

**THE REPRESENTATION OF GREAT MORAVIA
AND ITS FALL IN HUNGARIAN/MAGYAR HISTORIOGRAPHY
DURING THE PERIOD OF DUALISM¹**

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Rezumat: Reprezentarea Moraviei Mari și a decăderii sale în istoriografia maghiară din perioada dualismului.

Interpretarea problemei Moraviei Mari de către istoriografia maghiară din secolul al XIX-lea ridică întrebări. Întâi de toate este problema interesului față de subiectul care a devenit o parte integrantă și statornică a narațiunii naționale slovace de la începutul formării naționalismului modern. Prezentarea Moraviei Mari ca stat suveran al slovacilor, existent înainte de perioada maghiară, precum și cultivarea acestei tradiții sub forma mitului despre „Epoca de Aur” a slovacilor au demonstrat vechimea, autohtonitatea, continuitatea istorică și statutul egal al națiunii slovace în interiorul granițelor Ungariei. Aceste fapte ar fi putut să indice mai degrabă o lipsă de interes decât o oarecare preocupare a istoricilor maghiari față de interpretarea amintitului fenomen. Cu toate acestea, lucrările lor referitoare la istoria timpurie a națiunii maghiare arată contrariul. Articolul este centrat pe întrebarea cum este înțeleasă reprezentarea istorică a Moraviei Mari și decăderea acesteia de către istoricii maghiari din perioada dualismului.

Abstract: *The interpretation of the issue of Great Moravia by Hungarian/Magyar historiography in the 19th century raises questions. First of all is the question of interest in the topic that became an integral and fixed part of the Slovak national narrative from the beginning of the formation of modern nationalism. The presentation of Great Moravia as the statehood of Slovaks existing before the Hungarian period as well as the cultivation of this tradition in the form of myth about the “Golden Age” of Slovaks, demonstrated the ancientness, autochthony, historical continuity and equal status of Slovak nation within the boundaries of Hungary. These facts indicate rather expect no interest than some attention of Hungarian/Magyar historians in the interpretation of this phenomenon. However, as we can follow, their works about the early history of Hungarian/Magyar nation show the contrary. The issue raised in the introduction has become irrelevant. The article is focused*

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on the question how the historical representation of Great Moravia and its fall are understood by the Hungarian/Magyar historians during the period of dualism. Parallel with this we ask them for coping with not own national tradition.

Résumé: La représentation de la Grande Moravie et de sa déchéance dans l'historiographie hongroise de la période du dualisme.

L'interprétation de la question de la Grande Moravie par l'historiographie hongroise du XIX-ème siècle suscita des interrogations. Premièrement, il y en a la question liée de l'intérêt vis-à-vis le sujet qui devint une partie intégrante et constante de la narration nationale slovaque du début de la formation du nationalisme moderne. La présentation de la Grande Moravie comme État souverain des Slovaques existant avant la période hongroise, ainsi que la culture de cette tradition sous la forme du mythe sur "L'Âge d'Or" des Slovaques, démontrèrent l'ancienneté, l'autochtonie, la continuité historique et le statut égal de la nation slovaque à l'intérieur des frontières de l'Hongrie. Cela aurait pu indiquer manque d'intérêt plutôt qu'un certain intérêt des historiens hongrois par rapport à l'interprétation du phénomène qu'on vient de mentionner. Malgré cela, leurs ouvrages faisant référence à l'histoire ancienne de la nation hongroise montrèrent le contraire. On centra l'article ci-joint sur la question comment est comprise la représentation historique de la Grande Moravie et sa déchéance par les historiens allemands de la période du dualisme.

Keywords: Great Moravia, representations, Hungarian/Magyar historiography, Hungary, age of dualism

Introduction

The interpretation of the issue of Great Moravia by Hungarian/Magyar² historiography in the 19th century raises several questions. First of all, the question of interest in the topic that became an integral part of the national narrative of Slovaks from the beginning of the formation of modern nationalism. Actually, the presentation of Great Moravia as the statehood of Slovaks existing before the Hungarian period as well as the cultivation of this tradition in the form of myth about the "Golden Age" of Slovaks, demonstrated the ancientness, autochthony, historical continuity and equal status of Slovaks in a relevant territory.³ We should rather expect no interest than some interest of Hungarian/Magyar historians in

² Distinction is drawn here between the terms "Magyar" (ethnic and cultural significance) and "Hungarian" (state-political significance); or we use both of them (e.g. Hungarian/Magyar historiography, historians, nation).

³ Adam Hudek, *Najpolitickéjšia veda – Slovenská historiografia v rokoch 1948 – 1968* [The Most Political Science. Slovak historiography between years 1948 – 1968], Bratislava, Historický ústav SAV vo vydavateľstve Typoset print, spol. s. r. o., 2010, pp. 28-30, 39.

the interpretation of this phenomenon, because the stressing of its importance might undermine the historical right of Magyars to the land of Hungary that was defended during the overall "long" 19th century. However, their works about the early history of Hungary and Hungarian/Magyar nation show the contrary.

Thus, the issue raised in the introduction has become irrelevant and the article is focused on the question how Great Moravia and its fall are understood by the Hungarian/Magyar historians during 1867 – 1914. We will focus on the works of authors such as Mihály Horváth, Károly Szabó, Vilmos Fraknoi, Ferenc Salamon, Sándor Márki, Gyula Pauler, Lajos Baróti and Henrik Marczali. We will take into account the extent of their professionalism and external factors influencing their work, methods and attitudes to the topic. In general, the issue of coping with not own national tradition run through the overall study.

Basic Trends of the Development of Hungarian/Magyar Historiography during the Period of Dualism

From the period of reformism and several periods later, national liberalism as a conceptual basis of history writing,⁴ but also diminishing ideas of the Enlightenment and dominant literary romanticism raise their voices in Hungary.

