

The Foundation of the Hungarian Historical Association and its Impact on Hungarian Historical Studies

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The establishment of the Hungarian Historical Association in 1867 added a significant new factor to the development of Hungarian historical scholarship in the nineteenth century. It gave a new impetus to the revival of Hungarian historiography that began during the absolutist period of the 1850's, and it also broadened and reoriented historical research and writing.

As has been shown elsewhere¹⁾, following the flowering of the great source-collecting schools in eighteenth-century Hungary²⁾, the post-Napoleonic age ushered in a period of decline in Hungarian historical scholarship. The primary causes of this decline were the spirit of Romanticism and the resurgent nationalism of the Magyars that dominated the first half of the nineteenth century. On the one hand, romantic nationalism undermined the spirit of criticism that is essential

*) The author would like to thank his colleague, Professor *Samuel J. Astorino* of Duquesne University, for his helpful comments in revising this study.

¹⁾ The history of Hungarian historical studies had always been a stepchild of Hungarian historiography. Up to now only two summaries appeared: The first from the pen of the German-Swiss scholar, Sándor [Alexander] Flegler, *A magyar történetírás története* [The History of Hungarian Historiography]. Budapest 1877, and the second by Emma Lederer, *A magyar polgári történetírás rövid története* [A Short History of Hungarian Bourgeois Historiography]. Budapest 1969. The first of these is a century old and goes only up to the mid-19th century, while the second is a short summary from the mid-19th century till 1945. Tibor Baráth's study: *L'histoire en Hongrie 1867—1935*, in: *Revue Historique*, CLXXVII (1936), pp. 84—144, and CLXXVIII (1936), pp. 25—74, on the other hand, is basically a bibliographical essay. The first extensive modern synthesis of Hungarian historical studies is by Steven Bela Vardy, *Modern Hungarian Historiography: The Development of Hungarian Historical Studies with an Emphasis on the Twentieth-Century Schools of History*. Pittsburgh: Department of History, Duquesne University) limited offset edition. For the revised edition of this work see S. B. Vardy, *Modern Hungarian Historiography* (East European Monographs of the *East European Quarterly*). Boulder, Colorado and New York, 1976.

²⁾ See chapter IV of Vardy's *Modern Hungarian Historiography*. See also Bálint Hóman, *Tudományos történetírásunk megalapítása a XVIII. században* [The Foundation of Our Scientific Historiography in the 18th Century]. Budapest 1920, and *idem*, *A forráskutatás és forráskritika története Magyarországon* [The History of Source Research and Source Criticism in Hungary]. Budapest 1925.

to scholarship; on the other, it syphoned off some of the best Hungarian minds to political activism³).

Following the Revolution of 1848—1849, however, these intellectuals retreated from political activism. Moreover, coming as it did after the tumultuous and romantic years of the Hungarian Reform Period (ca. 1825—1848), their defeat completely reshaped their minds and attitudes toward the immediate future. Because the efforts and expectations in the 1840's had proved futile, the nation now lay prostrated; and the Magyar intellectuals turned from the hopeless present to the more inspiring past. Thus, the oppressive political system of the 1850's, coupled with the desire of the Magyars to find solace in the examination of their national past, combined to produce a new renaissance in Hungarian historical studies⁴).

This revival manifested itself partially in the rise of the National Liberal School, represented by the great syntheses of *Ferenc Toldy* (1805—1857), *Mihály Horváth* (1809—1878) and *László Szalay* (1813—1864)⁵), and partially in the uncoordinated source publication ventures of a number of emerging historical scholars⁶). From the mid-1850's onward, this revival increasingly assumed the

³) The romantic national historiography of the Hungarian Reform Period is treated by Louis J. Lékaï, *Historiography in Hungary, 1790—1848*, in: *Journal of Central European Affairs*, XIV (1954), pp. 3—18; and *idem*, *A magyar történetírás, 1790—1830* [Hungarian Historiography, 1790—1830]. Budapest 1942. See also Sándor Bíró, *Történelemtanításunk a XIX. század első felében* [The Teaching of History in Hungary in the First Half of the 19th Century]. Budapest 1960; Ervin Pamlényi's chapter "A reformkorszak történetírása" [The Historiography of the Reform Period], in his *Horváth Mihály*, Budapest 1954, pp. 13—20; and Vardy, *Modern Hungarian Historiography*, chapters IV—V.

⁴) The relationship between the absolutism of the post-revolutionary period and a renaissance in Hungarian historical scholarship was first noted by Imre Lukinich, *A Magyar Történelmi Társulat története* [The History of the Hungarian Historical Association]. Budapest 1918, pp. 15—16.

