

## CHRONICLE

---

### A REPORT ON THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HUNGARIAN STUDIES

Following the usual and internationally recognized procedures, the *International Association of Hungarian Studies* (IAHS) was founded by approximately one hundred researchers from inside and outside Hungary in a provincial Hungarian town in Nyíregyháza in August 1977. The founders' meeting elected Bo Wickman, professor of the University of Uppsala, as president of the Association, a choice which the first general assembly, held in 1981 in Budapest, confirmed.

The task and the objective of the Association is to gather within one organization the experts on the so-called Hungarian philological studies i.e. linguistics, literary history, ethnography and folklore; and to facilitate the international dissemination and cultivation of these studies. At present the Association has more than 800 members, almost half of whom are scholars, university professors, librarians, editors and translators not living in Hungary. It was founded with the aim of introducing the results of research in Hungarian studies to the international arena and, as had been done for Germanistics, Turkology and Hispanology, to unite within one organization the philologists dealing with Hungarian studies in different countries of the world. Naturally, the Association wishes to perform not just the tasks of organizational representation, however in international scientific life organizational matters cannot be altogether neglected. It will fulfil its role properly if sooner or later it also assumes the role of offering encouragement, transmitting information of facilitating and promoting research. These are the long term aims it has set its sights on, for which quick successes in the shorter term, as provided by organizational activities, offer a good start. Given the scope for the spread of Hungarian philological studies, the size of the membership can be reckoned quite large. The scientific gain it yields will be measured by whether, through patient work performed assiduously over long years, the Association can be the active initiator in the international forum of Hungarian philology.

Why was it necessary to found the Association? The idea of establishing an international association was raised by experts dealing with Hungarian philology outside Hungary. For the number of researchers dealing with Hungarian philology abroad is increasing—in many cases they are not of Hungarian origin—and their fundamental professional interest dictates that they try to establish contacts with their

colleagues, including those living in Hungary. In the same way experts on linguistics, literary history, and ethnography and folklore, living in Hungary cannot disregard the results and educational experience of their colleagues working abroad. The scientific activities of philologists performed outside Hungary may enrich Hungarian philology through new discoveries; they can add fertile viewpoints to the cultivation of comparative philology. International exchanges of views can exert an influence on the methods applied and even on the assigning of trends in research. It is even possible that the employment of Hungarian results will start abroad, where they will be systematically checked by experts; as a result of this a professional dialogue of the creative individuals of science will be initiated, the significance of which can hardly be underestimated in this day and age.

What do the designations "Hungarian studies", "Hungarology", and "Hungaristics" mean? They are cognate ideas, originating from the words *Hungaria*, and *Hungarus*. All of them are collective ideas embracing the whole of the sciences that deal with the Hungarian people, its history, culture and language. Hungarian studies and Hungarology are wider categories than philology, their scope of meaning includes the study of history, culture history, archeology, music and art in general. Hungarology embraces all the sciences engaged in the complex, interdisciplinary research on Hungarian civilization. However, Hungarology defined in this way can be interpreted from three different points of view, taking into account the fact that not all of the Hungarians do constitute one national state. Quite understandably the centre of Hungarology is the scientific-intellectual life in Hungary. The systematic research of the history, culture, language and literature of the Hungarians includes essential contacts with the past, with the collective memory preserved in linguistic and intellectual manifestation. While the philologist or Hungarologist in Hungary is dealing with his subject, he can conduct his research with the same unbiased objectivity as if Hungarian were a dead classical language, as if Hungarian civilization were one of the ancient civilizations. But without any bias or nationalistic passion seething within him, he can perform research on his subject—the history of Hungarian literature, for example—with more intrinsic interest and can conceive the work of writers also as documents of the historical continuity of the Hungarian consciousness, besides their being linguistic, aesthetic creations. Research on the national character may never be an end in itself or a scientific program of more importance than anything else. But if the national character is inherent to the subject itself as one of the elements of linguistic or aesthetic existence, then they must be dealt with through objective, scientific means. This dilemma is raised mainly for the Hungarologist living in Hungary, who has to decide for himself whether he should examine the Hungarian language, literature and ethnography from such a distance as if he were examining the product of a foreign civilization; or whether he should comprehend the creations of culture as intellectual creations which, through the mother tongue, lie closer to him than the products of Icelandic or Eskimo civilization.

