

Obverse

The obverse depicts a period sailing ship on stormy waves. To the left is the Slovak coat of arms. At the bottom of the field are the name of the issuing country 'SLOVENSKO' and the year of issuance '2026', one above the other. To the right of the sailing ship is a stylised linden branchlet from the logo of Národná banka Slovenska, which changes into the letters 'NBS' when the coin is tilted. To the left of the country name are the stylised initials 'MR' of the obverse designer, Miroslav Ronai, and to the right is the mint mark of the Kremnica Mint.

Reverse

The reverse features a portrait of Maurice Benyovszky. To the left of it is a portion of a globe with an enlarged image of Madagascar and a stylised representation of a zebu, an animal closely associated with the island. To the left of Madagascar are the stylised initials 'BR' of the reverse designer, Branislav Ronai. To the right of the portrait are the coin's denomination '20' and currency 'EURO', one above the other. A compass is depicted at the lower right edge. Beneath the portrait is an emblem composed of a stylised traveller's palm (*Ravenala madagascariensis*) and a crescent moon with two stars. The name 'MÓRIC' runs along the upper left edge; 'BEŇOVSKÝ' along the upper right edge, and 'KRÁL MADAGASKARU' (king of Madagascar) along the lower edge, below the year '1776'.

Coin details

Denomination	€20
Composition:	.925 silver, .75 copper
Weight:	33.63 g
Diameter:	40 mm
Edge:	• ŠĽAHTIC CESTOVATEĽ DOBRODRUH (nobleman, traveller, adventurer)
Issuing volume:	limited to a maximum of 15,000 coins in either brilliant uncirculated or proof quality
Designers:	Miroslav Ronai (obverse) Branislav Ronai (reverse)
Engraver:	Dalibor Schmidt
Producer:	Kremnica Mint (Slovakia)



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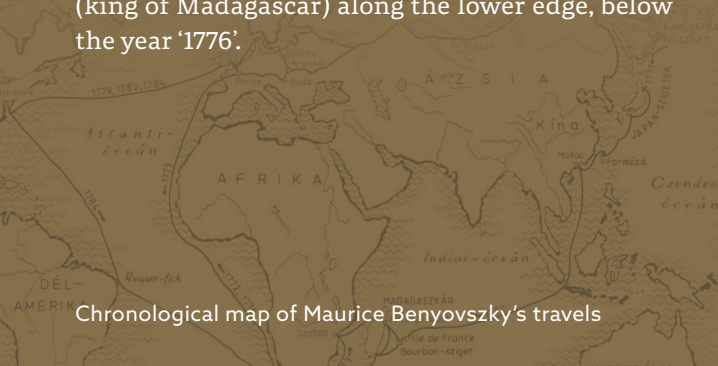


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250th anniversary
of the proclamation of
Maurice Benyovszky
as king of Madagascar

SILVER COLLECTOR EURO COIN



Chronological map of Maurice Benyovszky's travels

Maurice Benyovszky (1746–1786) was a notable figure of the European Enlightenment—an era marked by the expansion of knowledge, the growth of trade, and the advancement of seafaring. A Hungarian nobleman of Slovak origin, traveller, explorer and soldier, he played a role in the history of several countries in Europe, Asia, Africa and North America during his adventurous life. His story combines the courage of a voyager, the restless spirit of an exile, and the vision of a man who believed in progress and the dignity of the individual.

Maurice Benyovszky (Hungarian: *Benyovszky Máté Móric Mihály Ferenc Szerafin Ágost*; Slovak: *Matúš Móric Michal František Serafín August Beňovský*) was born on 20 September 1746 into a landed family in Vrbové, a town in present-day Slovakia. He studied at the Lutheran lyceum school in Svätý Jur, where he was recorded in the 1760 student register as a member of the Slovak nobility. After the death of his parents and disputes over his inheritance, he left his homeland and, in 1768, joined the fighters of the Bar Confederation, who opposed Russian dominance in Poland.



Maurice Benyovszky's manor house in Vrbové before its renovation in 1995–1998



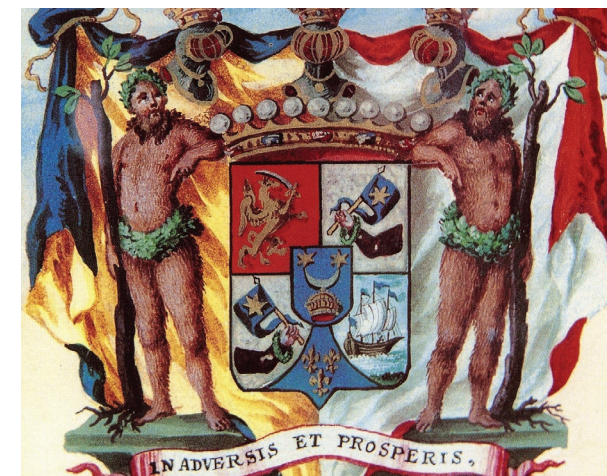
The family residence of Maurice Benyovszky and his wife Zuzana in Beckovská Vieska

In the spring of 1769, he was captured by the Russians, imprisoned in Kazan, and subsequently deported into exile in Kamchatka.

Kamchatka was the location of the best-known episode of Benyovszky's life. He organised an uprising among other exiles, and undertook a perilous voyage with them across the North Pacific, sailing past the Aleutian Islands, Alaska, and the coast of Japan. After months at sea, he reached the Chinese port of Macau and from there returned to Europe, where he entered the service of France. In Paris, in 1772, King Louis XV appointed him a colonel and entrusted him with a mission to Madagascar.

He was only 27 years old when in 1774 he arrived in Madagascar, where he founded the trading post of Louisbourg at Antongil Bay. According to his memoirs, he explored the interior, mapped the land, built roads, united local tribes, supported trade, and improved the living conditions of the population. In October 1776, by his own account, an assembly of tribal kings elected him their leader—the great king ('Ampansacabé').

After returning to Europe in 1777, King Louis XVI awarded him the rank of general. In Paris, he met Benjamin Franklin and corresponded with George Washington. In 1778, Empress Maria Theresa granted him the title of count. In 1784, with the support of American merchants, he set out once again for Madagascar to continue his plans. On the island's eastern coast, in the Cap Est region, he began building his new settlement, Mauritania. His growing influence aroused concern among the French authorities on the Isle de France (present-day Mauritius). During a surprise attack by a French punitive force on 24 May 1786, he was killed while defending his settlement. He died at the age of 39, as a man whose life became a symbol of courage, adventure, and an extraordinary determination to push beyond the boundaries of the known world. Benyovszky also left a literary account of his travels in the widely acclaimed *Memoirs and Travels of Mauritius Augustus Count de Benyowsky*, published in London in 1790.



The Benyovszky family coat of arms, augmented by Empress Maria Theresa in 1778 when she elevated Maurice Benyovszky to the rank of count