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Course of Military History

BÉLA SZABÓ:

**MILITARIAN AND MILITARY-POLITICAL ACTIVITIES OF PRINCEPS
OF TRANSYLVANIA AND KING OF POLAND STEPHEN BÁTHORY**

PhD Dissertation

Author's review

Consultant:

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Choice of theme and showing the researching aims and methods:

In the Hungarian military history Stephen Báthory (King of Poland, Princeps of Transylvania) and his military activity has got emerging place. At the first like Princeps of Transylvania, after that like King of Poland he continued significant military and political activities. We have to talk not about only him, because played excellent role in his campaigns Hungarian officers and soldiers too.

Stephen Báthory were a important political and military person in 16. century, at age of influence Ottoman Empire. He is the main target in my researching works. Earlier his person had not researching enough. Endre Veress (famous Báthory researcher) said standard biography about him did not existing in Hungarian and Polish historiography to beginning 20. century. But we know his military activities are important chapters in military history.

In my work I try to ordering this not enough clear problem-system, by analyzing and showing original references. In my dissertation I try to not only showing campaigns livonian war, even I analyze his Transylvanian and Polish military activities. The Hungarian officers and soldiers had got main role in these activities, this is other main course my researching.

Of course I present 16. century and Middle-East Europe history, economic life, political and military status, because Stephen Báthory military activities should be suitable background.

Other main course of my dissertation russian diplomatic relations, because these relations had seriously military policy content. I intent important role to correspondence between Báthory and Ivan, the Terrible. Very important working with protocols of peace conference, reports and memoirs from 16. century. I base my work some original Russian references, certainly with critical way. Mainly I use Hungarian, Latin and a few Polish references.

I think, very important thing is Swedish relation and their role in Livonian¹ War, because we can say Sweden basically helped to Poland and changed the order of events and about this written some references in 16. century.

In my publications to this time I tried to analyze Stephen Báthory's foreign policy and military activities. I thought important thing is Livonian War diplomacy. After previous work I thought so many new questions about this problem, and now I try to solve these questions.

I think, another thing is very important too. Stephen Báthory like Polish King at once were Princeps of Transylvania and continued political activities for Transylvania. These political activities for Transylvania were useful all Hungarians, too. I am underlying his discussions with Turkish, Tartar and Moldovanian ambassadors.

In my choice of theme had a role of my opinion: Stephen Báthory Princeps of Transylvania and King of Poland at Turkish time were great politician and commander for Hungarians and for Central-Eastern Europe. Nowadays opinions about him has changed and new scientific works help put our hero to suitable place.

Nowadays, I think very important deal with Polish-Hungarian friendship and relationship and historical prior events because, for example we stepped together in NATO and EU.

In my researching works I used methods for historical science and military history. Under these conditions:

- Writing research about 16. century and reveal research facts and events and their relationship that time.
- By the way researching I executed collection, system, reclass and examine references and scientific literature.
- Foreign references and scientific literature are on my focus in my researching works.
- I worked in Institute of Military History, National Széchenyi Library and Hungarian Academy of Sciences for references and scientific literature.

¹ Livonia (Livland): Territory between Gulf of Riga – Estland – Lake of Chud – Kurland. Main cities: Riga, Tartu (Derpt ill. Dorpat)

- I put gathering informations on critical analyzing.
- I analyzed and recognitioned new datas.

The last aims my researching are next:

- To examine Stephen Báthory activities, how to effect for Hungarian History.
- To demonstrate, The King contiuned excellent political and militarian activities, which effected to our time.
- To compare states in area (Poland, Russia, Principality of Transylvania) historical an militarian status in 16. century.
- To analyze campaignes against Russia. To prove other ethnic soldiers (Polish, German, Lithuanian and Hungarian) can fight well together.
- To sum up and to analyze activities hungarian soldiers and officers in Livonian War and to prove these activities were excellent pages in Book of Hungarian Military History.
- To prove, Stephen Báthory life's work influenced Central - Eastern Europe militarian and political life.

In the fallowing I review this work by chapters:

Chapter I. Introduction

I reviewed importance this dissertation and Stephen Báthory in militarian history and his descent. I showed status Central-Eastern Europe in 16. century and presented military events that time and gave short discription of area, where military operations were.