⁵) The syntheses in question are Ferenc Toldy's *A Magyar Nemzeti Irodalom története* [The History of Hungarian National Literature], 2 vols., Pest 1851—1854; Mihály Horváth's *Magyarország történelme* [The History of Hungary], 6 vols., Pest 1860—1863, 2nd ed., 8 vols., Pest, 1871—1873; and László Szalay's *Magyarország története* [The History of Hungary], 6 vols., Leipzig 1851—1854 and Pest 1857—1859. On *Ferenc Toldy* see Pál Gyulai, "Toldy Ferencz," in his *Emlékbeszéd* [Memorial Speeches], 2 vols., 3rd ed., Budapest 1914, I, pp. 85—113; Elemér Császár, *Toldy Ferenc kritikai munkássága* [The Critical Works of F. Toldy] in: *Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények*, XXVII (1917), pp. 297—312, pp. 405—418; and Árpád Berczik, *Ferenc Toldy. Begründer der ungarischen wissenschaftlichen Literaturgeschichte*, in: *Acta Litteraria*, IV (1961), pp. 225—257. *Mihály Horváth* has been treated in two major biographies: Ervin Pamlényi's above-cited work (n. 3) and Sándor Márki's *Horváth Mihály, 1809—1878*, Budapest 1917. On *László Szalay* see Dávid Angyal, *Szalay László*, in: *Budapesti Szemle*, CLVII (1914), pp. 1—22, pp. 187—228; and Ervin Pamlényi, *Szalay László: Magyarország története* [L. Szalay's History of Hungary], in: *Századok*, XCVIII (1964), pp. 1370—1379.

⁶) On some of these uncoordinated source publications see Hóman, *A forráskutatás és forráskritika*, cited in note 2; and Domokos Kosáry, *Bevezetés Magyarország történetének forrásaiba és irodalmába* [Introduction into the Sources and Literature of the

form of a concerted effort, and shortly thereafter the Hungarian Academy of Sciences also became involved in this cultural and scholarly renaissance.

The Academy's involvement took the form of the establishment of an Historical Commission within the organization itself in 1854, which soon became one of the main centers of organized historical research in Hungary⁷). In addition to various other involvements, the Historical Commission initiated a number of major source publication ventures, the most significant being the *Monumenta Hungariae Historica* series, published in four sections starting in 1857, and modeled on the earlier *Monumenta Germaniae Historica* (1826 ff.) and the *Fontes Rerum Austriacarum* (1849 ff.). But the *Hungarian Historical Repository* (*Magyar Történelmi Tár*) (1855—1877), initiated for the publication of shorter historical sources, was also of considerable importance⁸).

Although the Academy had an increasing role in the renaissance of post-revolutionary Hungarian historical scholarship, its own revival was not nearly as rapid and as extensive as desired by the intellectuals. This was also true for several other Hungarian scientific, scholarly, and literary societies, such as the prestigious Kisfaludy (Literary) Society and the Hungarian Natural Sciences Association, which was also concerned with archeological research⁹). In point of fact, during the oppressive 1850's, the Hungarian Academy had to fight even for its right to restore the cultivation of the Magyar language as one of its primary goals. Moreover, due to the lack of official financial support for its goals and undertakings, the Academy — under the guidance of the historian Count *József Teleki* (1790—

History of Hungary], vol. I, projected 5 vols., Budapest 1970, pp. 223—236. For an assessment of mid-19th-century Hungarian historiography in general see Ágnes R. Várkonyi, *Históriográfiai törekvések Magyarországon a XIX. században* [Historiographical Tendencies in Hungary in the 19th Century], in: *Századok*, CIII (1969), pp. 939—989; and *idem*, *The Impact of Scientific Thinking on Hungarian Historiography about the Middle of the 19th Century*, in: *Acta Historica*, XIV (1968), pp. 1—20.

⁷) On the Hungarian Academy's involvement in the revival of Hungarian historiography see Imre Lukinich, "A Magyar Tudományos Akadémia és a magyar történettudomány" [The Hungarian Academy of Sciences and Hungarian Historiography], in: *A Magyar Tudományos Akadémia első évszázada* [The First Century of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences], 2 vols., Budapest, 1926—1928, I, pp. 127—142.

⁸) For a list and description of the individual volumes of the *Monumenta Hungariae Historica* see Emeric Lukinich, ed., *Les éditions des sources de l'histoire Hongroise 1854—1930*, Budapest 1931; Kosáry, *Bevezetés Magyarország történetének forrásaiba*, I, pp. 226—231; and Vardy, *Modern Hungarian Historiography*, pp. 474—485. See also Lukinich, *A Magyar Tudományos Akadémia*, and Hóman, *A forráskutatás és forráskritika*.

⁹) On the post-revolutionary difficulties of the Hungarian scientific and scholarly organizations see Lajos Kéky, "A Kisfaludy-Társaság története, 1836—1936" [The History of the Kisfaludy Society, 1836—1936], in Kéky, ed., *A százéves Kisfaludy-Társaság* [The One Hundred Years Old Kisfaludy Society], Budapest 1936, pp. 9—264; and Gábor Kátai, *A Királyi Magyar Természettudományos Társulat története alapításától fogva máig* [The History of the Royal Hungarian Natural Sciences Association from its Foundation until Today], Pest 1868. See also Dávid Angyal, *A Magyar Tudományos Akadémia és az önkényuralom* [The Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the Period of Absolutism], in: *Budapesti Szemle*, CXVI (1903).

1855) and the philosopher-statesman Baron *József Eötvös* (1813—1871) — was forced to seek support for its publishing activities among magnates and high churchmen of various political, ideological and religious persuasions¹⁰). Although quite necessary, such reliance upon private financial support was ultimately bound to influence the Academy's orientation and activities.

