

B: Biographical and Bibliographical Notes

ANONYMOUS. All that we know about the author of the first Latin chronicle based on old Hungarian historical tales is that he was "King Béla's anonymous notary" who signed his name as Master P. While there were four kings of the Árpád dynasty known by the name Béla (in the two centuries between 1061-1270), research ascertained that the author had to be the court notary of Béla III (1173-96), and his chronicle must have been compiled around 1203.

Gesta Hungarorum (The chronicle of the Hungarians) was first published in Hungarian in 1746. English translation: 6% of total text.

János APÁCZAI CSERE (1625-59). Transylvanian Protestant theologian and educator. He studied in Holland for five years and gained his doctoral degree there. Back in his homeland, the Transylvanian Principality, he was ostracized for his modern pedagogical ideas. He was compiler of the first encyclopedia in the Hungarian language, and author of a book on logic. He delivered his inaugural speech on the occasion of his appointment to the presidency of the college of Gyulafehérvár (now Alba Julia, Romania) — a position he did not manage to hold for long.

"Az iskolák fölöttébb szükséges voltáról" (About the great necessity of schools), 1656. English translation: 2.25% of total text.

János ARANY (1817-82). Poet, critic, editor, secretary-general of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Part of his poetic activity was aimed at recreating the Hungarian heroic epic. Why he thought this endeavour was so important is explained in "Naiv eposzunk" (Our naive folk epic), first published in the periodical *Szépirodalmi Figyelő*, 1, 2, 3, 1860. English translation: 30% of total text.

Mihály BABITS (1883-1941). One of the most respected literary and public figures of the early 20th century. His activity covered all fields of literature, from poetry to translation. He was also a thinker, often tackling unpopular problems. Selections in chapters VII. and VIII., in sequence, are from the following works:

"Pajzzsal és dárdával" (With shield and spear), first published in the periodical *Nyugat*, 1939: 65-72, 173-79. English translation: 9% of total text.

"A magyar jellemről" (On the characteristics of the Hungarians), first published in the collective volume *Mi a magyar?* (Budapest, 1939). English translation: 30% of total.

"Az írástudók árulása" (The treason of the intellectuals), first published in the periodical *Nyugat*, 1928: 355-76. English translation: 7.5% of total text.

Béla BARTÓK (1881-1945). Composer, musicologist, one of the internationally best known Hungarians. He researched the musical tradition of a number of countries, most importantly his own, and achieved probably the most impressive synthesis of folk and avantgarde music in his compositions. Selections in chapters IV. and VII., in sequence, are from the following works:

"A parasztzene hatása az újabb műzenére" (The influence of peasant music on modern music), first published in the periodical *Új Idők*, 23, 1931. English translation: 22% of total text.

"Népdalkutatás és nacionalizmus" (Researching folk songs in our age of nationalism), first published in the periodical *Tükör*, 3, 1937. English translation: 35% of total text.

Gergely BERZEVICZY (1763-1822). Hungary's first economist. After his studies and travels in Germany, France and England, he participated in Hungarian public life for eight years, then retired to his estate to be a freelance scholar. As such, he received much recognition. Beside economic progress, he also wanted to implement social reforms.

The excerpts are from two of his works written in Latin, translated for this volume from Hungarian: *De commercio et industria Hungariae* (About Hungary's commerce and industry, 1797), only a few pages of the total translated; and, *De conditione et indole rusticorum Hungariae* (About the state and nature of the peasants in Hungary, 1806). English translation: 7% of total text.

Dániel BERZSENYI (1776-1836). Transdanubian landlord, writer of poems in classical metric and conventions. His balanced reformist essay on the rural conditions of his country is an exceptional digression from the rest of his oeuvre, partly because it was based on personal experience. "A magyarországi mezeti szorgalom némely akadályairul" (About some obstacles of Hungarian agriculture), 1833. English translation: 15% of total text.

Farkas BOLYAI (1775-1856). Mathematician, inventor, poet. Studied in Germany (where he met the great mathematician Gauss), was appointed to the college of Marosvásárhely (now Tirgu Mures, Romania) in 1804 as professor of mathematics, physics, and chemistry.

Since Bolyai corresponded with Gauss in German, the two letters were translated from this language as they were published in Franz Schmidt and Paul Stückel, eds., *Briefwechsel zwischen Carl Friedrich Gauss und Wolfgang Bolyai* (Leipzig, 1899). The letter of 1836 is from pp. 122-24. English translation: 25% of total text. The letter of 1848 is from pp. 128-31. English translation: 7% of total text.

