

DOCUMENTATION

A: Notes

Chapter I. Myth: The Foundation of Historical Consciousness (pages 3-14).

1. Scythia: territory inhabited by nomadic peoples in ca. the 8th to the 1st centuries B.C. The Scythians probably were a mixture of Mongolian and Indo-European tribes. Occasionally they controlled huge areas of the Southern Russian steppe. Since they were nomads, the physical boundaries of their sphere of influence constantly changed.

2. Gog and Magog: mysterious rulers mentioned in the Old Testament. All attempts for a closer identification (assumptions that the country called Magog was ruled by Gog, that Gog was another name for the Asian king Gyges and his people were the Scythians, that they were "giants", etc.) remained conjectures. Reference to Alexander the Great: according to the fantastic *geste* of Alexander (ca. 320 A.D.), the Macedonian king built a protective wall somewhere in or around the Caucasus to defend his empire against raids by the barbarians.

3. The assumption that Magog, son of Japheth (Genesis, 10) lent his name to the Magyars is an example of so-called naive etymology which bases semantic observations on morphological similarities of unrelated words.

4. Menroth is identical with the mighty Biblical hunter-king Nimrod, Noah's great-grandson from Ham's lineage (Genesis, 10). Evilath: the Biblical Havilah, land of gold (Genesis, 2). According to the Hungarian chroniclers, it was the ancient homeland of the Hungarians. In fact, both Menroth and the Evilath of the Hungarian chronicles had nothing to do with the Biblical person and site.

5. Maeotis: Greek name for the Sea of Azov.

6. Belar: ruler of the Bulgarians (a Turkish people) at the Sea of Azov. Dula(n): according to the Hungarian chronicles, king of the Alans (an Iranian people) — in fact, another king of the Azov Bulgarians.

7. Attila, king of the Huns (433-453): while demonized as one of the most abominable historical figures in Western consciousness, in the past centuries many

Hungarians proudly (but erroneously) regarded him as an ancestral ruler of the Hungarians. The first written document that briefly mentioned this myth was the *gesta* of Anonymous. Later chroniclers elaborated on the myth. Buda was Attila's older brother with whom he shared power for a while, then killed him.

8. Reference to the abandoned Roman settlement along the Danube, between Buda and Aquincum to the north.

9. Emesh: "the female one," also referring to female animals. Like the name of Enech, Nimrod's wife, Emesh is also a totemic name.

10. Turul: a bird of prey of much debated ornithological identity, totemic symbol of the nomadic Hungarians.

11. More exactly, *almus* means "the blessed one" in Latin. A typical example of medieval historiography that tried to find analogies between Pagan and Christian times, or their symbolism. This practice was widespread in Europe.

12. Pannonia: Roman province; in the early 2nd century A.D. emperor Traian extended its eastern border to the Danube, which flows across Hungary in a north-south direction. The Romans abandoned the Hungarian part of the province in the mid-4th century.

13. Árpád: head of the Hungarian tribal confederation that entered the Carpathian Basin in 895-96 A.D., establishing there what became the Kingdom of Hungary.

14. The Rhetor Priscus: 5th-century Greek historian. Among others, he wrote a report about his mission to Attila's court as emissary of the Byzantine emperor Theodesius II. This report is regarded as one of the few authentic human profiles of the mysterious Hun king.

15. Galeotti: Galeotto Marzio, Italian humanist (1427?- 1497). Between 1461-1479 he sojourned several times, for several years, in the court of the Hungarian king Matthias (Mátyás, 1458-90). In 1484-87, back in Italy, he wrote a Latin work lavishly praising the personality and court of the great Hungarian Renaissance king.

16. Son of János Hunyadi, a Transylvanian warlord, Mátyás was the only Hungarian king elected by "the people," i.e., the lower nobility. Consequently, he was probably the most popular figure of his country's royal oligarchy.

17. Andrew III (1290-1301) was the last king of the Árpád dynasty. The source of Arany's reference to an award for poets is unknown.

