-Rakoczi-kastely-Beregszasz-935>

town was the scene of the still rudimentary but fruitful organizing work that eventually laid the foundations for Rákóczi's army. The people of Berehove could also find out about the historical facts from the historian Kálmán Thaly (1839–1909), an outstanding researcher of Rákóczi and his era. It is known that in these years no representative memory was erected in other counties of Hungary to Ferenc Rákóczi II. It is noteworthy that the prince's equestrian statue was first dreamed to be erected not in Budapest or Sárospatak, or in one of the scenes of the decisive battles, but in the square next to the Roman Catholic Church in Berehove, the scene of the third flag-unfolding. For this reason, the historical reparation is justified today, not far from the place of unfolding the flag, in today's Budapest Square. In our writing, we use archival data to revive the main stages of erecting the sculpture in Berehove, reminding today's people of how long the journey to truth, the realisation of a dream, can be.

In Berehove, with the establishment of the Rákóczi Sculpture Fund in 1893, the fundraising began, which initially meant the receipt of income from scientific and historical lectures. On May 22, 1893, on the day of the flag-unfolding in Berehove, the first historical lectures were given at the county hall, which were dedicated not only to the Rákóczi War of Independence but also to the history of the whole of Hungary. First Count Jenő Zichy (1837–1906), a Hungarian writer, politician, researcher of Asia, and honorary member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, gave a lecture entitled «On the Origin of the Hungarian Race». Then the researcher of the Rákóczi era and politician of the age, Kálmán Thaly, a poet, writer, honorary member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, and a Member of Parliament, gave a successful lecture entitled «Historical role of Bereg County in the Rákóczi War of Independence». The historically significant lecture used credible sources that the audience could hear from a professional researcher. The attention of the intellectuals of Bereg County – together with the whole country – was then focused on several historical events, one of which was the erection of the Rákóczi sculpture in Berehove, the second was the worthy celebration of the millennium of the conquest in 1896 and the repatriation of Rákóczi. According to the petition submitted to the government of Bereg County and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the ashes were to be placed in the castle of Munkács/Mukachevo. According to the preliminary plans, Bereg County wanted to erect the statue of the Prince at the thousandth anniversary of Hungary's existence, in 1896.

During the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, several cities in Hungary wanted to commemorate Rákóczi in the spirit of the living Rákóczi cult. In 1894, the city of Košice decided not to collect for the Kossuth statue planned until then, but to call on the country to erect a Rákóczi statue. Regarding this, the weekly newspaper *Bereg* published in Berehove stated that efforts should be made to erect the Rákóczi sculpture in Berehove because the people of Košice can implement their plan first. At the same time, it was also described that Berehove was a flag-unfolding place, so it had the primary right to erect the sculpture. Back in this year, a series of donations began that lasted for many years. Officials, towns, villages made their donations. Gyula Sallay, the publisher of the weekly paper *Bereg*, donated four forints. Typically, the general assembly of the cities of Győr and Hódmezővásárhely transferred 100 forints each to the Rákóczi sculpture fund in Berehove.

The settlements of Bereg County also donated on the occasion of our national holidays, for example on March 15th. On such an occasion, a patriotic letter was sent from Mezőkaszony to the *Bereg* editorial office. Regarding Rákóczi, it was emphasized: «He

was the one who unfolded the bloody banner of freedom, who sacrificed wealth, honors, rank, who, as the unbreakable champion of freedom, voluntarily went into bitter exile. The place where he stood at the head of the sacred cause of freedom, and from where he said goodbye to his beloved homeland forever, was Bereg County»³⁸.

The sculpture base also grew with sums sent here from remote parts of the country. For example, after the donation of the Mureş-Torda County and the officials of Hungarian State Railways from Budapest, the fund grew to more than 12,000 crowns.

The 200th anniversary of the beginning of the Rákóczi War of Independence (1903) gave another impetus to the collection of donations. If we take into account the national conditions, it was planned to create four Rákóczi statues in the Highlands. Thus it may have happened that Berehove was in the sculpture competition with Košice, which at the end of 1902 established a sculpture base of 20,000 crowns, while in Berehove's memory base there was little more than 12,000 crowns. Six years later, 300 thousand crowns were collected for the equestrian statue of the city of Košice. Sátoraljaújhely also entered the competition with its statue project in front of its new county hall. Until then, 30,000 crowns had been collected for the costs of the Bereg County statue. They wanted to erect the fourth statue in Szécsény on the main square of the town, for which 19,000 crowns were collected. During this time, donations for Rákóczi's statue were collected in the towns of Érsekújvár, Kecskemét, Szeged, and Sombor, but significant sums could not be collected. There was such a great demand for the Rákóczi statues at that time because in 1908 Rákóczi's memory was proclaimed in Zólyom only by a bust.

