



Fairfield plaque\*

\*Memorial plaque in honor of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, erected at the Fairfield, CT Town Hall by Magyar Studies of America in 2003

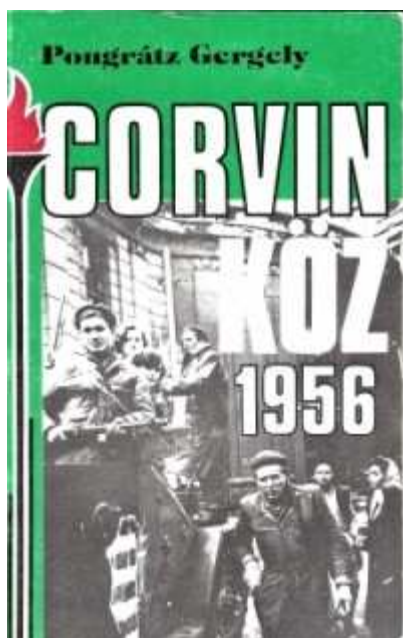
## November 2nd

Pongrátz Gergely

*This piece by Pongrátz Gergely has been translated from the book Corvin köz – 1956 (Corvin Passage). He was Commander of the volunteers fighting the Russians at what was perhaps the best known center of resistance in Budapest in the 1956 Revolution. (See map with article) This episode took place on November 2nd, when it still seemed as if the Revolution had been successful.*

A very interesting episode that characterized the entire Hungarian Revolution played out in the Commander's office in the morning. There were many young people among us, whom we had chased home in vain during the battles; they were unwilling to leave their brothers-in-arms and wonderfully stood their ground through the heaviest battles, to the very end. They quickly learned to handle the weapons and used them very effectively. Often it was these 12-13 year-old children who strengthened our resolve to continue the fight. Their courage and self-sacrifice served as an example for many of us. The photo of two such "Corvinists" was published by the world press after the Revolution. Their names were not important. They were "Pesti

srácok" (scamps), "Corvinists", which was a great distinction not only for them, but for us as well.



Zsuzsa was just giving me the last Home Guard I.D.s to sign, when Jancsi (Johnny) burst into the office. He was one of these young people who had come to join us around the 26th. Him too we had chased away in vain, in vain did we tell him to go home, he merely turned around and was where he had been before – in a window on the Körút. There were about a dozen of similar age, who competed with each other in the most difficult moments of the battles. They were heroes! But now Jancsi was scared.

"Uncle Bajusz" (meaning mustache – Pongrátz' nickname), he yelled, "my Mom is coming! Don't let her take me home! I'm a Home Guard too, I have the ID too. I've been assigned to the First Section of the Second Company. You'll let me stay, won't you?" he begged

Jancsi couldn't continue, because we could hear yelling out in the hallway between the Guards standing there and Jancsi's mother. So Jancsi jumped under the bed.

"Get away from me with that shotgun, son, because I'll slap you so hard your one eye will knock out the other! Where's the Commander? I want to talk with him!" yelled Jancsi's mom impetuously and, pushing aside everyone, came into the office.

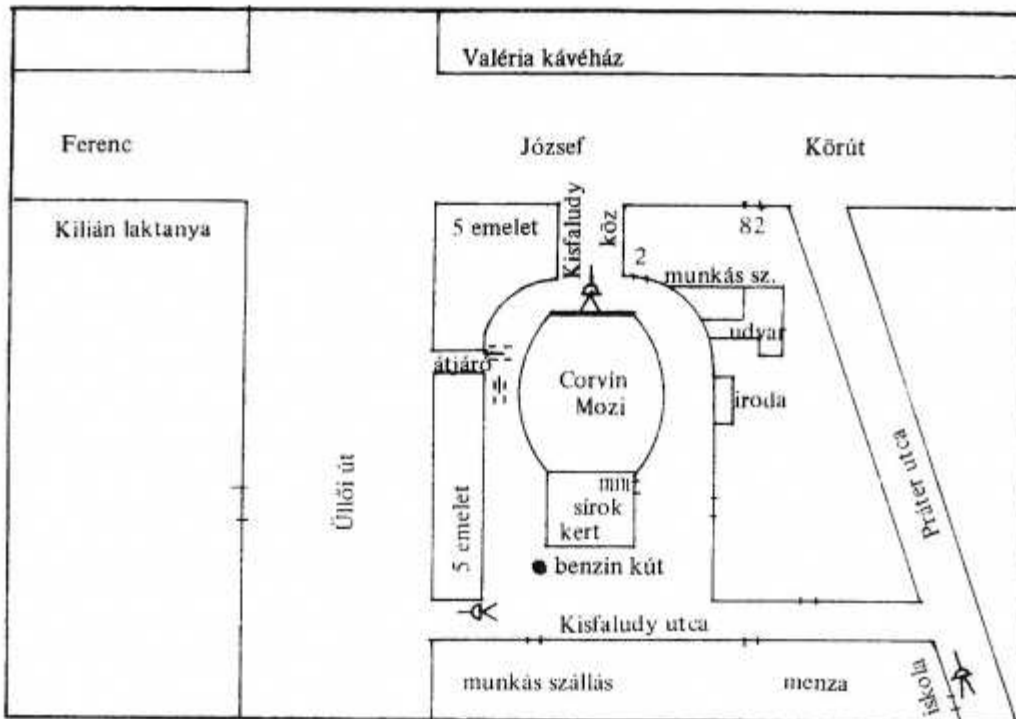
"You're the Commander?"

"Yes," I replied.

"Where's my son?" she asked.

"My dear lady", I replied, "first of all I ask you to sit down. Look, there are so many children here, I couldn't know which one is yours. Are you sure he's here?"

"I saw him five minutes ago in front of the movie theater, but he



*Map of Korvin köz taken from Pongrácz Gergely's book*

faces.

"What do you mean you'll stay here? I'll give it to you once we get home. But what your father will give you you'll remember for the rest of your life! And you deserve it too, for the agony we went through because of you. You come with me, I won't let go of your hand. Your father will tie you up and we'll watch you until this upheaval is over."

This scolding was a mother's loving anxiety for her

saw me too and disappeared, the little scamp. I had locked him into the bedroom, but he escaped from home. He wanted to come here, that's why I locked him in. He hasn't come home to eat or sleep for some five days. He's blond, 13 years old and is called Varga János. He has to be here!"