The national and romantic concept of history was developing under the influence of individuals (for example István Horváth, the professor of university in Pest) by new historians such as M. Horváth, K. Szabó, and others. They used historical sources to describe the Golden Age of Hungarian/Magyar nation such as mediaeval chronicles, specifically *Gesta Hungarorum*, the chronicle of the anonymous notary of Bela III, which is currently considered the Hungarian heroic epos or historical novel.⁵ Not earlier than after the Austro-Hungarian Compromise some progress in Hungarian/Magyar historiography was observed, and the bases of more modern infrastructure were laid (but, not specialisations). Thus, it approximated to the West Europe model of historiography. Research into history commenced with the establishment of new scientific associations and journals, the opening of archives and more intensive publishing of the

⁴ Ignác Romsics, *Clio bűvöletében. Magyar történetírás a 19.-20. században – nemzetközi kitekintéssel* [Under the Enchantment of Clio, Hungarian History Writing in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries – with an International Overview], Budapest, Osiris Kiadó, 2011, pp. 99, 125.

⁵ František Musil, *Gesta Hungarorum a historicko-zemepisný obraz Slovenska* [The Gesta Hungarorum and the historical and geographical picture of Slovakia], in "Historický časopis" [Historical Journal], 2004, Vol. 52, no. 3, p. 434.

sources. From 1867, besides the Institute of History of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the *Hungarian Historical Society* [*Magyar Történelmi Társulat*] with the journal *Századok* and from 1878 with its quarterly *Történelmi Tár* [Historical Repository], became the centre for the popularisation of science and the social organisation of historians.⁶

The turning point of Hungarian/Magyar historiography in the direction to its modernisation and professionalism occurred during the 1880s of the 19th century. Not only its institutional basis was extended, but also university education was reorganised according to the German model. The increasing interest in studies at the Departments of History (Pest, Cluj-Napoca) weakened the influence of historians – auto-didacticians, and created some space for the generation of educated historians. At the turn of the 19th and the 20th century, Hungarian/Magyar historical science was predominantly represented by main European theories (positivism, philosophical idealism, Marxism), but without a major impact. Though there were historians who adopted modern approaches and methods for critical analysis of the sources of Western European (specifically German) historiography; the majority of historians remained apathetic towards theoretical and methodological issues. They continue to research into political history and publish sources.⁷

Half a century of dualism was also typical of stronger links between policy and science. Looser or tighter groups of the historians were formed according to prevailing political camps. As the Hungarian political scene, where government liberals and an independent opposition were pitched against each other, as two historiographical concepts of Hungarian/Magyar historiography – pro-Habsburg (*labanc*) and independent (*kuruc*) – were formed according to their attitudes to the House of Habsburg, Vienna and the Austro-Hungarian Compromise. Furthermore, some religious aspect was also present. The defenders of the first attitude inclined to Catholicism, the defenders of the second one identified themselves with Protestant Christianity. Several Israelites or Christianized Jews wavered between them, but neither from the ideological point of view nor from the methodological point of view, formed a special group.⁸ The contradictions between these two concepts “*became more apparent at the moment when policy mixed into historiography as it happened at the turn of the 19th and 20th century.*

⁶ Péter Gunst, *A magyar történetírás története* [History of Hungarian historiography], Debrecen, Csokonai, 2000, pp. 197-198.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 199-200, 202, 210; Ignác Romsics, *Clio bűvöletében...* [Under the Enchantment of Clio...], pp. 113, 115-116.

⁸ Ignác Romsics, *Clio bűvöletében...* [Under the Enchantment of Clio...], pp.108-113, 125.

Before, these views were not so strong than it appeared at first sight."⁹ Whether it was the case of Great Moravia, we will see based on the analysis of representative works about Early Middle Ages.

National Romanticizing Representation of Great Moravia and its Fall

Mihály Horváth (1809 – 1878), considered a founder of the national liberal historical school in Hungary, submitted his first synthetic history of Hungarians/Magyars *A magyarok története* (1842). The mix of national liberal and romantic elements manifested themselves in his uncritical adoption of Hungarian/Magyar traditions from Hungarian chronicles. He only acknowledged such foreign sources that did not contradict national traditions.¹⁰ He applied similar concept in his four volume synthesis *Magyarország történelme* (1860 – 1863) under his cover name Hatvani. Contrary to the pre-revolutionary work, he offered more detailed representation of the establishment, territory and rulers of Great Moravia, but not of its fall.¹¹

In the synthesis of the same name, issued and extended in four new volumes during 1871 – 1873, he documented the deep love of Magyars for freedom as their primary aim. He also tried to document it in relation to the new homeland and the inhabitants speaking different languages who were allegedly considered their brothers or comrades-in-arms.¹² Before Horváth described the conquest of the homeland, he also mentions two Slavonic principalities on the both banks of the Danube's middle stream. The Slavonic leader Pribina [*Privina*] formed the basis of Moravian Empire [*Morvaország*] on the left bank; later it was seized by the other leader of Slavs Mojmir [*Moimir*]. He and his successor Rastislav [*Ratiszláv*] were fighting for its independence from German kings, which was achieved by Svätopluk [*Svatopluk*] in 870. Horváth used the name *Great Moravia* [*Nagy-Morvaország, Marahania*] for the area from the Czech-

⁹ Péter Gunst, *A magyar történetírás története* [History of Hungarian historiography], p. 207.

¹⁰ Ignác Romsics, *Clio bűvöletében...* [Under the Enchantment of Clio...], p. 85.

¹¹ Beáta Pintérová, *Pohľady maďarskej historiografie na otázku príchodu Maďarov do Karpatskej kotliny a na ich vzťahy k okoliu (od polovice 19. storočia do konca 20. storočia)* [Views of Hungarian Historiography on the Question of the Arrival of Magyars in the Carpathian Basin and their Relations to the Surroundings (From the Middle of the 19th Century to the End of the 20th Century)], in *Dějiny – Teorie – Kritika* [History – Theory – Criticism], 2011, Vol. 6, no. 1, pp. 78-81.

¹² Ignác Romsics, *Clio bűvöletében...* [Under the Enchantment of Clio...], p. 126.

