

# Hungarian Turkophils in 19<sup>th</sup> Century Istanbul and Their Bequests in the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences

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“I did not know how great treasures  
I gained in the community of the real *muminin*:  
the Turks love me, really, intrinsically love me.”<sup>1</sup>

After the Ottoman withdrawal from the territory of Hungary in the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, a special scene of the Turkish-Hungarian interactions was opened. During the early 18<sup>th</sup> century Anti-Habsburg Hungarian emigrant leaders found shelter in the Ottoman Empire: Imre Thököly (1657–1705) in Izmit, Ferenc Rákóczi II (1676–1735) in Tekirdağ. This new period of the

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1 These enthusiastic passages were written by the renowned traveller, Orientalist Ármin Vámbéry (1832–1913), in a letter in August 1861, to his fellow scholar, the linguist József Budenz, which expresses his experiences of the kindness and helpfulness of the Turks at the beginning of his career, in Istanbul. Department of Manuscripts and Rare Books in the Library and Information Centre of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (henceforth DMRB), Ms 5450/204.

relationship between the former enemies has also been marked by some individual efforts which resulted in significant contributions to the development of the Ottoman civilization. The Hungarian-born convert, İbrahim Müteferrika (cca 1672–1747),<sup>2</sup> founder of the first Turkish printing-house in Istanbul (and in the Islamic world at all) in the last years of the Tulip-period, and Ferenc Tóth alias Baron de Tott (1733–1793), a promoter of the modern Ottoman artillery and organizer of the defense system of the Dardanelles during the Russian-Ottoman war between 1768 and 1774 are antitypes of the early Hungarian experts in the service of the Ottoman modernization.

The middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century opened a new chapter in this process. In 1849, after the Habsburg court in Vienna in coalition with the Czar of Russia managed to repress the Hungarian war of independence, thousands of Hungarian soldiers emigrated to Ottoman territory. In spite of Russian and Austrian threats Sultan Abdülmecid (1839–1861) gave refuge to the Hungarian and Polish emigrants. Their leader, Lajos Kossuth and the most prominent officers were accommodated in Kütahya, but a considerable number of the emigrants formed a Hungarian colony in the Galata district of Istanbul. It is well known that many of them entered into Ottoman service, and took part in the westernization and modernization of the Ottoman state.<sup>3</sup> For instance, the legendary Polish general of the Hungarian army, Jozef Bem proceeded his career as Murad Tevfik Paşa, governor of Aleppo. Another officer, György Kmety (alias İsmail Paşa) played a significant role during the defense of Kars against the Russians in 1855. Richárd Guyon, as Hurşid Paşa became the commander of Damascus and also fought in the Russian-Ottoman war. Although he was not the member of the .....

2 According to his own account, he "was born in *Kolozsvár* in the land of Hungary" See: *Risale-i Islamiye*, Süleymaniye Yazma Eserler Kütüphanesi , Esad efendi ktp. 1187 fol. 2r.

3 Arbanász Ildikó-Dursun Ayan-Csorba György-Hermann Róbert-Hóvári János, *Magyar honvédtábornokok oszmán szolgálatban. Guyon Richárd és Kmety György. Hursid pasa és Iszmail pasa* = Ildikó Arbanász-Dursun Ayan-György Csorba-Róbert Hermann-János Hóvári, *Macar generalleri Osmanlı hizmetinde. Richard Guyon ve György Kmety. Hurşid Paşa ve İsmail Paşa*. Budapest, 2013.

emigrants, here we should remember Ödön Széchenyi who organized the fire-service of the Ottoman capital during early 1870's and died in Istanbul in 1922.

This article is devoted to the careers and activities of some probably lesser known individuals in the context of their role they played in emerging of a considerable collection of Oriental, especially Turkish manuscripts, an invaluable living treasury of source material for researchers of the Turkish culture. Since, as we will see, at least a part of these bequests are preserved in the Oriental Collection of the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (henceforth OC [Oriental Collection of the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences]), this study also aims to provide an overview on the history of related groups of sources for the modern researchers.

Among the emigrants of 1849 settled in Istanbul was a lieutenant, Dániel Szilágyi. He originally studied to be a protestant theologian, but after the defeat of the war of independence he was forced to flee with the Kossuth-emigrants first to Vidin, then to Shumen (Şumla), from there to Varna, and finally (in October 1851) to Istanbul. Once settled in the Ottoman capital, Szilágyi at first found employment in the household of a Prussian military engineer called Wageman. Later, in June 1854 he married Wageman's cook, Wilhelmina Brüsch (1805–1881) from Schleswig-Holstein. Their two sons Béla (b. 1853) and Árpád (b. 1863) were born in Istanbul.<sup>4</sup>

As many other fellow Hungarian emigrants Szilágyi also took part in the Crimean War. Working as a victualler in the French, later in the British camp, he earned enough money to buy the antique bookstore where he had previously worked as an assistant.<sup>5</sup> This bookshop was located in Beyoğlu (Galata), as the contemporary accounts mention, in the *Timoni* street, identical with the present day Gönül sokak, bystreet of the *İstiklal Avenue*. With refined taste

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4 György Csorba- Balázs Sudár, Egy magyar antikvárius Isztambulban: Szilágyi Dániel [A Hungarian Antiquarian, Dániel Szilágyi] in *Függőkert – Orientalisztikai tanulmányok* [Hanging Gardens – Oriental Studies] 2003, p. 121.

