

HUNGARIAN WORLD ENCYCLOPEDIA

Joseph Pungur

Editor-in-Chief

INTRODUCTION

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ON HUNGARIAN LANGUAGE

A GUIDE TO HUNGARIAN PRONUNCIATION

IMPRESSUM

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Canada**

Foreword

The Hungarian World Encyclopedia is a collection of Hungarian-related issues, themes, events and persons. It attempts to present Hungarian history, culture and individuals who also shaped the life of the world throughout more than thousand years of history. It provides a cross-section of the Hungarian culture and presents the treasures of Hungarian heritage. Doing so, we believe, is an important contribution to the cultural wealth of mankind.

This Encyclopedia pays homage to those who served or are serving the public and contribute to the development and welfare of the nation and the world. Unfortunately only a fragment of important Hungarian historical events, cultural achievements and their eminent representatives are included in this work. Alas, much more was left out than could have been included in this work.

Language not only links, it also separates peoples and nations. Latin was the lingua franca of the literati in Europe well after the end of the middle ages. The gradual separation of peoples and their culture started with the emerging national languages. Hungarian, unrelated to Romance, Germanic or Slavic languages, gradually separated the Hungarians from the rest of the world. This is the reason why Hungarians remained mostly unknown or misunderstood in many ways. Since the world wars of the 20th century Hungarians scattered around the planet. Today 2.5 million live in the neighbor countries, 2.5 million in the western world and only 10 million in their own homeland. Despite all the adverse effects of forced separation, Hungarians represent one nation, one culture and one heritage. The realization that so little is known about Hungary and Hungarians is the motive behind this work. Especially since the facts are most often inaccurate and at times distorted. This work attempts to rectify this situation.

So far no one has ventured to publish a modern Hungarian Encyclopedia in English, French or German. Most probably it is due to a proud, old Hungarian attitude that “If one wants to know more about Hungarians – learn the language!” Unfortunately the world did not learn Hungarian and we remained mostly unknown to the world. This Encyclopedia is an attempt to bridge the gap.

The Hungarian World Encyclopedia has some 6000 entries which based on a number of available resources. At the end of each entry the letter “B” and the subsequent numbers indicate their bibliographical sources, and the letter “T” followed by its number specifies the translator’s name, and there are also cross-references. All the names of the entry-writers, data-providers, chief contributors as well as text editors are listed in the Introduction, and the Bibliography, Rulers, Maps, etc., in the Appendix.

The Hungarian World Encyclopedia is the work of more than a hundred volunteers from all over the world. From Hungary and its detached historical territories: Transylvania (now in Romania), Northern Upland (now in Slovakia), Sub-Carpathia (now in Ukraine), Southland (Vojvodina, now in Serbia), and the Hungarian Diaspora of Australia, Canada, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, Switzerland and the USA. To sum up: this Encyclopedia is the result of a combined effort of Hungarian experts worldwide.

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Canada and Hungary, 31 December 2012.

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**GEORGE FALUDY:
ODE TO THE HUNGARIAN LANGUAGE**

(A free, partial translation by Éva Kossuth on the occasion of Hungary's millecentenary.
Vancouver, 1996)

As violet twilight darkens my lodging
I see before me St. Gellért's handmaiden,
on whose lips on an ancient evening
song burst forth in Hungarian.
Her Magyar face is distant and fading –
yet, some secrets we must still be sharing:
for her song flows through my every pore
on a distant shore.

Magyar tongue, my loyal mate in life,
you gave comfort to my wounded pride;
through loss, suffering and adversity
you were the promise, a brighter destiny
Attack me with guns or accusations:
I shall be armed with alliterations
Each ancient, vibrant verb
protects me in every nerve.

Your melodious vowel harmony
will stay with me through eternity
Those sturdy nouns, so vain and proud,
possessive endings, like greedy Counts.
Your gay adjectives and playful similes
stood guard over us through the centuries.
In each word I see your physiognomy,
tormented Hungary.

It's the speech of Árpád's people,
and not that of the Latin scribbler,
nor the chatter of foreign barons,
but the prayer of toiling peasants.
Magyar tongue! Can you withstand the gale?
You're our future, stand firm and hale!
Your soft sounds cover the nation's face
like St. Veronica's veil.

Magyar speech, so flowing and vivid:
you bubble, like our rebellious spirit.
We lost at Buda, Mohács and Muhi –
but church bells still toll for Hunyadi's victory!
Unfulfilled promises and burning desires,
a brighter future, or fateful disasters;
Tokaj's wines, ancient songs: they're all
in one sobbing tárogató-call.