Loránd EÖTVÖS, Baron (1848-1919). Physicist, university professor, president of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences for sixteen years. He pursued higher studies in Germany. Better known as a scientist, he had penetrating observations as a teacher and academician as well. Selections in chapter VI, in sequence, from three essays:

"Néhány szó az egyetemi tanítás kérdéséhez: nyílt levél Trefort Ágoston vallás- és közoktatásügyi miniszterhez" (Some observations on university teaching: an open letter to Ágoston Trefort, Minister of Religious Cults and Education), first published in the periodical *Budapesti Szemle*, 1887: 307-21.

"Az egyetem feladatáról: rektori székfoglaló beszéd a Budapesti Tudományegyetemen" (About the task of the university: inaugural presidential address at the University of Budapest), first published in *Természettudományi Közlöny*, 1891: 505-14.

The above two writings were conflated here; English translation: 27% of total text.

"Elnöki beszéd a Magyar Tudományos Akadémia közülésén, 1895" (Presidential address at the general meeting of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 1895), first published in *Akadémiai Értesítő*, 1895: 321-25. English translation: 90% of total text.

Ottó HERMAN (1835-1914). Natural scientist, ethnologist, politician, member of parliament 1875-86. He was famous for his vivid style and his success at presenting the natural and anthropological sciences to the wider public. Also, he had merits in developing Hungarian scholarly terminology. Selections in chapters II. and IV., in sequence, are from the following works:

"Bezáró szó," *A magyar nép arca és jelleme* (Postscript to: The physiognomy and character of the Hungarian people), Budapest, 1902. English translation: 1.5% of total text.

"A magyar konyha és a tudomány," *A magyar halászat könyve* (On the relation between Hungarian cuisine and science, in The book of Hungarian fishing), Budapest. 2 vols. English translation: only three pages from the book.

Gyula ILLYÉS (1902-1983). Writer, poet, public figure. Between the world wars, he was one of the leaders of the leftist populist reform movement. He endorsed the communist takeover after World War II but became disenchanted and, not surprisingly, welcomed the national revolution of 1956. During the relatively liberal decades that preceded the collapse of communism, Illyés was revered as a national icon, but also put under surveillance when he raised his voice on behalf of the Hungarian minority of the detached historical territories.

Selections in chapters II. and III. are from the same pamphlet: *Ki a magyar?* (Who is a Hungarian?), Budapest, 1939. English translation: 16% of total text.

Lajos KOSSUTH (1802-1894). Statesman, newspaper editor, as proxy of various aristocrats delegated to several parliamentary sessions in the 1830s. For his unwavering opposition to Habsburg supremacy he was regarded as a radical and imprisoned for three years (1837-40). He became instrumental in the 1848-49 Hungarian revolution and fight against the Habsburgs, then was elected governor of Hungary for four months in 1849. After the defeat of the revolutionary war in August 1849, Kossuth spent all the rest of his life in exile, bursting with plans that had less and less to do with Hungarian realities.

Selections in chapters III. and VII., in sequence, are from Kossuth's collected works (*Iratai*, ed. Ferenc Kossuth. Budapest: 1898).

"Dunai szövetség" (Danubian Confederation, 1862), VI, 9-12. Full text translated.

Dezső KOSZTOLÁNYI (1885-1936). Poet, writer, translator and journalist. Without yielding to extreme formalist tendencies, he introduced a new poetic style and perspective in Hungarian literature. He had an inclination to criticism, as the translated polemics (triggered by a sense of fairness) proves.

"A magyar nyelv helye a földgolyón: nyílt levél Antoine Meillet úrhoz" (The global place of the Hungarian language: an open letter to Mr. Antoine Meillet). First published in the periodical *Nyugat*, July 16, 1930. English translation: 44% of total text.

Ferenc KÖLCSEY (1790-1838). Poet, critic, member of parliament 1832-34; an outstanding public figure of the so-called reform age (1825-1847). His well-known moral integrity also brought recognition to the liberal reform movement that he represented.

"Magyar játékszín" (Theatre in Hungary), 1827. Published posthumously. English translation: 17.5% of total text.

Sándor KŐRÖSI CSOMA (1784-1842). Transylvanian scholar, traveller, linguist. After his studies at the college of Nagyenyed (now Aiud, Romania) and in Germany, he set off to trace the route of the migrating Hungarians from the Orient to their homeland. His hypothesis about the ancient cradle of his nation did not coincide with the Finno-Ugric theory. During the decades of his Asian sojourns, he became an internationally noted orientalist who, among others, compiled the first dictionary of the Tibetan language.

Selections are from the same collective volume: *Kőrösi Csoma Sándor levelesládája* (The correspondence of S.K.Cs.), Budapest, 1984. Letter to his sponsors; dated Teheran, December 21, 1820. English translation: 50% of total text. Letter to Gábor Döbrentey; dated Calcutta, July 18, 1835. English translation: 25% of total text.