The Academy's involvement in the revival of Hungarian historical scholarship during the 1850's was of momentous significance, for its publication of source materials and serials represented the only attempt at order and coherence in the otherwise unsystematized discipline¹¹). Yet, a sizable portion of the historical research of that period, as well as much of the historical discipline itself, remained outside the Academy's control. This is evidenced by the fact that private publication ventures outnumbered those works printed under the Academy's auspices. Moreover, the rise of the Trans-Danubian Friends of History also began to challenge the work of the Academy scholars¹²). This short-lived association, founded in 1863, had resulted from a "rebellion" by younger members of the historical profession against the insufficiently critical approach and methodology of the older scholars. These younger historians (*A. Ipolyi, F. Pesty, I. Nagy, A. Csengery, S. Szilágyi, K. Ráth, N. Knauz* and *K. Thaly*) were also behind the first post-revolutionary attempt to establish a professional historical journal¹³) and the ultimately successful foundation of the Hungarian Historical Association¹⁴).

¹⁰) The role of Baron *József Eötvös* was particularly significant in the post-revolutionary revival of the Hungarian Academy. In this connection see Gusztáv Heinrich, *Eötvös és az Akadémia* [Eötvös and the Academy], in: *Akademiai Értesítő*, XXIV (1913), pp. 554—565; Paul Bödy, *Joseph Eötvös and the Modernization of Hungary, 1840—1870* (Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, New Series, Vol. LXII, Pt. 2), Philadelphia 1972, pp. 75—76; and Steven Bela Vardy, *Baron Joseph Eötvös: The Political Profile of a Liberal Hungarian Thinker and Statesman*. Ph. D. Diss., Indiana University, Bloomington 1967, pp. 175—177.

¹¹) On the achievements of the Hungarian Academy's Historical Commission see Jánosné Fráter [Mrs. J. Fráter], *A Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Történettudományi Bizottságának működése, 1854—1949* [The Activities of the Historical Commission of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences], Budapest 1966.

¹²) For the activities of this organization see Alfréd Lengyel, *Megemlékezés a Dunántúli Történetkedvelők példamutatásáról* [Remembering the Example of the Trans-Danubian Friends of History], in: *Arrabona*, X (1968), pp. 163—176.

¹³) Ferenc Glatz, *Kísérlet történelmi folyóirat indítására 1865-ben* [An Attempt to Establish a Historical Journal in 1865], in: *Századok*, C (1966), pp. 1278—1299.

¹⁴) On the problems surrounding the foundation of the Hungarian Historical Association see Ágnes R. Várkonyi, *A Történelmi Társulat megalakulásának előzményeihez* [On the Antecedents of the Foundation of the Historical Association], in: *Századok*, CI (1967), pp. 1185—1190; Ferenc Glatz, *A Magyar Történelmi Társulat megalakulásának története* [The History of the Foundation of the Hungarian Historical Association], *ibid.*, pp. 233—267; Győző Ember, *A Magyar Történelmi Társulat száz éve* [One Hundred Years of the Hungarian Historical Association], *ibid.*, pp. 1140—1169; and Lukinich, *A Magyar Történelmi Társulat története*, pp. 15—24.

The Foundation of the Historical Association

The founding of the Historical Association in 1867 occurred in a atmosphere of renewed political activism. This renewal marked a departure from the period of absolutism that stretched through the 1850's and early 1860's. By the latter part of 1866, however, the country's political atmosphere was filled with hopes and expectations. Hungarian historians now sought to root their expectations in the rising national consciousness of the masses. History was to be a vehicle by which national goals were to be popularized, and the formation of a professional association was a first step in this direction. The return of the noted synthesizing historian, *M. Horváth*, after seventeen years of political exile, also fueled the enthusiasm for a national historiography, and urged the older Academy scholars (*J. Érdy*, *F. Toldy*, *F. Wenzel*, *F. Rómer* and others) to close ranks with the younger activists in the profession. All these efforts culminated in the resurrection of the cherished dreams of the historians of the 1840's¹⁵), the organization of the Hungarian Historical Association.

While the details, problems, and conflicting views concerning the foundation of the Historical Association cannot be treated in this short essay, one has to point out that from the very beginning there were serious disagreements among the founders about the specific structure, goals, and prospective membership criteria of the projected organization. The proponents of the idea of a small, exclusive and strictly scholarly organization (*Ráth* and *Pesty*) were opposed by adherents of a looser and more encompassing association (*Toldy* and *Csengery*). The latter desired an organization that would combine scholarly, social, and cultural goals, and they also wished to extend membership to nonprofessional historians¹⁶).

Ultimately the latter prevailed, and the Hungarian Historical Association was duly incorporated with the encompassing aim "of cultivating and popularizing all branches of Hungarian historical scholarship, and of creating the widest possible interest in the same"¹⁷). Thus, consonant with the goal of cultivating history on a scholarly level, the founders of the Association also wanted to participate in the formulation of historical consciousness of Hungarian society. By attempting to spread Hungarian national consciousness among the masses, they were also assuming certain national, political and social goals.