5 Orbán Balázs, *Törökországról s különösen a nőkről* [About Turkey With Special Regard to the Women], comp. Ágota Steinert, Budapest, 1999, p. 117.

and expertise he passionately collected Turkish and to a lesser degree Arabic and Persian manuscripts, books and periodicals. His collection became soon an important source for the local Turkish readers, scholars as well as European researchers.

Szilágyi was linked with close ties to several representatives of the *Yeni Osmanlı* movement. He made available for them the copies of the movement's illegal periodicals, as the *Hürriyet* and the *Muhbir* (printed in London). To avoid the censorship, some members of the Young Ottomans were corresponding via Szilágyi. Thus, even if somewhat indirectly, Szilágyi became involved in the Ottoman political strives which is also marked by the fact that this evoked perquisitions of the police of Abdülhamid II several times.<sup>6</sup>

Szilágyi got acquainted with outstanding personalities of the Ottoman reformers, among others, the erudite thinker, poet and writer, İbrahim Şinasi (1826–1871) and the eminent personality of the Tanzimat era, Ahmed Cevdet Paşa (1822–1895). Szilágyi acquired quite a good command of Turkish which made him able to become a kind of advocate and in particular a mediator between the Ottoman authorities and his fellow Hungarian emigrants. His everyday work for securing livelihood prevented him from sharing his otherwise unquestionable learnings by any kind of scholarly publication. Not a single article known is evidently associated with his authority. It seems that his interest and efforts were confined to his rich book and manuscript collection. Hungarian Orientalists and scholars – among others Ignác Goldziher (1850–1921), Lajos Thallóczy (1854–1916) historian, or József Thúry (1861–1906) turkologist etc. – could always rely on Szilágyi's helpfulness, and pieces of advice during their stay in Istanbul.<sup>7</sup>

Áron Szilády (1837–1922), the scholar, historian and protestant pastor of a city in the Hungarian Plateau, Kiskunhalas was one of those Hungarian personalities who visited the Hungarian 'rehber' of Istanbul. Along with his clerical mission, Szilády devoted his activity to, and collected material about the history of Hungarian

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6 Csorba-Sudár, op. cit. p.126.

7 Ignaz Goldziher, *Tagebuch*, Leiden, 1978, p. 56.

settlements in Southern Hungary during the Ottoman occupation. His manifold interest in Oriental literature is also illustrated by several partly unpublished essays and translations of Turkish and Persian historical and literary sources kept today in the Department of Manuscripts and Rare Books of the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.<sup>8</sup> Szilády was the first who drew the attention to one of the most important Ottoman source groups, the Ottoman censuses, i.e. the *defters*.<sup>9</sup>

Szilády reported that he experienced a warm welcome by Szilágyi during his first trip to Istanbul.<sup>10</sup> Deep friendship was formed between them and, from that time, Szilágyi sent plenty of books and provided source materials for Szilády regularly.<sup>11</sup> After Dániel Szilágyi domiciled his family to Hungary in 1863, Szilády followed the courses of life of his friend's sons with particular attention.

In 1857, Ármin Vámbéry, later famous traveller, Orientalist but in that time still a very poor young man met and befriended with the antiquarian in Istanbul. Vámbéry's study trip to Constantinople, became reality thanks to the support of his patrons in Hungary, who recognized the talent of the ambitious juvenile. In the Ottoman metropolis, Vámbéry also owed a lot to the emigrants, who were informed about his journey from the Hungarian newspapers. His most significant Hungarian connection in Istanbul was probably his friendship with Dániel Szilágyi. Although there is no clear evidence, it is assumed that Vámbéry seized a part of his Oriental manuscripts through the mediation of Szilágyi. Vámbéry's relationships developed with the members of the Ottoman political elite were even more important than his good relations with the Hungarian colony. His interest in everyday language and behavior,

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8 Translations of the works of Firdausi and Hafiz, see: DMRB, Ms 10.115 and Ms 78; translations of *defters* (*cizye defteri* of Mohács and *mufassal defteri* of Nógrád) see DMRB, Ms 10.116.

9 Szilády Áron, *A defterekről*. Pest, 1872.

10 DMRB, Ms 116 and Ms 4448/95.

11 Csorba-Sudár, op.cit. 122–123. Several letters from the correspondence between Szilády and Szilágyi are kept today also in the DMRB.

his quick comprehension and literary erudition helped him to win the confidence of the Turks, and to develop relationships leading to the highest circles of the Ottoman political elite.