Polish border up to the Drava river. He also linked Svätopluk with the mission of apostolic brothers Cyril [*Kyryll*] and Methodius [*Methodius*] and this author also mentions that Svätopluk almost succeeded to establish the National Church independent from Rome.¹³

Horváth pointed out the integration efforts of northern and southern Slavs as one nation at the time when Magyars were settling in their new homeland. He did not answer the questions “*if the Slavonic Empire had been established what would have happened to Germany (i.e. the Kingdom of the East Franks) and how would have influenced it Europe as a whole*”, but he at least mentioned the causes of the collapse of this project. It was due to the unexpected arrival of Magyars, the seizure of Pannonia, and the displacement of Slavs from the area of the Danube. In this way the Magyars broke into the northern and the southern Slavonic tribes.¹⁴ In fact Horváth reaffirmed the thoughts of Palacký, and he defined the historical role of Magyars in this space by means of his concept. Furthermore, he mentions that the news about the successful invasion of Magyars was brought to Germany, Arnulf called them on against the powerful and feared Duke of Great Moravian Svätopluk. Horváth described the fate of defeated and humiliated Svätopluk who died in 894 by means of two possible traditional stories. Thus he offered some choice for readers, either to believe in the Hungarian/Magyar tradition according to which he got drowned in the Danube or in the Slavonic romantic tradition about his life as a hermitin Zobor. There is nothing said about the fall of Great Moravia. He only mentions the disputes of Svätopluk’s sons– Mojmír [*Moimir*] and Svätopluk II. [*II. Szvatopluk*]. With respect to Árpád’s conquest and in accordance with *Gesta Hungarorum*, he understands it as a happy ending for the Magyars.¹⁵

The influence of romanticizing national concept of professor I. Horváth and traditional education can be also seen in the work of another historian during the 1850s and 1860s, Károly Szabó (1829 – 1890). He was a professor of Hungarian history and its auxiliary sciences at Cluj-Napoca University, but he did not master the method of the critical analysis of sources.¹⁶ This fact was reflected in his monograph dealing with Hungarian/Magyar chieftains starting from Árpád till the rule of St. Stephen of Hungary – *A magyar vezérek kora Arpádtól Szent*

¹³ Mihály Horváth, *Magyarország történelme*. Első kötet [History of Hungary. Volume 1.], Pest, Heckenast Gusztáv, 1871, p. 46.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 46-47.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.46, 50-51.

¹⁶ Péter Gunst, *A magyar történetírás története* [History of Hungarian historiography], p. 203.

Istvánig (1869). He repeated the well-known schemas of his predecessors resulting from German (*Annals of Fulda*), Byzantine (the work of the emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus *De administrando imperio*), Hungarian and Slavonic sources and chronicles. Szabó also referred to Palacký when emphasizing the historical role of Magyars and their impact on the direction of world history. In accordance with the interpretation of anonymous notary, he described the conquest of homeland in details and dated it 889 – 895.

This historian understands the year 892 as a milestone for the topic of Great Moravia. He highlighted not only the alliance of Arnulf with the Magyars against Svätopluk's Empire [*Szvatoplug birodalma*], but also the military expedition of Árpád and the successful conquest of Upper Hungary [*Felső-Magyarország, Felföld*]. Szabó dated the invasions of Magyars to Transdanubia in 894, after Svätopluk deceased and the Moravian Empire [*Morvaország*] was divided between his three sons – Mojmir [*Mojmir*] and Svätopluk [*Z(w)ventibáld*] (but he does not mention the name of the third son). Their competitiveness and the fact that they ignored their father's advice resulted in an armed conflict. Furthermore, the Bavarians also participated, and this fact resulted in the fall of declining empire.¹⁷ In parallel with the establishment of "Magyar Empire" [*magyar birodalom*] and Árpád's rule, Szabó described the last years of Great Moravia as the Moravian Land [*Morva föld*] disappearing due to the Magyar "fatal blow".¹⁸

The texts of Szabó were also embellished with myths and stories that were attributed some historical meaning such as the Legend of Svätopluk's Three Wands or the Legend of the White Horse as a symbol of the conquest of this territory. This legend can be found in all domestic chronicles (*the Buda Chronicle, the Vienna Illuminated Chronicle, the Chronicle of John of Turiec, the Bratislava Chronicle*) and in oral Hungarian/Magyar traditions.¹⁹

The non-critical approach to the history of Hungarian/Magyar nation was also applied by the historian of Jewish origin Vilmos Frankl (1843 – 1924), from 1874 Fraknói, despite his efforts to reveal and evaluate historical sources. His tendency to the policy of dualism and work for Catholic Church (he became a bishop) influenced his scientific activities. Fraknói's conservative, pro-Habsburg and Catholic attitude is proved by his three-volume synthetic work *Amagyar nemzet története* (1872), worked out on the call of the Society of St. Stephen of

¹⁷ Károly Szabó, *A magyar vezérek kora Árpádtól Szent Istvánig* [The Age of Hungarian chieftains from Árpád to Saint Stephen], Pest, Ráth Mór, 1869, pp. 75-81, 125.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 102, 133-134.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 66-67, 93.

Hungary. His concept is based on the role of Church in Hungarian history. He considers the Church the basis for the establishment of Hungarian state, for the protection against enemies, the strength which keeps independence and the national character of state and a tool for the including Hungary among European states.²⁰ The priority given to the topics related to Christianization process starting from the first Hungarian king over the unchristian past of Magyar people was also indicated in the Fraknói's approach to the Great Moravian tradition. He omitted it, and if he mentions something from this period, there is nothing new compared to Horváth and Szabó: the act of alliance in 892 against the Duke of Great Moravia Svätopluk [*Szvatopluk, Nagy-Morvaország*], the defeat of Svätopluk's armed forces, the voluntary subjugation of Slavonic people and the conquest of homeland during 889 – 895 from the Carpathians to the Adriatic Sea, from the Székelys to Moravia.²¹

Representation of Great Moravia and its Fall, between Ideologisation and Professionalization

From the beginning of 1880s, the part of historians in the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (Gyula Pauler, Tivadar Botka, Károly Szabó, Ferenc Salamon) tried to determine the year of the conquest of the homeland by Magyars because of forthcoming one thousand anniversary of their arrival in the Carpathian Basin and the establishment of the Hungarian state. In general, they agreed that it was the process lasting several years between the years 888 – 900.²² The efforts to determine the “Golden Age” of Hungarian/Magyar nation at the time axis raised strong interest of (semi-) professional historians in early medieval history. They not only wrote about it, but compared to previous works, they “innovated” – reinterpreted in accordance with the method of critical analysis. They continued to work with the historical representation of Great Moravia that served as a tool to identify the beginning and the end of the conquest of homeland by Magyars.

