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NOT ONLY THE “GENIE” OF THE LAMP CAN HELP:  
GENEALOGY AND RESEARCHING THE “LOST” TWO  
DECADES OF HUNGARIAN EMIGRATION TO THE UNITED  
STATES, 1850–1870

Writing about research methodology is never easy. Historians who do it risk boring their readers to tears. That is why, the presentation of this aspect is usually pushed into the background, more often than not, banished to a separate chapter at the end of books, bypassed and ignored by the overwhelming majority of readers. Sometimes, however, we cannot escape devoting entire articles to historical methodology. The reason why I have decided to write about a related subject on these pages is that as an undergraduate student I myself was influenced by an article Miklósné Kretzoi wrote on a neglected aspect of Hungarian–American relations: the depiction of the events of the American Civil War in American history in the contemporary Hungarian press. Her „Az amerikai polgárháború a magyar sajtóban 1861–65 között” [The American Civil War as Reflected in the Hungarian Press, 1861–65] remained a solitary effort, being one of the very few Hungarian academic works studying the War Between the States. How Miklósné Kretzoi approached the subject had a very clear methodological suggestion every historian should take: the search for ‘whys’ sometimes necessitates the presentation of ‘hows’ as well.<sup>1</sup>

Accordingly, what follows below is by no means an attempt to give a thorough analysis of the history of the Hungarian emigration to the United States between 1850 and 1870. This would go way beyond the scope of this paper, as a matter of fact any written work shorter than book-length. What I propose here instead is a summary of modern historiographical

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<sup>1</sup> Kretzoi, Miklósné. „Az amerikai polgárháború a magyar sajtóban 1861–65 között” *Századok* (1974/3), pp. 680–698.

research carried out in the field with special emphasis on new types and forms of research aids enabling the upcoming generations of historians to shed light on these rather ignored two decades of Hungarian emigration.<sup>2</sup>

### The ‘Kossuth Emigration’ in Hungarian Historiography

Those eager to get reliable information on the first sizeable wave of Hungarian immigrants to the United States, are not at all kindly treated by historians. There is only a single comprehensive work on this subject matter: Lajos Lukács’s *A magyar politikai emigráció, 1849–1867* [The Hungarian Political Emigration, 1849–1867], which did not exclusively have Transatlantic migration in its focus.<sup>3</sup> Of course, much information can be acquired from the general studies of the Hungarian–American past, although more often than not they only scratch the surface.<sup>4</sup> It is conspicuous right away that the most works tend to disregard the fact that the inflow of Hungarians in the United States did not start in 1870, with the coming of the waves of the so-called New Immigration. Even Julianna Puskás’s *Kivándorló magyarok az Egyesült Államokban, 1880–1940*, the somewhat shortened version of which was published in English as well: *From Hungary to the United States, 1880–1914*, concentrated on the so-called New Immigration and treated the Ante-bellum waves of Hungarian emigrés to the United States as if they had never existed, which is definitely the gravest shortcoming of her work. In 2000 Professor Puskás published an excellent synthesis in which she made use of the results of her more recent research: *Ties that Bind, Ties that Divide: 100 Years of Hungarian Experience in the United States* which nevertheless follows the same patterns.<sup>5</sup>

It is worth examining, therefore, why someone with the intention to determine the exact number of immigrants of Hungarian origin in the

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<sup>2</sup> For a more thorough discussion of the subject see, István Kornél Vida, *“The True Cause of Freedom”: The Kossuth Emigration and the Hungarians’ Participation in the American Civil War*. (Doctoral Dissertation: Debrecen.)

<sup>3</sup> Lukács, Lajos. *A magyar politikai emigráció, 1849–1867*. Budapest: Kossuth könyvkiadó, 1984.

<sup>4</sup> Just to mention the most recent one: Béla Várdy, *Magyarok az Újvilágban*. Budapest: A Magyar Nyelv és Kultúra Nemzetközi Társasága, 2000.