18. On August 29, 1526, the Osmanic Turkish imperial army smashed the Hungarian royal army at the southern town of Mohács. The defeat started the disintegration of the country. In 1541, when the Turks took Buda by cunning, Hungary fell into three parts: the western Hungarian Christian kingdom ruled by the Habsburgs, the vast central area under Turkish yoke, and the Transylvanian principality in the east and southeast. The tripartite division lasted until 1695.

19. The 150-year-long Turkish occupation affected all aspects of life (demography, culture, psychology, ecology), and had such devastating long-term

consequences that, in the view of social and cultural historians, the country has not overcome them yet.

20. Sebestyén Tinódi Lantos ("the Luter," 1510?-1556): Hungary's most famous bard, narrator of many heroic songs about battles against the Turks. Texts and authentic melodies of his songs have been preserved.

21. Miklós Toldi was a semi-legendary 14th-century knight, famous for his great physical strength. A series of amazing adventures were attributed to him. Physical strength was a characteristic of both mythical (Hercules) and folkloric (Paul Bunyan) heroes.

22. A concise summary of the democratic-reformist, but historically untenable, idea of mid-19th century Hungarian intellectuals that the concepts of nation and people (folk) coincided in the early (nomadic) Middle Ages.

Chapter II. Roots, or the Never-Ending Polemics on the Origins (pages 15-28).

1. Kőrösi Csoma's hesitation between Transylvania and Hungary (earlier he calls the college of Nagyenyed the best one in his country, and later mentions that he set off to find the cradle of his nation, i.e. Hungary) derives from the fact that after the expulsion of the Turks at the end of the 17th century, the large historical territory Transylvania, once organic part of the kingdom, was not reunited with Hungary but was pronounced an Austrian province, administered directly from the imperial court in Vienna (1690-1867). Hungary, on the other hand, was a sovereign kingdom whose monarch happened to be the (Habsburg) Holy Roman Emperor.

2. Hungarian Scientific Society: an early alternative name for the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (founded in 1825, actual activity started in 1830).

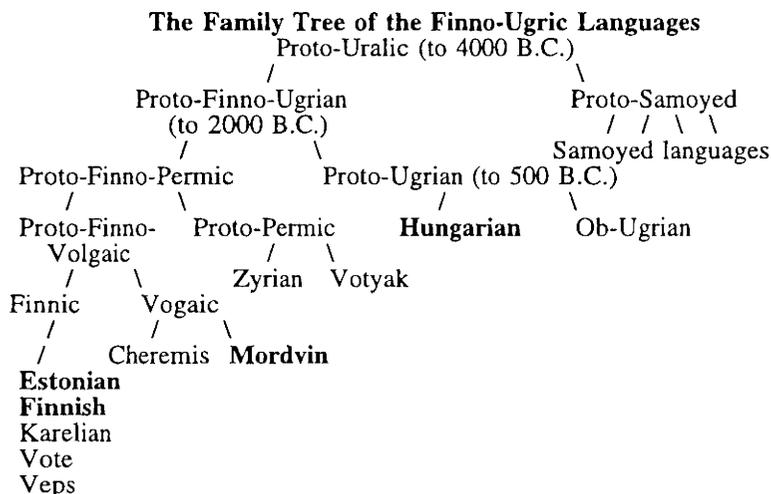
3. János Hunyadi (1387?-1456), Transylvanian oligarch and warlord, father to king Matthias (Mátyás), successful military opponent of the increasingly threatening Turkish attacks. See note 16, chapt. 1.

4. Sándor Petőfi (1823-49), born to a Hungarian-Serbian butcher called Petrovics and a Hungarian-Slovak servant girl, became questionably the greatest, unquestionably the most popular, Hungarian poet ever. His spontaneous language and vivid images make the identification with his poetic world easy.

5. Reference to Hungary's conversion to Christianity and the end of nomadic life.

6. The Hungarian equivalents of the Finnish words are cited in brackets. In both languages, diacritical marks (that is, various unfamiliar "accents") are used to qualify the pronunciation and length of the vowels. The following chart represents the family tree of the Finno-Ugric languages. In the Hungarian lineage,

the end date of coexistence is indicated. (The language groups with more than a million speakers are listed in bold characters).