¹⁵) On the efforts of this older generation to establish a historical association in Hungary already during the 1840's see Loránt Tilkovszky, *Kisérlet történelmi társulat alapítására 1845-ben* [An Attempt to Establish a Historical Association in 1845], in: *Századok*, C (1966), pp. 947—961. See also Lukinich, *A magyar Történelmi Társulat története*, pp. 11—15.

¹⁶) On this debate between the proponents of these two orientations see Glatz, *A Magyar Történelmi Társulat megalakulásának története*, pp. 238—251; and Ember, *A Magyar Történelmi Társulat száz éve*, pp. 1143—1152.

¹⁷) Section I, paragraph 2 of the Historical Association's bylaws, reprinted in *Századok*, CI (1967), pp. 264—267, as an appendix to Glatz's above-cited study.

These goals were acknowledged and supported by the leadership of the Historical Association. Its first president, the Transylvanian Count *Imre Mikó* (1805—1876), for example, declared history to be “the most effective nursemaid” of national consciousness, and regarded the cultivation of the discipline of history as “the first obligation” of every nation¹⁸). *Mikó* was seconded by *M. Horváth*, the Association’s first vice president, who pointed out that the propagation of the idea of national and social progress was among the first and most important goals of the newly founded organization. But to achieve these goals, historical knowledge and consciousness could not remain the secret possessions of a select few. They must filter down into society as a whole, and they must captivate “the great masses of the nation”¹⁹).

Goals, Programs, and Activities of the Historical Association

In light of these developments, it seems certain that the newly-founded Hungarian Historical Association was not intended by its founders to be a strictly scholarly organization eschewing social and cultural involvements. On the contrary, while urging its membership toward scholarly goals, the Association undertook the popularization of history and the advocacy of social and political progress, as defined by nineteenth-century liberalism. It pursued these goals within the context of the idea of a unitary Hungarian national state, a concept based more on historical rights than on the ethnic realities of the day. The Association adhered to this idea even after the collapse of historic Hungary, right up to 1945.

The Association naturally had several specific scholarly goals as well. These were best summed up by Vice President *Horváth* at the Association’s first regional meeting at Kolozsvár (Klausenburg, Cluj) in 1868. They included the critical evaluation of already collected historical sources, the continuation of source collection and publication, especially in areas untouched up to that time, and finally the utilization of these sources in future historical syntheses. In looking at these three goals, however, *Horváth* did not believe that all members of the Historical Association would be able to contribute in all three areas²⁰). While all members could collect materials, the evaluation and publication of sources, and the authorship of monographs should be left to professional historians. Moreover, the writing of syntheses should be assigned only to the most gifted historians, possessing the touch of a philosopher, as well as that of a literary artist²¹).

¹⁸) Gróf Mikó Imre beszéde a Történelmi Társulat 1867. júl. 2-diki választmányi ülésén [Count Imre Mikó’s Speech at the Board Meeting of the Hungarian Historical Association on July 2, 1867], in: *Századok*, I (1867), pp. 12—15. See also Kálmán Thaly’s introductory study to the *Századok*, A Magyar Történelmi Társulat keletkezése [The Birth of the Hungarian Historical Association], *ibid.*, p. 5.

¹⁹) Quoted by Thaly in *ibid.*, pp. 9—10.

²⁰) See Mihály Horváth’s speech in *Századok*, II (1868), especially pp. 524—525.

²¹) The view that syntheses should only be written by the most gifted historians who were also philosophers and literary artists was also held by the champions of the so-called *Geistesgeschichte* School of the interwar period. See Steven Bela Vardy, Hun-

After outlining the scholarly goals of the profession, *Horváth* also urged his colleagues to turn their attention toward new and more interesting non-traditional topics of history. He specifically pointed out the need to study the history of social conditions, family life, artisanship, economic activities, cultural developments, and intellectual trends, at the expense of the hitherto over-emphasized political, military, diplomatic, and dynastic affairs²²).

The Philosophical, Methodological, and Ideological Foundations of Hungarian Historiography of the Dualist Age

As outlined by *Horváth*, *Mikó* and others, the Hungarian Historical Association's program was undoubtedly ambitious, and despite some of its shortcomings, the Association contributed much to the subsequent achievements of Hungarian historical scholarship. In addition to various publication and popularizing ventures, the Association's members were also in the forefront of formulating the ideological and methodological orientation of Hungarian historiography. This also included the introduction and spectacular spread of "positivism" that dominated much of Hungarian historical scholarship during the dualist age.

Inspired by the writings of *August Comte* (1798—1857), positivism is a philosophy of history which holds that human history moves through three distinct stages of development: theological, metaphysical, and positivist or scientific. In the course of this process, society progressively sheds the emotional elements of its make-up, replaces them gradually with intellectual elements, and in this fashion makes itself evermore rational and scientific²³).