<sup>5</sup> Puskás, Julianna. *Kivándorló magyarok az Egyesült Államokban, 1880–1914*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1982; *From Hungary to the United States, 1880–1914*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1982; *Ties that Bind, Ties that Divide: 100 Years of Hungarian Experience in the United States*. New York: Holmes and Meier, 2000.

United States during the 1850s has to face unexpected difficulties. Earlier historical works offer varied numbers ranging from 269 to over 5,000. The question may arise what makes it so problematic to give precise estimation of the number of immigrants during this period.

One of the reasons is that Hungarian statistics concerning emigration are available only since 1899 which rules out using the Hungarian official documents for the investigated era. Although in certain European ports files were kept of the emigrants heading for the United States, these statistics have been registered only since 1871. Moreover, in most of them emigrants were not distinguished by their home countries and places of destination.<sup>6</sup> The only available data are offered by lists of emigrants which were published in certain British or Hungarian–American (eg. *Magyar Száműzöttek Lapja* [Hungarian Exiles' News]) newspapers, although they are not extensive, therefore, cannot constitute a creditable starting point for further research.

These are the main reasons why historians had no other alternative but to estimate the number of immigrants in the United States prior to 1870. As already pointed out, these estimations vary greatly. Kertheny suggests that the number of Hungarians living in the United States could be 269 at the very most.<sup>7</sup> According to Jenő Pivány, this figure is approximately 4,000, which was considered a golden mean in the literature.<sup>8</sup> Other authors, like Ödön Vasváry, thought that only about 3,000 people of Hungarian origin lived in the United States at the end of the 1850s. As opposed to these estimations, Tivadar Ács claimed in his book that 5,000(!) Hungarian soldiers fought in the Civil War, suggesting that the total number of Hungarian people in America was even larger. The fact that these researchers failed to reveal their methods makes them hardly unreliable and forces us to make an attempt to analyze the statistical data ourselves.

No historian so far has endeavored to analyse the census data in the United States searching for people of Hungarian origin from the period

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<sup>6</sup> Rácz, István. "Emigration from Hungary to the U.S.A.," *Magyar Történeti Tanulmányok* 10, (1973), pp. 135–137.

<sup>7</sup> Kertheny, Karl-Maria. *Die Ungarn in Auslande. Namensliste Ungarischer Emigration Seit 1840*. Bruxelles und Leipzig, 1864.

<sup>8</sup> Pivány, Eugene. *Hungarians in the American Civil War*. Cleveland: Dongó, 1913. pp. 5–6., Vasváry, Edmund. *Lincoln and the Hungarians*. Pittsburgh, PA. *William Penn Fraternal Association*. 1961–1964. pp. 1–2., Ács, Tivadar. *Magyarok az észak-amerikai polgárháborúban*. Budapest: Pannonia, 1964. pp. 22–23.

prior to 1870. In order to realize the difficulties one has to face doing so, a few lines have to be devoted to the nature of this type of federal records.

A census has been taken in the United States every ten years beginning in 1790, for the purpose of enumerating the population for apportioning representatives.<sup>9</sup> Information about households and individuals was collected house-to-house canvass. The filled-in forms constitute the population schedules for each decennial census. The originals of these census records from the period between 1840 and 1870 are in the custody of the National Archives in Washington, D.C.