As he did in Hungary, Vámbéry also intended to earn his living in Istanbul by his previously gained lore and knowledge of languages. Thanks to his ever extending system of Turkish relationships, and also to the support of the Hungarian émigré officer György Kmety (alias İsmail Paşa as mentioned above), he received a teacher's position in the house of Hüseyin Daim Paşa. From the Pera neighborhood, which was mainly inhabited by Europeans, he moved to the Turkish-populated Kabataş. There he was given the name Reşid, which he used in the Muslim world from that time. The process of “becoming Turk” was a noticeably exciting challenge for him, but his metamorphosis always remained an outward one.

In 1859, two years after his arrival in Istanbul he taught history, geography and French language to Rauf who was the son of the recently deceased renowned statesman and former foreign minister Sadik Rifat Paşa (1801–1857). There he was absorbed in Turkish social life: he got in contact with the most influential personalities of the Tanzimat era, among others, Keçicizade Fuad Paşa (1814–1868), Mehmed Emin Âli Paşa (1815–1871), Mustafa Reşid Paşa, as well as with the later intellectual father of the Ottoman constitution, Midhat Paşa (1822–1884). He could also meet the great intellectual figures of the Ottoman reforms, including the already mentioned renowned author İbrahim Şinasi. On the recommendation of Kibrisli Mehmed Paşa, on one occasion he was also the interpreter of Sultan Abdulmecid.<sup>12</sup>

Vámbéry's Istanbul period was also an important milestone of his scholarly career. He visited libraries, where he focused on Turkish historical works, and especially on their parts referring to Hungary. His literary ambitions are illustrated by his more than twenty essays published until 1861 in Hungarian journals and magazines. Among others, he published the translations of the Hungarian-related

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<sup>12</sup> Ármin Vámbéry, *Küzdelmeim* (Hungarian edition of his autobiography: *My Struggles*), Budapest, 1905, p. 60.

chapters from the historical works of İbrahim Peçevi (1572–1650) and Hoca Mehmed Sadeddin (1536/37–1599) in various newspapers. He also translated some parts from Ahmed Feridun's (died 1583) collection of historical documents. An important scientific event of his Istanbul period was that in 1860 he discovered the only known copy of the sixteenth-century Ottoman chronicle about the Hungarians, the *Tarih-i Ungurus*, which he donated to the Hungarian Academy.<sup>13</sup> The difference in their habit of life and their relation to science is well illustrated by the story, that when Vámbéry published his first work which was a Turkish-German pocket dictionary in Istanbul in 1858, Szilágyi did not want to talk to him for a while. When his friend asked about the reason, the answer was as follows: "You have committed an insolence, you make a show of your science to the world!"<sup>14</sup> This short dialogue perfectly expresses the main difference between the two friends: Ármin Vámbéry became an integral part of Hungarian Oriental studies through his rich literary oeuvre, while the introverted Szilágyi, who was averse to writing, through the undying and unrepeatable result of his passion for collecting.

Vámbéry's commitment to research of the origin of the Hungarians and of the Hungarian language solidified during his first stay in Istanbul. His national sentiments which flared up on the wake of his experiences of the war of independence of 1849 were an important incentive in his turn towards the East, but his real goal was crystallized in his Constantinople years. He recognized that the development, transformation and interaction of peoples can be traced back through the study of the development of the language. Vámbéry's work was rewarded with an important recognition in his homeland: in the spring of 1861 he was elected a corresponding member of the Academy. After four years of absence he returned and with the strong determination of an Eastern study trip, he began preparations for his major enterprise, the long cherished journey to Central Asia. In his farewell speech on 29 July 1861 he informed the

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<sup>13</sup> The unique manuscript of the *Tarih-i Ungurus* is preserved in the OC marked Ms Török F.57.

<sup>14</sup> Vámbéry, op. cit. p. 124.

Hungarian Academy on his objectives. As he said, „we are looking for linguistic truth, instead of ancient homeland of the Hungarians.”

With the Latin letter of recommendation of the Hungarian Academy<sup>15</sup> and their support of 1000 forints in his pocket, at the end of 1861 he set off to Istanbul where he spent several months again with the preparations of his Eastern expedition. His start was also delayed by the cholera epidemic which broke out at the Iranian border.<sup>16</sup> Among other things, he took language lessons from an Uzbek from Majman, a certain Khalmurad Mullah, and in private libraries he had access to Eastern Turkic literary works and manuscripts.<sup>17</sup> He reported about his joy over these discoveries in his letters written to his Hungarian friends, especially to József Budenz (1836–1892) and Áron Szilády.<sup>18</sup>

Through his Turkish acquaintances he obtained two more letters of recommendation. These do not recommend the Hungarian scholar Vámbéry on his way to study the Turko-Tatar language, but *Reşid Efendi* from Constantinople, to the attention and benevolence of its readers, especially of Hayder Efendi, the Porte’s ambassador to Teheran.

His capital consisted essentially of his knowledge of the Turkish language, perfected for four years, and of the successfully learned and practised behavioral patterns. In their possession not only could he act the role of the educated Ottoman Efendi, but these also helped him in the communication with his Muslim environment, and even in finding his ways in the Shiite society of Persia, whose culture was different from the one he learned. All of these abilities proved to be crucial during Vámbéry’s expedition.

