REVIVALISM, BIBLE SOCIETIES, AND TRACT SOCIETIES IN THE KINGDOM OF HUNGARY: A MULTI-ETHNIC, MULTI-CULTURAL, AND MULTI-DENOMINATIONAL WORK FOR SPREADING THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS CHRIST

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ABSTRACT. The current research paper seeks to investigate how Evangelicals and Pietist, the most fervent of Protestants sought to ‘educate’ the masses outside the educational framework of ecclesiastical and state structures within the Hungarian Kingdom. More specifically the study intends to offer a concise overview of the history of Protestants who spread the gospel through the distribution of affordable Bibles, New Testaments and Christian tracts. It shows how various denominations worked together as well as directs attention to their theological outlook which transcended ethnic boundaries. It is a well-known fact in mission and church history that such undertakings were carried out to stir revivalism. The study also throws light on how influential role the Scottish Mission as well as Archduchess Maria Dorothea played in stirring revivalism through the aforementioned means. The history of these kinds of endeavours, especially that of the most significant ones like the work of the British and Foreign Bible Society and Religious Tract Society has not been treated adequately by historians of religion and education, intellectual historians and social historians. This research output is a contribution to give an account of the multi-ethnic and transdenominational work of Hungarians, Jews, Germans, Slovaks and Romanians working for a common goal.

KEYWORDS: Revival, Tract and Bible Societies, evangelicalism, mission to the Jews, Pietists, liberal theology

A Multicultural Protestantism in Hungary

Within the bosom of Protestant Revivalism in Central Europe the Reformed Church of Hungary played a central role. More precisely, events taking place in the life of the reformed congregation through the impact of Scottish Mission since 1841 was decisive for the spiritual renewals and even social reforms in the geographical area that is often referred to as the Carpathian basin. The mountain range, the Carpathians that signalled the borders of the Hungarian

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Kingdom hosted various ethnic groups (Hungarians, Slovaks, Ruthenians, Saxon and Schwabish Germans, Serbs, Croats, Romanians, Bosnians, Jews, Armenians) that lived in harmony under the political umbrella of Hungarian kings or Habsburg monarch. Ethnicity often went hand in hand with religious, that is denominational affiliations. If someone was Reformed than he or she must have been only Hungarian. Orthodox were only the Slavonic people and Romanians, Germans, Hungarians, Slovaks could be Roman Catholic or Lutherans too but never Orthodox. Such delineations of religious adherences made the nineteenth century Hungary colourful. Into this rich spectrum entered the Jews in greater numbers in the 1830 who assimilated to Hungarians faster than any other ethnic or religious group. Also, the arrival the Scottish Mission in 1841 signalled a new era in ecclesiastical history as the Mission like an outpost of British Evangelicalism played a crucial role either willingly or subconsciously in bringing in new so far unseen denominations to Hungary beginning with the Baptist, Adventist, the Nazarene through Pentecostalism to name just a few. At the same time the Presbyterian origin Scottish Mission began to transplant German and Dutch pietism, the French Réveil movements and naturally Anglo-Saxon evangelicalism to Hungary through its activities. The Scottish Mission came to Hungary with a view to convert the Jews to 'hasten the return of Jesus Christ'. This premillennial belief was influential to the degree to establish an outpost for such purpose in Hungary as the belief was that by conversion the Jews to Christ, his imminent return is even nearer. And one of the signs of times was the revival of the dried bone, the 'pagans', that is nominal Christians, especially their focus was the rationalist, ungodly Hungarian Reformed who needed to return to true Presbyterian faith of their ancestor as, of course, was understood by Scottish Presbyterian divines.

First the paper briefly introduces how mission to the Jews was an impetus in the church of Scotland for establishing mission outpost in Hungary to evangelise the Jews. Second, it briefly maps out how German Pietist, archduchess Maria Dorothea, met providentially with the staunch revivalists such as Reverends Keith and Black. A decisive meeting that resulted in the willingly established new mission outpost. Finally, the paper seeks to show that during the Hungarian Freedom Fight of 1848-1849 the revivalist parties worked through the Tract and Bible societies for the evangelisation of the ethnic group of the country. They believed in the political social change willed by God, and thought that they lived in the last days, the special eschatological times when Jesus Christ was about to return. This belief provided a platform for various ethnic groups to work together for the spread of the Kingdom of God during the 'Pentecostal' years of the 1840s which preceded the War of Liberation of 1848-1849. It is remarkable how various ethnic groups and people of different religious adherence worked together towards a common

goal. The paper presents this unique joint event where the national and denominational lines were suspended shortly and they worked together under the umbrella of the Scottish Mission which coordinated the work of the British and Foreign Bible Society as well as that of the Tract and Religious Society.

The Scottish Presbyterians, especially the Church of Scotland played a crucial role in evangelisation of the world during the Victorian times of the nineteenth century (Walls 1993: 570; Drummond 1956: 187). The events taking place in the Established Church strongly contributed to the emergence of the mission to the Jews. The tug of war between Evangelicals and Moderates was going on and there was a peculiar correlation between the fight for independence from state influence, the revivals of the late 1830s and the emergence of Jewish Mission (Brown 1993: 1-27). For many people, the revival of the Church and the Jewish mission were linked. One of the greatest revivalist preachers of that time, Robert M. McCheyne (1813-1843) (Hamilton 1993: 504-5) indicated that, 'the "revival" proper followed upon, rather than led to, the inauguration of Jewish Scheme' (Kool 1993: 99). In the *Edinburgh Christian Witness*, he said: 'Is it not a remarkable fact, that in the very year in which God put it into the hearts of the church to send a mission of kind inquiry to Israel, ...God visited his people in Scotland by giving them bread in a way unknown since the days of Cambuslang and Moulin (McCheyne 1840: 3).' By accepting the opinion that mission to the Jews was the initiative of laymen, it is possible to talk about two groups of schemes. On the one hand schemes such as Education, Propagation of the gospel in India, the Church Extension Scheme, and the Colonial Scheme owe much to the astute churchmen like Chalmers, Inglis, Brunton, but on the other hand mission to the Jews, as indicated above, had close relation with the grassroots level of the revival in the Church.