7. *Kalevala* is the national epic of Finland, a poetic compilation of folkloric myths based on old Karelian songs. The compilation was the work of Elias Lönnrot, a country doctor, who published the first version of *Kalevala* in 1835.

8. The demographic statistics provided below, are courtesy of Dr. Harri Mürk of the University of Toronto. Like certain other ethnic groups in our century, some Finno-Ugric peoples have objected against their traditional (in their opinion, patronizing) name. The name they prefer is indicated in parentheses.

Hungarians.....	14 500 000
Finns	5 000 000
Estonians	1 120 000
Mordvinians	1 191 800
Votyaks (Udmurts)	713 700
Cheremises (Maris)	622 000
Zyrians (Komis)	477 500
Karelians	138 000
Laps (Saamis)	48 000
Ostyaks (Khantis)	20 900
Voguls (Mansis)	7 600
Vepses	8 000
Votes	10

9. Ármin Vámbéry (1832-1913): orientalist, writer, and university professor. He travelled extensively in Central Asia, and became preoccupied with the cultural ties between Hungarians and the Turkish peoples.

10. Reference to the final secession of the Hungarians from their nearest linguistic relatives.

11. One of several attempts to justify the right of Hungarians to the Carpathian Basin. Earlier, the assumed Hunnish-Hungarian relationship provided such justification. László theorized that the so-called "Late Avars," a Caucasian people who dominated the Basin from the 670s till the early 9th century A.D., were related to the Hungarians. According to this interpretation, the Hungarians moved into the Carpathian Basin in two phases.

12. The first Eastern (Arabic) and Western mentions of the Hungarians originate from the early 860s A.D. Al-Dzhahani, a high-ranking emissary of the Bokharan emir, wrote about the "ferocious" Hungarians with fear and respect. In Western Europe, we find the first reference in a Belgian chronicle from 862 A.D. By the end of that century, when the raids of the Hungarians reached the West, chroniclers began to demonize them, attributing bizarre inhuman traits to them.

13. The Hungarian chroniclers mention seven tribes, while the Turkish word *onogur* (from which the name Hungarian was derived) means "ten arrows," probably referring to a confederation of ten tribes.

Chapter III. Historical Tradition (pages 29-44).

1. Three peoples that were the enemies of the Hungarians in nomadic times, yet found refuge from their enemies in Christian Hungary and assimilated to the Hungarians. All three groups were multiethnic: the Cumanians and Pechenegs spoke Turkish languages, while the Jazygians were Iranian. The Cumanians came from the Black Sea area, first attacking the Hungarians in the 11th century; their big influx was in the 13th century. The Jazygians started their migration to Hungary at an unknown date. Once enemies, other times allies of the Hungarians, the Pechenegs started arriving in the mid-10th century, but the biggest wave came in the early 12th century. By the mid-14th century, all three groups were fully assimilated; only a number of geographic names keep their memory alive.

2. The expulsion of the Turkish empire from the Balkans was a simmering issue of the 19th century. In 1862, when Kossuth made his views on the Danubian Confederation public, the whole Balkan Peninsula was still under Turkish rule or control, with the exception of Greece and Croatia. Bulgaria, Romania and Serbia gained their independence in 1878, after long military and diplomatic pressure on Turkey by Russia and the Western powers.

3. In Romanian and the Slavic languages both titles are approximate equivalents of the ruling prince.

4. The north-eastern fringe of historical Hungary, held in special esteem since the Verecke Pass, through which chief Árpád led the Hungarians into the Carpathian Basin, is situated in this area. The Trianon treaty assigned the area to Czechoslovakia. In 1939, when this country ceased to exist, Hungary reclaimed Subcarpathia. After World War II the region was occupied by the Soviet Union; today it belongs to Ukraine, where it is known as Transcarpathia.

5. Ruthenians are a Slavic group inhabiting Subcarpathia. They have a sense of ethnic identity, although Ukrainians claim they are just a subgroup.

