



BOOK REVIEWS

Pécs 1663. Evliya Cselebi és az első részletes városleírás.

(Források Pécs történetéből 4.)

[Evlīya Çelebi and the First Detailed Description of the City.

(Pécs Historical Sources 4)]. By Balázs Sudár. Pécs: Pécs Története Alapítvány–Kronosz, 2012. 180 pp.

Recent historical research into everyday life among the three parts of divided Hungary during the early modern period has found that the differences were much less profound than previously thought. Examples are the rates and means of taxation, and relations with authority. Even the religious changes brought by the Reformation, economic trends, and cultural affairs developed in almost exactly the same way in the territory occupied by the Ottomans as in the part of the kingdom retained by the Habsburgs. Where there were considerable divergences, however, was in the history of the towns. When we consider such well-defended Transdanubian towns such as Sopron or Szombathely, or leaf through books on the early modern history of towns in Upper Hungary, the differences from the stories of Szeged, Temesvár (Timișoara, Romania) and Pécs are striking. There is also a palpable difference in Hungarian historiography. András Kubinyi developed a standardized system for researching medieval urban history, but there is neither a standard method nor a consensus view for the early modern period. There are still two “parallel worlds” of historical research into the towns of the period, one dealing with those in Christian-held lands and the other with those under Ottoman control. As things stand, the prospect of a synthesis is remote. The differences in the available sources are of course a contributory factor. Special abilities are needed to treat the distinctive types of sources on the life of towns in the occupied territories, especially those generated by Ottoman administration, and this inevitably requires the involvement of Ottomanists. The number and quality of sources changed, but some of the towns which passed into Ottoman control are in a more fortunate position in one respect: the Turkish traveler Evliya Çelebi described them in his memoirs, thus leaving a special source for posterity. In this book, Balázs Sudár presents to us Evliya’s description of Pécs, which is really a work of literature, and requires very thorough background knowledge to be used as a source on urban history.

The early modern history of Pécs divides into two parts. There is a relative abundance of material on the sixteenth century, permitting a fairly good reconstruction of this period. Surprisingly, the seventeenth century is much more poorly served in this respect. The Ottoman sources have almost completely disappeared, and gleaning nuggets of information from family correspondence is like panning for gold, demanding much patience and luck. One of the few contemporary developments with a positive legacy in terms of sources was the reviving interest of the Catholic Church. It is against this paucity of information that we have to assess Evliya's account of his travels, almost the sole narrative source on most of the towns in the occupied territory. Even though Pécs is uniquely recorded in Pál Esterházy's observations during Miklós Zrínyi's siege of 1664, when Christian soldiers entered the city, the value of Evliya's work is undiminished.

Evliya's writing has been accessible to Hungarian readers since 1904, and his description of Pécs since 1908. Its value has only been recognized very recently, however, because fragmentary translations and the lack of familiarity with Islamic historical literature were insurmountable barriers for local historians. Indeed Sudár has chosen to re-translate the text rather than patch up earlier attempts. The resulting book bears out the wisdom of his decision. The desired effect is largely achieved with explanatory notes, without which even an improved text would have remained "dead." The author himself was surprised to find that "the explanations are seven or eight times the length of Evliya's text. In the process, many new details have come to light, and we find that Evliya was a much better-informed author than previously thought: the superfluous-seeming oriental flourishes often carry factual information." The foundations of this translation are Sudár's linguistic and literary erudition, through which Evliya's chapter on Pécs has become a true description of the city.

The first chapter of the book introduces the author and his work in the light of the latest international literature. Evliya was born in Istanbul in 1611. Although his family held high posts in the empire, he always avoided a political career. He started off as a scholar, and was already a very well-read youth when a dream prompted him to set off on his travels; exploration the Muslim world then became his life's work. His surviving work tells us little about his own life. All that remains are a few inscriptions painted in his own hand in Adana in Anatolia, Kyustendil in Bulgaria and Foča in Bosnia. Most of what we know of him comes from his own writing. For instance, he frequently traveled to Transylvania on diplomatic missions. His uncle, Melek Ahmed, Pasha of Silistria from 1656,

frequently interfered in Hungarian politics, and it was by his side that Evliya came to the Carpathian Basin. His curiosity and thirst for knowledge got him into interesting situations. In 1660, he met Miklós Zrínyi in Csáktornya (Čakovec, Croatia), and in 1665, he was a member of the Ottoman delegation to Vienna to negotiate the Peace of Vasvár. He also visited Kassa (Košice, Slovakia) and Déva (Deva, Romania). One question regarding the author remains unanswered in Sudár's fascinating description: in the Muslim world how much accepted and practiced was the humanist ethos of an educated person renouncing a worldly career for the sake of scholarly enquiry?