This tool was also used by Ferenc Salamon (1825 – 1892) in his work *A honfoglalás éve* (1883). As one of few historians and despite the fact he had no

²⁰ Emma Lederer, *A magyar polgári történetírás rövid története* [A Brief History of Hungarian Bourgeois Historiography], Budapest, Kossuth könyvkiadó, 1969, pp. 67-68; Ignác Romsics, *Clio bűvöletében...* [Under the Enchantment of Clio...], p. 131.

²¹ Vilmos Frankl, *A magyar nemzet története. I. Füzet* [History of the Hungarian nation. Part 1.], Pest, Szent István Társulat, 1872, pp. 19-20.

²² Gyula Pauler, *Lebedia, Etelköz, Millenarium (II.)* [Lebedia, Etelköz, Millenium II.], in *Századok* [Centuries], 1880, Vol. 14, no. 2, p. 103.

education in history, he was interested in theoretical problems. He called on scientism and impartiality of historians.²³ While searching for significant milestones for leaving the original homeland by Magyars and their settling in a new one, he pointed out two events: the war against the Bulgarians and the dispute of Svätopluk's sons. With respect to the second event, he took into account such facts as the death of Svätopluk (894), one-year ceasefire between his sons and its failure, the mixing in this conflict by Magyars, the defeat of bickering brothers and the conquest of homeland.²⁴

Based on the comparison of two sources – the *Annals of Fulda* and Porphyrogenitus's work – he reconstructed the sequence of events and differentiated two stages of Magyar arrival in their new homeland. He understands the first stage between the years 892 – 894 as a preparation stage.

In his opinion, the alliance with the Germans (i.e. Franks) against the Slavs in 892 prepared the ground for a gradual decline of the Moravian Empire [*Morva birodalom*] and its definite conquest. Two years later, there was an alliance with the Slavs. According to Salamon, the permanent settlement of Magyars occurred during the second stage in 897 and 898.²⁵

Political situation in Hungary in 1890s also activated the historians from the "kuruc" (independent) camp, for example Sándor Márki (1853 – 1925), the professor of world history in Cluj-Napoca. His historical approach links national ideas and the state's independence with idealizing plebeian democratic elements.²⁶ In 1890 the journal *Századok* published his study in two Parts under the name *A középkor kezdete Magyarországon*. This study is very interesting from several points of view: because of the criticism of medieval source (questioning the conquest according to *Gesta Hungarorum*), the terminological preciseness of the way of conquest (the differentiation between a non-violent settlement [*megszállás*] and a conquest [*foglalás*]), because of nationalistic background (the reference to the Magyarization of the most of Slavs in the area of rivers the Váh, the Hron and the Nitra after the arrival of Magyars) and because of the deformation of the national identity of Slovaks. In the case of deformation of their national identity, he wrote about Toths as the descendants of Czechs and Moravians who arrived in Hungary in the 15th century.²⁷

²³ Ignác Romsics, *Clio bővületében...* [Under the Enchantment of Clio...], pp. 135-136.

²⁴ Ferencz Salamon, *A honfoglalás éve* [The Year of the Conquest], Budapest, Az Athenaeum r. társulat könyvnyomdája, 1883, 48 p.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

²⁶ Ignác Romsics, *Clio bővületében...* [Under the Enchantment of Clio...], p. 150.

²⁷ Sándor Márki, *A középkor kezdete Magyarországon (I.)* [The beginning of the Middle

Márki describes Great Moravia on several pages as the territory situated in the valleys of the Morava, the Ipel' and the Danube. His description starts with the betrayal of Svätopluk against Rastislav [*Rastizlav*] and ends with the fall of the Empire in 907. This author also considers its civilisation benefit: *"The life of this state was so short, only two decades, and during this time it could not contribute to civilisation. Could it follow the customs of those who defeated it during the first years of the arrival of Magyars?"*²⁸

He described Great Moravia [*Morvaország*] as a northern-west part of Hungary and in the context of the dissemination of Christianity. He started his presentation about the process of converting the Slavs with the year 862. According to Márki the Moravians and the Slovaks [*Morva, Tótok*] came to Constantinople and requested the emperor to send somebody who could learn humble Sloviens [*Szlovének*] the truth and explain the meaning of the Holy Scripture. The mission of Cyril [*Cyryll*] and Methodius [*Methód*] to the territory from the Morava river, the mouth of the Ipel' and the left bank of the Danube was aimed to inform the Slavs [*Szlávok*] about the Christian faith. Furthermore, he mentioned the archiepiscopate from 874 (from the right bank of the Váh to the Sudetenland), the administration of Moravian Church by the apostle Methodius and the administration of Syrmia by his pupils. He explained the importance of Methodius's activities such as the translation of Greek books to Slavonic language and the use of Slavonic language as a sacral language from the point of view of his period and his "kuruc-protestant" attitude: *"Methodius who was Greek in no case did it because of his enthusiasm for the Slavic character of Svätopluk's Moravian-Slovak Empire [Svätopluk morva-tót birodalma]. At that time, they were not interested in national ideas. He simply tried to make the truth of Christian faith understandable, how later it was done by the second Slavic missionary Ján Hus. "Márki mentions that "Svätopluk was not keen for Slavism very much, otherwise he would not defend those who blamed Methodius for the oppression of Latin."*²⁹ He explained it with the expulsion of Methodius's pupils by Svätopluk [*Svätopluk*]. According to his opinion the Slavic liturgical language could not leave permanent traces because it only existed in the area of the Váh for a short period of time.³⁰

Ages in Hungary, I.), in Századok [Centuries], 1890, Vol. 24, pp. 311-327; Sándor Márki: *A középkor kezdete Magyarországon (II.)* [The beginning of the Middle Ages in Hungary, II.], in Századok [Centuries], 1890, Vol. 24, pp. 396-413.