The census of 1850 is often called “the first modern census”, as beginning with that year more comprehensive census information was gathered. Prior to 1850 only the name of the household head was recorded. In the 1850 schedules, however, for the first time, the name of each free person in a household is given (free inhabitants were separated from the slave schedules). In addition, an entry for each free person shows the following items of information: name, age, sex, color (white, black, or mulatto), occupation for males over 15, value of real estate owned, the state, territory, or country of birth, whether the person attended school or was married within a year, whether the person could read or write if over 20, and whether the person was deaf-mute, blind, insane, an idiot, a pauper, or a convict. As far as the censuses of 1860 and 1870 are concerned, they followed the very same pattern, thus they provide similar type of information.<sup>10</sup>

These data are accessible in the National Archives, in the American federal capital. The schedules are part of the Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. The 1850 schedules are microfilmed on M432, 1,009 rolls, the 1860 schedules on M653, 1,438 rolls, whereas the 1870 ones on M593, 1,748 rolls.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> In the United States Congress there is a twofold system of representation: each state sends to senators to the upper chamber (equal representation), whereas the number of representatives in the lower house depends on the population of the particular state (proportionate representation.)

<sup>10</sup> For more detailed information about the censuses consult, Donne Delle and R. Carmen, *Federal Census Schedules, 1850–80: Primary Sources for Historical Research*. Reference Information Paper 67, 1973; Carroll D. Wright and William C. Hunt, *The History and Growth of the United States Census*. (56th Congress, 1st session, S. Doc. 194, serial 3856.)

<sup>11</sup> For the utilization of the holdings of the National Archives for genealogical purposes see, *Guide to Genealogical Research in the National Archives*. Washington, D.C.: National Archives Trust Fund Board, 1985.

Everyone who has ever worked with the microfilm reader would agree that searching for information using it is extremely time-consuming and tiresome. Moreover, we definitely face numerous difficulties when looking for people of Hungarian origin in these records. Unfortunately, there are no indexes which group the household heads based on their country of origin, therefore, it is impossible to trace them using solely the microfilmed schedules. It could offer a way out to use additional sources, for example, contemporary newspapers, but these sources are sporadic by their nature and the spelling of the foreign names is hopelessly and gloriously confused in them. Using them as the only starting point for further research surely leads nowhere.

There is, however, another crucial, migration-related group of federal records which could definitely be made use of. In 1819 the Congress enacted the first legislation concerning the processing of immigrants. It provided that a record should be kept of the number of passengers in each customs district and mandated the registration of each person's name, age, gender, occupation and country of birth. Up to 1867, the records included all "alien passengers arrived", although it did not distinguish "immigrants" from "passengers."<sup>12</sup>

The passenger arrival records are also available in the National Archives and they consist of customs passenger lists, immigration passenger lists, and indexes to some of the lists. The records were created by the captains or masters of the vessels, collectors of customs, and immigration officers at the ports of entry to comply with the above-mentioned federal laws. Most of them are in the Records of the United States Customs Service, Record Group 36, where nearly all the lists and indexes are available as microfilm publications. The problem again, however, is that only name-based search is possible in them, therefore, some additional information is needed, since the records of passengers are voluminous. For some parts, there are hundreds of lists for each year, many of which contain hundreds of names. A general search, consequently, would be prohibitively time-consuming.

These are the main reasons why no historian so far has embarked on collecting data about this first sizeable wave of Hungarian emigrants to the United States. Moving downward (starting out from the general population statistics) in the records does not work with these early immigration records, but the exact opposite could offer a possible way of

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<sup>12</sup> See, John P. Colletta, *They Came in Ships*. (Ancestry.com, 2002.)

approaching them. However, as we have seen, the confusing nature of the various record groups and the fact that we know only the full names of a disproportionately small number of immigrants makes this enterprise almost hopeless.

A different approach and the recent development in research methodology may solve this deadlock and finally enable us to place this early period of Hungarian expatriation within the general framework of Hungarian emigration to the United States. This aid comes from the realm of genealogy, an often neglected and more often looked-down-on field of history which, therefore, deserves a brief introduction.

