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MARCELL NEMES AND THE ART OF THE RÁKÓCZI ERA

From among the extant works of art representing Ferenc Rákóczi II stands out a well-known painting, which, at least in Hungary, played a more decisive role in the formation of the Rákóczi image in the 20th century, living in the common knowledge even today, than any other artworks.¹ It is the celebrated portrait of Rákóczi painted by Ádám Mányoki in Gdansk, (Danska, Danzig) 1712, which has been in the Hungarian National Gallery since 1974 (fig. 1).² Although the painting, possibly as a present from the prince,³ entered the collection of the Saxon royal family soon after its accomplishment, and only centuries later, exactly in 1925 returned to Hungary, it became a renowned painting in Hungary around the turn of the century thanks to the copies and photo reproductions made after it. As it was rightly stated by many, the name of Prince Rákóczi and his painter, Ádám Mányoki became inseparably interwoven from that time onwards.⁴

The first report in Hungary about the whereabouts of the painting is possibly Sándor Nyári's short article which appeared in the *Vasárnapi Újság* in 1893. In this the author stated that Mányoki's portrait of Rákóczi, which he had not inspected personally, was in the collection of the Saxon royal family in the Taschenburg Palace near Dresden. As for the dating of the picture, Nyári referred to the comments of Kálmán Thaly, noted historiographer of the Kuruc times, and remarked that for a long time he himself had been making research work on the life and art of Mányoki.⁵ Shortly after the publication of the article,

¹ On the iconography of Ferenc Rákóczi II see among others: A. Kampis, "II. Rákóczi Ferenc arcképeiről", in: *Rákóczi-émlékkönyv* II. Budapest 1935, pp. 82–86; Gy. Rózsa, "II. Rákóczi Ferenc ikonográfiájához", *Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények* 80(1976) pp. 479–484; G. Galavics, A Rákóczi-szabadságharc és az egykorú képzőművészet, in: B. Köpeczi – Á. R. Várkonyi – L. Hopp (red.) *Rákóczi-tanulmányok*, Budapest 1980, pp. 465–510.

² Oil, canvas, 75.5x62.5cm, Hungarian National Gallery, Inv. no. 6001; Most recent literature on the painting: E. Buzási, *Ádám Mányoki (1673–1757) Monographie und Oeuvrekatalog*, Budapest 2003, pp. 288–289, cat. no. A-136.

³ E. Buzási, Mányoki Ádám (1673–1757). Egy monográfia tanulságai, in: *Európa fejedelmi udvaraiban. Mányoki Ádám. Egy arcképfestő-pálya szereplői és helyszínei*, exh. cat. Hungarian National Gallery, Budapest 2003, pp. 59–75, especially p. 64.

⁴ See: E. Petrovics, "Mányoki Ádám Rákóczi-képéhez", *Magyar Művészet* I(1925) pp. 3–4, especially p. 3; B. Lázár, "Mányoki tanulmányok" I-II, *Magyar Művészet* II(1926) pp. 91–101, and pp. 463–474, especially p. 91; G. Galavics, "Mányoki Ádám II. Rákóczi Ferenc arcképe", *Művészet* X(1969) no. 9. pp. 42–44.

⁵ S. Nyári, "II. Rákóczi Ferenc arcképe", *Vasárnapi Újság* 1893, p. 226.

possibly in connection with the millennium of the foundation of the Hungarian state, the young Fülöp László – who later became a famous portraitist in England – was sent to Dresden to make a faithful copy after Mányoki's Rákóczi portrait. This picture painted in 1895 entered the collection of the Hungarian Historical Portrait Gallery, where it has been preserved ever since.⁶

The great influence, emblematic significance of the Mányoki-portrait is proved by the fact, that, being the original painting inaccessible, a whole lot of copies were made after Fülöp László's painting between 1903 and 1913.⁷ The great interest in the celebrated portrait is doubtlessly connected with the homecoming of the Prince's ashes in 1906 and with the parallel emergence of the Rákóczi cult.