Chapter II. Principality of Transylvania, Poland and Russia in 16. century

I reviewed how to establishment of the Principality of Transylvania, after that I analyzed militarian and political status area of Principality and described Military of Transylvania.

Next I reviewed how to Stephen Báthory became Princeps of Transylvania and presented his military and political activities to 1576, when he got Polish crown. After that I showed and analyzed process to get Polish crown.

By historical look back on I showed in detail process medieval Poland. Very important contact between Europe and Poland in 16th. century. Western-European changes (in economy, politics, military and geographical discoveries) were effected on Poland, too. These changes mostly we can see in economic life (in form of second villainage), that formed for economical expansion, because Western-Europe needed polish agricultural products. This led to strengthening nobility, therefore formed „noble republic”. After died out Jagello-dinasty, strengthening nobility, had deciding hand in election of a king. The nobility wanted emperor with strong arms, who didn't want absolut despotism. This verified by laws, accepted by Valois Henrik and accessioned to the throne, Stephen Báthory (Duke of Transylvania). By condition of accession to the throne Stephan Báthory I write more, because on my opinion his rule excellent in polish „golden century”.

I wrote in details about Polish army in time Livonian war, because very important to know how to changed better Báthory this army and how they could fight.

It is very Important show in detail Russia and its army like enemy, analyzed and describing russian history, underlining role Ivan, the Terrible.

Chapter III.

Stephen Báthory's Livonian campaigns

I showed origin of Livonian war from 1558 to the end, 1582. In detail I presented final etap this war when Báthory definetelly won against Russia in three campaigns. I use Hungarian and Foreigner materials too. In the end this chapter I presented peace conference and its results.

Chapter IV.

Hungarian soldiers in Livonian war

In this chapter I presented and analyzed role of hungarian soldiers in last three campaigns in Livonian war. I showed how they fought at battles and sieges. I

presented how many Hungarian soldiers were involved in this war. In these campaigns were lot of soldiers, who aftertime get a name in hungarian militarian history too (For example Mózes Székely, János Bornemissza, Albert Király).²

Final conclusions:

In 16. century Ottoman Empire tried to conquer western direction and this gave seriously hard status to Hungarian Kingdom. After a century fighting, in the beginning 16. century Turkey became a huge empire, and Hungarian Kingdom could not fight with this empire anymore. This situation leaded to deviding Hungary to three pieces. North-West Hungary belonged to Hapsburg Empire, Central-Hungary directly to Ottomans and Eastern parts of Hungary particulary independent, but under the influence Turkey. Turkey thought about campaigns to the west, therefore they gave some independent status to former Eastern parts Hungary, what became Principality of Transylvania.

Transylvania had got a special status, therefore from Báthory, every princeps had got special politics and most important thing were one: defend particulary independent of Transylvania. Other main course in politics: try to unite all Hungarian Kingdom. And let see what about these things Báthory in his secret plans: he planned his brother son get Hungarian crown and his cancellior Zamojski get Principality of Transylvania, because this way Hungary, Transylvania and Poland became a huge state-unit against Hapsburg and Ottomans.³ Báthory knowingly tried on Polish throne be occupied with future of Hungary and Transylvania. He tought these plans live even after his dead.

We can sum Báthory's role between Hungary and Poland next way: „Báthory thought his independent Principality of Transylvania is good base to unite all Hungarian Kingdom; with polish throne he got closer to this aim. He organised a new system of collaboration and Polish aid may help reunification Hungary with Transylvanian help.⁴

But what is Báthory's reign mean for Poland? About this write some interesting Norman Davies: „The Rzeczpospolita (Poland) became a great power under Báthory.

² Most of them fought in 15-years war (1591-1606).