### Genealogy and Immigration Studies

Genealogy is the study of the history of families and the documentation of lines of ancestry and descent. Although in the United States pedigree *per se* has not been crucial in determining status or in transferring property, in more limited situations it has had a degree of importance. Since the 18th century genealogy has developed into a subsidiary academic discipline, serving sociology, history, medicine, and law. Libraries often have departments of genealogy, where volumes used in genealogical research are kept (e.g., passenger ship lists, immigration records, family genealogies, etc.); many historical societies also have such libraries.<sup>13</sup>

As the United States is undoubtedly a nation of immigrants, where individual self-definition is often made difficult by geographical, cultural and language barriers, people understandably wish to know about their ancestors and roots. Getting hold of these pieces of information is often immensely difficult, especially for those with no research experience. Therefore, it is no exaggeration to say that one of the most profitable history-related enterprises overseas is being a genealogist: a special kind of family “private eye” who takes the lives of long-deceased relatives under his magnifying glass.

What makes their services particularly indispensable is the fact that the primary sources of information are the federal records available for

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<sup>13</sup> Concerning genealogy consult, Bill R. Linder, *How To Trace Your Family History: A Basic Guide to Genealogy*. New York: Everest House, 1980.; Loretto Dennis Szucs and Sandra Hargreaves Luebking (eds.) *The Source: A Guidebook of American Genealogy*. (Ancestry.com, 1996.)

research at the National Archives. As it could be seen previously, doing research there can be quite confusing. One cannot enter knowing only a single name. The National Archives keeps federal records, therefore, one should always have information of when, how, and where their ancestor came into contact with the federal government (birth, marriage, naturalization, death, etc.) For those who find this job too complicated, professional genealogists can offer assistance. Although they are looked at reproachfully by the rest of the historian profession, these “genies”, as they are generally nicknamed, can be of great help in certain cases and not just in the reconstruction of family histories. One of the fields where genealogy can provide precious pieces of information is migration studies and this is the point where this branch of history can come in handy when studying the history of the Kossuth emigration.

However, our original problems are not solved by this recognition. We hardly face any chance going to the National Archives, if we know only the names, misspelled as they often were as the expatriates disembarked, either by the master of the ship or the immigration officer at their port of entry. However, two factors offer a solution to this problem. Searching for ancestors ranks just below baseball among pastimes in the United States, although it is clear that not everybody has the opportunity to do research personally in the archives, and not everybody can afford to hire a “genie” to do this job for them. It is no wonder that the spread of the Internet spawned very successful enterprises which offered access to the digitized images of the original documents, and, what is more important, the creation of these databases offer advanced search options, other than the rather restricted ones in the archives. In the following, I am going to focus on two of these online genealogical research aids, and analyze how they can be utilized, and finally, elaborate on the records of two individuals as case studies.

One of the electronic genealogical research aids is called HeritageQuest Online ([www.heritagequestonline.com](http://www.heritagequestonline.com)). Founded in 1983 by Bradley and Raeone Steuart, HeritageQuest is the largest genealogical data provider in the United States and a leading purveyor of data, products, supplies to consumers and institutions. Its source document holdings have soared to over 250,000 titles which can be combined with the resources of Proquest, another Internet-based data provider which

purchased HeritageQuest in 2001.<sup>14</sup> Among its databases one can find the complete set of U.S. Federal Census records for the years 1790, 1800, 1810, 1820, 1860, 1870, 1890–1930. But what makes this research software particularly interesting for those trying to locate people of Hungarian origin in the census records? It is its advanced search options which enable us to search for surname, age, state, county, age sex, race and birthplace. And this last feature is exactly what we have been looking for. By searching for people born in Hungary in the census of 1860 we get a total number of 1,141 household heads. What is more, they are arranged according to the states and territories where they were living when the census was taken. By clicking on one of the states, Alabama, for instance, we get the list of names with the basic personal particulars. Choosing any of the names, we get the digital image of the original page from the census records. It can be printed or downloaded for further studying. This is a crucial option of the software, as—although they have been working carefully with the transcription of the original documents—some mistakes, mostly misspellings, do occur. This way, however, these can be corrected with relative ease and not only the household heads can be detected, but further members of the households (spouses, underage children, elderly people, etc.) as well.