6. Two international conferences held in Vienna returned to Hungary parts of the Upland (Felvidék) in 1938 and Transylvania (Erdély) in 1940.

7. Sultan Suleiman's (1520-66) five expeditions to Hungary took place in 1521, 1526, 1543, 1552, and 1566.

8. During the 150-year-long Turkish threat and partial occupation of Hungary, the town Nagyvárad (now Oradea, Romania), on the edge of the Great Plain, flourished, until it was occupied by the Turks in 1660. In Zrínyi's eyes, "Várad" had great strategic importance for Hungary.

9. Actually, Brazil was under Spanish rule only between 1580-1640, 23 years before Zrínyi wrote his pamphlet. Otherwise, Brazil was a Portuguese colony. News from other continents travelled slowly in those times.

Chapter IV. Ethnology and Folklore (pages 45-50)

1. Gábor Bethlen (1613-29), ruling prince of Transylvania, and for a short time (1620-21), uncrowned king of Hungary. While harbouring ambitious plans for Hungary's liberation from both Austrians and Turks, Bethlen's greatest success is believed to have been the consolidation of his principality which prospered during his rule in all respects.

2. Wallachs: originally dwellers of the Balkan mountains who gradually migrated north to the Lower Danube Valley. Beginning with the thirteenth century A.D., some of them moved on to Transylvania.

Chapter V. National Economy and Social Life (pages 51-66)

1. Reference to numerous peasant rebellions that took place in the course of Hungarian history.

Chapter VI. Education and Science (pages 67-92)

1. Philology: "love of the word" — once regarded as the basis of comparative cultural studies, it is hardly used in English any more. This discipline presupposes the perfect knowledge of the language(s) in which the scrutinized documents are written, and derives far-reaching historical, anthropological, social, even scientific, conclusions from the linguistic facts. A philologist was a person of wide and thorough knowledge.

2. Széchenyi is referring to one of his ambitious projects: the construction of the Chain Bridge (Lánchíd), the first permanent bridge connecting Pest and Buda. He commissioned two English masters, both called Clark (but unrelated): William, the planner, and Adam, the builder. Construction started in 1840, and the opening was in 1849.

3. Reference to Farkas Bolyai's most important contribution to mathematics: the two-volume *Tentamen* that he published in Latin in 1832. The lengthy Latin title is usually not quoted in its entirety. It means, more or less: "An attempt to introduce the studious youth to the basics of mathematics." The modesty of the title does not reflect the pioneering character of this internationally acclaimed work.

4. Long and difficult decades preceded the opening of the National Theatre (at that time called the Hungarian Theatre of Pest) in 1837, in the course of which Pest county's mid-rank nobility assumed initiative and pushed forward with the plan.

5. Eötvös is addressing Ágoston Trefort, Minister of Religious Cults and Education, in this "open letter". See the biographical notes.

6. At that time in Budapest and Kolozsvár (now Cluj, Romania).

7. A traditional Hungarian wind-instrument, most popular in the early 18th century, during prince Ferenc Rákóczi's campaign against Austrian supremacy.

8. In 1896 Hungary celebrated the one thousandth anniversary of its statehood with splendid commemorative events.

Chapter VII. Hungarian National Character (pages 93-111).

1. Elite soldiers of the Ottoman Turkish army, composed of kidnapped Christian boys who were raised to become fanatical fighters for the Sultan.

2. Osman (1288-1326), first ruler of the Turks, founder of the Ottoman Empire that later challenged Hungary and Europe. The data provided here about his thirteen descendants is incorrect; that his nation developed from the dwellers of two thousand tents may be more of a figurative expression than historical fact.

3. After hundreds of years of using Latin, Hungarian public administration adopted the national language in 1844.

4. The Unitarian bishop János Kriza's *Vadrózsák* (1863) was a celebrated collection of Transylvanian folk ballads. "Clement the Mason" revolves around a topic well known not only from Eastern European but also world lore: human sacrifice for the public good.