A 'Providential Meeting': The Encounter of the Evangelical A. Keith with Archduchess Maria Dorothea

As a result of the revivalism taking place in Scotland during the 1830s, the 1839 General Assembly of the Church of Scotland endorsed the decision of the Jewish Committee to send a Deputation to Palestine. Its aim was to obtain sufficient intelligence on the Jews there and in other places in Europe with a view to plant missionary station to evangelise the Jews (Bonar 1848) (Keith 1867: 212-3). The idea of sending a Deputation to Palestine, the most dearly revered Holy Land, came from Robert Candlish, a revivalist preacher while talking to Alexander Stuart Moody (1809-1898) (Ross 1993: 803) about Robert M. McCheyne's health (Carlyle n.d.: 11-2). He thought that McCheyne's health would improve with a climate change and combined his idea with another, to send a Deputation to Palestine having the Jewish Scheme in mind. The selection of the members was uncomplicated except for A. A. Bonar,

whose premillennialist views hindered his appointment until Candlish intervened (Bonar 1973: 186). Originally, Robert Wodrow was appointed a member of the Deputation, but he withdrew due to illness (Yeaworth 1957: 267). The final membership of the Deputation consisted of four ministers deeply imbued with millennial views: Professor Alexander Black (Black 1926: 205) of Aberdeen; Alexander Keith (1791-1880) of the parish of St. Cyrus, Kincardineshire; Robert M. McCheyne (1813-1843) of St. Peter's Dundee; and Andrew A. Bonar of Collace, Perthshire (Carlyle 1893: 430). All were heavily involved in interpreting biblical prophecy, but it was Keith who was best known for his publications (Bonar 1973: 292), especially his *Evidence of the Truth of the Christian Religion from the Literal Fulfilment of Prophecy particularly as Illustrated by the History of the Jews* (Fraser 1990: 9), which appeared in thirty-seven editions and several translations. In this work he presented a polemic against A. P. Stanley's poetical interpretation of prophecy. An evidence of the popularity of this book is that the Archduchess of Hungary, the Pietist Maria Dorothea, had read it (Oehler 1998: 251).

Maria Dorothea was the wife of Joseph the Palatinate of Hungarian Kingdom who represented the Kaiser in the country. His wife was a Würtemberg Pietist, whose major concern was to revive Protestant churches of Hungary. The Archduchess was about to meet Keith by 'special providence' of which they had not been aware. The story of Keith's and Black's stay in Pest is left out of this massive and fascinating report for being afraid that the Habsburg may uncover their intention. cf. Brown, 289. Stuart-Moody was the Convenor of the Free Church Jewish Committee between 1847-1888. A. N. Somerville, MS. Letter to McCheyne, 1 March 1839. Somerville informed McCheyne and Andrew Bonar's premillenarian view raised some doubt of his eligibility to join the Deputation saying '[...] As to Andrew, I feel his millenarianism will knock the prospect of his going upon the head'. Somerville—later playing a very influential role in the Hungarian revival—belonged to the core group of young people at the dawn of Disruption who were interested in mission and decided to study the scripture on a daily basis. For that purpose, a 'brotherly agreement' was drawn up by McCheyne on 24 May 1838 undersigned by such persons as A. A. Bonar, A. N. Somerville, G. Smeaton, Henry Moncreiff, Walter Wood and three other persons besides McCheyne. Black was appointed to the Chair of Divinity Marischal College, Aberdeen on 27 June 1832. No birth date or death given. Letter from R. M. McCheyne 16 September 1840 Dundee. It is printed in Andrew A. Bonar, *Memoir and Remains of the Rev. Robert Murray McCheyne*, 292. Here McCheyne refers to him as an outstanding scholar on prophecy. Surprisingly enough, it seems that Keith's immense literary output escaped the attention of many scholar despite his popularity on interpreting prophecy. Oehler cited Maria Dorothea saying, 'Ich kenne diesem Mann. Ich habe sein Buch, *Fulfilled Prophecy* (Biblische Weissagungen)

gelesen. Und jetzt muß ich ihn auch persönlich sehen.' My translation: 'I have come to know this man. I have read his book, 'Fulfilled Prophecy'. Now, I must see him in person'. Keith came to know this fact when they accidentally met in Pest in 1839. This meant a quick dissemination of his ideas not only at home but abroad. Obviously, there was a flowing web of networks between the Evangelicals of Britain and the Pietist tradition of the German principalities, notably that of Württemberg.]