With regard to all this, it is easy to imagine what a great sensation it was when the original Mányoki painting returned to Hungary a couple of years after World War I, in 1925. The acquisition of the Mányoki painting, by then well-known through the reproductions and regarded a national relic, was not at all an easy task because officially the painting was still in the possession of the Saxon royal family. Although Elek Petrovics, director of the Museum of Fine Arts, made inquiries after the painting and other works of Mányoki in Dresden already in 1924, the famous picture was finally acquired by Marcell Nemes of Jánoshalma, a Hungarian collector living at that time for years in Munich, who subsequently donated the painting to the Hungarian state.⁸

The official report about the new acquisitions of the Museum of Fine Arts in 1925 well reflects the special significance of Marcell Nemes' donation: As it turns out among others, "...for his generous deed, with which he fulfilled the old wish of a whole nation", the Minister of Religion and Education expressed his gratitude to the donator before the national assembly on 2nd April, 1925.⁹ In his speech frequently cited in the contemporary press, Kúnó Klebelsberg highly spoke of Marcell Nemes' donation with the following words: "Honourable Assembly! A great national relic got back to the country and into the possession of the nation. (After the similarly great donation of the Apponyi library and the

⁶ Oil, canvas, 76x62 cm, Inv.no. 532.

⁷ After the mentioned painting by Fülöp László copies were made by Jenő Gyárfás and Ilona Machik in 1903, by Ede Lengyel-Reinfuss for the Town Hall in Kassa (Košice, Slovakia) in 1905, by Mrs Hugó Szegedy Maszák in 1907, by László Tatz in 1912 and by Valér Ferenczy in 1913. See: *Az Országos Magyar Szépművészeti Múzeum Állagai IV. Magyar Történelmi Képcsarnok*, Budapest 1915, p. 43.

⁸ Elek Petrovics, who, authorised by the Minister of Culture, negotiated with the collector in Munich between 27th February and 2nd March, 1925, seems to have had an important role in the fact that Marcell Nemes finally donated the Rákóczi-portrait to the Hungarian State and not only deposited it as part of his own collection at the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts. See the files under nos. 181/925 and 269/925 in the archives of the museum.

⁹ See: *Az Országos Magyar Szépművészeti Múzeum Évkönyvei*, IV. 1924–26. Budapest 1927, p. 198.

acquisition of the Ehrenfeld-codex this is the third event in the history of the holdings of our national cultural treasures which raises us and renders some consolation amidst our fights for our national existence.) The portrait of Prince Ferenc Rákóczi II painted by Ádám Mányoki, which had been in the possession of the Saxon royal family, was hereby acquired and donated to the Museum of Fine Arts by Marcell Nemes of Jánoshalma royal councillor, noted connoisseur and collector, highly esteemed donor of our museums. This is the portrait of Mányoki which made the features of Ferenc Rákóczi II known for the whole nation. The way he captured the manly yet gentle features of the Prince became known by our children, by our people, into whose hearts he found his way. If there is a work of art which became rooted in the consciousness of the nation, became popular in the noble sense of the word, this is this portrait of Rákóczi. ...The fact that Marcell Nemes of Jánoshalma acquired it and as a faithful son of his homeland, donated it to the nation, won everlasting merits to him and deserved the grateful thanks of the nation which we warmly send him from here, the national assembly.”¹⁰

The official presentation of the Rákóczi-portrait, brought home from Munich by Marcell Nemes in person, occurred on 22nd April, 1925, in the presence of the governor, Miklós Horthy of Nagybánya, the Minister of Religion and Education, the donor and distinguished guests in the Hungarian Room of the Old Masters' Gallery. According to the wish of the donor, the painting remained there on display for a long time for an extra entrance fee which was appropriated to the benefit of the poor students of the Hungarian Royal Academy of Arts.¹¹ Elek Petrovics wanted to keep the affair in secret until the donation becomes legal and the painting comes home, nevertheless, the journalists thirsting after sensation, informed about the forthcoming event already in February, 1925.¹² During April a whole series of articles about Mányoki and the famous Rákóczi-portrait which got to the Museum of Fine Arts appeared in the various newspapers. Finally, Elek Petrovics appraised the historical and art historical significance of the painting in the opening article of the *Magyar Művészet*.¹³ He stressed that “.... Neither the features of King Matthias nor those of Kossuth are so closely related to one single representation. So not even their earthly figures live in the common knowledge as vividly as Rákóczi's, in which there is something from the intimacy of a personal acquaintance. This painting is more human and real than an ordinary painting, in its colouring there is more fire and

¹⁰ For the full text of Minister Klebelsberg's speech see: *Nemzetgyűlés Naplója 1922–27*. no. 31, p. 247.