While all of the so-called "positivist historians" of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries have subscribed to this philosophy of history, very few of them tried to apply it. The reason was that, to the practicing historians of that period, positivism was not only a philosophy, but also a methodology of history, and they were much more comfortable with the latter. Their preference for methodology over philosophy manifested itself partially in their application of the German critical-philological method of source criticism to the innumerable historical sources that appeared in the large tomes of source publications of that period, and partially in their authorship of detailed monographs on specific topics. Simultaneously, however, they shied away from writing syntheses that

garian Historiography and the "Geistesgeschichte" School, Cleveland 1974; and *idem*, *Modern Hungarian Historiography*, chapters VIII—XI. See also Stephen Borsody's short summary, *Modern Hungarian Historiography*, in: *The Journal of Modern History*, XXIV (1952), pp. 398—405, especially pp. 401—402.

²²) Mihály Horváth's speech in *Századok*, II (1868), p. 527.

²³) For some relatively recent works on positivism, see W. M. Simon, *European Positivism in the Nineteenth Century*, Ithaca, N. Y., 1963, and Ágnes R. Várkonyi, *A pozitivisták történetelmélete [The Positivist Philosophy of History]*, Budapest 1970. See also the relevant sections of Harry Elmer Barnes, *A History of Historical Writing*, 2nd ed., New York 1962; and R. G. Collingwood, *The Idea of History*, New York 1956.

required the application of the positivist philosophy of history. Even when they wrote general compendiums, these were more akin to chronological accounts than to true syntheses, such as the works of the great *Geistesgeschichte* historians of the interwar period. The British historian *R. G. Collingwood* was basically correct when he declared that "the legacy of positivism to modern historiography . . . is a combination of unprecedented mastery over small-scale problems, with unprecedented weakness in dealing with large-scale problems"²⁴). This certainly showed in the reluctance or inability of positivist historians to apply those general laws of historical evolution which they accepted and professed.

Collingwood's observation about positivist historiography in Western Europe also holds true for Hungarian historians of the Positivist School which developed in Hungary almost simultaneously with the birth of Austro-Hungarian dualism and the foundation of the Hungarian Historical Association. The works of these Hungarian positivist historians contain very little in the way of positivist philosophy²⁵). Their source publications and monographs, however, reflect both their thorough grasp of the critical method, as well as all other positive and negative features of Western positivist historiography of that period.

From an ideological point of view, positivist historians were basically adherents of political and economic liberalism. They subscribed to the ideas of political and personal freedom, favored parliamentary democracy, and rejected violent revolutions as acceptable means of social and political progress. It is true that following the passing of the great liberal generation of *Ferenc Deák* (1803—1876) and *József Eötvös* during the first decade of dualism, Hungarian liberalism became gradually more formalistic. But this did not alter the adherence of Hungarian historians to the fundamental tenets of that ideology²⁶). This was true for most of them, whether they were followers of the pro-Habsburg (*labanc*) or anti-Habsburg (*kuruc*) orientation²⁷), members of the great autodidactic generation that emerged

²⁴) Collingwood, *The Idea of History*, pp. 131—132.

²⁵) The model of Hungarian positivist syntheses is Gyula Pauler's *A magyar nemzet története az árpád házi királyok alatt* [The History of the Hungarian Nation under the Arpadian Kings], 2 vols., Budapest 1892. Pauler has generally been regarded as the "father" of Hungarian positivism in historical scholarship. The largest synthetic work of the Hungarian Positivist School is *A magyar nemzet története* [The History of the Hungarian Nation], ed. Sándor Szilágyi, 10 vols., Budapest, 1895—1898. This ten-volume work, which is also known as the "Millennial History" because it was prepared for the occasion of Hungary's millennium in 1896, was authored by nine individual scholars, the most important being Henrik Marczali.

²⁶) In addition to the works listed in note 10, on *Deák* and *Eötvös* see also Béla Király, *Ferenc Deák*, New York, 1975 and István Sőtér, *Eötvös József*, 2nd ed., Budapest 1967. On the growth of political and ideological conservatism after the mid-1970's, see Pál Zsigmond Pach, *A dualizmus rendszerének megszilárdulása az 1870-es években* [The Consolidation of the Dualist System in the 1870's], Budapest 1958, and Péter Hanák, *Probleme der Krise des Dualismus am Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts*, in: *Studien zur Geschichte der Österreichisch-Ungarischen Monarchie*, eds. V. Sándor and P. Hanák, Budapest 1961, pp. 337—382.

²⁷) The best recent work on the *labanc-kuruc* conflict in Hungarian historiography is

during the 1850's and 1860's (*S. Szilágyi, F. Salamon, A. Ipolyi, K. Szabó, F. Pesty, N. Knauz* and others), or of the next generation of trained positivists (*Gy. Pauler, A. Károlyi, H. Marczali, L. Fejérpataky, K. Tagányi* and others)²⁸).

The Historical Association and the Popularization of History

In line with one of the original goals of its founders, and unlike the Academy's Historical Commission, the Historical Association forcefully moved into the popularization of history²⁹). This was demonstrated both by its frequent regional congresses, as well as by the orientation of its official periodical, *Századok* [Centuries]. The primary purpose of its regional meetings (which lasted from six to twelve days each) was to popularize history among the educated public. With this method, they hoped to foster Hungarian national consciousness, particularly in the ethnically mixed border regions. Simultaneously, however, the Association also wished to familiarize Hungarian historians with the content of the various regional and local archives, which were to be surveyed and assessed by local historians during these regional meetings³⁰).