²⁸ Sándor Márki, *A középkor kezdete... (II.)* [The beginning of the Middle Ages..., II.], p. 404.

²⁹ Sándor Márki, *A középkor kezdete Magyarországon (I.)* [The beginning of the Middle Ages..., I.], p. 326.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 327.

For some authors the research into the period of Árpád and the conquest of homeland became a sanctuary from the topics that initiated the disputes between the protestant camp and the Catholic camp of historians. It was also the case of the director of state archives and positivistically oriented historian Gyula Pauler (1841 – 1903). He focused on Árpád after his attempt to link the idea of independence with Catholicism failed. However, with respect to positivism, he only applied the impartial, descriptive method of presenting the past. The Pauler's work is typical of factual material and the collection of written texts about the oldest history of Hungary. As he avoided the critical evaluation of sources, he mostly slipped into the description of facts.³¹ Therefore it is not surprising that the chronicle of anonymous notary was his source for the interpretation of the arrival of Magyars in the Carpathian Basin. He even describes him as a critical writer searching the historical truth in his foreword for the edition of sources from the period of conquest.³²

The Pauler's key works *A magyar nemzet története az árpádházi királyok alatt* and *A Magyar nemzet története szent Istvánig* interpret Great Moravia [Morvaország] according to more or less known schemes and stereotypes: the grow of empire to the superpower during the reign of Svätopluk, the arrival of Magyars after his death and their mixing in German-Moravian fights, the conquest and the use of conflict between the sons of Svätopluk in favour of their victory. Svätopluk, who was dead at the time when Magyars arrived in 895, was described by Pauler in accordance with German traditions: "*strong Svätopluk [Swatoplug] was the terror of the neighbourhood, the wisest and smartest for his people, blood craving rebel*". Thus he indirectly included him among the potential obstacles of Magyars while they were taking their new homeland (if he had reigned until then). Pauler attributed Svätopluk the name "*fabulous father*" in relation to his sons who were urged to unite based on the example of three wands.³³

He did not mention the fall of Great Moravia in his work published in 1899. He only described its Slavic inhabitants; some fled to neighbouring nations, some

³¹ Péter Gunst, *A magyar történetírás története* [History of Hungarian historiography], pp. 205-206; Ignác Romsics, *Clio bűvöletében...* [Under the Enchantment of Clio...], p. 134; Emma Lederer, *A magyar polgári történetírás rövid története* [A Brief History of Hungarian Bourgeois Historiography], pp. 34-36.

³² Gyula Pauler, *Béla király névtelen jegyzőjének műve...* "A tartalom" [Work of the anonymous notary of King Béla... "Contents"], in *A magyar honfoglalás kútforrásai* [Sources of the Hungarian Conquest], Budapest, MTA, 1900, pp. 386-387.

³³ Gyula Pauler, *A Magyar nemzet története szent Istvánig* [The History of Hungary up to Saint Stephen], Budapest, A Magyar Tudományos Akadémia kiadása, 1900, pp. 34, 41-42.

subjugated to various extents– as slaves, menials or companions.³⁴ Next year he described in detail this event that was preceded with Magyar attack on Moravians in 902 and the occupation of the area from the Váh, the Nitra up to the Morava. He concludes that because of unsuccessful reign of Mojmir [Mojmir] and Svätopluk II. [Svätopluk], and the fact that the Magyars conquered, the Empire collapsed in 906.³⁵ With respect to Christianity, he only mentions that prior the Magyarsit was Methodius [Methodius] who converted the Czechs.³⁶

The professionalization of Hungarian/Magyar historical science on one hand and the celebration of millennium from the establishment of Hungary on the other hand seems to be two incompatible poles. It was not easy to combine a modern critical and objectivist approach to the study of one's nation past without any inclination to its heroisation and idealisation which was required by the grandiose events regarding the celebration of millennium. Despite this fact, several Hungarian/Magyar historians manifested seriousness in some aspects. On the occasion of millennium during 1895 – 1898 the history of Hungarian/Magyar nation was written in several volumes *A Magyar Nemzet Története*. The oldest history until the extinction of the Árpáds was compiled by Lajos (Grün) Baróti (1856 – 1933). When describing the arrival of Magyars in the Danube river area in 895 and their contacts with indigenous population, he doubted the chronicle *Gesta Hungarorum* and criticised it sharply: because of telling a lie and concealing some facts(not knowing the original homeland of Hungarians/Magyars, the names such as Svätopluk and his sons), fabricating the most of terms and contemning the traditions contrary to other medieval sources (for example *the Legend of the White Horse* and *the Legend of Svätopluk*).³⁷

Baróti offered a survey of the Moravian rules – from Pribina [Privina] up to Svätopluk [Svätopluk] and also mentioned the merits of some of them for the dissemination of Christianity (e.g. the construction of church in Nitra, later Pribina and Kocel' had merits in constructing the other churches in Blatnohrad).

³⁴ Gyula Pauler, *A magyar nemzet története az árpádházi királyok alatt. Első kötet* [History of the Hungarian nation under the kings of the House of Árpád, Volume 1], Budapest, Az Athenaeum irod. és nyomdai r. társulat kiadása, 1899, pp. 7-8.

³⁵ Gyula Pauler, *A Magyar nemzet története szent Istvánig* [The History of Hungary up to Saint Stephen], p. 44.

³⁶ Gyula Pauler, *A magyar nemzet története az árpádházi királyok alatt...* [History of the Hungarian nation under the kings...], pp. 15-16.