Sudár gives a thorough overview of Evliya's work on pages 24–30, from which the need for the translation becomes unmistakably apparent. A quarter of the text relating to Pécs had never previously been published, and the rest was peppered with mistranslations. This prevented the texts which were available in Hungarian from being properly interpreted, resulting in distrust of Evliya's work. His description of Pécs is in fact highly detailed and almost certainly authentic, recording his own experiences there in 1663. Taking up seven pages in the modern edition, the text is hardly less than what Evliya devoted to Sarajevo, for example, so that the description is not a negligible part of his work.

The account follows Evliya's usual scheme. First he describes the foundation and conquest of the city. After that comes the architectural description, accompanied by the author's conclusions. The latter show Evliya to be a sophisticated observer. Sudár well elucidates the context, and displays impressive background knowledge. For example, in connection with the mosque of Kasim Pasha, Evliya mentions Sultan Selim's mosque in Istanbul. Indeed, the buildings are very similar, differing only in dimensions. In an important subchapter, Sudár explains the background to Evliya's numerical data, the area of the Turkish traveler's work which usually attracts the harshest criticism. Sudár has himself calculated all of the figures for Pécs, and settles the matter satisfactorily. Evliya gave an accurate figure for the number of mosques, but in general the figures should not be taken too seriously, as they were only intended to convey orders of magnitude.

The central chapter of the book is the source itself, occupying pages 49–88. The translation flows well, but most important is the critical apparatus. There are nearly 170 explanatory notes, and it is these that really bring seventeenth-century Pécs to life. I will highlight only one or two from the wealth of new details. Evliya laid great stress on the Greek tradition as regards Pécs. He considered that it had been built in the time of King Alexander the Great, to plans by Plato.

He also mentions the grave of the latter as being there, which of course is not true, but offers a glimpse into the worldview of the local Turks. They saw the Ottoman Empire as the inheritor of Alexander the Great's lands, and the Sultan as his direct descendant. The conquest of Hungary and their presence in Pécs was therefore a justified recapture. Recognition of this, for which Sudár takes the credit, allows us to understand the mention of Plato and Alexander in Pécs. He also itemizes all of the places in Evliya's travelogue which the author calls the "Garden of Irem." In the few passages where he mentions the earthly paradise of Muslim mythology, he includes Pécs, because he had a high estimation of the Tettye Hill above the city.

The second half of the book is an appendix, in fact an expansion of twenty of the footnotes. First he discusses the circumstances of the fall of the city and settles the contradictory statements found in the historical literature. The information he draws on is not new, but his review is very worthwhile. The same is true for the biographies of the major Ottoman dignitaries in the history of Pécs, because until now we have only known about Kasim, and almost nothing about Memi Pasha or Jakovali Hassan. The latter was the subject of a study by the author a few years ago. In the absence of a modern Ottoman cultural history, we know very little about early modern Muslim culture. This underlines the importance of Sudár's account of the various orders of monks and his substantial contribution to the question of the relations between the medieval university and the Muslim colleges. School students and general readers may also be interested in the chapter on Muslim mythology and legends, with sections on the Garden of Irem, and the history-of-ideas aspects of Plato's alleged presence in Pécs. At the end of the book is a glossary, a bibliography and an index to help researchers navigate through the text.

Sudár's book is not an urban history in the strict sense, and does not set out to be. *Pécs 1663-ban* is a scholarly source publication with critical apparatus that helps the reader understand Evliya's text. The presence in the title of the year is misleading, because the author touches on nearly every part of Pécs's early modern history. It may thus be seen as preparatory work for a major monograph, and also a very useful source for anybody interested in the history of the city.

Translated by Alan Campbell.