This is, however, only a tiny fragment of the services offered by the program. It is possible to search for names in the Publications database which includes 20,000 family and local histories (books) and more than 1.6 million genealogy and local history articles.

It is easy to see that HeritageQuest Online is indeed an immense help not only for those searching for information about their ancestors, or the genealogists trying to reconstruct family trees, but also for the historian looking for data about immigrants.

However, there are other immigration-related sources which could be made good use of when tracking people of Hungarian origin living in the United States in our scrutinized period. Therefore, it is advisable to use the previously-mentioned research aid along with another, similarly excellent software, *Ancestry.com* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)). Part of a network of genealogical websites, Ancestry.com offers 5 billion names and 4,000

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<sup>14</sup> For information about the enterprise visit,  
[http://www.heritagequest.com/genealogy/information/html/about\\_us.html](http://www.heritagequest.com/genealogy/information/html/about_us.html)



searchable databases, which make it one of the definite sources of information on the Internet for family history information.<sup>15</sup>

Ancestry.com offers the very same services as HeritageQuest Online, as the censuses from 1790 to 1930 can be researched, furthermore, the ones which were missing from the previous one (1830–50, 1880) are also included in this software. This enables us to cover the whole period between 1850 and 1870.

The databases of Ancestry.com provide much more than that. Its collections include Birth, Marriage and Death Records which are the prime sources of genealogical research. What is particularly interesting from the point of view of our research is the United States Immigration Records. It consists of various crucial sources: passenger lists for all major ports, immigration lists, naturalization applications, the data of the Emigrant Savings Bank, just to mention some.

Yet another database offers a more restricted option which can be used with Hungarians who participated in the American Civil War, 1861–65. The Military Records offer information about those who served in all major wars of the United States. It is possible to acquire the basic service information, but sometimes biographical notes are provided as well, particularly if the person served as an officer.

The software offers several additional features which provide an opportunity for the ardent researcher to get hold of precious pieces of information. All these enable us to trace down the careers Hungarian immigrants with a relatively high degree of accuracy and, consequently, we might hope to place these two neglected, almost “lost” decades into the framework of Hungarian emigration to the United States.

In the second part of this paper I wish to present two case studies for the application of both of the above-mentioned research tools so that the readers can get an idea of the versatility of their utilization. Both of these concern members of the Kossuth emigration. One of them is an almost unknown Alabama farmer of Hungarian origin, Sigmond Brock, while the other is one of the most famous Kossuth emigrés, Charles Zágonyi, about whom we know so much, yet about whose career there are still so many questions to be answered.

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<sup>15</sup> For further information about ancestry.com visit, <http://www.myfamilyinc.com/default.aspx>.

## Sigmond Brock and Charles Zágonyi: The Application of Internet-based Genealogical Research Aids: Two Case Studies

One can come across with the name of Sigmond Brock in the database of the United States Census of 1860. At the time the census was taken, Brock, 38, lived in Lawrence County in the state of Alabama. The country of his birth was Hungary. He was married, his wife Malvina, 22, was native-born American from Alabama. They had three children: Samuel, 4, James, 2, and Mary, 8 months old. Sigmond worked as a farmer and he was a relatively well-to-do man: the value of his real estate was \$1,000 and he had a personal property worth \$15,000.

This latter piece of information is quite surprising, as for farmers the value of the real estates usually well exceeded that of their personal property. However, if we continue studying the various databases, in the Slave Schedules of 1860 we come across a more surprising fact which immediately answers the previous question as well: Sigmond Brock was a slave holder!

Slaves were enumerated separately during the 1850 and 1860 censuses. The actual images are in the custody of the National Archives. Unfortunately, the individuals were not named, but simply numbered, therefore, they can be distinguished only by age, sex, and color; the names of the slave owners are listed, of course.