I was in trouble. I didn't want to lie, but neither did I want to betray Jancsi to his mom who was obviously a decent working woman. In my confusion, I turned to Zsuzsa and asked that she check the list of names for a boy of that age and by that name. The situation suddenly changed, however, however, when a revolutionary about 15 years of age brought me up a cup of coffee from the bunkhouse, where those with less severe wounds were housed. He had on his head a bandage which showed blood seeping through. When the woman saw our wounded companion, she began to cry. "Maybe I just imagined that the one I saw in front of the movie theater was my Jancsi. Maybe he is wounded too,

or maybe he's even dead. Maybe I'll never see my Jancsika again. Now I really don't know where to look for him," she wailed. "If he's not here, I'll go through the hospitals. Dear God, let me find him there instead of having to go look for him in the cemetery."

The woman was sobbing, and was no longer that lioness protecting her cub who had come into the office. At that point Jancsi, also crying, climbed out from under the bed: "Mom, I'm here ... and I'm not even wounded. There's nothing the matter with me! But you'll let me stay here, won't you? Promise me you won't take me home! I'm a Home Guard too, here's my ID, let me show you!"

But Jancsi didn't have time to take out his Home Guard ID, because his mother hugged him so tight and kissed him that he couldn't tell her all he wanted to. The tears of sadness and sorrow turned in a moment into tears of happiness and joy, and flowed down both their

child. Still crying, the mother gave him two kisses after every sentence. Once she quieted down a bit, I asked her to listen to me, because I had something important to tell her.

"My dear woman", I said, "believe me, your son is a hero too, as are those hundreds of other children who have taken up arms so we could finally win our country's freedom. We can thank these young people for the fact that the Russians have already withdrawn from Budapest, and will soon leave all of Hungary. It was these children who were there when the country needed them, they were there, they stood and held their ground, and achieved those results which you can now see everywhere.

"Believe me – I and the others also have mothers who cry as you did and worried about your son. It's true that we can't even tell these mothers not to cry, because unfortunately they have reason to. Still, I must ask you, could you tell me

what would happen to this unfortunate, long-suffering nation if every mother, whose anxiety is exactly as great as yours, would come and take their own Jancsika home?

During the battles we often chased away your Jancsika and the other children of similar age, but they did not want to leave because they felt this was where they had to be. The nation can thank these children for the victory of our revolution because this patriotism which is in them was what you, Hungarian mothers, had instilled in us, in them. Take home your son if you want. But I ask you to be very proud of your 13-year old Home Guard son, who had fought to acquire that title."

The woman stood up and responded in a very determined voice. She wasn't crying any more:

"Sir, you are still a young man too. Do you know what responsibility rests on you? The lives of these children are in your hands. I ask you, for the love of God, watch over them. What you have done in the last few days is the seventh wonder of the world. The eighth will be if you can also keep the victory you have fought for, which neither I nor my husband believe. I only ask you to watch over these children, because they are our greatest treasure. Forgive me for my previous behavior", she continued, "which was the behavior not of a Hungarian woman, but of a mother."

I told Jancsi to escort his mother home, and – if she would let him – to come back before dark. Zsuzsa filled out a permit to leave, and they went away...

*Pongráz Gergely (1932-2005) was the best-known of the six Pongráz brothers who fought in the Hungarian Revolution. They were of Hungarian-Armenian stock who moved from Transylvania to Hungary ahead of the advancing Romanian*

*and Russian troops in 1945. He eventually emigrated to the United States, but returned to Hungary in 1991, after the fall of Communism.*

## Let Us Remember! Emlékezzünk!

Lakatos Pál

*This piece was written in November 2018, by Lakatos Pál, a good summary of the events of 1956. We must never forget!*

It was a Sunday.

On that sleepy dawn, the city still turned over on its other side. Sleep still reigned in the rooms.

Having ended the strike, the nation prepared to go to work the next day.

But by then, the tracks of the Russian tanks were creaking through the streets. After having rid themselves of their rotten load, the traitors arriving in Budapest with and by them.

Of Kádár and his companions.

In Budapest and the countryside, the radios were desperately calling the world.

They asked for help.

The world, however, remained mute.

Cruelly, obstinately, treacherously and unfeelingly.

There were still some who resisted. They wanted to stop the largest military force of the world.

They did not succeed.

They could not have succeeded. Some fell headlong on the cobbles. Others fled to the mountains, with

weapons in their hands.

And there were those who headed for the borders.

200,000 left their country then. Armed troops and civilians. It was November 4th.

Today, we know it was a day of mourning.

Let candles burn in every home!

Let us remember them!

Let us remember our fallen selves!

## Élj tovább dicső nemzedék!

Évszázadok hamuja hullik reám.  
Boldog, s bús emlékek pora száll.  
Számok, fájdalmas évek számai,  
Melyek nem akarnak elmúlni.  
48, 56 mégis mind oly gyönyörű  
esemény,

Mert ekkor tudattuk, hogy mi is  
vagyunk e földtekén.

Győztünk!

De veszítettünk is sokat,  
Meggyötörték a Magyarokat.  
Minket, a hazát, s még oly sok mást.  
Másképp is történhetett volna,  
Bár akkor nem tudtuk, mit hoz a  
holnap.

Örültünk minden jónak, rossznak,  
S a forradalmi szónak,  
Mely segített elfeledni,  
Milyen állandóan rabságban lenni.

*This poem attests to the fact that the upcoming generation also has an appreciation of the historic importance of the 1956 Revolution.*

*Attila József Szabó wrote this poem in 2018 for the anniversary of the 1956 Hungarian Freedom Fight and Revolution. He is an 18-year-old sophomore at the Pannonhalma Benedictine Catholic high school. He is planning to study history, although he hasn't yet chosen the university he wants to attend. When not in school, he lives with his parents and four siblings in Pestszentlőrinc, Hungary.*

## Dr. Alexander Havadtoy (1924 – 2019)

*We have to say good-bye now to a very prominent member of our community, well-known and respected not only in the immediate Connecticut area, but also in Transylvania and Canada. Eternal rest grant unto him, o Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him. May he rest in peace!*



Born in Kovászna, Transylvania, grandson and son of Protestant

preachers, he passed away unexpectedly on October 7<sup>th</sup>, five weeks before his 95<sup>th</sup> birthday.