Szabolcs Varga

Irem kertje. Pécs története a hódoltság korában 1526–1686 [Garden of Irem. History of Pécs in the Ottoman era 1526–1686]. (Seria historiae dioecesis Quinqueecclesiensis 6) By Szabolcs Varga. Pécs: Pécsi Püspöki Hittudományi Főiskola–Pécs Történeti Alapítvány, 2009. 220 pp.

Books on the history of single towns or villages in Hungary have proliferated in the last twenty years. Szabolcs Varga's monograph on the history of Pécs in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, published as part of the Pécs European City of Culture 2010 program, stands out among these. It is structured around five main subjects. He examines how the city became a defensive fort and the role it played in the border defense systems first of Hungary and then of the Ottoman Empire. This leads in to a discussion of the changes in its internal administration and ethnic composition. The author also convincingly demonstrates how Pécs retained its old regional economic role in the sixteenth century, making a credible argument that there were more complex causes of Pécs's seventeenth-century economic decline than the financial difficulties of the Ottoman Empire. Varga then gives an exposition of how Pécs became one of the regional centers of Islamic culture, leaving a substantial architectural and cultural heritage. His coverage of the city's Catholic institutions also substantiates the apparently paradoxical finding that Pécs managed to remain a prominent center of Catholicism in the occupied territory throughout the period.

The two years following the fall of Buda in 1541 brought a fundamental change in the life of Pécs. It became the main South Transdanubian outpost of the Kingdom of Hungary, but the state of its fortifications and its geographical position made the city very difficult to defend and incapable of withstanding a sustained siege. A further hindrance to the organization of the city's defenses was its status as a feudal possession. Even though its strategic role was such that there were forces stationed there belonging to the bishop, the captain-general of the border defenses and the landed nobles, all of them were incapable of replacing their losses. On the other side, the Ottoman Empire set up the Mohács sanjak no later than the beginning of 1542, and its leader, Kasim bey, was charged with the duty of steadily extending the occupied area of Transdanubia, which he did with great success. Overall, then, it is not surprising that Pécs, despite its large garrison, surrendered some time before the fall of Siklós, and not later than 5 July 1543.

Now under Ottoman control, the city was, by order of the Sultan, made the center of the Mohács sanjak (the Pécs sanjak only being set up in 1570),

to be led—apparently with due heed to the opinion of the inhabitants—by its conqueror, Kasim bey. Pécs had a large garrison at that time, and for a while it retained its military significance as the most important South Transdanubian outpost of the occupied territory. Its place in the Hungarian border defense system was taken over by Szigetvár, to where the surviving officer corps of Baranya County moved. The fall of the latter in 1566, and of Kanizsa in 1600, also had consequences for the history of Pécs. Varga correctly highlights the Ottoman military doctrine that forts not in the direct front line were of lesser significance, so that their garrisons were reduced to the minimum necessary. This process is evident in Pécs in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. From being a “solitary fortress,” the military and civil center of South Transdanubia, it increasingly became part of the hinterland, and its garrison shrank accordingly. The fortifications, weak and difficult to defend at the outset, were left as they were until an attempt was made to reinforce them in the 1680s. That is why it was only lack of satisfactory artillery that prevented the forces led by Miklós Zrínyi and Wolfgang Julius von Hohenlohe from taking the episcopal castle in January 1664. In autumn 1686, when Margrave Louis of Baden led his column to Pécs, he waited for the arrival of the siege guns, and on 21 October, after two days of intensive bombardment, the garrison had no choice but to surrender the castle unconditionally. The author leads the reader through all of the stations between these two termini, as the city transformed from episcopal seat to key defensive fort to strategically-secondary sanjak.

In the late medieval period, Pécs belonged to the estate of the bishop and chapter, and was legally classified as a market town (*oppidum*). During the Ottoman era, the city was one of those Hungarian towns (the others being Szeged, Buda, Szolnok, Székesfehérvár and Gyula) in which, as the author points out, the incoming Muslim and south Slav populations lived in a peculiar coexistence with a substantial native population. Muslim judicial institutions had a much more prominent role there than in the militarily almost worthless market towns of the Great Plain, and the office of the Kadı operated throughout the period. There was also a customs officer, chief architect and town administrator in Pécs. The author claims that this may have been a factor behind the immigration by Balkan craftspeople and traders, whose affairs were looked after by the Kadı ex officio. For a long time, the Hungarian inhabitants of the city retained their own government, at least in religious affairs, if with varying powers as conditions changed. It was headed by a magistrate, whose rights were conferred by the community. He was assisted by a mayor, whose legal status was uncertain, and