Undoubtedly, Keith's book, which first appeared in 1828, prepared the general public opinion of the church to be susceptible for Jewish mission. All the members believed in the national conversion of the Jews, and Keith was particularly involved in explaining the physical restoration of Israel to Palestine. McCheyne saw a strong bond between the revival of the Scottish churches and the conversion of the Jews. He believed that 'the moment a man begins to take the statements of the Word of God as literally true, that moment he begins to care for Israel' (Yeahworth 1957: 265). Both McCheyne and Andrew Bonar attributed a special place to the Jews in the salvation of the Gentiles. Bonar gave a speech at the General Assembly of Free Church of Scotland proclaiming 'when we gave the Jews their proper place in our missionary work, we might look for special blessing at home, for "Blessed is he who blesseth thee"' (Bonar 1966: 192). Bonar did not miss the opportunity to underline that the Kilsyth revival was at the very same time when the deputation 'was seeking out the scattered Jews' (Saphir 1889: 21). John Duncan, who was to be the first missionary in Pest, shared this conviction, believing that revival of Protestant Churches was strongly linked with Jewish Mission (Duncan 1860: 39-42). With such a theological intention the Deputation left Britain on the 12 April 1839 (Brown 1993: 290). [Yeahworth cites McCheyne's word: 'They shall prosper who love thee'. This indicates a theological consensus for evangelisation of the Jews.]

They wanted to approach Palestine via Alexandria, but a plague broke out and they had to travel via land. During his trip, Black 'having been lulled to sleep' fell off his camel and was greatly stunned (Yeahworth 1957: 269) (Bonar 1889: 18). This forced the two senior members of the Deputation, Black and Keith to return to Britain via the Danube. It was very much against their original plan as the Jewish Committee in Scotland was determined to keep the Deputation from 'visiting any part of the Austrian Empire' (Keith 1867: 213). They knew how inimical the Catholic countries were to Protestant mission and that strict laws prohibited such activities. Yet instead of heading home by a steamer from Beirut to London they chose to traverse through Central Europe with the view to enquiring into the conditions of the Jews (Keith 1867: 214). At first Bucharest and Semlin seemed to be favourable spots for initiating mission stations since they were welcomed there. In addition, there was a British consulate there (Keith 1867: 214). They travelled on

to Pest, where the journey took an unexpected turn. Originally Black and Keith intended to stay there only for three days but when they realized how prospective the field of 'Jewish mission' Pest was, they decided to stay and let the steamer, for which they had tickets, depart. While pursuing their inquiries both were smitten by an intermittent Danube fever and Keith exhibited some type of cholera symptoms. He became so ill that it was feared that he would die within days. Julia Pardoe, an English traveller and author of a book on Hungary, saw them and notified the Archduchess, Maria Dorothea—a devoted Württemberg Pietist—whom she had come to know (Pardoe 1840: 321; 66-9; 91-7). [Pardoe was a celebrated writer of the century her books on various European countries were widely read. Even the missionaries used them to inform themselves about the country.]

The Archduchess intervened and offered to care for Keith. She sent immediate orders that everything possible should be done for his recovery (Keith 1867: 215). She finally persuaded him to accept the most eminent physician in Hungary whom she recommended (Keith 1867: 248). Besides these signs of imperial favour, she sent hot dishes for Keith's daily main meal from the palace and attended on Keith herself, like a deaconess (Keith 1867: 261; 262). These unusual actions on the part of the wife of the Emperor's representative in Hungary excited the public of Pest. Soon rumours arose about her frequent visits. When Keith learned that there were spies at the hotel, he asked her to defer her visitations until the agitation subsided. She answered:

I know all that they are doing or can do. They can only send a complaint to Metternich, and all he can do is to present it to the Empress. But I have been beforehand with them, for I have already written to her, saying that I have seen you, and will see you, and nothing shall prevent me, so make yourself at ease about me (Keith 1867: 247-8).

Due to her position, Maria Dorothea dared to resist and ignore the disapproval of the formidable Imperial Chancellor Metternich, the most influential person in the whole Empire. During these visits, the Archduchess developed a friendly and personal relationship with Keith, who became her confessional father (Keith 1867: 236). She shared her sorrow, the loss of her most beloved son, Prince Alexander with him. Although she enjoyed the highest status in the Hungarian society, she experienced solitude and desired to have a Pietist community around her.

To understand her position as a Protestant, it should be pointed out that the ruling class, the aristocracy of Hungary was mostly Catholic, as was her husband, the Austrian Archduke. The Habsburg family was hostile to the marriages of Palatine Josef, whose first wife was Russian Orthodox, and the second Calvinist. The fact that his third wife, Maria Dorothea was also a Protestant (Payr 1908: 1) was barely tolerated in the Habsburg Court. He

needed to obtain a special permission from the Pope for the marriage (Oehler 1998: 241-2). Although Maria Dorothea was granted personal religious freedom, her children had to be educated by Catholic priests. To her grievance they were taken from her for instruction. Moreover, she had no personal chaplain at her disposal at the Royal Court of Buda and her public actions were under the eyes of the imperial spies. She was a deeply religious Pietist and was well informed of British Evangelicalism to Keith's surprise. It is evident that the meeting of Maria Dorothea and Keith was decisive in the history of the Scottish Mission in Pest. On the very last meeting she entreated that missionaries to the Jews should be sent to Pest 'Send out missionaries here, and I will protect them' (Keith 1867: 247). Undoubtedly, she played a crucial role in offering a protection for the Church of Scotland missionary endeavour to the Jews. [Palatine Josef's former marriages were to Alexandra Paulova, who was Russian Orthodox, died in 1801 and Hermina, a Calvinist who died in 1817. Archivalien des Hauses Württemberg im Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, G 285, fol. 35. Wedding of Maria Dorothea. A letter dated 20 August 1819. Here one finds the actual marriage contract and a letter from the Pope giving his consent to the marriage.]