¹¹ See: *Az Országos Magyar Szépművészeti Múzeum Évkönyvei IV*. 1924–26, Budapest 1927, p. 198. See also the following report: “Petrovics Elek nyilatkozik Mányoki Ádám Rákóczi-képének kettős jelentőségéről”, *Az Ujság* 3rd April, 1925, p. 3.

¹² *A Nép*, 15th February 1925; *Az Est*, 20th February 1925.

¹³ E. Petrovics, “Mányoki Ádám Rákóczi-képéhez”, *Magyar Művészet* I (1925) pp. 3–4.

depth in, its rendering there is more reverence. As if its painter wanted to do his best to win the appreciation of his master and patron, who himself, as an amateur, tried his hand at painting and about whom Simon Forgács wrote the following: His Majesty is not a good Catholic because in the church he criticizes the paintings and mocks if they are wrongly painted.”¹⁴

The unparalleled popularity of the Rákóczi-portrait can also be due to the fact that it originated from the court painter of the Prince, so its authenticity could never have been queried. Besides, in quality it far surpassed the only painting by Mányoki, a female portrait, then in the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts. Here we can note that Mányoki painted a portrait of the Prince some years earlier, too, around 1707. This painting now in the Historical Portrait Gallery of the National Museum was for long unknown to the public, because until the 1930s it had been in the Radvány Castle of the Radvánszky family (fig. 2).¹⁵

Doubtlessly, as regards the quality, the Rákóczi-portrait painted somewhat later, in 1712, which also reflects the results of Mányoki's study-tour to Holland, became more suitable to become the ideal portrait of the Prince (figs. 1. 3). Nevertheless, some had a different opinion about it. Namely, the painting called by Elek Petrovics a national relic and venerated as though with religious devotion at its homecoming was not received with unanimous zeal. It is worth quoting here Zoltán Farkas's article that came out in the *Napkelet*, May, 1925: “Unfortunately, the Rákóczi portrait is not an intimate work of art: it is not more and not less than the likeness of a merry Hungarian nobleman from the turn of the 18th century. The melancholic sound of the Hungarian clarinet playing Kuruc melodies does not ring from behind it, Hungarian defiance, Hungarian pride, Hungarian hope and faith are not rendered in it. This Rákóczi is the cavalier, the fun-loving lord, one of the carefree aristocrats of the Baroque period, but not the prince. Yet, when Mányoki captured his features, he was already a Prince all over, one of the outstanding bearers of the hard Hungarian fate ...”¹⁶ So first of all Farkas missed the national character from the picture. Quite interestingly, the same critical remarks were made twenty years earlier by Dezső Malonyai, who, in his book from 1905 entitled *Pioneers of Hungarian Painting*, also missed the Hungarian soul, the national content from the famous

¹⁴ Petrovics must have borrowed the often-cited statement of Simon Forgács from a former publication by Kálmán Thaly. See K. Thaly, “Adalék Mányoky Ádám híres magyar képiró életéhez, és Rákóczi mint műbíráló”, *Századok* 1874, pp. 512–513.

¹⁵ Oil, canvas, 77.5x55 cm. Hungarian National Museum, Historical Portrait Gallery, Inv. no. 65.8. On this Rákóczi-portrait of Mányoki see among others: L. Vayer, „Mányoki Ádám két Rákóczi-képe”, in: L. Vayer, *Témák, formák, ideák*, Budapest 1988, pp. 169–177; E. Buzási, “Einige Kapitel aus dem Leben des Bildnismalers Ádám Mányoki”, in: *A Magyar Nemzeti Galéria Évkönyve* 1992–96, Budapest 1996, pp. 7–164, especially p. 129; Budapest 2003, cat. no. 20, see note 3.

¹⁶ Z. Farkas, “Mányoki Ádám”, *Napkelet* V(1925) nos. 1–5. p. 490.