While these regional congresses were held at regular intervals, they generally proved to be successful in unearthing a multitude of previously unknown sources. Moreover, they also created a general awareness and appreciation of history among the middle and upper classes. Due to unforeseen factors, however, this growing awareness did not necessarily advance the cause of Magyar national consciousness among the masses. At times, Magyar awareness simply increased the growing anti-Magyar sentiment of the increasingly nationally conscious minorities. In addition, due to the general decline of the interest in history during the latter part of the century, the regional meetings became less frequent during the 1880's, and by the 1890's they ceased altogether³¹). The Association's aim of advancing the cause

Ágnes R. Várkonyi's *Thaly Kálmán és történetírása* [K. Thaly and his Historiography], Budapest 1961.

²⁸) The most exhaustive and best work on Hungarian positivist historiography is Ágnes R. Várkonyi's *A pozitivisták történetészlete a magyar történetírásban* [The Positivist Philosophy of History in Hungarian Historiography], 2 vols., Budapest 1973. See also Steven Bela Vardy, *The Social and Ideological Makeup of Hungarian Historiography in the Age of Dualism, 1867—1918*, in: *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, N. F., vol. 26 (1976), pp. 208—217; and Vardy, *Modern Hungarian Historiography*, chapter V.

²⁹) See István Sinkovics, *A történettudomány és a népszerűsítés* [Historical Scholarship and Popularization], in: *Századok*, CI (1967), pp. 1180—1185.

³⁰) These goals are expressed in the Historical Association's bylaws, section I, paragraph 3, reprinted in *Századok*, CI (1967), pp. 264—267. They are also discussed by Mihály Horváth in his oft-quoted speech at Kolozsvár in 1868, *Századok*, II (1868), pp. 527—528.

³¹) The Historical Association's regional congresses were held at Kolozsvár (1868), in Hont County (1869), in Vas County (1870), in Zemplén and Ung Counties (1871), at Kassa and in Szepes County (1872), in Zólyom, Túróc and Bars Counties (1874), in Nyitra County (1875), in Gömör County (1876), in Pozsony County (1877), at Kassa and in Abaúj County (1878), at Marosvásárhely (1879), in Sáros County (1881), at

of Magyar national goals, therefore, proved to be a double-edged weapon. Furthermore, not even its popularizing efforts were completely successful.

The Association's Journal: *Századok*

The mixed achievements of the Hungarian Historical Association with its regional congresses were generally surpassed by the success of its publishing activities. The most important of its periodical publications was the still functioning *Századok*, which immediately became the leading journal in Hungarian historical studies.

Initiated in 1867 at the time of the foundation of the Historical Association, the *Századok* announced a twofold aim: to publicize the results of Hungarian historical research in relatively short articles, and to generate enthusiasm for the Hungarian past through the popularization of history. Because of these goals, the *Századok* hesitated to publish documentary materials, unless these were brief and were accompanied by an introductory essay. The reprinted documents also had to be in Magyar, which often necessitated their translation from the original language³²). This stipulation had both positive and negative implications, for the honest researcher still had to consult the original.

In addition to becoming the leading historical journal, the *Századok* also emerged as the most significant ideological forum for the members of the Hungarian historical profession. For this reason, the personality and the ideological orientation of its editor-in-chief (who until 1912 was also the executive secretary of the Historical Association) was of utmost importance in shaping the ideological orientation of the whole profession³³). This was also true to some degree for the methodological development of the historians, particularly during the dualist period when the *Századok* had no serious rivals in the field.

Indeed, the journal's only major rival was the Academy's less romantically inclined *Budapesti Szemle* [Budapest Review], edited by the noted literary critic *Pál Gyulai* (1826—1909)³⁴). More critical and cosmopolitan in outlook than the

Sopron and in Sopron County (1883), at Déva and in Hunyad County (1887), and in Máramaros County (1889). See Lukinich, *A Magyar Történelmi Társulat története*, pp. 30—42, pp. 50—59, p. 98; and Ember, *A Magyar Történelmi Társulat száz éve*, pp. 1148—1149.

³²) On the goals of the new journal see *Századok*, I (1867), pp. 81—82. See also Miklós Incze, *A száz esztendő Századok* [One Hundred Years of the *Századok*], in: *Századok*, CI (1967), pp. 174—176.

³³) On the ideological orientations of the editors of the dualist period see *ibid.* They included *Kálmán Thaly* (1867—1875), *Sándor Szilágyi* (1875—1899), *Gyula Nagy* (1899—1908), *Samu Borovszky* (1909—1912), *Albin F. Gombos* (1912—1913), and *Sándor Domanovszky* (1913—1943). The ideological influence of *Thaly*, *Szilágyi*, and later of *Domanovszky* were particularly important.

