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TRANSYLVANIAN REFUGEES AND THE KHUST NATIONAL ASSEMBLY IN 1706

During the Rákóczi War of Independence, three national assemblies took place in today's Transcarpathia, two in Khust (Huszt) in 1706 and 1709 and one in Shalanky (Salánk) in 1711. They played a significant role in shaping national policy. At the same time, we should also know that only a limited number of representatives of those who were invited participated in all three occasions. This can be explained by which side the senators were on in the given period, the side of the emperor or the war of independence. The aim of this study is to examine in detail the circumstances of the 1706 Khust National Assembly and the decisions made there, as well as their significance. The central issue was the conclusion of the federal agreement between the two countries, Transylvania and Hungary, which ensured a wider international scope for the leaders of the war of independence. It is true that the representatives of the Transylvanian orders were not fully present at this national assembly, as the pro-imperial Transylvanian nobility stayed away, but this did not affect the legality of the decisions.

Important deliberations were held and decisions were made about the accommodation and care of the nobility fleeing Transylvania to Hungary and their servants. The flood of refugees mainly affected the area of today's Transcarpathia, where the pro-Rákóczi nobility who moved out of Transylvania settled down or moved on. At first, the leadership of the counties viewed the refugees with understanding, but years later conflicts arose from the forced coexistence, which are richly reported in the documents of the counties of Uzh (Ung) and Uhocha (Ugocha), which can still be found today in the Transcarpathian State Archives.

It is stated that Khust National Assembly demonstrated the high degree of alliance between Hungary and Transylvania, the importance of which they wanted to use in negotiations with the imperial court. It is known, however, that these peace negotiations did not lead to success, but the federal system of the two countries survived even later.

Keywords: Ferenc Rákóczi II, national assembly, Khust, refugees, alliance, Transylvania, Hungary.

Many moments in the history of the war of independence led by Ferenc Rákóczi II are connected to the town of Khust (Huszt). Its castle was the first of the significant fortifications to fall into the hands of the Kuruc insurgents on August 17, 1703 (Csatáry, 2020, p. 117–118). The castle was captured not by siege, but by trick, thanks to the ingenuity and recklessness of a freedom fighter from Bereg County, Bálint Ilosvay (Heckenast, 2005, p. 201). The

nobility staying in the castle then changed sides and transferred to Rákóczi, which meant the joining of the entire region. Mór Jókai, the famous Hungarian 19th century writer, wrote a cheerful short story about the castle's capturing, titled *A huszti beteglátogatók* (The visitors from Khust) (Jókai, 1975). Khust (Huszt) was one of the five crown towns, which was considered an important place for transporting salt. The significant income from the sale of salt provided considerable financial resources to both the treasury and the town (Bánkúti, 1975, p. 31–66). In exchange for this, the crown towns were granted numerous privileges by the rulers (Csatáry, 2012, p. 228–247). During the war of independence, Rákóczi could not fully comply with the town's old privileges due to the constant shortage of money. Regardless, many Kuruc insurgents from the town of Khust (Huszt) fought for the independence of the homeland. Since 1708, Kata Szidónia Petróczi, the famous poetess of the Kuruc period, and Lőrinc Pekry, general of Ferenc Rákóczi II, who died in 1709, have been buried in the crypt of the Khust (Huszt) Reformed Church (Mészáros, 2006, p. 79). In October 1709, Rákóczi held deliberations with the Polish delegates here, inspected the ramparts of the castle, and participated in hunting. In May 1710, he consulted with the Transylvanian lords here. The Khust (Huszt) National Assembly held between March 8–20, 1706 and its circumstances are among these events (Bánkúti, 1992, p. 306). Data on the literature and scientific research of the assembly are very limited, the text of its resolution was published a long time ago (Ráday, 1955, p. 529–531), but its historical background and circumstances are not yet clear.

The assembly took place during the phase of the Rákóczi War of Independence, when on November 11, 1705, the army of 16,000 soldiers of the imperial commander, Imperial Field Marshal Ludwig Herbeville, won a victory over Rákóczi's troops at Jibou (Zsibó) (Czigány, 1981). The imperial army entered Transylvania and devastated the country. The population of Transylvania with part of the nobility fled to Hungary or Partium (parts annexed to Transylvania), the town of Khust (Huszt) also belonged to the latter. To offset the defeat, Rákóczi began to build a reinforced defence line, the organization of which he entrusted to General Ferenc Barkóczy (Mészáros, 2006, p. 68).