Rákóczi portrait, which was then still in the possession of the Saxon royal family.¹⁷ In my opinion the remarks of Farkas and Malonyai are rather about the romantic notions about the Prince around the turn of the century than about the criticised painting itself, because the authors call Mányoki and the painting to account for such things which were not part of either his or his commissioner's intentions. It is not probable that in a portrait painted for propaganda and representative purposes, which Rákóczi presented to August II, the Prince wanted to appear in the role of a rebelling Kuruc leader lamenting over the fate of the nation. Following Klára Garas and Béla Köpeczi, Lajos Hopp also rightly stressed that "the elegant figure dressed in princely pomp does not look like the despondent, fugitive-emigrant afflicted by political failure but rather seems a self-confident, tranquil personality."¹⁸ It is worth adding here that during the Baroque period realism meant that the artist was supposed to depict the commissioner in the way he wanted to look like.¹⁹

At the time of the homecoming of the famous Rákóczi portrait from Dresden, the life and art of Ádám Mányoki was almost totally unpublished. No wonder that the Minister of Culture himself urged the publication of a scholarly monograph on Mányoki. On behalf of the ministry Kúnó Klebelsberg offered 10 million crowns for this purpose which was complemented by a further 25 million crowns by the donor of the painting, Marcell Nemes. A competition was announced for the writing of the Mányoki-monograph by the Council of the so called National Hungarian Collection University then supervising the public collections.²⁰ Its winner was Béla Lázár. The work finally appeared in 1933. In its preface the author, along with Kúnó Klebelsberg and Bálint Hóman, expressed his special thanks to Marcell Nemes of Jánoshalma without whose unselfish and generous help the monograph could not have been written.²¹

It is time to deal with the donor himself, Marcell Nemes, in more details, since, as we will see, he was one of the legendary figures of collecting at the beginning of the 20th century, whose grandiose activity as a patron of art was not restricted to the donation of the Rákóczi-portrait. Marcell Nemes (Jánoshalma 1866 – Budapest 1930), originally called Mózes Klein, was born into a Jewish family and for a longer time he was occupied with coal and woodenware trade as well as stock exchange and real estate transactions. He was nearly forty when around 1906 he emerged from obscurity and in a couple of years he became one

¹⁷ D. Malonyay, *A magyar képzőművészet története*, Budapest 1905, pp. 16–17.

¹⁸ L. Hopp, "Mányoki Ádám fejedelmi képíró", *Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények* 77(1973) pp. 733–743, especially p. 735; K. Garas, *Magyarországi festészet a XVII. században*, Budapest 1953, p. 91; B. Köpeczi – Á. R. Várkonyi, *II. Rákóczi Ferenc*, Budapest 1955, p. 325.

¹⁹ See with regard to the Rákóczi portrait: B. Lázár, *Mányoki Ádám élete és művészete*, Budapest 1933, p. 119; Hopp op.cit. p. 735.

²⁰ See: „Pályadíj Mányoki Ádám életrajzára”, published in *Magyar Művészet* 1925, no 2. p. 60.

²¹ Lázár op.cit. 1933, p. 5.

of the most renowned collectors in Europe.²² In this lecture it is not possible to give a detailed survey of the history of the development and decay of his superb collection comprising excellent works by Hungarian and foreign masters. It is enough to mention that the rich collection contained a whole series of paintings by Mihály Munkácsy, József Rippl-Rónai, János Vaszary as well as half a dozen paintings by Tintoretto, Rembrandt, Goya and Van Gogh. Nevertheless, Marcell Nemes attracted the attention on himself not with these works but as one of the discoverers and most important collectors of the works of the Spanish El Greco born in Greece.²³ He also possessed a rich selection from the works of the French Impressionists and post-Impressionists, which, together with other fine works from his collection, he exhibited several times both in Hungary and abroad.²⁴

With regard to the famous Rákóczi portrait, it is interesting to mention that Marcell Nemes wanted to acquire Mányoki's painting for the Hungarian state already before World War I – as it turns out from the 1919 letter of Hans Posse, director of the Dresden gallery. In exchange, Nemes then offered a painting by Edouard Manet from his collection.²⁵ Unfortunately, the archives in Dresden do not give any information about how the noted collector finally acquired the long-desired Rákóczi-portrait in 1925. According to certain later reports he paid a huge sum for it, however, Kornél Divald in his 1927 *Art Treasures in Hungary* states that Nemes obtained the painting by way of exchange.²⁶

