CHAPTER 3

The Nationalization of Landeskunde and Civic Ethos after 1848

The decades after 1848 were the age par excellence of voluntary associations in Central Europe, and the most significant difference compared with the beginning of the century consisted in their socially more inclusive character. This applied particularly to those serving specialized purposes, including the scholarly societies. If the patriotic circles of the late Enlightenment and the Age of Reform belonged to the more exclusive sphere of the higher administrative circles, the new wave of the civic movement recruited its members from a broader basis.

Hermann Heimpel called the German and Austrian scholarly associations founded in the early 1850s, “the group [dedicated to] the conservative recovery achieved after the liberal compromise.”¹ Their most typical representative was the Gesamtverein der Deutschen Geschichts- und Altertumsvereine (Overall Association of the History and Archeology Associations) and its creation, the Germanisches National-Museum (German National Museum), founded in Nuremberg in 1852. The museum of the “German People” upheld the ideal of the unified German nation during the failed 1848 revolution.² This was patriotic and amateur scholarship in a new sense, intending to educate and thus mobilize the broad public towards moderately liberal and national goals.

The post-revolutionary decades also fostered specialization, which recreated in certain circumstances social exclusivity on the basis of professional achievement. In the German and Austrian lands Landeskunde gradually transformed into historical scholarship, being affected by the professionalization of history as a discipline and the institutionalization of historical research

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as science.\textsuperscript{3} Associations specializing in historical inquiry were competing in research with the traditional loci of the universities, academies, and the older types of polymath learned societies. Membership in these new institutions was no longer defined on the basis of voluntary participation, but the quality of the scholarly work. Leopold von Ranke and Heinrich von Sybel for instance received permission from King Maximilian II of Bavaria to found the German Historical Commission as a separate institute of the Bavarian Academy of Sciences, which recruited its members solely on the ground of professional expertise. The same selectivity was applied in the case of the separate body of the Hungarian Academy of Science, entitled Történelmi Bizottság (Historical Commission, 1854), later Történelmi Társulat (Hungarian Historical Association, 1867). This took place at a time when the boundary between lay and expert knowledge was still blurred—yet it was a symptom of a slowly differentiating landscape of institutionalized knowledge. The rank-and-file of the booming German and Austrian Landeskunde associations was still the Bildungsbürger, whether he be an educated merchant, lawyer, medical doctor, or gymnasium professor. This social category was the beneficiary of a modern educational system, for whom studies in gymnasia and universities, i.e, a meritocracy, promised the chance for social mobility.\textsuperscript{4}

This chapter seeks to position the emerging Transylvanian scholarly associations in the broader institutional panorama while tracing their intra-regional relations. The late 1850s and early 1860s brought about the foundation in Kolozsvár of the Transylvanian Museum Society and later in Hermannstadt the Asociația Transilvană Pentru Literatura Română și Cultura Poporului Român (Transylvanian Association for Romanian Literature and Culture of the Romanian People, hereafter ASTRA).\textsuperscript{5} Both were founded as

\textsuperscript{3} Heimpel, “Geschichtsvereine,” 53.
\textsuperscript{5} Tanya Keller Dunlap, “A Union in Disarray: Romanian Nation Building under Astra in Late-Nineteenth-Century Rural Transylvania and Hungary” (PhD diss., Rice University, 2002); Dunlap, “Astra and the Appeal of the Nation: Power and Autonomy in Late-Nineteenth-Century Transylvania,” \textit{Austrian History Yearbook} 34 (2003), 215–246; Pamfil Matei, \textit{Asociațiunea Transilvană pentru Literatura Română și Cultura Poporului Român (ASTRA) și rolul ei în cultura națională. 1861–1950} [Transylvanian Association for Romanian literature and