the council. The powers of the Hungarian self-government did not expand in the seventeenth century, and the position of the local Christian community further declined. For that period, as the author points out, there are no records of the town's autonomy, and Turkish officials took every decision and administrative action in Pécs. The only remaining channel whereby citizens could pursue their interests was bribery, a practice sharply at odds with European legal philosophy, and one which lent the city a peculiarly Balkan nature. It would be interesting to find out further details on the special coexistence of Christian and Muslim culture in Pécs, and possibly to compare it with other towns of mixed culture in the Balkans, the Iberian peninsula or elsewhere, but Varga only makes brief references to the principal phenomena. These include the gradual displacement of the Hungarian inhabitants from the walled city to the surrounding villages or the Malomszeg district. Varga also mentions that, in 1622, the Jesuit monk Máté Vodopia was evicted from the house he had built beside the Church of All Saints by the neighboring Turks, because they thought he had done so to mock them. The book twice covers interdenominational conflicts among the Hungarians in Pécs. The first was generated by the arrival of Unitarians in the second half of the sixteenth century and the second when the Jesuits came in the early seventeenth century. Varga stresses, however, that difference in the available sources means that the conditions prevailing in Pécs society during the Ottoman era are much more difficult to study than those in the late medieval period.

Late medieval Pécs dominated the South Transdanubian economy and was its main beneficiary. Its goldsmiths, tanners and tailors even received orders from the royal court. King Wladislaw II allowed Bulgarian Gypsies to move to the town to make weapons, musket balls and other military equipment. Major contributions to the citizens' prosperity came from the viniculture and milling industry, both benefiting from the natural features of the area. These combined with the geographical situation of the city and the purchasing power of the populous episcopal seat to make Pécs the commercial center of South Transdanubia. Varga highlights the city's retention of its leading economic role in the region during the Ottoman occupation, despite the flight, in 1543, of the city's wealthy burghers (most of them German) to parts of the country considered safer, or abroad. The opportunities presented by the profitable cattle trade and the healthy local demand attracted both merchants and craftspeople. In consequence, a large south Slav population moved in from the Balkans, and not only as soldiers. Although—stresses Varga—the incomers were unable to play a major role in commerce, and always remained economically dependent on the conquered population, they contributed

by bringing new trades to Pécs to replace those which had declined. Alongside them came Ragusan and Jewish merchants with interests in long-distance trade, and the Gypsies, known as *Kipti*. Pécs's economic decline started with the ravages of the Long War and the detrimental effects of Ottoman "economic policy," and was worsened by economic trends in seventeenth-century Europe which reduced the demand for hitherto-profitable cattle.

Varga shows that the customs and way of life of the incomers played an important part in the administration of the town and in changes to the urban landscape and spatial structure, giving rise to a special European culture interspersed with Balkan features. Late medieval Pécs had a much more urban appearance than most *oppida*. We know from Miklós Oláh's notes that in addition to St Peter's Cathedral in the episcopal castle, the town was adorned by many churches, the palace which Bishop György Szatmári erected in Tettye, and friaries and convents belonging to the Dominicans, Franciscans, Carmelites, Dominican nuns and Augustines. Their locations were dominated the townscape and street layout. To serve Pécs's new function, there was military construction work (such as the conversion of churches to gunpowder stores or warehouses) and the erection of new religious and welfare buildings to serve everyday needs (mosques, minarets, madrases, monasteries), which were also, in several cases, built on the sites of Christian predecessors. The incomers were generous in supporting these, but spent little on the houses, which were left to steadily deteriorate. This is how Pécs came to have a richer Ottoman architectural heritage than almost any other Hungarian town. To make a living, the newcomers built rows of little shops and kiosks tacked together out of wood, reeds and mud, making a further impression on the streetscape.