On February 10, 1706, at the council meeting in Miskolc, it was decided to convene the assembly of the Transylvanian orders in Khust (Huszt) with the aim of establishing an alliance (a federal state) with Transylvania. In the assembly, the state of Rákóczi was represented by István Kálmánczay (Heckenast, 1998, p. 34–40), and the senate was represented by court captain Ádám Vay (Esze, 1969, p. 7–32), Lőrinc Pekry (Mészáros, 2006, p. 79), Mihály Mikes (Mészáros, 2006, p. 76), Mihály Teleki, Benedek Henter, György Dolhay, Zsigmond Balogh and others (Heckenast, 1997, p. 7–17).

However, Rákóczi already started preparing for the recapture of Transylvania in the days following the loss of the battle at Jibou (Zsibó). He formed a line of defence from the Maramureş mountains (Munții Maramureşului) to the Mureş (Maros), from Deva (Déva) to Tâşnad (Tasnád), which could be the basis of the coming attack. The prince entrusted General Ferenc Barkóczy, Count, with organizing the defence. He sent the regiment of Captain Sebestyén Seldtmajer, which included German soldiers from Transylvania, to the vicinity of Baia Mare (Nagybánya). He gave orders to Captain Sándor Komlóssy to organize the regions of Beiuş (Belényes) and Bologa (Sebesvár). He built the reorganization of his Transylvanian forces on the experiences of Mátyás Fonáci in Zărând (Zaránd) County, and László Mósa in Chioar (Kövár) (Köpeczi, 1988, p. 906).

Although Transylvania was independent, it had different organs of state power and customary law, but the goals of the war of independence united the goals of the two countries.

Furthermore, Rákóczi planned to involve the Turks in the anti-Habsburg movement with the help of the Transylvanians. According to the prince's plans, the alliance could offset the loss of Transylvania to some extent and it was possible for the representatives of the Kuruc of Transylvania to participate in the peace negotiations that had been unsuccessful until then. Rákóczi recognized the overlapping needs of the two Hungarian states and the historical opportunity to create a strong alliance. It is true that there were enemies of the alliance, primarily those lords who changed sides after the entry of the imperial troops and expected confirmation of the legal status of Transylvania from the emperor. Some of the orders that stayed in Transylvania thus swore allegiance to Joseph I at the Sighișoara (Segesvár) National Assembly on December 15, 1705. At the same time, the other part of the Transylvanian orders that fled to Hungary made an alliance with the Hungarian orders at the Khust (Huszt) National Assembly between March 8–20, 1706 (Kis, 1989, p. 375).

The assembly primarily decided on the state status of Transylvania, they agreed that Rákóczi's state would recognize and ensure the independence of Transylvania. The representatives emphasized that they wanted to keep the two countries in a «true alliance», based on a modern, new state alliance.

At the Khust (Huszt) assembly, 341 nobles confirmed their oath with their own signatures and seals, that in order to restore the Hungarian freedom and laws violated by the House of Austria, the elected orders of Transylvania and the allied orders of Hungary would fight for freedom with Ferenc Rákóczi to the last drop of blood (Márki, 1907, p. 505–510). The senators emphasized that Hungary and Transylvania would mutually provide refugees with the right of asylum, which later turned into an almost unsolvable problem (Ráday, 1955, p. 530).

At that time, the followers of Rákóczi who had already fled from Transylvania also had to be provided for. The exile of the people of Transylvania started already after the lost battle of Jibou (Zsibó), when some of the lords of Transylvania fled to Moldavia, Hungary and Wallachia. The prince could only provide help to refugees in Hungary. We have a census of refugees to Hungary, in which more than ten thousand people are listed by name (MNL RSzL-1: f. 372–379). Rákóczi also mentioned them in his Memoirs. He said that after his retreat, he was surprised to learn that the many Transylvanian lords and noble envoys fled with their families under miserable conditions. They had to be provided with housing and food. Their insistence moved the prince, but for the most part they were unnecessary consumers from the point of view of the war, and they all burdened the common people. Rákóczi accommodated them on his own estates (Emlékiratok, 1979, p. 323).