Maria Dorothea's Pietism, Scottish Evangelicalism, and the French Réveil Working for a Common Goal: The Evangelisation of the Multi-ethnic Hungarian Kingdom

As it has been described the threads of missionary interest met at the very heart of the central power of the Habsburg. William Wingate, one of the later missionaries claimed that Maria Dorothea had been waiting for seven years for a religious revival to occur before Keith and Black arrived in the autumn of 1839 (Wingate 1878: 34; Kool 1993: 100). She, just like Keith and McCheyne, hoped that the 'Gentiles', i.e. the nominal Christians of Hungary, would experience true conversion. Hence the revival of the Hungarian Protestantism became the first point of the convergence of interest of Scottish Presbyterian Evangelicalism and German Pietism that Keith and Maria Dorothea represented. Second, the Christian responsibility for the socially disadvantaged was a deep concern to both. Third, they laid an emphasis on Christian education starting with nursery to primary education. These three issues were to characterize the future work of the Scottish Mission which was the vehicle of transferring Western European, more precisely Anglo Saxon evangelism as well as German and Dutch Pietism into the Protestant landscape of Hungary.

The fact that Maria Dorothea's piety was so close to that of the Scots was not by accident. She came from a Württemberg Pietist background, where Albrecht Bengel played an important role (Wallman 1990: 123-143; Schmidt 1983: 109-113). The piety of her mother, Duchess Henrietta of Württemberg,

decisively influenced her life. The Duchess introduced her to the work of a disciple of Pestalozzi and did not let her daughter read the Bible until the age of thirteen due to the influence of Rousseau's school (Wingate 1878: 33) (Keith 1867: 245). Maria Dorothea's mother had contact with the Swiss *Réveil* movement and notably César Malan (Malan 1869: 90). It is truly fascinating to notice that the international character of 'evangelical' Christianity because Malan was converted through the Scottish preacher Robert Haldane (Walls 1993: 568, 570) at New Year in 1817 (Haldane n.d.: 220-5; Malan 1869: 45; Drummond 1947: 69-82). In 1820 Malan built the 'Chapel of Testimony' in his own garden, where many distinguished people including Maria Dorothea, the Archduchess of Hungary, with her mother attended his devotional meetings (Malan 1869: 90; Drummond 1956: 186-7; Brown 1993: 123). To see how interactive continental Pietism and Scottish Evangelicalism were, it is enough to mention that John Duncan, the first missionary to the Jews at Pest and later famous professor of Hebrew and Oriental languages, was converted through the Scottish influenced Swiss César Malan (Brown 1993: 131-155). Both Maria Dorothea and John Duncan shared Malan's creed. His main tenet was 'there is only one God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; man is born in sin out of which he can only be saved by being born again through the Holy Spirit; the salvation of man is God's completely free gift of mercy' (Fabiny 1980: 345). Apparently all the three trends of revivalists believed in the necessity of conversion of an individual. He comments on it condemning those very principles, 'though a Protestant, yet for the first thirteen years of her life, from an unwise theory, she had not been instructed in the Scriptures (not even to read them), or in any religious knowledge, till it was through her understanding should be matured, as if in the degenerate soil of human nature weeds would not spring up where good seed is not sown'. Robert Haldane initiated a mission to India which failed due to the lack of governmental support then he shifted his Evangelical enthusiasm and started the Home mission to the Highlands. [Brown, 131-155. Here we find a highly interesting and detailed account of Duncan's conversion. It is said that the biographer David Brown was instrumental in introducing Duncan to Malan. It is acknowledged on pp. 72, and 131].

It was this *Réveil* movement to which the famous Henri Merle d'Aubigné, professor of Church History in Geneva, a proponent of the teachings of this movement, belonged. He had cordial relationships with both Scottish Presbyterians and German Pietists of Hungary especially with George Bauhofer, who became chaplain to Maria Dorothea. Church historians have not yet pointed out this tripartite connexion of Scots, Swiss and Hungarians, but it is important to recognise the existence of this network of like-minded people across Europe: in Scotland, in Geneva, in Württemberg, and finally in

Hungary by the early 1830s (Stunt 2000). [It would be interesting to extend the results of Stunts' research to the Pietism of Württemberg and Hungary.]

Hungarian Protestantism and Maria Dorothea's Vision

The theological and spiritual background of Hungarian Protestantism had not been profoundly influenced by any form of revivalist tendencies of the Western trends of Protestantism since the Reformation except the period of Puritanism during the seventeenth century. Though there was a period of Puritan influence in Hungary for a while, it never came a nationwide movement and did not have lasting impact on the society at large like in England. There were some Pietists ministers in the Lutheran Church from the eighteenth century, but they were small in numbers (Szent-Iványi 1935: 1-38; 157-58; 321-333; 414-427). Also, German Pietism failed to reach the Reformed Church as a whole (Révész 1925: 58). Escaping the impact of Western European revival movements, some Hungarian Reformed people developed a personal piety that could be likened to those in the West, but these sporadic forms of individual piety never assumed a form of a movement. The Reformed Church did not have significant contacts with British Protestants until the early nineteenth century but with German rationalist theology that became a dominant feature in Hungary. The other important trait of Hungarian Protestantism was orthodox confessionalism (Bucsay 1985: 192; Fabiny 1980: 345). As to rationalism, Fabiny cites an excellent example from a Lutheran teacher and writer at Szarvas, Péter Vajda whose 'moral lecture' on Protestantism around 1830 mirrors a liberal rationalist mind. 'The Reformers—he said—did not execute their work to its fullness as they did not draw on God's holy Scripture, the Mind and Heart, but only from the Bible. *By the means of freethinking* [Fabiny's italics] Protestantism has to achieve its true aim' (Fabiny 1980: 346). Also, István Szentgyörgyi, professor at Sárospatak College, declared that the basics for the knowledge of God are mind and nature which leads to true revelation (Tóth 1995: 224-6). On the other hand, orthodoxy launched a bitter attack on the immorality, libertinism and loss of religious belief. Péter Ócsai Balogh lamented on these issues and predicted that if the situation was not redressed Protestantism as such would cease to be within two generations (Fabiny 1980: 341). Rationalism had a sway over Hungarian Protestant theologians and ministers in the first half of the nineteenth century.] [Révész cited György Szikszai, *Keresztény tanítások és imádságok a keresztyén embernek* (Pozsony: [n. pub.], 1796) as a justification that personal devotion and biblicist piety was present in the Reformed Church as well.] [The liberal theology of Ferdinand Baur and David Strauss was only partially felt in Hungary. This is due to the fact that between 1715—soon after the defeat of the Rákóczi led War of Independence—up until 1825 the