In the case of Nemes the passion for collecting was from the beginning inseparably entwined with his inclination to patronize art. It is well illustrated by the letter of the director of the National Picture Gallery written to the minister of

²² On Marcell Nemes in general see among others: E. Petrovics, "In memoriam (Nemes Marcell)", *Magyar Művészet* 1930, pp. 560–561; S. Meller, "Marcell von Nemes", *Zeitschrift für Bildende Kunst* 1931–32, pp. 25–30; A. Géber, *Magyar Gyűjtők* I–II. (Manuscript in the Library of the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts) Budapest 1970, pp. 170–177; Gy. Sümegi, "Nemes Marcell, a műgyűjtő", *Cumania. Acta Museorum ex Comitatu Bács-Kiskun*, Kecskemét 1975, pp. 275–304.

²³ On the El Greco-paintings formerly in the Nemes-collection see: M. Haraszti-Takács, "Contribution à l'histoire de la collection Greco du musée", *Bulletin du Musée Hongrois des Beaux-Arts* 53(1979) pp. 115–124; I. Barkóczi, The Collection of Paintings of El Greco in Hungary in the Early 20th Century, in: *Hommage à El Greco*, exh.cat. (Budapest Museum of Fine Arts) Budapest 1991, pp. 69–84.

²⁴ On modern French paintings from the collection of Marcell Nemes see: J. Geskó, Collecting for the Nation and Not Only for the Nation: Impressionism in Hungary, 1907–1918, in: *Impressionism. Paintings Collected by European Museums*, exh.cat. (High Museum of Art) Atlanta 1999, pp. 77–90, especially pp. 84–85; J. Geskó-P. Molnos, Francia impresszionista művek gyűjtése Magyarországon, in: *Monet és barátai*, exh.cat. (The Budapest Museum of Fine Arts) Budapest, 2003–2004, pp. 15–31. especially pp. 26–27.

²⁵ See: E. Buzási, "Mányoki Ádám tevékenységének rekonstrukciója Erős Ágost udvarában, a drezdai gyűjtemény 18. századi leltárai alapján", *Művészettörténeti Értesítő* 1998, nos. 1–2, pp. 67–113, especially p. 88, note 19.

²⁶ K. Divald, *Magyarország művészeti emlékei*, Budapest 1927, p. 214.

culture on 30th January, 1906, in which Ernő Kammerer informed the leader of the portfolio that “.....the ambition of Marcell Nemes is to acquire gap-filling works to our collections. The purpose of his purchases is not only to fulfill his artistic desires but also to suitably complement the national collections with great donations.”²⁷ Although it would be alluring to relate Kammerer’s lines to the acquisition of the Rákóczi portrait by Mányoki nearly two decades later, supposedly, the letter does not refer to it. In fact Nemes enriched the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts with several valuable artworks already in 1906, but with regard to our topic, the four paintings by Jakab Bogdány Nemes donated to the museum in 1908 are of more importance. As Gábor Térey, chief curator of the Old Masters’ Gallery, remarked in his article appraising Nemes “...With his refined taste for art, he could always find the work of art which was most missing from our collections.”²⁸

Actually, around the turn of the century only a handful of works of art represented the art of the Rákóczi era in our public collections. One of its reasons is that apart from Mányoki only half a dozen painters are known from this period whose art can be regarded internationally significant. Besides, these masters, including Mányoki, were active mainly abroad and their works only sporadically got to Hungary. One of them was Jakab Bogdány from Eperjes (Presov) (c. 1660–1724) who studied in Holland and settled in England. With his decorative floral still lifes and bird paintings he reached considerable success among the British aristocrats from the 1690s onwards. For a long time nothing else was known about Bogdány in Hungary. Quite characteristically, Sándor Nyári wrote the following about him in 1906: “Bogdány has been forgotten, since I haven’t found his name or any of his works in England.”²⁹

Nyári seems to have obtained information quite superficially, nevertheless, Gábor Térey making parallel research with him, succeeded in identifying a whole series of Bogdány’s works in the royal collection and various castles in England. One year after Nyári’s writing, Térey in his article published in the *Vasárnapi Újság* rightly called himself the re-discoverer of Bogdány. He deserved this title even more because in 1907 it was him who acquired in London the first three paintings by Bogdány for the Museum of Fine Arts.³⁰ The chief curator of the Old Masters’ Gallery was hunting after the works of Bogdány at that time, as he wanted to write a monograph on the master. Quite

²⁷ See the file under no. 619/906 in the archives of the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts.