The north-eastern counties were responsible for feeding those who had moved out of Aranyosszék, Fejér, Küküllő, Torda, Kolozs, Doboka, Hunyad and other counties, providing for their livestock, in short, ensuring their livelihood. In the last years of the war of independence, due to their increasing numbers, they also lived in the forests and under the open sky. The refugees brought with them a large number of draught animals (cattle, sheep), some of them also came with 10–12 servants. In the first months, they even received regular supplies, and their animals could graze on the common pastures of the villages (Balogh, 1987, p. 15). Later on, as can be seen from the documents preserved in Transcarpathia, the supply gradually decreased due to sometimes the bad crop year, sometimes the enemy's conquest of territory, and later the spread of the plague. At first it seemed that the prince could organize new regiments with his followers who moved to the Hungarian counties. Rákóczi considered their resettlement as proof of their unconditional loyalty (SATR-5, Sheet. 11).

In addition to the obligation to provide military supplies, the counties were unable to meet the refugees' needs for accommodation and food, which led to tensions. Refugees appeared in increasing numbers, which led to serious supply problems. They wrote to Rákóczi to remedy these conditions. They said that due to the advance of the imperial troops into Transylvania, they had to support a disproportionately large number of Transylvanian refugees, but they reported that the Transylvanian lords had brought too many servants with them, whom the inhabitants of the depopulated villages could no longer support (SATR-4, Sheet. 17).

In the winter of 1706–1707, Rákóczi's regiments carried out a successful attack, as a result of which a large part of Transylvania was returned to the prince. At that time, Rákóczi marched into Transylvania, where he was inaugurated as prince on April 5, 1707 at the national assembly in Târgu Mureş (Marosvásárhely).

The refugee issue remained a heavy burden in the years to come, especially after the withdrawal of General Sándor Károlyi from Transylvania in 1707. As a result of the advance of the Imperial General Rabuten de Bussy, another crowd of ten thousand fled to Hungary. According to a census taken in the fall of 1707, there were 10,604 of them, with many horses and cattle (MNL RSzL-2, f. 541–554). The north-eastern counties interested in the refugee issue expected swift legal decrees from the prince. Transylvanians eligible for war were obliged to enlist during the county recruitments. Meanwhile, Rákóczi commissioned emissaries in the county to factually investigate the situation of the refugees and their expectations (SATR-3, Sheet. 1).

Rákóczi enlisted the refugees from Transylvania to the fronts, as they showed a willingness to go there. Sándor Károlyi was entrusted with the organization of the march of the men to the camp, as well as the placement of their family members according to the new division (AR, p. 475).

A later national assembly in Khust (Huszt) (October 26, 1709) provided for the winter accommodation of the people of Transylvania, in such a way that the refugees, who had decreased from 3,500 to 2,500, were collected and housed in the counties of Maramuresh (Máramaros), Uhoča (Ugocsa) and Satu Mare (Szatmár) (Márki, 1925, p. 358; Kis, 1989, p. 380).

Of course, national bodies also dealt with the issue of refugees. The prince did not tolerate the negligence and arbitrariness of the counties towards the refugees (SATR-2, Sheet. 10, 19, 23, 25). In his decrees, he encouraged the county leadership to organize support, knowing that these refugees lost everything because they took up arms to restore the former glorious freedom of the homeland and nation (SATR-1, Sheet. 2). The prince made the Transylvanian treasurer and counsellor Ábrahám Barcsay responsible for providing for the people of Transylvania (AR, pp. 478–479).

Rákóczi noted in his Memoirs that he had never felt such intense pity in his life as when he saw the refugees marching east. Family members of nobles and officers fled in the November frost, forming long lines of carriages. With tears in their eyes, they proved their husbands' loyalty and affection to Rákóczi. They asked him for accommodation and food. In the mud and half-frozen slush, their little children were crying from the cold on broken and stuck carts. Their situation deeply affected the prince, he did what he could, but all this could not alleviate their current situation, nor to ensure their future (Emlékiratok, 1979, p. 232).

Based on the Khust (Huszt) decision, Rákóczi was now able to build new international relations with the help of some of the lords of the principality. Based on the newly signed

alliance, the Transylvanian orders sent emissaries from Khust (Huszt) to the peace negotiations in Trnava (Nagyszombat). The accepted points did not change the traditional social structure of Transylvania. In the given historical situation, it was obvious that this confederation had an open and temporary character. Many questions awaited resolution regarding the continuation of the armed struggle, and especially regarding the conduct of settlement negotiations.