peregrinatio was severely restricted as well as bringing books into the supremacy of the Habsburg 1819.]

It is no wonder that the situation that Maria Dorothea found in Pest and Buda upon her arrival did not satisfy her soul for the subsequent years. She often attended the Church at *Kohlmarkt-Platze*, namely *Szén-tér*. None of the Lutheran ministers of Pest were spiritually awakened; Josef Kalchbrenner was a rationalist minister, Mihály Láng, the dean was philanthropic but theologically liberal and János Kollár by contrast ultra-orthodox but exhibited no interest in personal devotion (Fabiny 1997: 8). Thus, she had felt herself to be spiritually isolated since her arrival to Hungary in 1819 but began to set an example for Protestants by supporting of disseminating of Christian literature, establishing diaconal works and facilitating education. These endeavours stemmed from the deep Christian conviction that God's love must be manifested amongst the people. One of the leading church historians, Fabiny has argued that 'Maria Dorothea's personality and her biblicist views of life initiated the re-emergence of Christocentric theological thought in Hungary' (Fabiny 1980: 345). In other words, he claims that a new era began in Hungarian Protestantism with Maria Dorothea's arrival at Buda royal palace. During the 1840s the Scottish Mission took root in Hungary. It established a mission school for the Jews established by the Saphir family, it also founded a congregation and most of all it is vital to underline that it began to employ Jewish converts as well as Baptist itinerary preachers to exert an evangelical-pietist influence on the people of Hungary with a view to evangelise them. In this work the role of the British and Foreign Bible Society, the National Bible Society of Scotland and the Tract and Religious Society which were supervised by the missionaries in Pest was the most influential one to shape the spiritual map of Protestantism in the country. One of the most exciting periods of this multi-ethnic and multi denominational work was the period of the War of Liberation taking place in 1848 and 1849. [As a matter of fact, Vajda published Mór Ballagi's book entitled 'A zsidókról' [About the Jews]. They also worked together in Szarvas. Cf. Kiss K (1887) *Új Magyar Athénas* (*Újabbkori Magyar Protestáns Egyházi Írók Életrajzgyűjteménye*), edited by Kiss Sz et al. Budapest: Aigner Lajos, 16]

Evangelisation of the Protestants of Hungary and the Fight against the Antichrist

The Hungarian revolution broke out in March 1848. Hungary went through a political transformation. For the first time during the Habsburg control of Hungary, a government was formed in April. Hungarian political liberalism grasped control of the fate of the nation promoting freedom of expression and lessening the influence of the Vienna court. Owing to this, the general climate seemed to change favourably for the Evangelical cause. The legal

constraints on the work of the British societies were removed and it seemed that the newly gained civil liberties would protect the Evangelical interest (Eibner 1983: 51). The missionaries welcomed the change, the easing of the hostile Catholic control, which they held responsible for the violation of freedom of religion. Robert Smith, the young missionary of British evangelical stance, stated that there was perfect liberty, and the Mission was relieved from 'an oppressive load—the [Catholic Austrian] government under which they trembled having fallen with its whole system of espionage and corruption' (HFMRCofS 1848: 482).

William Wingate was the head of the missionary station in Pest and also supervised the work of the British and Foreign Bible Society. His perception of the revolutions taking place in Europe in 1848 reveals his stance on Catholicism, 'amid the convulsions of empires, and overthrow of kingdoms, which have long united their powers to uphold a system of Antichristian superstition that has enchained for nearly 1260 years, the majority of Europe is in the bonds of soul-destroying error' (Wingate 1848: 502-3). Clearly the missionaries, just as Hungarian Protestants, were fiercely anti-Catholic and welcomed the change.

The Presbyterian missionaries from Scotland were eager to take advantage of the change in the political climate. They held a meeting together with German Pietist of Hungary, Georg Bauhofer and August Gottlieb Wimmer to work out a plan to evangelise the country. Bauhofer was the court chaplain of Maria Dorothea and Wimmer was the chief agent of the BFBS in Hungary. Soon they came to an agreement, which stated that 'Messrs. Bauhofer and Weimmer (sic) agreed to have a Bible depository in Ofen, under the charge of Mr. Bauhoffer' (Wingate 1848: 502-3). Thus, a warehouse and a bookshop were set up in Buda (Eibner 1983: 51).