He studied at the Mikó Székely Reformed College in Sepsiszentgyörgy, followed by the Theological Faculty of the Hungarian Reformed Church at Kolozsvár, Transylvania, where he obtained his degree *summa cum laude* in 1948. He was granted a scholarship by the World Council of Churches to the University of Basel, Switzerland, where he obtained his Doctorate in Theology in 1951, under the direction of the world-famous theology professor Karl Barth. It was Barth who had suggested the topic for his thesis: The philosophy of Marx dealing with the problem of property and work.

He emigrated to Canada in 1952, where he led the Hungarian Presbyterian Church, first in London-Mt. Bridges, then in Windsor, ONT. It was there that

he met his wife, Magdalene, daughter of Hungarian immigrants. After the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, he helped 200 families to settle in Canada. In 1960, he was invited to serve at Calvin United Church of Christ in Fairfield, CT where he was minister for 33 years, serving both the Hungarian-speaking and the English-speaking congregation.

From 1967 until 1992, Rev. Havadtoy had a regular program on Radio Free Europe, which had an audience of a million behind the Iron Curtain, including József Cardinal Mindszenty who personally thanked him for it during his visit to the US in 1974.

A keen observer of affairs in his native Transylvania, Dr. Havadtoy frequently testified before Congress on human rights issues. For several years he was also Editor of a periodical titled *Carpathian Observer*. In

2001, he received the prestigious *Julianus* human rights award from the Hungarian government for his tireless support of Hungarians living outside Hungary.

Rev. Havadtoy also served as supervisor of theological students at Yale University for 25 years and was guest lecturer at the Yale History Department.

A graveside burial was held on October 15<sup>th</sup> at Oaklawn Cemetery in Fairfield, CT. The Rev. Tibor Király officiated.

Dr. Havadtoy is mourned by Magdalene, his wife of 65 years, his daughters Sandra and Leila, and grandchildren Luke and Sasha.

Donations may be made in his name to the Székely Mikó Collegium scholarship fund through the Funeral Home of Lesko and Polke in Fairfield, CT.

## October 23rd Re- membrance in Fairfield, CT EPF

A very light drizzle was falling as we gathered at Fairfield Town Hall to place flowers at the 1956 memorial plaque on October 20th. Rev. Tibor Király of the Calvin United Church of Christ gave the invocation. Consul Peter B. Nagy, Counselor of National Cohesion, brought a wreath from the New York Consulate General, and gave the keynote speech during the program which followed in the hall of the Fairfield Historical Society.

In his speech, Consul Nagy pointed out that, in 1956, "this small nation gave an example to every country in the world, to the West famous for its freedom, as well as to the East suffering from oppression. Hungary accomplished one of the greatest acts of heroism of modern times when it expressed its desire for independence, its faith in freedom and stood up against tyranny. We revolted not only against a dictatorship, but also against lies and fear...

"Should our faith and confidence sometimes wane, let us derive strength from those who went before us. Let us learn the determination of the university students of Szeged, of the youngsters of Pest... May their courage be our compass... May we all have the strength for quiet building, that those coming after us may be proud of our deeds in this

diaspora..."

The program at the Fairfield Historical Society included a recital by Irén Fehér of Márai's "Mennyből az angyal" as only she can recite it, and Olivér Valu singing a Hungarian version of "What a Friend we have in Jesus". This was followed by a presentation reminiscent of

the Revolution of 1956 by the Pilvax Players of New York, a small troupe of young amateur actors whose aim is to attract young people by positive literary programs. Their novel way of bringing to life Gyula Illyés' poem "A Sentence About Tyranny" was preceded by János Arany's "Rozgonyiné", the wife of a 15th century Hungarian



*Top: Zsuzsa Lengyel, Consul Peter B. Nagy, Irén (Ircsi) Fehér; Middle: Noémi and Dániel, Laura of Pilvax Players; Olivér Valu; Bottom: Some of the Guests.*

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## A 1956 Hero Recognized as *Vitéz*\*

*Gyula Gyenis, whom the Hungarians of Fairfield, CT will remember as the speaker at the October 23<sup>rd</sup> commemoration in 2017, has just been recognized as Vitéz, for his role in the Revolution of 1956.*

This past September, Gyula Gyenis was awarded the Silver Star of the Order of *Vitéz* in a ceremony at the Long Island home of art collector Imre Pákh, *Országos Kapitány* (US National Captain) of the *Vitéz* Order. It was in recognition of his heroism in saving the life of a teenager caught in a crossfire that broke out during the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 between the Freedom Fighters and the ÁVO in the park surrounding the National Museum in Budapest.

The young man had been innocently riding his bicycle, not realizing that he was entering a war zone. He was shot in the thigh, and fell off his bicycle, screaming for help. Gyula, who witnessed

the incident, crawled to reach the kid. He grabbed the boy and tried to drag him to safety. But the boy hung on to his beautiful bike for dear life as Gyula tried to pull him over a thin wire fence skirting the grass. Calling to his comrades to shoot above their heads, Gyula risked his own life, but managed to get the boy to safety where demonstrators by the thousands were massed in front of the Museum. Someone in authority reassured the boy that his bicycle would be stored in a safe place until he recovered. Then an ambulance took him to a hospital.

In those three or four days when the Revolution seemed to have succeeded, Gyula volunteered for the *Nemzetőr* (national guard) which was set up to keep order, and is still proud of his *Nemzetőr* ID number. He was assigned to a 4-member team to supervise the distribution of medicines and canned food arriving from the US to hospitals and the needy. He was there until the 18<sup>th</sup> of November. Warned by the super of his apartment building not to go home because the police were already waiting for him, he joined the last ambulance which they directed to deliver the remaining medicines to Tatabánya. From there, he left for the West on foot, two days later.

We are proud to number among our friends a true hero, a Freedom Fighter who has been recognized for his bravery and courage. Isten áldjon, Gyula! Thank you for your example, and congratulations!

*\*The Vitéz Order was set up by Regent Horthy Miklós in 1920, but was outlawed under Commu-*

*nism. It was revived in 1992. Every year, they bring a wreath of remembrance to the 1956 Memorial in New York City on October 23<sup>rd</sup>, no matter what day of the week it falls on. This year's speaker at the event was Gyula Gyenis.*



## Honoring the 1956 Revolution in Wallingford, CT

The rain could not dampen the spirits of those gathered in Wallingford on October 27th to pay tribute to the heroes of the Revolution of 1956, a number of whom were actually present at the event.