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<sup>15</sup> DMRB Ms 9/1856.

<sup>16</sup> DMRB Ms 5450/206.

<sup>17</sup> DMRB Ms 5450/210 cf. Arminius Vámbéry, *Travels in central Asia*, London, 1864, pp. 246–247.

<sup>18</sup> A handsome characteristic of some of these letters is that they referred to each other by using the muslim version their first names: Vámbéry was called by his *laqab* Reşid, Áron became Harun, József was called Yusuf.



In March 1862 he left Istanbul on a steamship for Trapezunt, where he enjoyed the hospitality of the Governor, Muhlis Emin Paşa for a few days. On 21 May 1862 he joined a caravan, continuing his way on horseback to Erzurum. There he was received for three days by his Istanbul patron, Hüseyin Daim Paşa.

Vámbéry, who wandered about in the role of a Sunni Turk, had to pass through the various manifestations of the aversion of the Shiites in the Persian world, which was a totally different environment for him in contrast with the friendly Ottoman world. In the searing July heat he reached through the city of Khoj the Azeri-inhabited Tabriz, and after two weeks of rest he moved forward on donkeyback to Tehran. He expressed his new impressions by a continuous comparison of the Turkish and Persian customs, and while on the former he gives an image idealized in every respect, he most often condemns the latter because of their way of living and religious fanaticism. In a letter written to Budenz from this period he bitterly reports that he “instead of Ottoman Turkish speaks in a rough Tatar language”.<sup>19</sup>

Vámbéry was the last European traveller to visit before the Russian invasion, in 1862-63 the Khanates of Central Asia, and to return home safely from his very dangerous trip leading through Khiva, Bokhara and Samarkand. This travel proved to be crucial regarding his future career, either in scholarly or political fields. The experiences gained during his travels were a capital to him which defined his further career, in linguistic, ethnographic, and even geographic terms. His observations also attracted the interest of the great powers interested in the region, Russia and Great Britain. Vámbéry, returning home in 1864, remembered his reception in Hungary with bitter disappointment, which he attributed to the political atmosphere preceding the Austro-Hungarian Compromise in 1867.<sup>20</sup> Vámbéry, a self-made man, who, emerging from extraordinary difficulties by his power of will and ambitions, and was forced to develop his talent through self-education, by bypassing the

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<sup>19</sup> DMRB, Ms 5450/216.

<sup>20</sup> Vámbéry, *Küzdelmeim*, pp. 240–246.

traditional educational system, and even so providing exceptional performances, found in Great Britain the coveted honor, which was unachievable for him in Hungary. After a month's stay in Pest, he went to London, where he was welcomed with appreciation and respect due to the discoverer. In 1864 he published in London his English-language travel book *Travels in Central Asia*. He felt at home in the keen interest surrounding him. He held a series of lectures, including in the Royal Geographical Society, and was presented to Prime Minister Lord Palmerston. Although in the following years he returned to Great Britain several times, and his books and articles were published in many countries of the continent, nevertheless it never occurred to him to turn his back to Hungary.

Unfortunately, Vámbéry's incognito significantly impeded him in his scientific objectives during journey to Central-Asian. Because of the suspicion surrounding him, he could make notes only in secret and on rare occasions. In addition, it would have been incompatible with his role to buy a larger amount, or non-religious manuscripts in the bazaar of Bokhara. This was anyway made impossible by the lack of money, a companion of his ascetic lifestyle. The direct memories of his journey include the largest part of his Eastern Turkic manuscripts – Vámbéry mentions 18 such works<sup>21</sup>–, and the small, litographed Quran, now preserved in the OC, whose role is remembered by a barely visible note by its owner on the first page: "...dervish incognito [...] hanging around my neck in a Persian flat bag." And: "This Quran, purchased in Tehran, hung around my neck all along my Central Asian journey in this same green bag, and was with me day and night."

In contrast to his traveller friend, Dániel Szilágyi definitely remained in the Ottoman capital. Although his wife and two sons, Béla and Árpád moved to Hungary as early as 1863, he himself seemed to be unseparable from his passionately developed book-collection and stayed in his new home, Istanbul until his death in 1885. He was buried in the Protestant cemetery of Feriköy.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> DMRB, Ms 5450/220.

<sup>22</sup> Csorba-Sudár, op. cit. p. 122.