³⁴) On *Pál Gyulai* and the *Budapesti Szemle* see Frigyes Riedl, *Gyulai Pál*, Budapest 1911; Jenő Dóczy, *Gyulai Pál kritikai elvei* [The Critical Principles of P. Gyulai], in: *Nyugat*, XV (1922), pp. 568—575, pp. 742—751, pp. 816—829; Kálmán Kovács, *Fejezet a magyar kritika történetéből. Gyulai Pál irodalmi elveinek kialakulása 1850—1860*

various editors of the *Századok*, Gyulai's *Budapesti Szemle* could have served as a healthy rival to the Historical Association's journal. The fact that the *Budapesti Szemle* was not strictly an historical periodical prevented such rivalry. While more "European" in outlook, ideologically it was more conservative than the *Századok*. Moreover, because of its strictly "academic" tone and style it had much less appeal to the nationalistic enthusiasts of history than the more liberal and more anti-Habsburg journal of the Historical Association.

The Historical Repository and the Historical Biographies

Because of the nature and purpose of the *Századok*, the Historical Association also contemplated almost from its foundation the establishment of a periodical devoted exclusively to source publications of moderate length that did not require a separate volume. Although this goal was constantly nurtured, not until 1878 did the Association initiate the publication of the *Historical Repository* (*Történelmi Tár*), which it then published till 1911³⁵). The establishment of this periodical directly resulted in the discontinuation of the *Hungarian Historical Repository* by the Academy's Historical Commission. The demise of the latter periodical after twenty-three years of publication increased even further the need for an outlet in the area of short source publications, and made it even more imperative for the Historical Association to fill the void.

The birth of the *Historical Repository* in 1878 freed the *Századok* from the need to publish documentary materials. Moreover, while this still left the Academy with the *Monumenta* series as the major source publisher, and its *Budapesti Szemle* as a competitor of the *Századok*, the *Historical Repository*, coupled with the Historical Association's other efforts, made that institution into the leader of historical studies in Hungary.

The *Historical Repository* appeared as a quarterly up to its demise in 1911, when declining interest and lack of funds obliged the Association to terminate its publication. Later several similar periodicals were started. These included the second version of the *Hungarian Historical Repository* by the Academy's Historical Commission (1914—1934), and the still existing *Archival Proceedings* (*Levéltári Közlemények*), initiated by the Hungarian National Archives in 1923.

Among the Historical Association's monographic publications directed towards the popularization of history, the best known were the volumes of the *Hungarian Historical Biographies* (*Magyar Történelmi Életrajzok*) series. Initiated in 1885 by

[A Chapter from the History of Hungarian Criticism. The Development of Pál Gyulai's Literary Principles 1850—1860], Budapest 1963; Anonymous, A *Budapesti Szemle*, in: *Akadémiai Értesítő*, I (1890), pp. 55—58; and Károly Jónás, Gyulai Pál mint a *Budapesti Szemle* szerkesztője [P. Gyulai as the Editor of the *Budapesti Szemle*], in: *Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények*, XXXVI (1926), pp. 314—315.

³⁵) Anonymous, A 'Történelmi Tár', in: *Akadémiai Értesítő*, I (1890), pp. 584—593. See also Lukinich, A Magyar Tudományos Akadémia és a magyar történettudomány, pp. 133—134; and idem, A Magyar Történelmi Társulat története, pp. 107—108, p. 121.

Sándor Szilágyi (1827—1899), the acknowledged “dean” of Hungarian historians of the last quarter of the nineteenth century, this series appeared continuously for thirty-three years (1885—1917), and placed the popularly written, yet scholarly, biographies of fifty-six great Hungarian personalities into the hands of the historically oriented reading public³⁶). The greatest shortcomings of these volumes included their idolizing tone and lack of an up-to-date scholarly apparatus. Both of these failings, however, were characteristic features of contemporary Hungarian and East Central European historiography. As a whole, the series also lacked a systematic standard regarding inclusion into the ranks of the biographees. These shortcomings notwithstanding, the termination of this series in 1917 left another void in Hungarian historical studies. The situation remained uncorrected until the 1950's and 1960's, when several similar popularizing efforts were started both by the Academy, as well as by the Historical Association.

Some of the Historical Association's other efforts in the area of monographic publications and the popularization of history during the dualist period included several essay collections, a number of commemorative albums and yearbooks, several historical indexes, bibliographies, as well as descriptions of archival collections³⁷).

The Association's Source Publications

Although the Historical Association's growing dominance of much of the Hungarian historical profession through its various periodical and serial publications and popularizing ventures cannot be denied, not until the interwar years did the Association match and surpass the Academy's Historical Commission in the area of source publications. The Academy's *Monumenta Hungariae Historica* remained the unchallenged major source publication series throughout the dualist age, even though its volumes became less frequent in the latter part of that period. This does not mean that the Historical Association refrained from source publications. But inasmuch as it devoted much of its energy and material resources to serial and monographic publications and to the popularization of history, few resources remained for source publications. Nor was it deemed wise to initiate a series that would rival the Academy's *Monumenta*. Even so, the Historical Association sponsored numerous documentary collections which should perhaps have been included in the *Monumenta* series; and this also holds true for several other scholarly organizations. All this seems to prove that none of the scholarly organizations of the dualist period had a monopoly in the direction of Hungarian historical research.

³⁶) Éva H. Balázs, A Történelmi Társulat könyvkiadásának 100 éve [One Hundred Years of Book Publishing by the Historical Association], in: *Századok*, CI (1967), pp. 1169—1173: For a complete list of the Hungarian Historical Biographies see Lukinich, A Magyar Történelmi Társulat története, pp. 121—124.