³⁷ Lajos Baróti, *Magyarország az Árpádház kihaltáig* [Hungary up to the extinction of the House of Árpád], in József Szalay – Lajos Baróti (Eds.): *A Magyar Nemzet Története* [History of the Hungarian nation], Budapest, Lampel 1895-1898, in <http://mek.oszk.hu/00800/00892/html/> (Accessed in 10.10.2014).

Thus author attributed merits to Rastislav [*Rasztizláv*] and Svätopluk in requesting the emperor Michael III., each of them individually, to send the Slavic apostles – the brothers Constantine/Saints Cyril [*Konstantin /Szt. Czirill*] and Methodius [*Methodius*]. Because of his act, Baróti attributed Svätopluk several modifiers: crafty and snaky because of his betrayal of Rastislav, capricious and uncertain because of his hesitation with respect to German priests and Methodius, and powerful because of his resistance against enemies and the territorial expansion of Great Moravia [*Nagy-Morávia*]. He repeated a well-known scenario about the end of Great Moravia: its weakening due to the disputes between Svätopluk's (unnamed) sons and its collapse under the attacks of Magyars.³⁸

At the same time when individuals contributed to the millennium anniversary by their works, the collective of historians initiated the working out of detailed and representative synthesis regarding the millennium development of Hungarian/Magyar nation – from its oldest history up to the present time. Sándor Szilágyi (1827 – 1899) was authorised to lead the millennium project team. After accepting the political Austro-Hungarian Compromise, it was the role of this self-educated author and the secretary of Hungarian Historical Society to ensure the cooperation of two historical camps – protestant-kuruc and catholic-labanc.³⁹ Similarly to the Hungarian political scene, the coming millennium also brought the period of “*treuga dei*” to Hungarian/Magyar historiography. Finally, during 1895 – 1898 ten-volume monumental work was published *A magyar nemzet története*, also known as *Millenáristörténet*.

The working out of its first volume is associated with the name of Henrik (Morgenstern) Marczali (1856 – 1940), the university professor of Jewish origin who was one of the first Hungarian/Magyar liberal professional historians. Under the influence of German historicism and Ranke's thoughts, he emphasized objectivity, return to primary sources and their criticism as well as research into Hungarian history in international context. He contributed to the implementation of the method of modern critical philology in Hungarian/Magyar historiography.⁴⁰ The “millennium” synthesis as a whole did not achieved harmony in the attitudes of authors, but Marczali's historical approach to the past represented an expected broader perspective with respect to the tradition

³⁸ Lajos Baróti, Magyarország az Árpádház kihaltáig [Hungary up to the extinction of the House of Árpád], in <http://mek.oszk.hu/00800/00892/html/> (Accessed in 12.10.2014).

³⁹ Emma Lederer, *A magyar polgári történetírás rövid története* [A Brief History of Hungarian Bourgeois Historiography], pp. 38-39.

⁴⁰ Ignác Romsics, *Clio bűvöletében...* [Under the Enchantment of Clio...], p. 141.

of revolution and the Compromise and the reaching of accord with respect to the issue of confessional ambivalence.

Marczali also applied his critical approach in his above mentioned volume under the name of *Magyarország a királyság megalapításáig*. First, he studied Hungarian medieval historical chronicles to get a complex picture of Great Moravia period. After he compared them, he concluded that some chroniclers hardly knew anything about the period that preceded the conquest. However, they knew the name of Svätopluk. Though Anonymus was the only one who described the conquering of new homeland by the Magyar tribal union in details, but the fact that he did not mention Svätopluk and his Empire resulted in Marczali's conviction that he knew less about the previous period than the other chroniclers.⁴¹ Therefore Marczali's work was based on foreign sources (*Constantin's work, Annals of Fulda, Conversion of Bavarians and Carantanians*) and thus he mentioned the existence of two Slavic state systems: the Empire of the Moravians stretching to the north from the Danube up to the Morava river [*Morvaország, morva birodalom*] and the area of Lower Pannonia with the centre in Blatnohrad.⁴²

Svätopluk became a central figure also in Marczali's work "*the great rival of the eastern ruler of Frankish Empire*", the traitor and monarch at the same time, that one who won political independence from the Franks and extended his reign over the ridges of the Carpathians, Silesia and Bohemia. He calls the Svätopluk's empire "*the first larger Slavic state, unestablished by foreigners*". Because from 892 to his death, he withstood allied Frankish, Bavarian, Swabian and Magyar armies, according to his opinion he became an equipollent and dangerous rival. In world history, he described him as the first advocate of Slavs who united numerous tribes and made them redoubtable for German oppressors. He described the last part of Svätopluk's death according to three various traditions: the legend of his life in Zobor as a hermit in accordance with Kosmas's chronicle, the legend about the taking of Pannonia by Magyars after his death according to Hungarian/Magyar tradition and the legend of three wands according to Constantine Porphyrogenitus.⁴³

With respect to the conquest by the Magyars, he also mentioned the Legend of Svätopluk [*Zvatapolug*] who gave up his homeland. However, Marczali

⁴¹ Henrik Marczali, *A vezérek kora és a királyság megalapítása* [The age of the chieftains and the foundation of the kingdom], in *A magyar nemzet története*, I. [History of the Hungarian nation, Tomus I.], Budapest, Athenaeum irodalmi és nyomdai részvénytársulat betüivel, 1895, pp. 82-83.

⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 85, 88-89.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 110-112.

was aware of the fact that this legend more or less celebrates the bravery of Magyars and luring the smart Svätopluk. Thus he wanted to point out the thinking of Magyars at that time, the fact that there were several legends known to people based on the hereditary right of Magyars to the taken land.⁴⁴ According to German sources, he concludes that during 896 – 900, the Magyar reign [*magyar birodalom*] superseded the Moravian reign and the Magyars favouring Mojmir mixed in the dispute of brothers [*Moimir, Szvatopluk*]. Thus he deduced the consequences for Great Moravia: *“First the Magyars reached the Nitra region, but it lasted several years to subvert the real ancient Moravian Empire. Before the century ended, Hungary was established.”*⁴⁵

Marczali attributed the merits for the establishment of Hungarian state to Christianity and to the interconnection of the spirit of the East with the West. He also noticed this cultural and church dimension in pre-Hungarian period when he evaluated the educational level of Slavs and the attitude of the Dukes of Moravia – Rastislav and Svätopluk – to the church organisation in Great Moravia. According to his opinion and despite the territorial expansion to the west and south-west, the Slavic patriotism was developing more slowly in the sphere of education due to its dependence on German (Frankish) and Greek culture.⁴⁶ Besides the dissemination of Christianity by Pribina [*Privina*] in the Lower Pannonia, he also did not forget to mention the Slavic apostles Cyril [*Kyrillos*], in particular Methodius [*Methodios*], the later Moravian archbishop. Marczali characterised Rastislav as that one who did not hesitate to convert to Christianity and so that he might ensure independence from the Franks, he turned to the Greek emperor for help. However, he understood the role of Svätopluk in defending the state and Christian culture as a barbarian action: *“Svätopluk himself destroys the church in Slavic language established by Methodius – capturing or repudiating his scholars, listening to Latin mass and preferring Frankish priests. Therefore, the considerable discrepancy between the Slavic barbarism and the strict Christian doctrine resulted in the prevention of the development of national culture and the substantial contribution to the fall of Empire. There is no better evidence of barbarism than the fact that a ruler and nations from personal reasons, following their instincts, weaken or destroy the most important institutions of maintaining and strengthening the state. The mutual political and church contradictions resulted in the fact that Christianity, at*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 98, 100.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 115, 119-120.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 91.

*least in the territory of ancient Pannonia, did not become deeply rooted among the Slavs. After the arrival of Magyars, paganism prevailed.*⁴⁷

In his own synthesis *Magyarország története* (1911) where he recapitulated the history of Hungary starting from the origin of Magyars up to the Compromise (1867), Marczali repeated the terrifying representations of Svätopluk and intensified the barbarism of Slavs. He concludes that Christianity was a destructive element for the Moravian Empire and the power tool of Svätopluk (Caesario-Papism).⁴⁸

Conclusions:

Did Hungarian/Magyar Historiography cope with the issue of Great Moravia?

If we look at Great Moravia as a whole, and in the way the Hungarian/Magyar historians introduced it during the period of dualism generally and without any details, the historical representation was typical of the following components: the arrival of Magyar tribal union in the Carpathian Basin, the state of Great Moravia and its territorial extend during the reign of Svätopluk, the Slavic apostles Cyril and Methodius and the importance of Christianity, the alliance between the eastern Frankish emperor and the Magyars against the Moravians, the death of Svätopluk and the dispute of his sons over power, the weakening of Great Moravia due to internal military conflicts and its fall under the pressure of Magyar attacks. Of course, not each of them included the overall line of above mentioned events. There were also such authors who misrepresented some facts, consciously concealed, or did not consider the facts to be important. However, there were also such authors who directed one's attention to one concrete phenomenon (for example Márki to Cyril and Methodius mission for the clarification of the significance of Christianity). Therefore, the researched historical representation was not homogenous, which was also proved by the differences in the spelling of first names and geographical names. Depending on the level of professionalism and the ideologisation of historical science, critical approach to sources, the external and internal determinants influencing the work and thoughts of historians, the historical presentations of many differences – factual, terminological and interpretational.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 94.

⁴⁸ Henrik Marczali, *Magyarország története* [History of Hungary], Budapest, Athenaeum Irodalmi és Nyomdai Részvénytársulat, 1911, pp. 39-40.

The presentation of Great Moravia and its fall during 1860s and 1870s was influenced by prevailing romanticising ideas about the Hungarian/Magyar nation and its heroic battles, the fantasy of historians, self-education and the automatic repetition of national traditions from the Hungarian medieval chronicles. The fabricated names of principalities, the Árpád's warriors (*Huba, Kadoča, Sovárd*) or Slavic commanders (*Zobor*, the Duke of Nitra), in *Gesta Hungarorum*, enabled to identify the historians who used it. Besides the detailed description of heroic battles, they were brought into light with the repeated interpretation schemes as the basis of subjugation theory: fear and trembling of Magyars among subjugated people, the act of voluntary subjugation, the symbol of selling the homeland, the motive of hostage and gifting. They are present in the works of authors such as Horváth, Szabó, Fraknói and even Pauler. Despite the fact that *Gesta* do not mention Great Moravia and its rulers, because the anonymous author did not write about them, the authors repeated minimum those parts which corresponded with the territory of this state (for example Nitra region, the Hron river). Consequently, their interpretation was supplemented with the terms related to Great Moravia.

The works of Horváth, Szabó and Fraknói were typical of the high level of non-criticism and purposiveness. The presentation of Great Moravia and its fall was based on their sticking to the description of conquest by an anonymous notary. They liked to repeat traditional stories, specifically the Legend of Svätopluk, and they attributed them some historical significance. At the same time, they promoted the symbols of conquering the homeland, the decadency of Empire or the conquering of powerful enemy. Svätopluk became the central figure of their stories about Great Moravia– traitor, the enemy of Germans and Magyars, the redoubtable, powerful duke.

Some progress in the understanding of Great Moravian period was due to the criticism of *Gesta Hungarorum* during 1880s and 1890s (Márki, Baróti, Marczali). Till that time, it was considered to be an undoubtable source about the conquest and subjugation by the Magyars. Thus the unified concept of Great Moravia based on the description by the anonymous notary disappeared. Though the last two critics of chronicle included the legends into their works, they did not demonstrate historical reality, but their purposive, nation glorifying function and mentality of people during the period when they had originated. From the last third of the 19th century, the pantheon of Great Moravia figures also extended in the names of Slavic apostles, the Dukes of Moravia and Transdanubia. However, Svätopluk is a figure who was always mentioned first in the descriptions about the territorial expansion of Great Moravia. His presentation was not changed very much, only some new attributes were used

such as a terror of the neighbourhood, a rebel, a wise man, a rascal (Pauler), a tricky and indecisive man (Baróti), a unifier of the Slavic tribes (Marczali).