The next step was to send out the colporteurs jointly employed by the Mission and the Scottish Bible Society for the usual one and a half months trip. Beside their own colporteurs, the missionaries continued their co-operation with the Baptists colporteurs of the BFBS, which also considerably increased its efforts. The colporteurs embarked on a 'campaign of door-to-door tract distribution and sponsored a week of evangelistic services, which were led by the German Baptist, Johan Gerhard Oncken, who was on a missionary tour of central Europe' (Eibner 1983: 52). It is clear from such initiative that the Evangelicals and Pietists united in spreading the gospel. This joint venture of the Scots and the BFBS lasted for a short period of time from the spring till the autumn of 1848. [Religious Tract Society. A Foreign Letter Book, June 30, 1848. Cf. Kardos L, Szigeti J (1988) *Boldog emberek közössége: A magyarországi nazarénusok*. Budapest: Magvető. It is a good study of the persecution of Evangelical Nazarenes after the War.]

The Ripe Event for a Harvest: Spreading the Kingdom of God through the Distribution Bibles and Tracts and Witnessing

The evangelisation of the country was a common concern of an elite in Pest and Buda during the 1840s. They often met in the Royal Palace due to the invitation of Archduchess Maria Dorothea. In September 1846 Bauhofer mentioned a conference where Pál Török the Hungarian minister of Reformed Church in Pest, József Székács one of the Hungarian Lutheran ministers, and the missionaries from Scotland such as Smith, Edward, Keith and himself as a German pietist discussed the possible extended distribution of the Bibles and Tracts (Bauhofer Diary 1846: 372).

However, they could only do this publicly unless they received permission from the government, which was not likely to give permission at all. They had to seize the first favourable opportunity to lay the matter before the Archduke. At last, the opportunity came, which the missionaries marked as a 'providence of God' (Smith 1866: 794). In Austrian Poland, the Polish peasant revolted against the proprietors and massacred many (Wingate 1848: 503). When the news reached Hungary, the Archduke was deeply troubled (Farkas 1898: 126). From that moment a door was to be opened for evangelisation. Smith tells us the story he was a just man and sincerely desired to promote the welfare of the people according to the measure of his light. While contemplating what to do to prevent the revolt spreading over to the domains of Hungary he came to the conclusion that 'unless the Bible be circulated among these people and they get good in this way, no other means will raise them from their present degradation'. Maria Dorothea who happened to be there said to him 'if an attempt of this kind were made in Hungary, would you give it your protection?' He said, 'Yes, I certainly would.' As the Archduke consented, he told her to send a message to the Scots to work in utmost silence. His message was if they 'met with any molestation from the authorities, they were on no account to offer resistance, but report the case at once to us, and we to him, and that he would take his own measures for its repression' (Carlyle 1893: 42-3).

Smith points out that even him could not go beyond a certain point (Smith 1866: 795). His power was limited as the ultimate one rested with Vienna. Yet in this way a door opened. The missionaries obtained letters of recommendation for the colporteurs from the Protestant pastors of Pest (Carlyle n.d.: 61). Smith stated, 'in after years we trained and sent out six of our young men as evangelist colporteurs, who carried the message of the gospel into all parts of Hungary and found that a rumour of what had taken place in Pesth, the capital, had preceded them' (New College, Edinburgh, Manuscript on Robert Smith, BRO-142-813-24). Farkas draws on data that is not indicated. It is likely to be the article published in *Witness* or Carlyle's work.]

Contrary to Smith Wingate mentioned only five colporteurs (Smith 1866: 794). Fortunately, He made a note of their names Taubner, Gellert, Kiewitz, Lederer and Neuman. All of these were German speaking Jewish converts residing in Hungary who were exposed to British evangelicalism and baptised by the missionary Smith and Wingate trained them in Theology, Church History, messianic prophecies for two years. They divided the country into districts to make them large enough for about a six-week tour. They secured the co-operation of British and Foreign Bible Society which provided them with Tracts, Bibles and books in Hebrew, German, and Hungarian. They distributed about thirty thousand Bibles. Their procedure was to go to synagogues first and engage the Jews through the literature they distributed by selling them. This was not without any difficulties as 'on one occasion they were all thrown into prison in Pesth. They spent the time in singing praises to God, in meditation and reading of the Scriptures, and in Prayer, and seemed so happy that it excited the whole goal' (Carlyle n.d.: 63). This scene again betrays that not only the missionaries but their fellow workers also thought themselves as Christ's true followers who were in continuation with the Apostolic times. The description and the language used strongly remind one of the stories of Paul and Silas from Acts. Indeed, they thought that they had relived biblical times.

They colporteurs always returned from their trip after two months and special meetings were held when they told 'what the Lord had done for them'. During the winter season they spent four full months in Pest with their families (Smith 1848: 333-4). This was criticised by the Jewish Committee as expensive and a correspondence took place regarding the matter. Years later Smith felt obliged to explain the situation again. 'It might seem to some. That this mode of procedure was both expensive and involved a great loss of time. It was certainly somewhat expensive, but the outlay was amply repaid' (Smith 1866: 795). Beside this they received further education from the missionaries to prepare them for the continuation of the work. By then not only the wandering merchant Jews spread the news of Scottish missionary work but the colporteurs' work began to make its effect felt on the mission. More and more Jews flocked to Pest from the countryside too. Smith expressed his desire that they wanted to evangelise the whole country not just Pest; 'A few souls in a single city can never satisfy us. Our station must be a centre from which streams shall issue forth through the whole land' (Smith 1846: 541). Through a network of colporteurs one of the means to evangelise the Jews was realised. At the same time, they hoped and worked for the other goal to infiltrate the gospel to the Protestant Churches of Hungary.

The War of Liberation of 1848/1849 was seen through the eschatological lenses of the millennialist mind of the missionaries. This part of the study will not explore that particular stance theologically. However, the primary

sources indicate very well how deeply the premillennialism of British Evangelicalism permeated the minds and actions not only that of the missionaries but their converts' and friends' entire life.