The weather did not cooperate on Sunday, October 27th as people under umbrellas gathered in front of the Hungarian Community Center in Wallingford, CT to lay flowers of remembrance at the 1956 Memorial.

Deputy Consul General Péter B. Nagy also brought a wreath and greetings from New York for the occasion. The ceremony was cut short by the rain, and the program continued inside, beginning with the presentation of flags by the Hungarian Scouts.

Moderated by Dr. Balázs Somogyi, highlights of the program included a message by Andrea Bocskor, Representative to the European Union from Kárpátalja. She and Dr. Ildikó Orosz, President of II. Rákóczi Ferenc University of Munkács summarized the present situation of Hungarians there under Ukrainian rule. Dr. Béla Popovics, local historian and history professor, declared that the Hungarian people DO have a future, and that they will have the necessary strength only if they trust in



*Top: Andrea Bocskor; members of the Scout troop; Middle: dancers; part of Sodró Ensemble; Bottom: presentation of the flags; wreath of the Hungarian Community Club at the Memorial*

God. Through the courage of the parents who taught the language to their children, he said, "we find our Christian roots and national pride. For we are not Felvidék Hungarians, Transylvanian Hungarians, Délvidék Hungarians or Kárpátalja Hungarians; there is only ONE Hungarian identity", he concluded. The Sodró Ensemble, also from Kár-



*The 1956 Memorial at Wallingford, CT*

pátalja, consisting of accordion, clarinet, violins, bass, cimbalom, a singer and a couple presenting folk dances, presented a most enjoyable musical program.

Csaba Téglás read his translation of an anonymous poem, "Forgive Me My Teenagers", a tribute to the many young heroes of the Revolution. László Papp, who was responsible for the planning and erecting of the 1956 Memorial on Riverside Drive in New York City, said in his English-language remarks that "Our testimony proves that the might of an oppressive power can crush a small nation, but can never suppress our yearning for freedom... The Hungarian revolution proved to be the first nail in the Soviets' coffin", concluding that "The thirteen days that shook the Kremlin finally tri-

umphed."

The opening invocation was given by Rev. Attila Tobiás of the Wallingford United Church of Christ, while the closing benediction was given by Rev. Tibor Király of the Calvin United Church of Christ of Fairfield, CT. Refreshments rounded out the beautiful afternoon of remembrance and homage which the rain could not dampen.

## **The North American Delegation of the Hungarian Knights of Malta**

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### **The End of an Era**

Charles Bálintt Jr.

*The North American Delegation of the Hungarian Knights of Malta announced its own demise this past summer. It had been a quiet force for good for 58 years, and its presence will be greatly missed by those who were its friends.*

I was personally saddened to see Megyesy Jenő's letter of June 27<sup>th</sup>, informing us that "The North American Delegation of the Hungarian Association has successfully accomplished its mission and will terminate its activities". This is truly the end of an era. They had been operating in North America since 1961, Imre de Jeszenszky initiating their work here, because the Communist government in Hungary would not allow them to function there. During their 58-year history here, they accomplished a lot of good and I will always have fond memories of attending many of their events for well over 40 of those years.

All of this comes to mind now, since normally in November the Hungarian Knights of Malta would have their annual cocktail party in New York; often held at the Hungarian

House. (Later on, a general fundraising letter was sent out to members and friends alike, replacing the cocktail party.)

Among their other events, they would host a retreat usually in March of each year. These were originally held at Mount Augustine and later at Mount Manresa, both in Staten Island, NY. My mother would usually attend for its entirety from Friday evening till mid-day on Sunday. I often went on Sunday, with my father, to join them for breakfast and the Mass. It was always impressive to see all of the Knights in their black robes walk in together. In mid-year they would celebrate another Mass, followed by a reception, on or near June 24<sup>th</sup>, which is the feast day of their patron saint, John the Baptist.

The North American Delegation was always raising money for one of their worthy causes – the training of doctors and nurses being a priority. Among many other things, I remember them helping the Hungarian victims during one of the larger Tisza River floods in 2001. They also initiated a collection to buy beds for some Hungarian hospitals that were having financial difficulties. Each year they would ask for donations that could be either earmarked for a couple of specific causes of immediate concern or a general donation to be used for the greatest need.

I remember one year, when Baron István Szentkereszty hosted a poolside outdoor Mass in his yard for the annual Saint John the Baptist Day celebration. Also for many years, Dénes Szabadhegy would invite most of the attendees to his house for a Sunday afternoon lunch at the end of the yearly retreat, since he lived on Staten Island not far from the venue. Those enjoyable afternoons came to an end about 15 years ago, when Dénes retired and



believe with the exception of Ferenc Schell. Another Knight and my confirmation sponsor/godfather, István Sándor, just passed away a number of weeks ago. It may be the fact that so many of these fine men and ladies (amidst the Knights, there were also some Dames of Malta) could not be replaced, that caused the recent demise of the association in this country.

To give a little background: this organization was founded in the middle of the 11<sup>th</sup> century by Blessed Gerard as the "Order of Saint John", also known as the "Knights Hospitaller".

1530, where they remained until Napoleon's occupation of the island in 1798. Since the Knights had a rule not to go into battle against other Christians, they left the island, never to return. Their headquarters was reestablished in Rome in 1834. But there are many divisions all over the world – with just one notable division fewer now.

It is still somewhat comforting to know that they will continue on in Hungary and any remaining members in the US will now be a part of the Association in Hungary. There, the Knights of Malta founded the *Máltai Szeretetszolgálat* (Maltese Charity Service) in 1989, which cares for the homeless, the elderly, the disabled, children, and provides emergency aid when necessary. Their ambulance service has become part of the national alarm system. Most of the associates are not Knights or Dames of Malta, but volunteers.

I am also happy to note that my childhood friend Kristóf Szabadhegyi is the current President of the Hungarian Association. Kristóf followed his brother Péter (former Hungarian Ambassador to the United Kingdom), to Hungary in the 1990s to work in the financial industry after graduating from the University of Pennsylvania and receiving an MBA from Duke University. So the Hungarian Knights of Malta are still in good hands, with a hopefully bright future in Hungary. But it still leaves me with somewhat of a melancholy feeling to know that another Hungarian group that did a lot of good over the years, and found ways to bring people together at uplifting get-togethers, could not find a way to continue on in the US.