Varga also discusses changes in spatial structure that accompanied changes to the townscape during the Ottoman era. European and Ottoman towns had a fundamentally different structure. In the former, the community was arranged by streets, while the representatives of the new regime usually divided the town into districts, called *mahalles*, arranged on the basis of denominations, each with a religious building complex at its center. The old and new spatial structures for a long time coexisted, as is very clear from their names. The street layout of the city did not fundamentally change during the Ottoman era, although the way of life of incomers from the Ottoman Empire probably made Pécs better resemble the center of some Balkan province than its medieval self. The Hungarian population, gradually displaced from the city, lived in the Malomszeg district to the east and north-east, where they set up what they needed for their

community life. This suburb, which might be regarded as the “industrial area” of Pécs, was not solely inhabited by Hungarians. Turks—some of them quite wealthy—and southern Slavs converted to Islam also appeared there. This led to a change in the face of the Tettye area.

It was not only in architecture that Pécs bore the marks of Islamic culture. The Mevlev monastery there had a strong cultural influence, and there were more people who could speak Persian in south-eastern Transdanubia than elsewhere in the occupied territory. Standing out among the sons of the city are the historian Ibrahim Pecsevi and the less well-known Jafer Ilyani, an outstanding representative of distinctive Ottoman prose.

Although the city lost much of its autonomy, its former population fled or was displaced to Malomszeg, and its spatial structure also transformed, the late medieval traditions lived on, and it did not lose its cultural significance. Citing recent research, the author stresses that the city might be regarded as one of the centers of Catholicism in the occupied territory. Despite the rapid spread of the Reformation, Pécs was not lost to Rome. It received constant reinforcements through the settlement of Catholic Bosnians, and the arrival of the Jesuits in the early seventeenth century gave new momentum to the process. It is also important to mention that many members of reformed denominations also lived in Pécs, and Unitarian evangelists migrating from Transylvania also found refuge there. This confessional diversity made the city at the foot of the Mecsek Hills one of the centers of education in the occupied territory and furnished it with a prominent role in the preservation of the Hungarian population’s identity in the region.

Overall, Varga does not regard the history of Pécs during the Ottoman era as a process of decline. The city retained its regional significance and, in the course of time, built up a substantial architectural and cultural heritage. A related question, the threat of Balkanization, gives pause for thought. Had the wars of reconquest started only a decade later, Hungary could have gone the same way as Bosnia. Szabolcs Varga has attempted to systematize and explain existing knowledge, and has successfully accomplished his objective. His book will serve as a sound base for future research in a wider context, determining the place of Pécs in the urban structure of the occupied territory and Hungary as a whole, and will also be used as a case study in the stimulating issue of Muslim-Christian coexistence.

Translated by Alan Campbell.

Zoltán Bagi

“A városok szíverek.” Tanulmányok Kassáról és a reformkori városokról [“Cities are Arteries.” Studies on Kassa and Other Towns in the Age of Reforms]. By Gábor Czoch. Pozsony: Kalligram, 2009. 209 pp.

Studies of Hungarian urban history were embarrassingly slim until very recently. One reason for this was Hungarian historians’ traditional focus on political history and the history of events. Most scholars believed that writing about the city was an unpromising intellectual endeavor, to be left to local historians whose scholarly ambitions were to describe various aspects of individual cities. As early as the mid-nineteenth century, historians suggested that the cities remained alien parts of the nation’s body since the majority of their population was not Hungarian. Patriotic historical writing therefore neglected them as uninteresting places irrelevant to national development.

In the past few decades, however, a small group of urban historians have concentrated intensely on urban networks, the representation of cities, and urban institutions. This recent historiographical development has brought the city into focus as a complex economic, social and cultural center and elucidated the position of individual cities within the wider urban context. The meticulous study of urban societies and institutions, and of the life of city-dwellers and their participation in the community, allows historians to examine individual and collective social behavior, and to investigate social actors in the context of universal and coherent cultural patterns.¹

Gábor Czoch’s collection of essays on Hungarian cities investigates what urbanization meant in the first decades of the nineteenth century. This was a period when the concept of the city was going through great change, and the legal definition based on feudal privileges coexisted with a more modern understanding of urban centers that involved the size of population and various parameters of economic and cultural life. Czoch attempts to analyze how contemporaries thought and talked about the city, how they defined the “urban issue,” and how the city was represented in public discourse. The essays focus particularly on Kassa (Košice, Slovakia), the shifts in the meaning of civic rights, the city’s ethnic composition, changes in its spatial structure, and the