Dániel Szilágyi clearly intended to let his collection pass to Hungary, for the benefit of the Hungarian scholars after his death, and this intention, although not fixed in a written last will, was also respected by his heirs.<sup>23</sup> The purchase of the Szilágyi legacy by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, which constitutes about the half of the Turkish manuscripts of the OC, was mainly due to Vámbéry's intervention. However, the transaction did not proceed smoothly, because the Academy did not offer a correct amount of money for the material which was not known by items, and Béla and Árpád – although in their own statement they were ready for a discount in the interest of the noblesse oblige – found the offered purchase price unfairly low. During the lengthy negotiations and bargaining, Vámbéry on the one hand had to repeatedly emphasize the real value of the legacy for the Academy, and on the other hand it was his unpleasant task to convince the heirs to accept the offered price, which he also considered very low. Vámbéry in his letter addressed to the Secretary General of the Academy on 7 February 1886 emphasized, that “The inventory of the library of the late Dániel Szilágyi, prepared by the Imperial and Royal Consulate of Constantinople, lays before me, and I have the honor to inform Your Excellence that this library indeed constitutes a rare treasure of high esteem, so that it would be a great loss if our Academy did not buy it, and it went over to foreign hands...” The estimation of the vast collection “was done at a rather low and advantageous price [...] so that the purchase of the entire library is recommendable, and I repeatedly say that it would be wrong to let this rare treasure pass over to the hands of foreign merchants.” According to the report, the legacy was composed of three main groups: books in European languages on Oriental subjects (8918 volumes), Oriental manuscripts (491 volumes) and Eastern, mostly Turkish printed books (2009 volumes).<sup>24</sup>

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23 Akadémiai Értesítő [Bulletin of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, henceforth AÉ (Akadémiai Értesítő [Bulletin of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences])] 1886, p. 206. Cf. Csorba György-Sudár Balázs, *Szilágyi Dániel és a magyar orientalisztika* [Dániel Szilágyi and the Hungarian Oriental Research]. In: Ágnes Birtalan-Yamaji Masanori (eds), *Orientalista Nap 2003*, pp.10–21, especially p. 15.

24 DMRB, Ms 110/1886.

As a result, only Szilágyi's Oriental manuscripts went over to the ownership of the Academy, for a fraction of the price hoped by the heirs, 4500 forints. The receipt of the manuscript collection at the Academy was acknowledged on 29 March 1886 by the report of the Library Committee.<sup>25</sup> The Academy did not lay claim to the printed books, so they eventually went over to the former school of Béla Szilágyi, the Calvinist high school of Kiskunhalas.<sup>26</sup> We are discussing the afterlife of this part of the Szilágyi-collection below.

Vámbéry himself let a significant collection to the Library of the Academy through his own donation as well. As Vámbéry's work and questions determined the way of development of Hungarian Turkology, which would have not arrived at its present character without them, so the manuscript treasure of the OC, the basic library of Hungarian Oriental research also would be incomparably poorer without Vámbéry's efforts and acquisition activity. After he died in Budapest in 1913, his son Rustem handed over the Vámbéry-collection of about 660 Oriental books, including Turkish, Persian and two Arabic manuscripts.<sup>27</sup>

The identification of Ármin Vámbéry's donations within the Turkish manuscripts of the OC is often made easier by the stamp of ownership. Besides, the "Accessions of the library since 1870", preserved in the DMRB (Department of Manuscripts and Rare Books of the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences) includes the donations and legacy of Vámbéry in an itemized form. In addition, the *Akadémiai Értesítő* [Bulletin of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences] also published a short title list of the received

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<sup>25</sup> AÉ 1886, p. 57.

<sup>26</sup> For more details of the transaction see: Sudár-Csorba, *Egy magyar antikvárius*, pp. 128–131.

<sup>27</sup> In the meantime, a considerable number of Vámbéry's books enriched the Fővárosi Könyvtár (Municipal Library of Budapest), later Szabó Ervin Könyvtár. As a result of the above mentioned revision of the public collections in Hungary around 1950, at least a considerable part of Vámbéry's oriental printed books has been handed over to the newly formed Oriental Collection (that time called Oriental Library) of the Library of the Hungarian Academy.

manuscripts.<sup>28</sup> The latter, however, has to be corrected in some places. For example, the poems of Hafiz were recorded twice, and they registered two copies of Nişancı's historical work (Ms [Manuscript] Török O.376 and Ms Török O.382), but later it turned out that the latter volume is a 18<sup>th</sup>-century chronicle by the court historian Mehmed Subhi. In addition, a lithographic copy of the mystical mesnevi *Nan u halva*, published in 1852 in Istanbul, was long recorded as a Persian manuscript (Ms Perzsa O.48).<sup>29</sup> The manuscript legacy handed over by Ruzstem Vámbéry consisted of 10 Persian, 2 Arabic, 43 Eastern Turkic and Ottoman Turkish items.

The Turkish collection also includes two manuscripts of Vámbéry, donated by him in his lifetime to the Academy (Ms Török F.23 and the above mentioned *Tarih-i Ungurus* = F.54). There are three other items bearing his stamp of ownership, whose circumstances of accession are still unclear. These are manuscript volumes of excerpts in Turkish, copied by European hands (Ms Török F.66 and F.67), and a Latin-Turkish fable collection (Ms Török Qu.60). Based on the above data and the overview of the material, the following manuscripts of the OC can be attributed to Ármin Vámbéry:

Ms Török O.38, O.171, O.176, O.196, O.329, O.370–388, Török Qu.39, Qu.60, Qu.63–78, Török F.23, F.57, F.66–67, F.70–71;

Ms Perzsa O.47, O.49–50, O.52–53, Ms Perzsa Qu. 3–5, Qu. 32–33, Ms Perzsa F.14;<sup>30</sup>

Ms Arab O.4, Ms Arab F.4.