In the life of the Hungarian minorities the neighbouring countries Hungarology, and similarly the preservation of the mother tongue, are means of fostering and

nursing awareness of cultural and ethnic identity. Hungarology may play a role in sustaining their traditional culture. Research on the culture history, language, literature and ethnography of the Hungarian ethnic groups as well as the fostering of cultural traditions, require an increased cultivation and complex integration of comparative Hungarian studies. The objective and methods of proper Hungarology have the same principles as the methodology of philology anywhere else. Nevertheless in its pedagogical and educational emphasis it differs from the way large and homogenized states cultivate philology. In the eye of the foreign Hungarologist outside Hungary, Hungarian culture is one of the subjects of study which possesses specific features for him too, but these he comprehends not as his own but as part of world civilization. The knowledge of Hungary that the Hungarologist living abroad possesses may differ in several details from the knowledge, viewpoints and methods of the experts in this field within Hungary, but never to the extent that it would allow us to speak of two types of Hungarology: one type cultivated inside Hungary and the other outside Hungary, in North America, for example.

When was Hungarology born? Its very name was born during the period between the two world wars and even then it was a collective idea with a very wide scope of meaning: it included all the studies dealing with the Hungarian nation, all the sciences dealing with the past, physical and intellectual stature, natural characteristics and intellectual values of the Hungarian people, from archeology to art history, from linguistics to anthropology. An independent periodical of these branches of science was started under the title *Magyarságtudomány* (1935–1937, 1942–1943) and a university research department of Hungarian studies was also established (1939).

Why did the new international association adopt in its (Hungarian) name “philology” instead of “Hungarology”? It did so because acquaintance with national cultures is attained through language. Historically national studies were revealed through the investigation of languages, they centered on language and literature—as is often the case even today. Within Hungarology the viewpoints of linguistics and literature are in the foreground at present too, which, of course, does not mean that the concept of Hungarology is narrowed down only to these. The Association, besides bringing together the experts on philology sciences, strives to establish contacts with as many historians as possible too. Without historical research there exists no Hungarology but no Hungarian philology either.

What was the topic of the first congress of the Association? According to the program of IAHS the cultivation of Hungarian studies conducted with international collaboration is an incentive for scientific progress and it not only promotes the discovery of new partial results but it contributes to establishing a wider scientific range of vision as well. The international context trains and tests as well as deepens the self knowledge, enhances its objectivity, accustoms them to adopting sober viewpoints, free from illusions.

A good opportunity for this was afforded by the first International Congress on Hungarology held in Budapest in August 1981, where experts dealing with Hungarian linguistics, literary history, and ethnography and folklore gathered for the first time to

discuss the situation of Hungarian teaching outside Hungary and to exchange views on the history of Hungarian versification and its characteristics. Altogether nine main lectures were delivered on the main topics, followed by the section meetings where more than one hundred participants took the floor. Twenty-two countries were represented at the congress; the experts from different countries conducted the meeting in a spirit of mutual understanding towards each other's opinions, and the atmosphere of the congress was permeated by the spirit of scientific openness. The scholarly results yielded as the fruits of international cooperation may ripen over a longer period of time, but the basis and incentive of this collaboration are personal acquaintances, mutual respect and tolerance towards differing opinions. An even more indispensable condition for the further development of Hungarology than it has been before is the widening of international collaboration as well as the utilization of experience resulting from different scientific angles of approach. The first International Congress on Hungarology made a significant advance in this direction. Its experience also proved that social sciences must not be forced into some kind of secondary role. If we remember that the so-called "human factor" is gaining increasing importance in production and in the economy, parallel to the development of technological civilization, then nobody can entertain doubts of any kind about the increasing significance of the different branches of social science which have joined hands with the noble purpose of fostering and nurturing the traditions of intellectual culture and its values that date back several centuries. The congress material will be published in two separate volumes. Papers concerning education are already been published (M. Róna Judit ed.: *Hungarológiai oktatás régen és ma*. Budapest: Tankönyvkiadó, 1983. pp. 235.), a second separate volume will include the papers devoted to Hungarian versification, and will be printed by the end of 1984.

The next congress of the Association will be held in Vienna in 1986.

Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Irodalomtudományi Intézet

Miklós Béládi

#### OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

The Association has at the present time 15 Honorary Members from eight countries. Its President is Bo Wickman (Sweden). There are six Vice-Presidents from five countries. Its Secretary General is Tibor Klaniczay (Hungary), Deputy Secretary General was until his death Miklós Béládi (Hungary), and at present it is (until 1986) József Jankovics (Hungary). 37 members are elected for its Executive Committee from 15 countries. The Auditing Committee has three members from three countries. The secretary's office has three staff members. The address is Budapest, Országház utca 30. This is also the address of the Hungarian yearbook of the Association (*Hungarológiai Értesítő*), as well as the mailing address of *Hungarian Studies*.