The donation process was interrupted by the First World War, given the situation, the sculpture fund donated the money collected to charities, the Red Cross, to care for the wounded and to help those in need. After losing World War I, our region became part of the Czechoslovak Republic, where political conditions did not allow a large statue of the excellence of the Hungarian War of Independence to be erected in our town. The Hungarian-minded representatives of Berehove were then busy preventing the erection of a statue of Tomáš Masaryk, the first president of Czechoslovakia, in the center of Bereg County. After the reconnection of Transcarpathia in 1938 (first Vienna Award), World War II broke out, the conditions for sculpture building did not exist any longer, and a significant part of the money allocated to culture was consumed by war expenditures.

The 300th anniversary of the Rákóczi War of Independence revived the plans for the statue, but the construction of the statue could only begin within the framework of the Rákóczi Memorial Year – 2019 announced by the Hungarian government, with the support of the Bethlen Gábor Fund. The issue of the monument was again supported by the Transcarpathian Hungarian Cultural Association and the Berehove Mayor's Office. At the request of the Berehove Municipality, the Budapest town park was prepared for the reception of the statue by the end of July 2019. By the end of August, the princely statue was cast in bronze. The creator of the sculpture is sculptor Lajos Györfi living in Püspökladány, Hungary. The work is five-quarters, i.e. a quarter larger than the life size, so the height of the horse's withers is 186 cm, and Rákóczi himself is 220 cm on it, which was calculated based on contemporary dimensions. The bronze equestrian statue weighs 1,2 tons. The pedestal is a 20-ton rock with the inscription «Cum Deo pro Patria et Libertate» (Latin: With God for the country and freedom) with the signature of the Great Prince.

³⁸ Kerekes L. Adakozások. P. 3.



Photo 2. Statue of Ferenc Rákóczi II (1676–1735) in Berehove

The creation of the statue is due to the joint efforts of Hungary and the Hungarians of Transcarpathia, as there was a great need for perseverance in overcoming the sometimes artificially created administrative difficulties between the two countries. Eventually, the coveted statue was born; the 128-year-old dream has come true. In our opinion, the Great Prince, who arrived in Berehove as a symbol of Hungarian freedom and independence, will proclaim the ideals of freedom of the surrounding peoples in our region for many centuries.

* * *

Within the framework of the Rákóczi Year 2019, the monument was inaugurated on December 17, 2019, in Budapest Square in Berehove, with the support of the Hungarian state. Gergely Gulyás, head of Prime Ministry of Hungary, Zoltán Babják, Mayor of Berehove, László Brenzovics, and others spoke at the inauguration of the statue.

President of the Transcarpathian Hungarian Cultural Association, and others spoke at the inauguration of the statue.

8. Rákóczi's bust at the college in Berehove

In 2008, the bust of Ferenc Rákóczi II was inaugurated at the Ferenc Rákóczi II Transcarpathian Hungarian College of Higher Education in Berehove in honor of the prince's birthday (March 27). The event took place within the framework of the annual Rákóczi Days held at the educational institution. The creator of the sculpture is János Tamáska, a sculptor from Budapest. The work of art was created with the help of funds and various individuals. At the inauguration ceremony, the President of the College dr. Ildikó Orosz greeted the guests: Ferenc Nick, President of the Foundation for the Culture of Villages, painter Imre Kasza, János Darabán, Knight of Culture, and others. The President emphasized that she wished besides the institution bearing the name of the prince, to establish his spirituality within its walls. Following the ceremonial speeches, Ferenc Nick and Rector Kálmán Soós unveiled the bronze bust in the corridor on the third floor of the College. The event ended with a performance by the choir of the Berehove College led by conductor Katalin Ladányi³⁹.

9. Reliefs of Ilona Zrínyi and Kelemen Mikes in Berehove secondary schools

On October 14, 1994, the reliefs of two personalities connected to the Rákóczi era were inaugurated in Berehove. One was to commemorate the memory of Kelemen Mikes and the other Zrínyi Ilona. The reliefs were given as gifts to two schools in Berehove, secondary school No. 3 (Ilona Zrínyi) and secondary school No. 8 (Kelemen Mikes). On the occasion of the inauguration ceremony, these two Hungarian-language secondary schools took the names of these two outstanding Hungarian historical figures.

³⁹ Marosi A. II Rákóczi Ferenc szobra Beregszászban. URL: <https://karpatalja.ma/sorozatok/karpatalja-ma/karpatalja-ma-ii-rakoczi-ferenc-szobra-beregszaszban/>

The mentioned reliefs are the works of the Hungarian Munkácsy Prize-winning sculptor Erzsébet Takács, who offered her works to the Hungarian Ministry of Defense. The army, through the Rákóczi Association, offered the works of art to the Hungarian Cultural Association of Beregvidék. In this way, the two reliefs could now be put in their final place. The inauguration ceremony was attended by Lieutenant Colonel Ferenc Daróczy, a senior staff member of the Social Relations Department of the Ministry of Defense, András Simén, a member of the Rákóczi Association, a representative of the Berehove District Administrative Office and many other public figures⁴⁰.