This is a total of 48 Turkish, 11 Persian and 2 Arabic, that is, 61 Oriental manuscripts. In his autobiography, Vámbéry refers to his Eastern manuscripts as “the most valuable prey of his journey”, suggesting that he purchased the Eastern Turkic works during his

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<sup>28</sup> AÉ 1886 pp. 661–683.

<sup>29</sup> Éva Apor, The Persian Manuscripts of the Vámbéry bequest. *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* (Budapest), 23, pp. 327–334.

<sup>30</sup> Due to the revision of the Persian collection relating the current preparation of the modern catalogue, stock-numbers of some of the Persian manuscripts have been changed recently. This enumeration represents these modifications.

Central Asian expedition.<sup>31</sup> Although there is not clear evidence, the majority of his Ottoman Turkish manuscripts were probably acquired through the mediation of Dániel Szilágyi.

The Turkish, Persian and Arabic Manuscripts of the bequests of Szilágyi and Vámbéry are preserved and incorporated now to the manuscript holdings of the Oriental Collection of the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in Budapest. Considering the number and diversity of its items, among various manuscript holdings of this library, the Turkish is the most extended one. It includes about 850 copies. To the present day, the Szilágyi-bequest constitutes the core of the Turkish manuscript material in the OC, that is, approximately a group of 436 items.<sup>32</sup>

In sharp contrast with the Vámbéry bequest, the correct identification of each item of the Szilágyi-bequest would be almost an impossible task since the incoming material has not been recorded and categorized according to the donators or as intact bequests.<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, the items of the Szilágyi bequest, with some exceptions, are lacking any reference to the possessor (stamp, note). Thus the manuscripts acquired from Dániel Szilágyi have somewhat been mixed with later acquisitions without being registered by items.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Vámbéry, *Küzdelmeim*, p. 245.

<sup>32</sup> Due some causes discussed below, in the present day, the correct distinction of Szilágyi's manuscripts within the Turkish ms collection in the OC is all but impossible. The quoted number is based on the report of the turkologist Ignác Kúnos, preparer of a card catalog of the Turkish Collection. See AÉ 3(1892) pp. 20–27, cf. Csorba-Sudár, *Egy magyar antikvárius*, pp.132–133.

<sup>33</sup> From the middle of the 20th century, the cataloging of books in the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences is based on the principle of *numerus currens* instead the previously applied method of division according to field of studies (history, literature, geography etc.). The manuscript holdings are similarly recorded by this method, however, combined with the system of divisions according to the language (Perzsa, Arab, Török – Persian, Arabic, Turkish/Turkic etc.) along with subdivisions by the size of the volumes (O=Octavo, Qu=Quarto, F=Folio).

<sup>34</sup> Balázs Sudár, the curator of the Turkish manuscripts of the OC made an attempt to assort the pieces of the Szilágyi-bequest within the Turkish manuscript collection. See Csorba-Sudár, *Egy magyar antikvárius*, pp.133–134.

The catalog, indispensable to the transparency and research of the collection was long in preparation. At the arrival of the Szilágyi collection at the Academy, the compilation of a professional catalog was immediately suggested. This task was first undertaken by Vámbéry himself, at no charge, but with the condition that the Academy makes him available a separate, bright room for the task, with a lockable book cabinet, and that he may appoint a “library assistant” among his own students, whose work would be honored with a “modest per diem”. Vámbéry was ready to immediately start the work, and he also received the necessary approval of the Academy.<sup>35</sup> However, the undertaking failed due to unknown reason. A few years later, in 1891 Ignác Kúnos (1860–1945) was commissioned with the description of the manuscripts. In the next year he gave an exhaustive report about the Turkish manuscript collection under cataloging, also offering very detailed descriptions on several items.<sup>36</sup> Meanwhile, Hungarian Orientalists, Géza Kuun and Ignác Goldziher complained that the Szilágyi collection, since six years in the ownership of the Academy, still has no catalog, thus there is no trace of the “scientific use” of the collection. They called for the preparation of a catalog meeting the standards of the time.<sup>37</sup>

The catalog prepared by Kúnos already applied the current system of the manuscript collection, although it left much to be desired. A part of the deficiencies were corrected by another student of Vámbéry, Sándor Kégl (1862–1920), the first teacher of Persian language and literature at the University of Budapest. The card catalog completed by 1909, which also included the new items of the increasingly growing collection, served for almost a century as the only usable index of the Turkish manuscript collection of the Academic Library, but in this hand-written form it could assist the researchers only in the local orientation, and it did not fulfill the most important function of modern printed catalogs, the access of the international research to the collection.

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35 AÉ 1887, p. 144.

36 Csorba-Sudár, *Egy magyar antikvárius*, p. 131–133.

37 AÉ 1892, pp. 20–27 and 730–731.

The modern printed catalog, published finally in 2007 also in English and Turkish,<sup>38</sup> has contributed to a spectacular extent to the international recognition of the Turkish manuscripts preserved in the OC, and in consequence the Turkish manuscripts of the collection could serve as a basis to several international source publications.