*Charles Bálint Jr. is a working Customs Broker in Lawrence, NY and a member of the Magyar News Online Editorial Board.*

moved back to Hungary.

Among the Knights, I had many close family friends, such as Dénes; and a few relatives, such as István Sándor. Some of them were former presidents of the delegation (Count János Hoyos, MD, Baron Ferenc Bessenyei and Baron Ferenc Schell). I know that in some areas of the world things have changed, but to the best of my recollection, at least for the Hungarian Knights of Malta, part of the acceptance into the Order was a review of a person's family tree. I know that my mother, with her great penmanship, had actually handwritten the family tree for a couple of the Knights. Many of them are no longer with us. This includes all of the above, I

They began their mission by aiding the poor and sick or injured pilgrims of all religions who went to the Holy Land. To begin with, they built a church, a hospital and a convent in Jerusalem. But during the First Crusade, in 1099, the pope decreed that they should also defend the Holy Land, so they became a military religious Order. As a result of this, the motto of the Knights of Malta became "Tuitio fidei et obsequium pauperum" (Defense of the faith and service to the poor).

They had to leave the Holy Land during the fall of Jerusalem in 1291. Soon the Order moved to Cyprus, and then to the island of Rhodes in 1310. They found a new home on the island of Malta in

## Georg Bocskay: Master Calligraphist

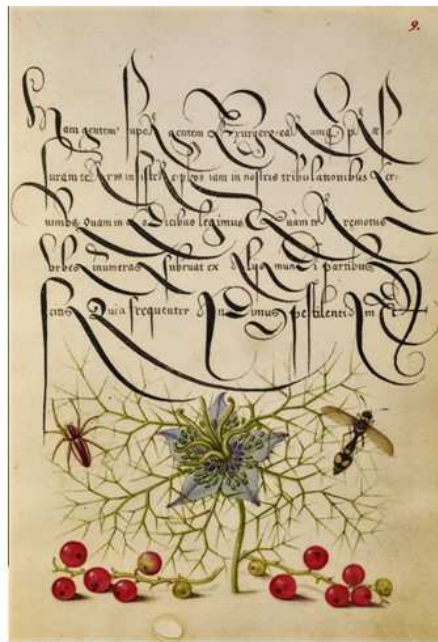
Erin Corrigan

When Erin mentioned that she had seen his work exhibited in Los Angeles, we immediately pounced on the idea of an article about this ancient artist.

Georg Bocskay was born in Hungary, in a part located in modern-day Croatia, in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Although the exact date of his birth is unknown, historians gather he was born around 1510. He is most prominently known for his skills as a distinguished calligraphist. Bocskay's legacy is defined by his service to the royal Hungarian Chamber as a scribe and secretary.

From Bocskay's own journals, historians were able to piece together his biography. From these journals we know that Georg Bocskay was born in Razinia, a part of Croatia that belonged to Hungary during the 16<sup>th</sup> century. He discloses that he was the heir of a noble Hungarian family. Bocskay also shares a bit of old family history: at the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, his wealthy family gained fiefdom under the noble surname *de Razinia*, embodying a castle and a small village.

From 1561 to 1562, Georg Bocskay demonstrated his abilities as master-scribe by collaborating on an exceptional book entitled *Mira Calligraphiae Monumena*, or, *The Model Book of Calligraphy*. The patron of this book was Rudolf II, Holy Roman Emperor and one of the most notable art patrons during the turn of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Bocskay's scriptures are written in Latin.



Top: Gillyflower, Mayfly, Fly, and Snail; Mayfly, Red Campion, and Pear.  
Bottom: Spider, Love-in-a-Mist, Potter Wasp, and Red Currant; Wainscot, French Rose, Wasp-like Insect, English Daisy, and Caterpillar

its

The artist Bocskay boasts his marvelous range of calligraphic styles in this book. Its original purpose was to exemplify his scientific mastery of the wide range of writing styles he had acquired and conjured from his own mind.

What makes *Mira Calligraphiae Monumena* so unique for this era is that it was started by Bocskay in 1561 and then contributed to by a Flemish/Hungarian illuminator until

completion in 1596, over 20 years after Bocskay's death in 1575. Joris Hoefnagel (1542-1600) was the illuminator who later added to Bocskay's calligraphic pages. The two artists never knew each other personally. Hoefnagel enhanced the existing beauty of Bocskay's scripture by adding a delicate balance of natural elements including fruits, flowers, insects, and amphibians.

If you take a look at the pages of this book, you can see how Bocskay laid out his writing as if beckoning future artists to decorate it in illustrative fashion.

Bocskay's calligraphy is so precise, clearly using typography as a method to keep his writing in a concise form on each page. His methodical style allowed Hoefnagel later to intensify his lettering, creating a wonderful balance of words and illustration.

Bocskay is the artist here who deserves the most praise. Yes, the illustrations from Hoefnagel add a whimsical quality to the pages, but the styles of writing Bocskay performs on each page are sweepingly brave and outstandingly inventive for 16<sup>th</sup> century ideals. The wide variety of calligraphy that Bocskay demonstrates, from curling cursive styles to bold geometric gothic lettering, is daring and evident of his clear talent, and he knew it. Bocskay sometimes invents his own writing order, each method appearing to contain its own personality.

When viewing these pages, one first notices the magical style of his words, not the words themselves. The script is compositionally organized on the page, highlighting the fact that Bocskay's work is not predominantly intended to be read, rather to be treasured artistically.

*Mira Calligraphiae Monumena* was created during a time when the printing press had eclipsed writing as the primary means of circulation. This only enhanced the value of hand-written scribes, making artists' work more valuable. As one could imagine, Bocskay came to be valued as an essential accomplished master of calligraphic style during the Central European Renaissance, exemplifying his intellectual background and social rank.

*Mira Calligraphiae Monumena*

currently resides at the Getty Museum in Los Angeles, California, available for the public to admire Bocskay's masterful artistry.