The mosaic of the representation of Great Moravia was supplemented in a new aspect approximately during 1880s – the mission of the Slavic apostles, Constantin (Cyril) and Methodius. Hungarian/Magyar historians attributed Christianity civilisational, moral, cultural and state formation dimensions. The approach of the Duke of Moravia, specifically Svätopluk, to the doctrine was evaluated in a larger spectrum. Some authors appreciated his merits with respect to the implementation of Slavic mass thanks to the Slavic apostles (Baróti, Acsády). Some pointed out the reasons why Christian doctrine was not largely accepted and not understood by people (Márki, Marczali). The dissemination of Christianity by Pribina in Transdanubia was appreciated positively, the measures taken by Svätopluk after the death of Methodius are characterised as barbarism, his power aspirations and a lack of interest in the Slavic idea.

Starting from 1880s when the representation of Great Moravia manifested itself in more differentiated form, we find several answers to the reasons why Hungarian/Magyar historians started to cope with a foreign national symbol. The fact that Hungarian/Magyar historiography did not omit Great Moravia could relate to the factor of animosity and to its constitutive and national identification function. Furthermore, the research into the early medieval state formation should also include the precise information about its end. Two different national stories – Magyar and Slovak – overlapped just in this issue. During the 19th century, two “rivalling” national cultures attributed significance to the same narrative but very often with opposite signs. Where the “Golden Age” of one culture ends, the “Golden Age” of the other one (of a conqueror or allies) usually starts. The presentation of foreign phenomenon and the description of its fall with their contribution could mean for the Magyars a certain form of their self-identification, their attitude towards the others and the appreciation of their nation merits when the conquest started. This aspect was more apparent when the preparation for millennium celebrations was in progress and as we could see in Salamon’s work, the last years of Great Moravia were used as an argument for the date of the end of conquest.

The most of Hungarian/Magyar historians agree that the weakening and collapsing of Great Moravia was accelerated by the conflict of Svätopluk’s sons. Furthermore, they agree that the Magyars struck a deadly blow during the years 905–907. Do their works also mention any continuity of Hungarian state formation and Great Moravia through the subjugated ethnic or the territory? With the exception of Márki who unsystematically alternated various ethnonyms to name the inhabitants of Great Moravia (*Moravians, Slovaks, Sloviens, Slavs*),

most of the authors tried to make a distinction between the current (Slovak) inhabitants of the north and north-west regions of Hungary and the original inhabitants (the ancient Slovians, the Moravian Slavs, the Moravia-Pannonia Slavs, the Moravian people). They wrote about their subjugation, mostly without any resistance or about vanishing and disappearing or about their exodus to neighbouring countries. From the territorial point of view, only Marczali mentioned the replacement of Great Moravia with the Hungarian state.

Besides the fact that the European (national) historiographies constructed national narratives in the 19th century and through them also the representations of their enemies, they were becoming modern scientific disciplines. Gradual increase in specialisations and the use of critical method for the analysis and comparison of sources demonstrated a certain level of scientism, impartiality and seriousness in historical works of these authors. Depending on actual political, social or financial situation, historians had various conditions for their self-realisation and professional preparation. Some were only offered a space to participate in professional discussions and a possibility to publish results of their researches. Luckier ones could count on a developed network of specialised institutions and university departments, to qualify for a relevant historical field, to acquire foreign scholarships and respond to incentives abroad. Except for 1848 – 1849 and the post-revolutionary decade, the Hungarian/Magyar historical science has also professionalised. Specifically, from the last third of the 19th century under the influence of rapidly increasing cultural modernisation, some historians continue efforts to achieve some professionalism and impartiality of the interpretation of historical events. For example, Marczali's effort to reconstruct history objectively manifested itself in his both historical works and not only during his studies of domestic chronicles and the comparing of foreign provenience sources, but also with respect the critical reflection of the presentist trends of Hungarian/Magyar culture at the turn of the 19th and the 20th century: *"Currently, when the situation of national minorities becomes more and more important, we can see some efforts to come to the conclusion in accordance with the fact that the Magyars drove a wedge to the centre of the organising and uniting Slavs, and they still stretch its body. However, this understanding is very far from the spirit of the age, and it also does not correspond with reality."*⁴⁹

We can see similar trends in Márki's work when he introduces Great Moravia period as the period not coping with the issue of nationalities. He demonstrated it with an indifferent attitude of Methodius and Svätopluk to the Slavic idea. However, he wanted to point out a lack of basis for the national

⁴⁹ Henrik Marczali, *A vezérek kora...* [The age of the chieftains...], p. 121.

requirements of Slovak patriots during the second half of the 19th century. Márki's "objective" representation of Great Moravia should have served, among others, to help to eliminate the myth about the Slovaks as Svätopluk's descendants. It can be proved by his opinion of the Slovaks as an unhistorical ethnic and their arrival in Hungary in the 15th century. Thus he strengthened his representation about the autochthonousness of Magyars within the boundaries of Hungary.

This approach also proves that despite the increasing level of professionalism most Hungarian/Magyar historians were not able to cross the level of dominant nationalistic ideology. Keeping one's distance from national issues, political pressure or personal beliefs was more difficult if a historian and writer or a historian and politician were the same person. It was not an isolated phenomenon in that century. At that time, it was expected if you write about history that you will take into account national and state interests and respond to the requirements of ruling elites. The analysis of historical works from the second half of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century convinced us not only about the interest of Hungarian/Magyar historians to include the period of Great Moravia into the history of Early Middle Period, but also about their intentions to construct its representation: the determination of the "Golden Age" of their nation, the emphasizing of its military virtue, the defence of its ancientness and autochthonousness in the conquered territory, the severance of the union of Slavic tribes or Magyar-Slovak coalescence.