As it was already mentioned, in 1886, the printed books of the Szilágyi-bequest were also transferred to Hungary, more exactly, to the Library of the High School of Kiskunhalas organized and developed by Áron Szilády. This transaction resulted the greatest increase ever in the Library's material.<sup>39</sup> However, the cataloging of the enormous quantity of books posed a very serious challenge in Kiskunhalas, since the task raised the requirements as the good command in the Oriental languages and the special linguistic and literary skills for the identification of works of various genres. In 1887 Szilády invited József Thúry, a turkologist of Vámbéry's students,<sup>40</sup> from Nagykőrös to Kiskunhalas.<sup>41</sup> Thúry was employed in the High School as a teacher of the Latin and Hungarian languages and was also charged with the professional organization as well as cataloging of the suddenly enriched material of the library numbering 31.316 items including the printed books from Szilágyi's bequest. From 1892 he was exempted from his teaching obligations and was able to concentrate only the hard task of the cataloging. However, in spite of Thúry's great efforts, the project ended unaccomplished due to the sudden death of the young turkologist in 1906.<sup>42</sup> The library and especially the Oriental material lost its greatest patron

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 38 *Catalogue of the Turkish Manuscripts in the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences*, comp. İsmail Parlatur, György Hazai and Barbara Kellner-Heinkele. Budapest, 2007.

39 Rita Laki, *A Szilády Áron Református Gimnázium könyvtárának története* [History of the Library of the Szilády Áron Protestant High School] in *Halasi Múzeum* vol 2. pp. 201–219, especially pp. 205, 209–211.

40 József Thúry (1860–1906) was the translator of Hungarian-related parts of several Ottoman chronicles and, after Vámbéry's retirement, he was appointed to the chair of the Department of Turkish Studies in the University Budapest. However, Thúry could not occupy his new position due his sudden death.

41 DMRB, Ms 4452/65.

42 Laki, op.cit. pp. 205–206.



when Áron Szilády deceased in 1920. A part of Szilády's manuscripts lost due to the negligence and ignorance.<sup>43</sup> The inheritors sold Szilády's own collection – including those rich Oriental book and manuscript material which he secured during his lifetime owing to Dániel Szilágyi – of 23 Oriental manuscripts and about 10.000 books to the Municipal Library of Kecskemét in September 1923.<sup>44</sup> Since the interest on the Oriental literature was very low in the small town of Kecskemét, next year the Library offered to buy the material for the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and also for the National Museum in Budapest. However, this time the transaction failed for unknown reason.<sup>45</sup> The remnants of the Szilády bequest ultimately was transferred to Budapest in 1952 and became the possession of the Library of the Hungarian Academy. The correspondence and some drafts belonging to Szilády is now preserved in the DMRB.

Within the holding of the Turkish manuscripts of the Library of the HAS a distinguished group of 51 Ottoman-Turkish manuscripts is preserved, namely the so-called *Szilády-octavos*. On the base of this misleading designation we might suggest that these copies derived from Szilády's bequest. However, there is not a single item in this group being identical with any of those 23 manuscripts in the private collection of Áron Szilády taken from Kiskunhalas to Kecskemét in 1923.<sup>46</sup> The whereabouts of the latter group of manuscripts is unknown ever since it had been transported to Kecskemét. Compared to the donations of Szilágyi and Vámbéry, the *Szilády-octavos* in the OC are of lesser value. Ottoman yearbooks (*salname*) are represented in great number (e.g. Ms Szilády O.5, O.13, O.20–28.), but copies of the *inşa* literature, works on military science, travelogues, fragments of historical works are also found

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43 Ván Benjámín, *Szilády Áron élete* [The Life of Áron Szilády], Kiskunhalas, 2012, p. 267–268.

44 Zsinka Ferenc, Szilády Áron hagyatéka Kecskemétre került [The Bequest of Áron Szilády Has Been Transported to Kecskemét], in *Magyar Könyvszemle* [Hungarian Book Review] 1923, pp. 278–281. The account enumerates the manuscripts by their titles.

45 Csorba-Sudár, *Egy magyar antikvárius*, p. 135.

46 According to the titles in the list quoted in the footnote 46.

in the this unit. An Ottoman Turkish copy of *Hüsrev u Şirin* (Ms Szilády O.48) and the only Arabic manuscript of the *Risalat Daqaiq al-Haqaiq* are the most noteworthy items from the *Szilády-octavos*. The great plurality of these copies are from the 19<sup>th</sup> century while there are only some exceptions dated back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century (e.g. Ms Szilády O.2, O.30). The circumstances of the acquisition of this material is obscure. Some of the Szilády-octavos bear the stamp of the collectivised High School,<sup>47</sup> consequently at least those items are from the holding of the Library of the High School Kiskunhalas and not from Szilády's own bequest.