*Erin Corrigan, granddaughter of our Editorial Board member Eva Wajda, currently resides in Southern California. She graduated with a BFA from Moore College of Art & Design, Philadelphia, PA, in 2013. Outside of working her job in Women's Addiction Recovery, Erin dedicates time to her artistic practice, painting and drawing commissioned animal portraits.*

*Her personal website is <https://ekcorrigan.wixsite.com/mysite>*

## Eszterházy Torte

This wonderful Hungarian cake was invented in the 19th century by an unknown confectioner, and it was named after Prince Paul III Anton Eszterházy de Galántha. The number of layers is usually 5 or 6. The cake layers don't contain flour, consist only of sugar, egg whites and ground walnuts or almonds.

The filling is a cooked vanilla cream combined with butter. It can be flavored with rum or other liquor.

The torte can be recognized by the decoration of the top, which is made out of fondant, or white chocolate icing and dark chocolate spider web-like decoration.

### Ingredients:

#### Cake:

7 egg whites  
7 oz ground walnuts or almonds  
1 cup sugar  
pinch of salt

#### Filling:

3 egg yolks  
½ cup sugar  
1 ¼ cups milk  
1 tsp vanilla

1/4 cup corn starch  
7 oz soft sweet butter  
1 Tbsp rum - optional

#### Icing:

3 ½ oz white chocolate  
2 Tbsp butter  
1 oz dark chocolate  
1 ½ oz chopped walnuts

Line 2 or 3, 8" spring form cake pans with parchment paper. (You can also cut out of parchment paper 5 8" round circles and use that instead of the pans.)

Preheat the oven to 355° F.

### **Cake:**

Put the egg whites and salt in a bowl, and start the mixer on low speed. As the whites turn opaque, start adding the sugar in small batches. Continue adding the sugar, and gradually increase the speed of the mixer. Whip until very stiff. Gently fold the ground walnuts or almonds into the meringue. Spoon 1/5-1/5 of the batter in each pan (or on the round parchment cutouts, which you lay on cookie sheets). Spread evenly, and bake for 10-12 minutes or until a cake tester comes out clean. Repeat the baking process until you have 5 cake layers. In between baking the layers always put the batter in the refrigerator.

### **Filling:**

Place three egg yolks in a sauce pan. Add vanilla and sugar, and beat until sugar dissolves and the mixture ribbons. Beat in rum and corn starch, then gradually pour in milk and whisk until well combined. Over medium heat cook until the cream thickens. Let it cool. Once the custard is cool, add cubed, soft butter and beat until butter is fully incorporated. Save some of the cream to cover side later

### **Assemble the cake:**

Put the first layer on a plate the torte will be served, and then spread one fourth of the filling on top. Add second layer and con-

The last layer should be set with the bottom side up.

### Icing:

Break white chocolate into pieces and melt with butter. In a separate bowl melt the dark chocolate, too. Pour the melted white chocolate over the top of the cake and spread evenly.

*(Fondant can be used for icing. Heat apricot jam and rum and spread over the top layer. Warm the fondant to body temperature, no hotter than 100 °F, and pour, slightly cooled, over the layer spread with jam.)*

Scoop the dark chocolate into a smaller zip lock bag and cut off one corner tip of the bag. The hole should be very small. Decorate the top of the torte with circles, then with a toothpick go across the lines in the other direction to make the "spider web".

Spread the cream you left behind on the side of the cake and with hands glue the ground walnuts or almonds to it. Allow to stand in the fridge for a while before cutting.



## Kőrösi Csoma Sándor

Olga Vállay Szokolay

*More and more people nowadays are trying to explore their roots. Companies offer services to help in their endeavors, using their DNA in the exploration of their origins. Two hundred years ago this month, a most remarkable Hungarian explorer, philologist and linguist set off to Asia to find the origins and homeland of the nation, the Magyars. In order to follow this complicated pilgrimage, it is advisable to have a map or globe on hand.*

On November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2019 we celebrate the bicentennial of the start of this unique man's journey to discover the origins and homeland of the Magyars.

*Kőrösi Csoma Sándor* was born on March 27<sup>th</sup>, 1784 at Kőrös (later renamed Csomakőrös in his honor, in Transylvania - today part of Covasna, Romania) into a poor Székely family, the sixth child of Csoma András and his wife, Göcz Ilona. Of his siblings only three lived to adulthood. The Székelys have been a Magyar ethnic group who believe they are descended from a branch of Attila's Huns who had settled in Transylvania in the fifth century.

Sándor's early schooling was at the local village school. At age 15, he walked with his father to Nagyenyed (now Aiud), where he joined the boarding school *Bethlen Kollégium*. The education was free, or *gratistae*, in return for manual labor. At that school he became interested in the history of the Magyars and first started to entertain the idea of discovering the homeland of his ancestors. He finished his high school studies in 1807 and passed the *public rigorosum* in

1815.

With a scholarship he continued at the University of Göttingen, a stronghold of academic freedom promoting Enlightenment ideals. Being an unprecedented linguistic genius, during his Göttingen years 1816-1818 he was noted for being literate in 13 languages including Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French and German in addition to his native Hungarian, while he studied Asian languages. Learning that certain Arabic manuscripts contained important information on the history of Hungarians in Asia, awakened his interest in the Arabic language. He soon mastered it, along with Turkish.

Csoma possessed skills for acquiring, retaining and interpreting knowledge, with an iron will and a single-minded focus. His mentality would lead him to feats that no one could have ever imagined for the son of a Székely border guard.

After three years in Göttingen, he returned to Transylvania and told his friends and acquaintances of his intention to journey across the Middle East and Central Asia to find the original Hungarian homeland. Most thought the idea to be quite ridiculous. Csoma had no financing for such trip and his previous travel experiences had been only within Europe. He would have to cross numerous hostile territories in pursuit of what most regarded as fantasy. One of the few of his more optimistic friends convinced him to first learn Old Slavic. He went to Croatia to pursue that over the next year.

Csoma was 35 years old and still unmarried. His parents were no longer alive. He had very little money for his journey and only a temporary Hungarian passport. Yet his determination was best encapsulated by the answer he gave to

Count Teleki's question about his destination when they met down the road:

"I am going to Asia in search of our relatives."

His unprecedented, historic journey started on November 24<sup>th</sup>, 1819, when he set off from Nagyenyed. On November 28<sup>th</sup>, he left his homeland at the Vöröstorony Pass. Csoma wrote about his decision in a letter:

"I decided to leave my country east-bound and, securing my daily bread as possible, to devote my whole life to sciences that could serve the European scientific world in general, and throw particular light upon certain data that are still obscure in my nation's history."