Pursuant to the Khust (Huszt) National Assembly, the two Hungarian states considered the voluntarily concluded state alliance to be the achievement of their goals, therefore the signing of the letter of alliance proved to be a good example of cooperation and interdependence. However, the ideal of the seven points of the alliance letter could not be realized for well-known reasons. The letter was dated March 8, the day of the opening of the assembly, but the document must have been issued later, because the oath-taking document was dated the 19th. The document was first published by Ádám Vay and István Kálmániczay (Heckenast, 2005, p. 214–215). Also Lőrinc Pekry, Mihály Mikes, Simon Kemény (Heckenast, 2005, p. 226–227), Ábrahám Barcsai (Heckenast, 2005, p. 45), Dániel Vas (Heckenast, 2005, p. 449–450) and István Jósika (Heckenast, 2005, p. 210) signed and sealed it. This decision had two consequences. The defenders of the privileges of the old order fiercely attacked the followers of Rákóczi, the advocates of such reforms in the state administration. As a consequence of this, a conflict arose between the generals: we are referring to the insults of generals Simon Forgách, Miklós Bercsényi (Csatáry, 2004, p. 5–8) and Ádám Vay. The prince took the raised demands and insults reluctantly and tried at all costs to avoid disunity among the top leaders of the war of independence. As a religious person, he always had the united service of the nation before his eyes. He decided to give more power to Forgách (which meant that he made him general of Košice (Kassa) and provided thirteen counties at his disposal) and left Vay in his position at his court. Similar military-political decisions were often made by the prince, in the interests of peace at all times (Köpeczi & Várkonyi, 1976, p. 235–236).

The lords, the delegates of the cities, counties, Szeklers, and Saxons negotiated on behalf of the Principality of Transylvania. The Szeklers were represented by Benedek Henter, Daniel Ferenc and János Sándor, the Saxons by András Soppel, the cities by Péter Gálffi and János Tikos, the Partium (parts annexed to Transylvania) by György Dolhai. Gábor Nagyszegi represented a group of Romanian retailers, and the counties were represented by Zsigmond Balog and Péter Dobai (Köpeczi, 1988, p. 907).

First of all, the national assembly decided on the state status of Transylvania. It declared that it did not consider Emperor Joseph I as his ruler, and Transylvania separated from the House of Austria. The purpose of the confederation with Transylvania was to declare the independence of the principality at the constitutional level. The Hungarian confederation recognized and ensured the independent statehood of Transylvania. The representatives of both countries emphasized that the kingdom and Transylvania were a united country in the past, but they wanted to maintain the existence of the two countries under one crown, not in the old form, but in a true alliance.

The resolutions adopted at the assembly were formulated in seven points. On the one hand, the representatives of the allied orders in Hungary, on the other hand, the representatives of the Transylvanian orders expressed their conviction that the two brotherly countries had to fight in close alliance against the oppression of the imperial house. Therefore, they agreed on the following:

1. The orders of both countries commit themselves to mutual assistance against the common enemy.
2. They consider the case of the war of independence as their common case.
3. They do not make peace without each other's knowledge.
4. The Hungarian orders will ensure the independence of Transylvania in the peace treaty.
5. The Transylvanian Principality of Rákóczi is protected against the imperialists.
6. If the court were to break the peace, Transylvania would take up arms with Hungary.
7. Both parties confirm the contract (Ráday, 1955, p. 529–532).

They agreed that Partium (a part of today's Transcarpathia) would be transferred to Transylvania, which would serve as a support for the state of the Hungarian confederation, and that, if necessary, they would provide mutual shelter to their followers (Köpeczi, 1988, p. 906).

The confederation served favourable purposes for both countries. Transylvania won the international achievements of Rákóczi's state, but Rákóczi was able to continue building his international relations based on the principality's former treaties. However, the Khust (Huszt) confederation left many questions unclear. The contradictions between the central power embodied in the person of the common ruler, the centralized organs of the government and the slightly different order of the two countries were still waiting to be resolved. It was not easy to unify the diplomacy of the two countries either, even in times of peace. The Senate accepted the federal treaty with the addition that Transylvania and Hungary, the two countries, would not enter into contact with the Turks or any other foreign country without the knowledge of other (Köpeczi, 1988, p. 906).

The alliance established in Khust (Huszt) was confirmed much later on the part of the Hungarian confederation in 1707 by Article 3 of the Ónod National Assembly, and in Transylvania by Article 10 of the Târgu Mureş (Marosvásárhely) National Assembly.