From the data we can learn that in 1860 Brock had 12 slaves. He had 6 under-age slaves, and 6 adults, males and females equally represented. An excellent study on slavery, *Time on the Cross: The Economics of American Negro Slavery* by Williams Fogel and Stanley L. Engerman (1974), estimates the average price of slaves to be around \$1,658 for the period 1856–1860, so it is safe to conclude that Brock had the overwhelming majority of his capital invested into slaves. According to analyses of the census data for e.g. Lauderdale County in Alabama, close to where Brock resided, an average of about ten slaves per holder was typical.<sup>16</sup> This means that the person under our scrutiny was a slaveholder of slightly-above-than-average wealth, but definitely not a great plantation owner.

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<sup>16</sup> Blake, Tom. *Lauderdale County, Alabama. Largest Slaveholders from 1860 Slave Census Schedules.*  
<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/%7Eajac/allauderdale.htm> (May 15, 2006)

There is yet another document which reveals a further piece of information about Brock's financial situation. In the database entitled Alabama Land Records one reference can be found to Sigmond Brock. On September 1, 1860 he had his land recorded in the land office in Huntsville, and the document contains that this portion of land was of the size of 240 acres.<sup>17</sup>

Quite strangely, no information of any kind can be found about Brock, or any member of his family in the census of 1870 or later. One wonders whether they were killed in the Civil War, or having been deprived of his slaves following the war Brock decided to return to Hungary, perhaps after the Compromise of 1867? On the basis of the existing documents we cannot tell.

It can be seen that plenty of information can be acquired from the combined use of the two research aids, even if the person we intend to do research on is an "unknown" member of the community, at least for mainstream historians.

Internet-based genealogical softwares can also come in handy, however, when we try to get hold of further bits and pieces of information in connection with the life and career of prominent immigrants. Therefore, in the following it is my intention to prove this by presenting the career of Károly (Charles) Zágonyi (1826–?) as a case study.

Zágonyi was another member of the so-called Kossuth emigration who arrived in the United States in 1851. Upon the outbreak of the Civil War, he joined with General Fremont in Missouri and organized and commanded a body guard cavalry unit to be known as Fremont's Guard. He led his men personally in a cavalry charge, the famous Springfield Charge also known as Zágonyi's Death-Ride, which took place on October 25, 1861. The guard succeeded in recapturing Springfield and claiming the state of Missouri for the Union. They lost sixteen men in the charge and the Confederates reported 116 men dead.<sup>18</sup>

This victory, however, could not save Frémont's command in Missouri, he was removed by Abraham Lincoln due to continuous military defeats and his premature emancipation proclamation in the state.

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<sup>17</sup> United States. Bureau of Land Management. *Alabama Pre-1908 Homestead & Cash Entry Patent and Cadastral Survey Plat Index*. General Land Office Automated Records Project, 1996. No. 21163.

<sup>18</sup> About Zágonyi see, Beszedits, Stephen "Hungarians with General John C. Fremont in the American Civil War." Vasváry Collection Newsletter (2003/2). Accessible at: <http://www.sk-szeged.hu/szolgalatas/vasvary/newsletter/03dec/beszedits.html>

This also meant dissolving his body guard, and many officers in his staff decided to remain loyal to Frémont and quit service, among them Zágonyi.

Basically that is all we know about Zágonyi's military career in the Civil War. His name appears here and there in the sources, but nothing can be known about his later life. In 1864 *The New York Times* listed him along with Frémont as a general officer without commands and even made his monthly payment of \$164 public.<sup>19</sup> It is not quite sure, however, whether he remained in the United States or returned to Hungary after the Civil War. According to one of the sources, he owned a cigar shop in Pest around 1870, although this cannot be validated.<sup>20</sup> Others suppose that he died some time after 1867.

Let us see whether Ancestry.com and HeritageQuest Online can offer any further information about his life?