1 On the development of urban history in Hungary and on its role in the historical scholarship see: Penelope J. Corfield, “A Conversation with Vera Bácskai: Urban History in Hungary,” *Journal of Urban History* 25 (1999): 514–35; Gábor Gyáni, “Trends in Contemporary Hungarian Historical Scholarship,” *Social History* 34, no. 2 (2009): 250–60.

administrative orders at the time of the famine in the 1840s. In his excellent examination of the importance of the acquisition of civic rights, Czoch shows how various social groups—including aristocrats, artisans, merchants, and intellectuals—maintained the privileges that underlay their prestige in this late period, and he explains their motivation for doing so. Political and economic privileges, including rights to election and filling a public office, property rights in the city’s territory, admission to guilds, free trading activity within the city, exemption from certain customs duties, freedom to sell wine, and the right to make a last will, remained important despite the transition to more modern, bourgeois values.

The notion of the city runs through all the chapters, and is approached through representation, the construction of space, the understanding of urban life, and the reconstruction of the historical role of the city-dwellers and their legacy in the first decades of the nineteenth century. The wide panorama of urban issues and the various aspects of urban everyday life lead us to unmapped territories of urban history and provide a basis for understanding the dilemmas and problems urban communities faced during the first half of the 1800s.

Since the 1970s, Hungarian historians have made attempts to reconstruct the Hungarian urban network by applying a more complex approach than legal definition and statistical analysis, recognizing that the number of a settlement’s inhabitants was only one factor among others. Urban historians have warned us against statistical definition, the reification of the size of the population when positioning a city and describing its urban characteristics, because concentration of population is not the only and not even the primary indicator of urban development. In 1975, a prominent urban historian, Sándor Gyimesi, employed the “functionalist” method; in addition to the size of the population he examined the number of artisans and other economic, administrative and cultural functions a city fulfilled.² Vera Bácskai and Lajos Nagy introduced an even more sophisticated approach when they computerized the data of a nationwide census of Hungarian settlements from 1828 and prepared several rankings of cities based on market functions.³ Their multi-variable factor analysis brought surprising results: by a number of economic and cultural indicators the most

2 Sándor Gyimesi, *A városok a feudáliszmusból a kapitalizmusba való átmenet időszakában* [Cities During the Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1975).

3 Vera Bácskai and Lajos Nagy, *Piacközségek, piacközpontok és városok Magyarországon 1828-ban* [Market Regions, Centers and Cities in Hungary in 1828] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1984).

prestigious free royal towns and the most populous cities occupied modest positions within the Hungarian urban network.

Czoch's inquiry leads him into issues of urbanity during a special period in Hungary which is referred to by historians as the Age of Reforms. It is a somewhat misleading term, however, because the social and economic reforms proposed by progressive politicians, intellectuals and artists at the time were much discussed, but little realized. Public figures presented grand ideas about modernizing the state and society through massive economic and social change. Instead, the traditional feudal structures survived. There was a sharp conflict between the conservative defenders of feudal law and the liberal representatives of bourgeois values.

The reformers also engaged in heated debates about what held the most promise for the future, about the political, economic, and social transformation needed by the country. Vibrant discussions were part of everyday life in political forums, the Hungarian diet and county assemblies, as well as in cafés, casinos and the contemporary press. The public expression of opinions resulted in the emergence of a novel form of communication which went beyond the narrow channels of personal or group interactions and integrated wider social strata. In the 1830s and 1840s, these diverging and harsh arguments circulated in a gradually widening public sphere which became the medium of political confrontation.⁴

One of the great strengths of Czoch's approach is his use of Roger Chartier's analysis of representation as a means of investigating social identity.⁵ The idea of applying the concept of collective representations to urban history, and more profoundly, to particular urban communities, is an inspired, original thought. This strikes me as a very promising line of argument. Still, I find the picture presented in the book somewhat incomplete.

Czoch explains how contemporary authors wanted to spread national feelings to the cities, and "Magyarize" of the urban communities. They saw cities as the centers of industrial and commercial development, but they found it dangerous that their inhabitants were not Hungarians. In the final essay of the book, an interpretation of how the city was represented in history books from the mid-nineteenth century, Czoch addresses the problem of the traditional opposition between national and foreign urban communities. In fact, this

4 See Gábor Pajkossy, *Polgári átalakulás és nyilvánosság a magyar reformkorban* [Embourgeoisement and the Public Sphere in the Age of Reforms] (Budapest: MTA Történettudományi Intézete, 1991).