Besides Áron Szilády's private collection, the Library of the high School in Kiskunhalas which owed so much to him also began to decline. Its holdings suffered serious damages during the Romanian invasion in 1919-20, but the devastations during the World War II resulted more disastrous losses in the material. In 1950, the high school of Kiskunhalas, being named of Áron Szilády, has been taken into public ownership. Although according to an account, its material was transferred from Kecskemét to Budapest in accordance with the new concept library reform,<sup>48</sup> it seems that only a fragment of the manuscripts and books has been passed to the that time newly opened Oriental Collection in the Library of the Academy. At present, considering the printed books, the Library of the Hungarian Academy is numbering approximately 420 records with the stamp of the High School of Kiskunhalas and only 28 records bearing the possessory stamp of Áron Szilády. However, these number may slightly increase in the near future, since the recataloging process in the Library still has not been finished.

Finally, some glimpses of some outstanding items of the Vámbéry and Szilágyi collections will be provided to picture the diversity and value of these considerable mosaics of the Turkish written heritage.

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<sup>47</sup> Állami Szilády Áron Gimnázium, Kiskunhalas.

<sup>48</sup> Berlász Jenő, *Az akadémiai könyvtár Kézirattárának átalakulása* [Transformation of the Manuscript Department of the Library of the Academy], in *Magyar Könyvszemle* 1957, pp. 228–246. Cf. Csorba-Sudár, *Egy magyar antikvárius*, pp. 134–135.

The perhaps most valuable, and already mentioned Turkish manuscript of the OC was discovered by Vámbéry, and in 1860, donated by him to the Academy. The above mentioned unique work bears the title *Tarih-i Ungurus*, i.e. History of Hungary. The frontispiece of the manuscript shows the possessor's note both in Hungarian and in Turkish. The modern edition of the chronicle was prepared by Professor György Hazai (1932–2016), and later its facsimile edition was also published.<sup>49</sup> Research has pointed out, that the author of the chronicle was a Jewish merchant of Vienna, Sebold, son of Jacob von Pibrach, who got to the Ottoman court probably as a prisoner of war, and the having converted to Islam, he was raised to a high rank as the interpreter of Sultan Süleyman (1520–1566). The author, who calls himself Mahmud Tercüman, admits to have used only one Latin source, but critical research made it clear, that certain parts of the Pictorial Chronicle and the Hungarian chronicle of János Thuróczy (1435?–1489?) both served for sources of the work, which was transformed and completed in several places. The author combined his work with a section describing the deeds of Alexander the Great, as a parallel to the military glories of Süleyman the Magnificent, conqueror of Hungary. István Borzsák (1914–2007) classical scholar pointed it out that the source of this section was the historical work of Marcus Iustianus Iustinus.

Another exceptional item of Vámbéry's manuscripts is a fable collection titled *Ferec bad eş-Şidde*, that is, "Joys After Sorrow". This genre, which akin to the Thousand and One Nights, is widespread in the Anatolian Turkish folklore. Its origin can be traced back to the Arabic fable tradition. The 42 short stories, different in content, are connected by their common end: in each of them an unexpected, wonderful turn brings solution for the actors in a hopeless situation. Several manuscripts of this work are known worldwide. The OC has eight copies, seven of which are from Dániel Szilágyi. However, this Turkish manuscript of the Vámbéry-bequest was copied in 1451, in Edirne, it is the oldest copy among the manuscripts known today. In

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49 György Hazai, *Die Geschichte der Ungarn in einer osmanischen Chronik des 16. Jahrhunderts: Tercümân Mahmûds Târih-i Ungurus* (Edition der Handschrift der Bibliothek der Ungarischen Akademie der Wissenschaften), Berlin 2009.

addition, this work is also uniquely valuable regarding historical linguistics, as an early written record of the Ottoman Turkish language.

The Szilágyi bequest contains a considerably early copy of Feridüddin Attar's *Tezkiretül-Evliya*. The manuscript is dated 1533. The same collection has a partly unique copy of the *Süleyman-name* by Firdevsi-i Rumi or Uzun Firdevsi which was dedicated to Sultan Bayezid II. The work is one of the most outstanding treasures of the Szilágyi collection and consists of 15 volumes. Many books and manuscripts belonging to Vámbéry's library bear the possessor's notes on circumstances of the acquisition. For instance, in the copy of the *Camasb-name* marked Ms Török Qu. 67 is a note as follows: "I got this ancient Ottoman poetic narrative (Camasp-nameh) on my seventieth birthday from my erudite Turkish friend Necib Asim." Quite naturally, several items of the Vámbéry-bequest served as objects for his research. An example of these manuscripts is the Chagatai dictionary, the *Abuşka Lugatı*, on which Vámbéry based the edited version published in 1862. The most carefully and richly illuminated Turkish manuscript in the OC is probably from the Szilágyi collection: an undated, but probably 17<sup>th</sup> century copy of Ahmedi's *Iskendername*.

In the light of the activities of the personalities got known in this paper we can conclude that some coercive and stimulative factors, individual efforts, political circumstances and the cosmopolitan milieu of Istanbul strongly contributed to the development of the Hungarian Turkology in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In particular, all of these factors were also indispensable considering the emergence of the most significant collection of invaluable Turkish and Turkic (and other) manuscripts and books in Hungary.