Barna Mezey examined the assemblies and deliberations; in his work he covered the legal status of Rákóczi's state and its place in the European political arena (Mezey, 2009, p. 180–181). Among the five Transylvanian assemblies, the significance of the 1706 Khust (Huszt) one lay in the fact that it declared the unification of the two homelands, but it was weakened by the fact that only Transylvanian refugee nobles took part in it. It was also obvious before the senate, which advocated the meeting, that the 341 members of the Transylvanian nobility could not be the same as the Transylvanian statuses. The council meeting also considered it necessary to include in a resolution that the Transylvanian statuses in hiding, gathering in Maramureş (Máramaros), should join the confederation as part of Transylvania. It was also considered desirable to emphasize that the meeting was held in the territory of the principality, so it could speak on behalf of the people of Transylvania (Mezey, 2009, p. 183–184).

The declaration of confederation could be used as an argument in international political actions. As a result, they gave a mandate to the delegates representing the Transylvanian orders for the peace negotiations in Trnava (Nagyszombat), and also drafted their instructions. The prince's relationship with the Transylvanian national assemblies can be said to be peculiar. He did not particularly participate in their preparations; he was only present in Târgu Mureş (Marosvásárhely), during his inauguration. He performed his task with the help of his agents. The Khust (Huszt) National Assembly completed

the transition to the confederation perfectly, which was already expected beforehand. It was typical of the prince that he only expected the minimum military supply from the Transylvanian orders, he did not want to make major changes. He told Lőrinc Pekry that «I will never oppose what the orders decide in their own interest» (Csatáry, 2014, p. 101–108).

If we compare the assembly in Khust (Huszt) with another one also held on the territory of present-day Transcarpathia, in Shalanky (Salánk) between 14–16 February, 1711 (Csatáry, 2011a, p. 1–28), it can be said that in both cases the lords of Rákóczi's camp were quite divided. While the senators of the imperial deliberations in Sighișoara (Segesvár) were not present in Khust (Huszt), the representatives of all the territories occupied by the emperor were missing in Shalanky (Salánk). Or, if these nobles did appear, their condition at that time was already equal to that of refugees (Csatáry, 2011b, p. 111–124).

Therefore, the issue of refugees left a strong mark on the economic and political events of the war of independence, complicating the difficult situation. Of course, the two big issues that are the subject of our study – the union of Transylvania and Hungary and the situation of Transylvanian refugees – could only have been resolved satisfactorily after a victorious war of independence.

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ТРАНСИЛЬВАНСЬКІ БІЖЕНЦІ ТА ХУСТСЬКІ ДЕРЖАВНІ ЗБОРИ 1706 РОКУ

Встановлено, що під час визвольної війни під проводом Ференца Ракоці II на території сучасного Закарпаття тричі відбувалися державні збори: два – в Хусті (1706, 1709) і один – у Шаланках (1711), які відіграли значну роль у формуванні національної політики. Водночас зазначено, що в усіх трьох заходах брала участь лише обмежена кількість представників тих, хто був запрошений. Це пояснено тим, на чийому боці були сенатори в той період: імператора чи війни за незалежність. Метою цього дослідження визначено детальний розгляд обставини Хустського державного збору 1706 р. і прийняті на ньому рішення, а також їхнє значення. Наголошено, що центральним питанням було укладення федеративної угоди між двома країнами – Трансильванією та Угорщиною, яка забезпечила лідерам війни за незалежність ширший міжнародний простір. Щоправда, зазначено, що представники трансильванської шляхти були присутні на цих зборах не вповні, оскільки проімперська трансильванська шляхта залишилася осторонь, але це не вплинуло на законність рішень.

Окремо акцентовано увагу на тому, що було проведено важливі обговорення та прийнято рішення про розміщення шляхти й опіку над нею, адже вона втікала із Трансильванії до Угорщини, та її слугами. Встановлено, що потік біженців здебільша заторкнув територію сучасного Закарпаття, де оселилася або куди переселилася шляхта – прихильники Ракоці, – які виїхали з Трансильванії. Спостережено, що спочатку керівництво комітетів ставилося до біженців із розумінням, але за декілька років виникли конфлікти через вимушене співіснування, про що свідчать документи Ужанського й Угочанського комітетів, які й сьогодні зберігаються в Закарпатському державному архіві.

Встановлено, що хустські державні збори продемонстрували високий ступінь союзу між Угорщиною та Трансильванією, значенням якого вони хотіли скористатися у переговорах з імперським двором. Однак констатовано, що ці мирні переговори не привели до успіху, але федеративний устрій двох країн зберігся до кінця визвольної війни.

Ключові слова: Ференц Ракоці II, державні збори, Хуст, біженці, конфедерація, Трансильванія, Угорщина.