Until January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1820, Csoma stayed in *Bucharest*, then continued via *Sofia* to *Constantinople*, planning to proceed north to Moscow, then to Central Asia with the eventual goal of reaching East Turkestan (western China). His plans had to be changed due to the outbreak of the plague in Constantinople. Thus, he took a ship to *Alexandria* in Egypt, from where the plague again made him leave in March for *Cairo* and Lebanon, into the heart of the Middle East: *Latakia, Syria*.

Csoma continued his journey on foot. In April he arrived at *Aleppo, Syria*, where he spent a month. There he joined a caravan and, having donned Asian attire to be inconspicuous, he arrived at *Mosul, Iraq* in May. From there he sailed on the *River Tigris* to *Baghdad, Iraq*. In July he became the guest of the Hungarian/Slovak Anton Svoboda. During their month-and-a-half together, Csoma had a chance to chat in his mother tongue again. Svoboda gave him European clothes, and money to continue his travels.

Arriving in *Tehran, Persia* in October, Csoma, with the help of British envoy Sir Henry Willock, spent four months there, perfecting his fluency in English and new-Persian. He left Tehran in March 1821, leaving behind his passport and papers for safety, changing costumes again, from a European to a Persian one and assuming the name *Scander Bey*.

In April 1821, he arrived at *Mashad, Persia* where he was delayed at a caravan camp for six months due to the Turkish-Persian war. In October, he set off for *Bukhara*. On January 6<sup>th</sup>, 1822 he struggled across the mountain ranges of *Hindu Kush*, reached *Kabul* (Afghanistan), from where he wandered towards India. At the *Khyber Pass* he met some French officers with whom he reached *Lahore* (Pakistan), then *Srinagar, India*. In May 1822, he took off for Inner Asia and, passing the 3,446meter (11,575') *Zoji La*, arrived at *Ladakh, Kashmir* on the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Continuing on the road northward to East Turkestan, a region crucial to his work, would have meant crossing mountain passes about 6,000 meters (nearly 20,000 feet) in elevation and braving bandits. The threat of being robbed or murdered, coupled with the dangerous climatic conditions of rarified air in the Karakorum Mountains made him reconsider that route. Thus, Csoma made a difficult decision of detouring to the walled fortress capital of Leh, where he arrived on June 19<sup>th</sup>. There he had a serendipitous meeting with William Moorcroft, an English explorer, on July 16<sup>th</sup>, 1822. Upon his initiation, Csoma started to be interested in the Tibetan language and literature, hoping to find proof of the origin of Hungarians in *their* ancient documents.

On July 26<sup>th</sup>, 1823 Csoma arrived

at *Zangla in Zanskar*. By recommendation of Moorcroft, he lived in the fortress of the King, albeit in a tiny unheated cell, for 15 months. During his stay he studied under a Lama, skimmed through several thousand Tibetan books, processed the history, geography and literature of Tibet and constructed a dictionary of 30,000 words. His main nutrition was tea with yak butter and barley.

He left Zanskar on October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1824 and reached *Subathu* on November 26<sup>th</sup>.

There he was detained by a Captain Kennedy who suspected him of being a spy. Since Csoma had not applied for an Imperial passport and traveled only with a temporary one issued locally, he rendered himself vulnerable indeed. Even with Moorcroft's letter of introduction and testimony clarifying his position, it took until May 1825 before he was absolved from any suspicion. During his detainment, Csoma was required to write his autobiography, accounting for all his travels, studies and activities that were ultimately deemed useful by the British authorities.

From November 1825, he lived and worked at the *Phugtal Monastery*, then from mid-June 1827 in *Kanam*, under more relaxed conditions, working with a Lama. The three years spent there became the most productive period of his life's activity. He finished his dictionary (the first Tibetan-English dictionary), compiled the first Tibetan grammar, and prepared the manuscript of a Buddhist terminology dictionary and the outlines of several dissertations.

He read about the fabulous *Shambala country* in the *Uyghur (ujgur)* region, which is believed in Eastern perception to be the Center of Wisdom. Csoma became convinced that his ancestors came from



*Bust of Kőrösi Csoma Sándor in his native village of Csomakőrös (photo by EPF). His tomb in Darjeeling; Tracing Csoma's journey from Transylvania to India (photo by EPF)*

that area, as cultured nations, centuries before Christ. The Royal Asiatic Society voted him a member in March 1830.

In April 1831, he arrived in Calcutta and moved into the headquarters of the Asiatic Society, to organize the Society's library. As a self-appointed monk, he was living in a small cell, preparing his Tibetan-English dictionary and grammar for printing. *500 copies of both of those scientifically accurate works were first published in Calcutta on January 5<sup>th</sup>, 1834*, causing him to be later recognized as the Father of Tibetology. From 1835, he studied the Sanskrit, Bengali and Mahratta languages. As per his original goals, he was still looking for the ancient homeland, under the alias of *Molla Escander Csoma*.

In February 1842, he attempted to get to *Lhasa*. He sailed on the *River Mahananda* but continued on foot across the unhealthy, swampy region, where he contracted malaria. He arrived at *Darjeeling* on March 24<sup>th</sup>. In early April he suffered severe bouts of pain, and a high fever debilitated his body. At 5:00 a.m. April 11<sup>th</sup>, 1842, the earthly career of Kőrösi Csoma Sándor came to an end. He was put to eternal rest at the European cemetery of Darjeeling where his grave became a site of Buddhist pilgrimage.

To commemorate our hero's pilgrimage and to introduce the significance of his life's work to Romanians, Pengő Zoltán, journalist of Kolozsvár set off in September 2019, to replicate, mostly on foot, Kőrösi Csoma Sándor's journey of about 7,000 kilometers (4,350 miles).

And restless Hungarians are still searching for their roots...

*Olga Vállay Szokolay is an architect and Professor Emerita of Norwalk*

*(CT) Community College, after three decades of teaching. She is a member of the Magyar News Online Editorial Board.*

## Two Counties' Coat of Arms

Erika Papp Faber

*Each of the 64 (71?) counties in pre-World War I Hungary had its own coat of arms. The variety of elements used in their composition has always held great fascination for me. Some elements are repeated in the escutcheons (shields) of different counties.*

*Here we present two such coats of arms, of counties in different areas, with some similar major components. But in no way is this meant as a scholarly study; it is merely a layman's look at curious coincidences.*

Szolnok-Doboka was a county in pre-World War I Hungary, now part of Romania. Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok is a county in present-day Hungary, configured in the 19th century from the Jászkun district, incorporating territory from Külső-Szolnok, Heves and Pest-Pilis-Solt. Strikingly similar in the two coats of arms on the escutcheon (shield) is a horse and rider which appears in both.