His name appears in the records of the Emigrant Savings Bank. This institution was established in 1850 by members of the Irish Emigrant Society. It ended up serving thousands of—predominantly Irish—immigrants. The bank kept many volumes of records including an Index Book, a Test Book, a Transfer, Signature and a Deposit-Account Ledger.<sup>21</sup>

Similarly to many fellow-expatriates, Zagonyi also held an account in the bank. His name appears both in the Test Books and the Index Book. One record was created on December 10, 1861, and it provides the following information about Zagonyi. He was born in 1823 in Hungary, Europe, he arrived in the United States in 1851. He served as a major in the Fremont Bodyguard. The name of his spouse appears as Amanda Speer, but it can be known that this is a misspelling, as he married Amanda Schweiger, the daughter of a German emigrant in 1854. The records say that the couple had no children. Three days later, on December 13, 1861, another record was made in the Test Book from which the very same pieces of information can be acquired.<sup>22</sup>

As mentioned above, not much can be known about Zágonyi's fate after the Civil War. Nevertheless there is a source which reveals that

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<sup>19</sup> *The New York Times* (January 15, 1864), 1.

<sup>20</sup> "First Fire, Then Smoke". [From the *Tuscumbia Osage Valley Sentinel*. February 24, 1871] *Missouri Historical Review* (Vol. 36, 1992)

<sup>21</sup> *Ancestry.com. New York Emigrant Savings Bank, 1850–1883*. Provo: Utah: MyFamily.com, Inc., 2005.

<sup>22</sup> *Emigrant Savings Bank Records*. R-USLHG, ZI-815. Microfilm Roll 6. New York, N.Y.: New York Public Library

Amanda Zágonyi married an unidentified person in Manhattan in 1870.<sup>23</sup> This can mean two things: Zágonyi was either dead by then and his widow remarried, or he returned to Hungary possibly after the Compromise of 1867, as some sources suggest, and they had divorced prior to that.

Plenty of other references can be found in the databases of both research aids with primary focus on Zágonyi's military career. Unfortunately, even the Internet-based genealogical databases have their limits, as many of the collections are based on documents held in the National Archives indicating only events of the individuals' lives when they came into contact with the federal government. Genealogy also relies on family documents, however, both the distance in time and space make it very difficult, yet not hopeless to get hold of this kind of information. There are some successful attempts by descendants of Hungarian emigrés living in the United States to reconstruct their family trees and what is more, plenty of primary sources (personal letters, diaries, family memorabilia, etc.) have been revealed this way. Just to mention a quite recent example, Janet and Douglas Kozlay, descendants of Colonel Eugene Kozlay, Hungarian participant in the American Civil War, donated his papers from the period between 1849–1853 to the Petőfi Irodalmi Museum (Petőfi Museum of Literature) in Budapest.<sup>24</sup> Janet has been working extremely hard to get the papers translated into English and they are planning to collect and publish them in a single volume.

When writing this paper I had the intention to show the strong interrelations between migration history and geneology. However, studying historical links and contacts in general is made particularly complicated by the fact that some sources are accessible in one country, while the rest of them in another, and sometimes the reading knowledge of at least two languages is required if one wishes to work with them. The practical applicability of Internet-based genealogical research aids cannot be denied, as using them there is no need to travel long distances to work in various archives. Unfortunately, this kind of research is still approached with suspicion by many historians who hang on to traditional archival research methodology. This will hopefully change in the not-too-distant future, and more and more researchers will recognize the excellent

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<sup>23</sup> Marriage Registers, Extract from Manhattan (1869–1880). Department of Health, Division of Vital Statistics, New York. Certificate number: 7289.

<sup>24</sup> *Népszabadság* (March 11, 2006)

features offered by these softwares which will facilitate the study of Hungarian migration to the United States, and enable us to treat it as an integral whole without a two-decade gap between Kossuth's visit to the United States and the beginning of the so-called New Immigration around 1870. Let this be our wish to the Genie of the Lamp!