Gyula LÁSZLÓ (1910-1998). Archeologist and historian, prominent figure of the new historical school that has challenged the official, linguistically oriented views on Hungarian prehistory.

Excerpts are arranged as a mosaic from two of his works: *A honfoglalókról* (About the conquerors), Budapest, 1974; and *Őstörténetünk* (Our prehistory), Budapest, 1981. English translation: 4% of the total of two books.

László NÉMETH (1901-1975). By profession a physician, one of the most influential and controversial thinkers, writers and critics of 20th-century Hungarian intellectual life.

"A magyar rádió feladatai" (The tasks of the Hungarian Radio). First published in the periodical *Tanú*, 9, 1934: 197-222. English translation: 8% of total text.

SIMON OF KÉZA. Court chaplain of king László (Ladislav) IV (1272-90). He wrote his Latin chronicle around 1283, in which he provided a colourful (although fictitious) account of the Hun-Hungarian relations. First translated into Hungarian in 1862. English translation: 3% of total text.

(Saint) STEPHEN I, born in 975, first king and converter of Hungary 1000-1038. He was born to the last pagan chieftain Géza (who also converted later) and was named Vajk, until he became Christian and adopted the name István (Stephen). During his rule he forged a feudal kingdom from the previous tribal system. He was canonized in 1083. His son and appointed successor, Prince Imre, died young — seven years before his father.

"Admonitions": the complete Latin title is *Libellus de institutione morum ad Emericum ducem* (A book of admonitions to Prince Imre). Hungarian translation 1738. English translation from Hungarian: 20% of total text.

[The genre is European, where similar medieval "King's Mirrors" summarized the characteristics of the good monarch. The actual author who wrote down Stephen's rules around 1015, was probably a German monk.]

István SZÉCHENYI (1791-1860), Count. Patriotic reformist aristocrat who used his great wealth to initiate so many economic and cultural projects that only more substantial biographies list all of them. Pertinent to our readings is that he tried to modernize Hungarian finances and economy, and established the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, which is still the citadel of research and scholarship in his country.

Selections in chapters III. and V. are from *Hitel* (Credit), 1830. English translation: 1.3% of total text.

The excerpt in chapter VII. is from *Világ* (Light), 1831. English translation: 1.5% of total text.

Excerpts in chapter VI. are from *A Magyar Akadémia körül* (About the Hungarian Academy), 1842. English translation: 12% of total text.

Blanka TELEKI, Countess (1806-1862). Pioneer of Hungarian women's education, she opened the first school for girls in 1846. Because of the war of independence of 1848-49, the school closed down. After the defeat of the revolution, countess Teleki was charged with conspiracy and suffered six years of imprisonment.

"Nyilatkozat" (Proclamation). First published in the periodical *Honderű*, 24, 1845. Full text translated.

Pál TELEKI, Count (1879-1941). Scholar, politician, statesman. Received a Ph.D. in geography; his work on this field brought him academic membership. Between the world wars he filled several political positions, among others as minister of different cabinets. He did much to introduce social reforms and propagate Hungarian history in Europe. In 1941 Prime Minister Teleki committed suicide, in despair about Hungary's irreversible alignment with Germany.

Magyar politikai gondolatok (literally: Hungarian political thoughts, i.e. Hungarian thoughts on politics), Budapest, 1941, is a collection of already published essays. English translation: 1.75% of total book.

Mrs. Pál VERES, née Hermin Beniczky (1815-1895). Educator, emancipator, founder of the first, extant, women's college (1867). Also founder of the National Association for Education of Women (to whose first meeting she refers in one excerpt), and author of a handbook in psychology.

A complete [?] collection of her writings was published in Budapest, 1902: *Veres Pálné Beniczky Hermin élete és működése* (The life and work of ...). Selections from: "Két levél Madách Imréhez" (Two letters to Imre Madách), 1864, pp. 130-35; "Felhívás a nőkhez közvetlenül az első értekezlet előtt" (Call to women preceding the first conference), 1867, pp. 142-43. English translation: 50% and 60% of texts, respectively.

Miklós ZRÍNYI, Count (1620-1664). Poet, soldier, statesman. He was brought up to be loyal to Hungary's Habsburg kings, appointed captain-general of Croatia, and celebrated as an outstanding leader. As time passed, Zrínyi got in conflict with the attitude of the Viennese court towards Hungary. As it has been surmised, he could have become head of an openly anti-Habsburg opposition. Because of his early death (a topic of many conjectures), we will never know. His most famous poetic work is a Baroque heroic epic about his great-grandfather's battle with the Turks. He wrote several military and historical treatises and polemic pamphlets.

Az török áfium ellen való orvosság (Remedy against Turkish opium), 1660-61, first published in 1705. English translation: 8% of total text whose considerable parts are quotations from Latin sources.