The Colporteur Work During the 'Eschatological Times' of the War of Liberation

At the outbreak of the Revolution, Hungary went through a political transformation unknown before, and it appeared to augur well for the evangelical cause. The legal constrain on the work of the British societies was removed and it seemed that the newly gain civil liberties would protect evangelical interest (Eibner 1983: 45-54). Smith stated that there was perfect liberty and the mission was relieved from 'an oppressive load—the government under which they trembled having fallen its whole system of espionage and corruption (Smith 1849: 481-2).

Wingate having returned in May 1848 from abroad, he met with 'pastor Wimmer from Oberschmitzau' (Carlyle n.d.: 112). Then the missionaries, Bauhofer and Wimmer held meetings to work out a new plan of evangelising the country taking advantage of the new political climate. Soon a new agreement was made as on May 12, 1848 'Messrs. Bauhoffer and Weimmer in the evening agreed to have a Bible depository in Ofen, under the charge of Mr. Bauhoffer' (Carlyle n.d.: 113). Thus, a warehouse and a bookshop were set up in Buda (Eibner 1983: 51). Then they sent out the evangelical Reformed Jewish converts who were the most eager colporteurs for the usual one-and-a-half-month trip. Upon the return of Thuritz, Jacobi and Gellert on July 8, 1848 they gave account of their work.

Thus, the missionaries gained first-hand information of the cruel atrocities of the Croats from the colporteurs who travelled the southern part of Hungary. Smith inferred from these that 'there is evidently an under-current of treachery at work'. He rightly anticipated the forthcoming political events. At the same time, he was also aware of the fact that time of socio-political changes created an interest of the gospel. The converts also gave account of formidable stories when the Jews were also attacked at various towns and they were made feel insecure. This accelerated changes even in their religion. Lederer reported a case when the Jews united themselves to introduce radical reforms in their religion in Neusatz (Smith 1848: 543-4). This was done with a view to Magyarise themselves so as to gain more protection within the state. [Regarding the events taking place in Hungarian Jewry in Pest see: Kovács Á (2007) Ballagi Mór és a Skót Misszió: megtérés, áttérés vagy kitérés? Egy liberális protestáns zsidó életútjának kezdete. *Confessio* 31(3): 109-125. Especially, pp. 109-112.]

The anticipation of the something new was to happen to the Mission to the Jews is best expressed thought Gellert's observation, who echoed Smith,

‘it is the time’ that the gospel may make its way to the Jews. Wingate remarked that it was not easy for them to work as ‘all of them were taken to magistrates almost everywhere’. He referred to a case when the missionaries themselves were interrogated before of the magistrate about the tracts that were distributed from the Buda depository by Bauhofer. Fortunately, they were dismissed without any further problem, writes Wingate. They could have well expected as it was wartime and any activity of suspicion rose the interest of the authorities.

All the mission trips were endangered yet the colporteurs bravely set themselves to the task. Beside their own workers the missionaries continued their co-operations with Baptist, which considerably increased in its effort (Szebeni 2019: 32). Wingate noted the following of their devotedness, ‘the Baptist brethren from Hamburg’ were made known by a person of high mark whether they were aware that martial law was proclaimed and ‘they might be hanged for what they were doing. They said, if it be so, we will not be great losers, in dying in such a cause’ (Carlyle n.d.: 116). To Moody, the convenor of the Jewish Committee this showed how grave seriously the Baptist took their evangelical commitment, ‘the glorious headship of Christ’ (Moody 1851: 386). ‘They embarked on a campaign of door-to-door tract distribution and sponsored a week of evangelistic services, which were led by Oncken, who was on a missionary tour of central Europe’ (Religious Tract Society. A., Foreign Letter Book, June 30, 1848).

The Scots were busy at removing all the obstacles from the way of proclaiming the gospel. They had a conference where Smith and Wingate decided to ‘print Hungarian tracts diligently and reduced “Boyer’s Evidences”, in Hungarian from 50 kreutzer to 20 kreutzer (8d.), and to sell all religious work proportionately cheap’. The means were ready but even a greater network was needed to be built for the distribution of the literature. This common goal was realised when Wimmer visited them in late July. He informed them of his visit to London and the consent of the Society to open depots in all principal cities of the Austrian Empire and engage twenty-five colporteurs to distribute and sell the literature at half of their original cost (Carlyle n.d.: 117). Their joint venture lasted for short period of time. By September, the Croats were marching towards Pest.

The achievements of the revolution were only temporary concession given by the Hapsburgs. The court in Vienna instigated the Croats who were Roman Catholics. They attacked the newly achieved freedom of Hungary in September. A civil war engulfed the country for more than a year. This new development compelled the Scots to leave the country on September 6, 1848. They took pain not to get involved and refrained from active involvement in politics, though they were deeply sympathetic to the Hungarian cause (Eibner 1983: 52). Before the departure, they made an arrangement and Mr.

Saphir and Bauhofer were approached to be in charge of the mission (Carlyle n.d.: 118). In comparison with the Scots' attitude to war quite a few of their colporteur served in the National Guard (Wingate 1848: 503). Wimmer who acted as a secret emissary of Lajos Kossuth, the leader of the War of Liberation, on his trips to Britain joined the Hungarian National Guard. Because of his political involvement an order of arrest was issued, and this forced him to flee to Switzerland in January 1849.