²⁸ G. Térey, “A Szépművészeti Múzeum gyarapodása, Nemes Marcell ajándékai”, *Vasárnapi Újság* 1908, pp. 968–970, especially p. 969.

²⁹ S. Nyári, “Kupeckzy János és Mányoky Ádám a Szépművészeti Múzeumban”, *Művészet* V(1906) pp. 250–258, especially p. 250.

³⁰ G. Térey, “Magyar festő II. Rákóczi Ferenc idejéből. Bogdány Jakab”, *Vasárnapi Újság* 1907, pp. 493–494.

characteristically, in October, 1907, Térey even advertised in the *Burlington Magazine* in search of new or lost paintings by Bogdány.³¹

As it has been recently supposed, it may have been Marcell Nemes himself who directed the attention of the eminent art historian to the Bogdány paintings having surfaced on the British art market.³² But this cannot be proved by the sources. As a matter of fact, one year later, in 1908 parallel with other donations, Nemes enriched the museum with four paintings by Bogdány, which have surely originated also from England. As Gábor Térey remarked with regard to it, "It would be hard to tell which painting from among the four donated by Nemes reaches the highest level of perfection. Whether it is the large-sized painting which shows a flock of birds in a park who are about to perch on the fruits scattered around, or rather the two fruit still lifes or maybe the painting with flowers. Looking at this last one the best Dutch flower still life painters come to our minds, who could not paint any better in this genre."³³ We can remark it here that the donation of these Bogdány paintings, which were so important, gap-filling works from the point of view of the art of the Rákóczi era, must have played an important role in the fact that at the end of 1908, at the proposal and request of the director of the Museum of Fine Arts, Marcell Nemes was conferred the title of royal councillor.³⁴

In March, 1910, Térey wrote an article in the *Pester Lloyd* summarising the results of his research work on Bogdány, but for some reasons, he could never publish the monograph on the master which had been several times foreshadowed. Several decades later, Andor Pigler wrote the monograph on the painter based on the above-mentioned study of Térey, which has practically been the only detailed summary about the art and life of the painter up till now.³⁵

In 1910, surpassing his own former donations, Marcell Nemes presented eight works of art to the Hungarian state which are also important from the point of view of the nation, and which, – with the exception of two 16th century portraits, all originate from the Rákóczi era. The official appreciation was not missing this time either, moreover, what was unreachable for other Jewish collectors also making great efforts for the national culture, such as Lajos Ernst, Marcell Nemes was raised to noble rank in the summer of 1910, receiving the forename Jánoshalmi. Among the donated works featured two further works by Jakab Bogdány, two paintings by József Orient and two pictures by Johann Kupezky, for long regarded a Hungarian master. While Bogdány became

³¹ See: *Burlington Magazine* LV(1907) Vol. XII. p. 48.

³² M. Haraszti-Takács, "Néhány adalék Bogdány Jakab és Stranover Tóbiás angliai működéséhez", *Művészettörténeti Értesítő* 1988, nos. 3–4., pp. 194–202.

³³ Térey op.cit. 1908, p. 969.

³⁴ See the files under nos. 597/908 and 1966/908 in the archives of the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts.

³⁵ A. Pigler, *Bogdány Jakab (1660–1724)*, Budapest 1941.

successful with his animal paintings and still lifes, József Orient (Feketeváros, 1677 – Bécs, 1747), who was about twenty years younger than Bogdány, was the only important landscapist of Hungarian origin of the Rákóczi times. He subsequently became the teacher and vice-president of the re-organised Academy of Arts in Vienna. The two romantic landscapes, which were subsequently transmitted to the Hungarian National Gallery together with the Bogdány paintings, represent Orient's early period.³⁶