³ Szádeczky 1882

⁴ Hopp 1992

Some times later historical opinion about him: He won against Ivan, the Terrible, but later he were charged with tyranny. After his dead Poland returned almost in chaos.”⁵

After Livonian War Báthory had got a Polish Throne, meaning political power in Europe. For example, in 1583 he mediated between Venezia and Ottoman Empire in their trouble.⁶

Summing it up, we can say Báthory' s early died broke up his great plans. Poland did not elected Zsigmond Báthory, but elected Swedish king' s relative, Zsigmond Wasa. Other political area changed contacts between Transylvania and Poland. For example Wasa fought against Stephen Bocskai and Gábor Bethlen. But in the future for Princes of Transylvania Polish Throne seemed really way for Transylvanian politics to misery expert of II. György Rákóczi in 1657.

Ivan, the Terrible as a consequence of Livonian War broke up his plans at Baltic Sea and offensive against West and Baltic territory came to a deadlock. Russia had to wait more century to solve problem in area at Baltic Sea and became a great power.

In the end, we can say the Hungarian soldiers gave seriously help to Poland against Russia and almost mainly contributed to victory against Russia. On the other hand these war experiences they used in Fifteen-years war, what began in 1591 and Principality of Transylvania stepped in war against Ottoman Empire in 1594. But before war Zsigmond Báthory killed nobles, who vote against war among János Bornemissza.

The fighting possibilites of hungarian soldiers were excellent, but sometimes they became passionated. There is a very interesting fact: in the 17. century described Hungarian soldiers like undisciplined, disordered group without field and any militarian works, Heidenstein wrote next about hungarian soldiers in Livonian War: „The Hungarian, who like working hard and disciplined unit, worked very well, because siege-trench digged across the town, somewhere in very disgusting places.”⁷

⁵ Norman 1992

⁶ MTA Kézirattár Ms 4980/2./VI. (1583-01-25)

⁷ Heidenstein

Stephen Báthory with his Hungarian soldiers definitely won in this long war and he proved in that time European warfare gave victory, although Ivan, the Terrible had got strong army.

Recommendations and useable in practice:

My opinions about using this work are following:

Mainly the aim is the authors researched results and data give to every interested persons, who wants to deal this theme professional scientific-teaching level even only amateur level. The questions and problems in this work can stimulate interested persons in this theme for future researching. Questions and solves in the chapters can shade problems in this area of military history. The bibliography correctly content almost all important scientific works and works of reference, and it may be a basic to future researching.

We never forget Polish-Hungarian friendship and relationship. I hope, this work help to remain this campaigns, which is the exemplary facts in military history and fact concentration of forces Poland and Hungary.

The new scientific results:

After analyzed and systemized research work I think the following things are results of this dissertation:

- I summarized how political and military facts jointly functioned between Hungary (Principality of Transylvania), Poland and Russia in 16. century.
- I proved the great role of Stephen Báthory in unite of Rzeczpospolita.
- I analyzed and lifted great role Hungarian soldiers and officers in Livonian campaigns.
- I examined role of Stephen Báthory like Polish King on Polish and Hungarian military affairs and showed political and military position of examined area.

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Curriculum vitae

I finished **Szent László High School** in 1987. After that I continued my studies in Kiev at **Military Aeroplane Engineering Academy** on radio – engineer course. Three years later broke my studies and returned home. To 1992 I worked at Technika International Trade Company as trade-clerk

In 1992 I began my new studies at **Eszterházy Károly Teachers Training College** and in the end I got history – russian language teacher graditude (Bsc) in 1996. Theme of my thesis were: Zamjathin, and his novel „We”. During my College years I wrote several essay.

From 1996 I were hungarian-russian translator and interpreter by ORFK, after that I were teacher in next schools:

- Móra Ferenc Primary School
- Gárdonyi Géza Primary School
- Lázár Vilmos Primary School
- Industrial School of Municipality Budapest
- Giorgio Perlasca Trade College
- Lengyel Gyula Trade College

In addition my teacher activity I got PC-skills degree in 1999. From 2000 to 2002 I studied at **Eötvös Lóránd University** faculty of humanities on course of history and in 2002 I got humanities degree teacher of history (Msc). Theme of my thesis at university: Diplomatical and political relations of Principality Transylvania to Stephen Báthory.

I got high degree knowledge on russian language, and medium degree on english language (elementary degree with military terminology).

I started my studies at **Zrínyi Miklós National Defence University** on Doctoral School of Military Sciences on course of military history in 2003. I got transcript certifying completion of all credits at university in 2006.