5. Székelys (Saecler): Transylvanian Hungarian group of much debated origin. Assumedly, they constituted a Turkish-speaking tribe of the nomadic Hungarians who seceded in the 6th century, and arrived to Hungary some time after, that is, potentially centuries before the conquering Hungarians.

6. Slovaks: a Slavic speaking group in Northern Hungary.

7. Gyula Szekfű was a historian in the first half of the 20th century. The source of his quote by Babits is unknown, but the same idea rings familiar from several of Szekfű's other works.

8. Reference to the Trianon peace treaty.

9. Endre Ady (1877-1919) was a rebellious Symbolist poet of many controversial ideas.

10. Distinguishing between "high" and "low" culture was a once fashionable division of cultural production along the horizontal line of social stratification. The debated issue was whether folk art and customs were "sunken" manifestations of upper-class culture, or whether the latter was refined folk culture.

11. The term "national classicism" was an attempt to reconcile the concept of Romanticism with the earlier, great poetic tradition. Actually, the poets who were thought to fall into this category, and the critics who coined the term, were closer to national romanticism.

12. The typical late 19th-century historical outlook in most countries of Europe was historicism. Rooted in Romanticism, it advocated the idea that history was a continuum. In poetry and ethics it also meant, figuratively, that the past and its heroes were still actively shaping contemporary consciousness.

13. After humiliating defeats on various European battlefields, Austria was compelled to yield to the long-time Hungarian demand for independence. In 1867, Austria made Hungary an equal partner in governing the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy (known in English terminology as the "Austro-Hungarian Empire"). The emperor was Hungary's king. Hungary gained full autonomy in all respects except external affairs, defense, and finances. About half of the country celebrated the Compromise as realization of a centuries old dream, while the other half regarded it as a betrayal. The debate still goes on. At any rate, the new arrangement led Hungary into decades of very intensive economic and cultural progress.

14. Zsigmond Móricz (1879-1942) is regarded as a writer (of mostly prose works) who developed an unprecedented sympathetic, yet non-idealized, literary image of the Hungarian country people.

15. Although 18-19th century Hungarian authors often referred to this assumption (familiar from Romanticism) in their works, no one expressed it in writing in exactly these terms. It is a composite wisdom.

16. In 1936 Lajos Prohászka, a Hungarian philosopher, published an influential book, *A vándor és a bujdosó* (The wanderer and the refugee), in which he used sweeping allegories to compare the national character of Germans and Hungarians. One of his controversial concepts was Hungarian finitism: the assumed preference of Hungarians to close down their world, delimiting themselves, and resisting change and expansion.

17. The original sequence of this and the following two excerpts was rearranged.

18. Until 1949 Hungary did not have a single document that would have clarified the rights and responsibilities of government and citizens. Instead, gradually enacted laws regulated political life. Similarly, in Great Britain codified legal agreements and laws fill the role of a constitution.

19. The motto of Miklós Zrínyi's prose pamphlet *Remedy Against Turkish Opium*.

Chapter VIII. Confrontations (pages 113-124)

1. "Hungarian truth" (*magyar igazság*), later on "God of the Hungarians" (*magyarok istene*): two expressions of much less semantic significance than that which Babits attributed to them.

2. Obsolete name for the Indo-European language family.

3. Meaning of the four French words: hussar, kepi (also from French, but also shako), frog (not the animal!), coachman. (Hungarian originals: *huszár, csákó, sujtás, kocsis*).

4. Adjectival form *kocsi* (of/from Kocs).

5. Ferenc Kazinczy (1759-1831): poet, literary and language reformer. Thanks to his activity, in the early 19th century Hungarian language was modernized and standardized. More important than his fine literary oeuvre are his polemical essays and his letters, the latter published posthumously in 23 volumes.

6. Gergely Czuczor (1800-1866): poet and linguist, editor of the first major dictionary of the Hungarian Academy. Along with Petőfi and Arany, he did much to break down the dividing walls between poetic and colloquial language and imagery.

7. Actually, in 1791.

8. Kosztolányi was wrong: linguists regard Dutch and Flemish as practically identical languages.