³⁷) *Ibid.*, and Ember, A Magyar Történelmi Társulat száz éve, pp. 1149—1150.

The most extensive of the Historical Association's source publications were devoted to the history and domestic affairs of aristocratic families. In addition to the innate value of these documents to Hungarian historical studies, the reason for this emphasis was that these families were willing to subsidize such publications, which the Historical Association could not afford to decline³⁸). The most notable among these source publications were the twenty-odd volumes dealing with the *Teleki* and *Zichy* families³⁹). Other significant collections included the *Székely Archives* (1872—1895), the *Native Archives* (1879), the *Relics of Our Domestic Life* (1888—1893)⁴⁰), as well as numerous other single or multivolumed publications.

Conclusions

The foundation of the Hungarian Historical Association in 1867 added a significant new intellectual dimension to the development of historical studies in nineteenth-century Hungary. The significance of the Association was further augmented by the fact that its foundation coincided exactly with the dualistic reorganization of the Habsburg Empire into Austria-Hungary. But just as the imperial reorganization failed to have an immediate impact on Hungarian society, it likewise took a number of years before the newly organized Hungarian Historical Association could make its influence felt throughout the historical profession.

In both instances this change came about in the mid-1870's. In the case of Hungary's political life, the impact appeared in the demise of true nineteenth-century liberalism, as represented by *Deák* and *Eötvös*, and the simultaneous rise of the pseudo-liberal "Liberal Party" under *Kálmán Tisza's* (1830—1902) leadership in 1875. In the case of the Historical Association and the historical profession as a whole, this transformation came through the death or retirement of the last remaining members of the pioneer *Toldy-Horváth-Szalay* generation,

³⁸) For an annotated list of the Historical Association's source publications see Lukinich, *Les éditions des sources de l'histoire Hongroise*, pp. 86—107. See also Kosáry, *Bevezetés Magyarország történetének forrásaiba*, I, pp. 232—235; and Vardy, *Modern Hungarian Historiography*, pp. 483—493.

³⁹) *A római szent birodalmi gróf széki Teleki család oklevéltára* — *Codex diplomaticus sacri Romani imperii comitum Teleki de Szék*, ed. Sámuel Barabás, 2 vols. Budapest 1895; *Teleki Mihály levelezése* [The Correspondence of Mihály Teleki], ed. Sámuel Gergely, 8 vols., Budapest, 1905—1926; *A zichi és vásonkeői gróf Zichy-család idősb ágának okmánytára* — *Codex diplomaticus domus senioris comitum Zichy de Zich et Vásonkeo*, eds. Imre Nagy, Iván Nagy, Dezső Véghely, Ernő Kammerer, Samu Barabás, Antal Áldásy and Ferencz Dőry, 11 vols. (Pest-Budapest 1871—1915).

⁴⁰) The cited works include: *Székely oklevéltár* [Székely Archives], ed. Károly Szabó (vols. I—II) and Lajos Szádeczky (vols. III—IV), 4 vols., Kolozsvár 1872—1895; *Házi történelmünk emlékei* [Relics of Our Domestic Life], ed. Béla Radvánszky, 2 vols., Budapest 1888—1893; and *Hazai oklevéltár, 1234—1536* [Native Archives, 1234—1536], eds. Imre Nagy, Farkas Deák and Gyula Nagy, Budapest 1879). The last work is not to be confused with another collection, *Hazai okmánytár* — *Codex diplomaticus patrius*, eds. Imre Nagy, Iván Pauer, Károly Ráth, Dezső Véghely and Arnold Stummer [Ipolyi], 8 vols., Pest-Budapest, 1865—1891.

roughly at the same time. To this must be added the temporary withdrawal of the young, romantic, and over-patriotic *Kálmán Thaly* (1839—1909) from the active leadership of the Historical Association, including both the editorship of the *Századok*, as well as the executive secretaryship of the Association in 1875⁴¹). Fortunately, *Thaly's* withdrawal was followed by the rise of the more realistic members of his generation to the leadership of the Association and the *Századok*, including *Sándor Szilágyi*, the “Great Compromiser” of that positivist age⁴²). Under *Szilágyi's* wise leadership the Historical Association rose to an almost unrivalled position in the profession, and in the course of the next quarter century contributed much to the achievements of the Positivist School in Hungarian historiography.

⁴¹) On *Thaly's* role in the shaping of Hungarian historical studies during the dualist period and on his influence in the Hungarian Historical Association, see Vákonyi, *Thaly Kálmán és történetírása*.

⁴²) On *Szilágyi* and on his editorship of the *Századok*, see Dezső Csánki, *Szilágyi Sándor emlékezete* [Remembering S. Szilágyi], in: *Századok*, LXI—LXII (1927—1928), pp. 337—343; and Miklós Mann, *Adatok a Századok történetéhez Szilágyi Sándor szerkesztői korszakából, 1875—1899* [Data on the History of the *Századok* in the Period of S. Szilágyi's Editorship, 1875—1899], in: *Századok*, CII (1968), pp. 205—239.