The Work of the Bible Society During the Early 1850s

After the War of Liberation, the Scots needed to reorganise the distribution network. Wingate notices the great demand for Hungarian Bibles and regrets that the printing presses are not back in operation yet. Edward Millard, the agent of the Bible Society was also aware of the extraordinary interest in spiritual matters. Smith recalls in his account of the history of the mission that 'a thirst sprang up for the word of God' and 'the eagerness of the people to possess a copy of the Bible was such that for a time our supply run short' (Smith 1866: 810). They experienced an unprecedented demand for Christian literature. This can be estimated from the account, 'During ten days of the Pesth market alone, about 600 Hebrew Bibles were sold, besides many copies of the German Scriptures' (Smith 1850: 284). Despite of the difficulties of operating under martial law of the country they managed to resume the work. The British evangelicals supported them and appeal for funds was made in *Evangelical Christendom* (Eibner 1983: 53). The colporteurs' distributive work as we have seen was booming since the spiritual hunger of the people was insatiated. We may rightly conclude that the mission's focus turned to primarily towards the school and colporteurs work. Wingate's testimony attests to this assumption: 'we are sold out of almost every size and language of Bibles'. The Scots did not even wait till September as the demand was so great and the numbers of the pupils doubled. 'We have attempted to open in the former premises fitted up as they were for 130 but it is impossible to continue these. We require at least twice the old place' (Wingate 1850: 19). From 1850 the missionary reports incorporate a considerable amount of the colporteurs' work. By the summer of 1851 the bookshop of the Bible Society, the Tract Society and the Free Church of Scotland was closed by police (Eibner 1983: 51-3). Wingate estimated that 'in 1850 they sold 4000 copies and in the first six months of 1851 more than 8000 copies were distributed from the depot called as *Pest Bible Repository*' (Wingate 1850: 95). In March, the Reichardt Press, which Bible printed Bibles, was raided by the police. All the literature was confiscated from in Kőszeg (Grün) Pest and Vienna due to an edict from Alexander Bach (Balogh 1903: 20). Nevertheless, the Vienna government was pressurised by the British to return the Bibles as they declared them as the property of British Empire (Brown 1859: 450; Eibner 1983: 53).

Finally, they consented to the freight of 58000 Bibles from Vienna to Britain (Antal 1908: 84).

By the early 1850s the colporteurs were interrogated by the Austrian state authorities. Not much later in January 1852, the missionaries who supervised the BFBS and TRS activities in the region were officially summoned to the head of police in Pest. He informed them of the imperial edict that forced the missionaries to leave the country within six days. They tried to protest and despatched a letter to ambassador, Lord Westmoreland but it was in vain. The expulsion was more than a shock for the missionaries who had hastily to leave all their properties behind without any hope of compensation. They bid farewell to the two Hungarian pastors who had supported them for years, Török and Bauhofer, the latter gave Smith a manuscript on Hungarian Protestant Church History that he smuggled out of the country. Bauhofer's work was a valuable piece of historiography as no publication of this sort was permitted by the state for centuries. Upon their arrival to Britain, the missionaries resented the failure of Lord Westmoreland to deal with their case in Vienna. They subsequently made several inquiries and attended numerous audiences in London to seek justice but in vain. On one occasion Earl Granville said that 'it was too bad that Lord Westmoreland had not instantly informed them of what Austria had done'. Their case was negotiated between the Free Church of Scotland and the Austrian government through the British government. They sent a Deputation to wait upon the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. The answer they received was that the Austrian Government was determined not to allow proselytising and that there was no hope of the compensation for the loss of property.

It is interesting how the key persons of the Mission reacted to the sudden closure of their activities. With uncovered embitterment Smith concluded, 'we had been brought thither by the hand of God; we were driven thence by the malice of Satan'. This clearly depicts his Evangelical worldview that interpreted all events as the fight between the forces of God and Satan. Robert Candlish also blamed the evils of Popery for the expulsion. On the Hungarian side, the absence of the Mission created a vacuum. Török expressed his regret of the sudden expulsion of the missionaries saying, 'we suffer a great damage in losing those who furnished us solace in adversity. The support collapsed, relying on which we felt satisfaction and security'. He also begged Duncan to 'consign our distressed affairs to the fidelity and guardianship of the Scottish Church'. However, Habsburg ruled out any possible advocacy of Hungarian Protestantism. Keith, the initiator of the Pest Mission, received a message from Maria Dorothea that she kept her promise alluding to fact that 'as long as it is my power, I shall put myself between the mission and any danger'. By this time, her influence was limited. Thus, by the expulsion years of vicissitudes began until the reestablishment of the Mission in 1857.

The activities of the British societies were suspended until 1860. Many colporteurs were arrested, Bibles and Tracts were confiscated, and the Scottish Missionaries were expelled from the Habsburg Empire (Kardos 1988). A German speaking periodical published a letter from Johan Rottmayer written on 25 June 1849 where the colporteur wrote about him being saved from further interrogation by the police thanks to a Lutheran minister (Flugge 1938: 2-5). The person must have been Georg Bauhofer, the chaplain to the Archduchess who not only saved him, but the Bibles were returned to him. In his church history, Bauhofer appreciated the devout work of German-speaking Hungarian Baptist colporteurs whose number may have been around twenty. He remarked that these staunch Baptist often dared to make 'audacious' statements about the Catholic and Lutheran churches (Bauhofer 1854: 26). Having lost the War of Liberation of 1848-49, after more than a decade of harsh treatment, humiliation and persecution of the Protestant Churches, the evangelistic efforts of missionaries, the Tract and Bibles Societies fell into a rich soil as when the Scottish Mission resumed its work by the early 1860s the old network of multi-ethnic and multi-denominational cooperation was easily revived.

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