Summary and perspectives of further investigation of the topic. During the Rákóczi War of Independence, Berehove was in the status of a market town. Our knowledge of the history of settlements of this category is rather incomplete. In the present study, we used contemporary diaries and archival sources to process one of the most interesting sections of urban history, the events of 1703–1711. In our research, we have brought new sources into the scientific bloodstream, which can be used to outline the situation of the urban population and what was expected of the new princely power to improve their destiny. The town made tremendous efforts since the beginning of the war of independence to pay the war tax, for example. It is another issue, however, that it was not always possible to meet the demands that were becoming increasingly depressing due to the impoverished and declining population of the depopulated town. Under the conditions of war, the performance of agricultural work also encountered serious difficulties. Berehove, together with Bereg County, stood by Rákóczi throughout and remained the economic base of the war of independence until May 1711.

We have relatively few documents on the events of the Rákóczi War of Independence in Berehove, which encourages us to continue our research in this direction. Our research in the Hungarian National Archives shows that the records of this town and county are the most incomplete compared to its neighboring counties. Our study aims to enable the drawing of the novel, hitherto unrecognized conclusions with the help of additional source material. The continuation of the research can be based on the exploration of the events of the Rákóczi era in the towns of Transcarpathia, more precisely on the performance of a comparative characterization in connection with the neighboring city, Munkács, which is Berehove's rival in several respects.

Berehove's historical events, this time the flag-unfolding in the language of the people, have also been preserved by tradition, suggesting to posterity that these are events of great significance over centuries. The population of the town still preserves the memory of Ferenc Rákóczi II and the Kuruc flag-unfolding and has developed a special cult around the defining actors of the era. Thus, Tamás Esze, the colonel of the prince, could also receive a memorial plaque and a statue in Berehove beside Ferenc Rákóczi II.

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⁴⁰ Mikes Kelemen domborműve, Beregszász. URL: <https://karpatinfo.net.ua/erdekes-helyek/mikes-kelemen-dombormuve-beregszasz>; Csatóry Gy, Zrínyi Ilona – «Európa legbátrabb asszonya». URL: <http://kmf.uz.ua/hu/zrinyi-ilona-europa-legbatrabb-asszonya/>

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Юрій ЧОТАРІ

*кандидат історичних наук, доктор філософії
доцент кафедри історії і суспільних дисциплін
Закарпатського угорського інституту ім. Ференца Ракоці II
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7265-1273>
e-mail: csatary.gyorgy@kmf.org.ua*

ВІЙНА ПІД ПРОВОДОМ ФЕРЕНЦА РАКОЦІ (1703–1711) ЗА НЕЗАЛЕЖНІСТЬ ТА ЇЇ КУЛЬТ У МІСТІ БЕРЕГОВЕ ЗАКАРПАТСЬКОЇ ОБЛАСТІ

Розглянуто подробиці малодослідженої історії війни за незалежність під проводом Ференца Ракоці (Ferenc Rákóczi), що привертають увагу дослідників і сьогодні, особливо з погляду її ведення в міських населених пунктах. Зазначено, що наразі існує багато відкритих питань щодо історії її ведення в м. Берегове. Відтак вирішено на основі нових архівних джерел представити період із історії м. Берегове, який показує унікальність історії Закарпаття загалом.

Констатовано, що центр Березького комітату став третім пунктом розгортання прапора повстанців куруців. Актуальність теми, з одного боку, зумовлено скромною джерельною базою, а з другого – порушено питання, що потребують відповідей. Для реконструкції сучасної історії м. Берегове використано першоджерела та літописи із Закарпатського державного архіву. Всі події описано на основі архівних джерел та наукової літератури. Відзначено, що роль м. Берегове у війні за незалежність значна, оскільки воно було першим населеним пунктом, який потрапив під владу повстанців; тут Ференц Ракоці II також володів і замком, відтак багато жителів міста стали воїнами-куруцями.

З'ясовано перехід м. Берегового, першого міста куруців, на бік прихильників війни за незалежність та наслідки цієї події. Встановлено, що головний суддя міста, у руках якого ще не зосереджувалися військові й поліційні сили, був одним із перших, хто став на бік національно-визвольної війни, а за ним, після розгортання прапора, і кілька жителів міста.

Вміщено опис листів, написаних князеві жителями Берегового, та відповідей на них, які є джерелом інформації про найгостріші проблеми бідних верств населення у місті. Також представлено матеріал про долю головного судді міста після війни за незалежність. Відзначено, що Берегове століттями зберігало культ війни Ракоці за незалежність, про що свідчать багато пам'ятників, які відновлюються щороку.

Ключові слова: Ференц Ракоці II, війна за незалежність під проводом Ференца Ракоці, культ Ракоці, Берегове, пам'ятні місця епохи Ракоці в Береговому.