In addition to the fact that Szolnok is part of the name of both counties, another common bond is that both had something to do with the *kunok*, or Cumanians, a nomad people who had originally invaded Hungary in the 11th century, but later came to settle in the 13th century. The rider with the lance in the Szolnok-Doboka coat of arms is identified as King Szt. László (c. 1040 – 1095), pursuing a *kun* soldier who, according to the most famous legend about the king, had abducted a Hungarian girl. Szt. László called to her, telling her to grab her abduc-

tor's belt and jump off the horse with him. She followed suit and he rescued the girl by killing the pagan soldier. The seven stars above Szt. László represent the seven leaders of the Hungarian tribes.

The fess, or band in the middle of the shield, represents the Szamos River. The chapel in the lower part of the design is that of the ancient castle of Dés, capital of Szolnok-Doboka County.

Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok County is named for the *jászok* (Jazygians, from Iran), and the *kunok* (Cumanians), both groups which settled in the Carpathian Basin in the 13th century. The stork in the upper left of the escutcheon represented the Kiskunság area, the lion with two tails in the upper right hand (and with the waning moon and star reminiscent of Turkish occupation in the 16th and 17th centuries) stood for Nagyunság. The bottom section with the rider, in reverse this time, has a round shield in his hand, and the symbol of Jászság, Lehel's horn\* in the other.

Here, three wavy bands separate the top of the Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok coat of arms from the bottom, also representing rivers: the Tisza, Zagyva and Kőrös, all of which flow within its borders.

Just clearing up a puzzle ...

*\*According to the early chronicles, the Hungarians did not all settle down once they came into the Carpathian Basin. Some went marauding across western Europe, keeping the people in fear. It has been recorded that "From the arrows of the Hungarians deliver us, o Lord" was a frequent prayer of the time. Among the leaders of these roving bands were Lehel (or Lél) and Bulcsu. They suffered a crushing defeat at Augsburg in 955, were captured and condemned to death*

by the German emperor. Lehel asked that his last wish be granted, that he might blow his battle horn one more time. When it was brought to him, he approached the emperor and hit him on the head with the horn so hard that the emperor died on the spot. He said, "You will go before me and be my servant in the next life." Both Lehel and Bulcsu were executed by hanging. An ivory horn – with a crack in it – is preserved in the museum of Jászberény, said to be Lehel's battle horn.

## It's a Small World!

EPF

*Not all Small World encounters are a social success. Some are downright embarrassing!*

This happened in the processing camp of Wentorf near Hamburg, where we spent a month undergoing physical exams before being admitted to the US in July 1949.

We were housed dormitory-style, in former German army barracks, 3-story brick buildings, with about 30 hopeful immigrants in each large dormitory hall. Most of those in ours came from the Baltic states.

One day, a young priest, probably Lithuanian, came to visit. Our beds were opposite the door, and so he came to us first and asked about our nationality. When Remy replied, "Hungarian", his face lit up and he began to recite the Our Father, "Miatyánk, ki vagy a mennyekben..." His accent was bad, as Remy related years later, but we listened respectfully until he came to "mindennapi kenyérünket add meg nekünk" – but then he continued "holnap" – ("our daily bread give us tomorrow") - and Remy burst out laughing. The priest stopped, embarrassed. Some Hungarian jokester must have taught him this



*Szolnok-Doboka*



*Jász-Nagy-Kun-Szolnok*



fon-  
dant,  
and

*For greater clarity, we show two versions of the coats-of-arms*

way. We never had a chance to explain, as he left abruptly.

But it was a small – albeit embarrassing – world!

## Did you know...

... that we have a smorgasbord of items this time, including a fabulous dessert? See the recipe section for how to create it.

...**that** Hungarian desserts are famous all over the world? CNN Travel listed the 50 best desserts in the world. On the list are the Turkish baklava, South American flan, Italian cannoli, and three Hungarian desserts: the Eszterházy torte, the kifli and the Rigó Jancsi.

The torte is a walnut based cake, filled with buttercream (or the modern whipped cream), covered with

topped with chocolate "spiderweb". It was named after Paul III Anton, Prince Eszterházy, whose favorite dessert was that cake.

The kifli is the crescent shape, soft dough pastry filled with preserves.

My most favorite is the Rigó Jancsi. Between two fine layers of cake is a thick chocolatey whipped cream filling. Oh, oh, good!!

... **that** part of Budapest's 7th District was also known as "Csikágó" (the Hungarian pronunciation of "Chicago")? It acquired that nickname in the late 1890's, when a whole new section of apartment buildings was constructed in a record two years. The speed with which the area was laid out and raised reminded people of the American "supercity". The apart-

ments were intended for working people and minor civil servants, and consisted of merely one or two rooms, but the buildings sported fancy façades which still lend the district a distinct air.

Christened Erzsébetváros in 1882, in honor of Queen Elizabeth, the nationally beloved wife of Emperor Francis Joseph, it became the historic Jewish section of the capital. It is there that the largest functioning synagogue in Europe, that of Dohány Street, is located. Today, the area has a number of firewall paintings (see the October 2018 issue of Magyar News Online), and is a tourist attraction with "ruin pubs", and has become what one website calls "the heart of hip and bohemian Budapest".



*Firewall painting of nationally beloved Queen Elizabeth, consort of Emperor Francis Joseph. (Photo Kőrösi Tamás, We Love Budapest)*

... **that** a Hungarian missionary mapped the Amazon region in the 18th century? With the Amazon fires still drawing attention to that region, it is appropriate to remember the 325th anniversary of the birth of Brentán Károly (1694 – 1753), a Jesuit born in Komárom, who went to work among the South American native peoples in 1722. He learned many of the languages of those living along the Marañon, a major tributary of the Amazon River, and translated the catechism into their language. He wrote a work on the missions, with his own illustrations, which unfortunately has been lost. Only a detailed map from the planned 2-volume work has survived.



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