The portraitist Johann Kupezky (Bazin 1667 – Nuremberg 1740), who was of Czech origin and active in Vienna and Nuremberg, was regarded around 1910 one of the most important and renowned Hungarian artists of the Rákóczi times. In contemporary writings on art his name featured together with that of Mányoki and Bogdány. Otherwise, one of the Kupezky works from the Nemes donation, the *Portrait of Count Daniel Erasmus von Huldenburg* (1660 – 1733) had some Hungarian connection: the count, who was the ambassador of the courts in Braunschweig and Hannover in Vienna, was raised to the members of the Upper House in 1712.³⁷ From the point of view of history of art, the other donated painting of the noted collector, the *Self-portrait of the Artist with his Wife and Son*, one of the chefs-d'oeuvre of the artist, is much more important. The painting executed in Vienna was already compared by some contemporaries to the works of Rembrandt and Van Dyck, and the fact that Kupezky kept the painting in his possession till the end of his life shows how emotionally important this intimate family portrait must have been for the artist.³⁸

The indisputable merit of Marcell Nemes is that in a minor Parisian private collection he discovered and identified the painting long thought to be lost, and regarded the work of a pupil of Rembrandt, and acquired it for the Hungarian state. Although around 1910 the Museum of Fine Arts and the Municipal Gallery possessed more paintings by Kupezky, the *Family Portrait* donated by Nemes well complemented the material and became one of the most important pieces in the assembly representing the art of the Rákóczi era.³⁹ We can remark it here that in the collection of Marcell Nemes there were some further old Hungarian pieces apart from the artworks mentioned above: at the

³⁶ See: M. Mojzer (ed.), *A Magyar Nemzeti Galéria régi gyűjteményei*, Budapest 1984, p. 143.

³⁷ See: A. Pigler, *Katalog der Galerie Alter Meister*, Budapest 1967, p. 358.

³⁸ On this painting by Kupezky see among others: A. Fáy, "Le dilemme d'un mise au jour. La restauration de l'Autoportrait de l'artiste avec sa femme et son fils par Johann Kupezky", *Bulletin du Musée Hongrois des Beaux-Arts* 85(1996) pp. 17–46; E. A. Safarik, *Johann Kupezky (1666–1740) Ein Meister des Barockporträts*, exh.cat. (Suermondt-Ludwig-Museum) Aachen 2001–2002, pp. 43–46.

³⁹ On the mentioned painting donated by Marcell Nemes in 1910 see: S. Nyári, "Kupezky családja. Kupezky János festménye", *Vasárnapi Ujság* 1910, pp. 77–78; K. Pogány, "Jánoshalmi Nemes Marcell", *Vasárnapi Ujság* 1910, pp. 624–626; Z. Takács, "Rundschau – Sammlungen. Budapest", *Cicerone* II (1910) pp. 314–315; Z. Takács, "Die Neuerwerbungen des Museums für Bildende Kunst in Budapest", *Cicerone* III (1911) pp. 857–878.

1909 exhibition of the Nemes collection in the Museum of Fine Arts a still life by Bogdány, and a *Female Portrait* attributed to Mányoki were put on show, while at the auction of his bequest in Munich, 1933, featured a portrait by Mányoki representing Friedrich August I the Strong.⁴⁰

From among all the works of art discussed here, understandably, it was Mányoki's famous Rákóczi portrait, which most preserved the name of Marcell Nemes in the memory of the nation. The obituary notices that appeared after the death of the collector in October, 1930, and the encyclopaedia entries published afterwards, all stress that it was him who, besides his other donations, presented the Rákóczi portrait venerated as a national relic to the Museum of Fine Arts. The acquisition and bringing home of the works of the Hungarian "classical painters" scattered all over abroad, which was one of Nemes' major strivings from the beginning, doubtlessly culminated in this work making the picture about Nemes as an unselfish and grandiose patron complete. As Mányoki's portrait of the prince played a decisive role in the formation of the Rákóczi-image in Hungary at the beginning of the 20th century, so did the donation of the painting become an inseparable part of the Nemes-image, partly formed by the collector himself.

⁴⁰ See: *Nemes Marcell képgyűjteményének kiállítása a Szépművészeti Múzeumban*, exh.cat. (The Budapest Museum of Fine Arts) Budapest 1909, cat.nos. 18. and 19; *Sammlung Marcell von Nemes*. 2. Abteilung. Hugo Helbing, 2nd November 1933, cat.no. 24. Enikő Buzási does not consider the mentioned portrait of Friedrich August I the Strong an authentic work by Mányoki. See: Buzási 2003, (note 2.) pp. 383–384, cat.no. c 343.