5 Roger Chartier, "The World as Representation," in *Histories: French Constructions of the Past*, ed. Jacques Revel and Lynn Hunt (New York: New Press, 1995), 544–58.

dual representation goes back to the Middle Ages, and was reproduced after the decline of the Ottoman rule. It would be interesting to know whether this perception was general and universal in public speech, or particular, and only applying to particular cities.

In fact, we might learn new lessons from examining historical documents other than those analyzed by Czoch, especially the contemporary press. I have found that editors of the popular fashion journals and their contributors put an emphasis on introducing the cities, their characteristics and communities to their readers. In other words, they produced city portraits that can be read as representations. In the 1830s and 1840s, inspired by patriotic feelings and enthusiasm, editors sent reporters all over Hungary to provide the readers with passionate and overblown descriptions of the country's beauty. This newly emerged genre, "traveler's notes" was edited strategically with the goal to represent and praise contemporary Hungary to the public, and create a common consciousness and identity for all Magyars. Ambitious journalists and up-and-coming young writers had a deep affection for the Hungarian countryside as well as for the cities, despite their deficiencies compared to Western Europe. They were ready to write about even the most boring and uninteresting town with majestic words, strong and lofty emotions and much aesthetic and moral glorification.

The ironic and critical tone of a contributor to a contemporary fashion journal who visited Debrecen in 1845 was unusual and sensational among the somewhat homogenous celebration of the Hungarian countryside. The journalist who visited the city made sarcastic statements and included in his report a scathing satire that ridiculed both the city and its inhabitants and included sentences taken almost verbatim from previous descriptions. The tone was painfully ironic because the author scoffed at the city for presenting itself as the true and most authentic Magyar community while being so hopelessly in decline. As opposed to the capital, Pest-Buda, where the day-to-day mingling of different minorities coupled with an urbane spirit made the city almost cosmopolitan, Debrecen's culture, language, and customs were genuinely Magyar. The vitriolic language was highly provocative because the criticism of Debrecen was, at the same time, criticism of what it meant to be a traditional Hungarian in the time of national revival.

The literary construct of Debrecen as a doleful, uncivilized and village-like urban space with burghers possessed of obscure manners held a powerful sway over the imagination of journalists and travelers, and due to their influence, the

reading public. It remained the dominant representation of the city in the middle of the nineteenth century, and this negative depiction was also incorporated into national literature. Late-nineteenth- and twentieth-century writers built on an earlier tradition of negative impressions, adding some new perspectives of their own. For them, Calvinist Rome, the city which remained faithful to the “true Hungarian religion” symbolized provincialism and traditionalism.

Czoch’s thoughtful argument of the national hostility towards the cities and the negative representation of Magyar values in Debrecen might inspire historians to pose further questions about the connections between urban and national identities, and the representation of Hungarian cities in general. Did they play a unique role in Hungarian history? In addition, it would be good to examine this issue in a European context. Was this hostile attitude towards the cities, their perception as foreign elements, unique to Hungary, or can we find similar examples elsewhere in Europe? I believe that an exploration of these questions would provide us with more through understanding of national identity. As always happens when one reads a great book, I have many more questions at the end than I had before starting to read it.

Mónika Mátay

Hungary's Long Nineteenth Century. Constitutional and Democratic Traditions in a European Perspective. Collected Studies. By László Péter. Ed. Miklós Lojkó. (Central and Eastern Europe. Regional Perspectives in Global Context, vol. 1) Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2012. xxi + 477 pp.

Historian László Péter, who from the defeat of the 1956 Revolution until his death in 2008 lived and taught in London, was an active participant in British and Hungarian professional life. He organized numerous conferences, the papers of which also appeared in volumes (e.g., in connection with the 200th anniversary of Lajos Kossuth's birth and the 50th anniversary of the 1956 Revolution),¹ collaborated on the definitive publication in English of the medieval laws of Hungary and through his book reviews helped to make the results of Hungarian research better known abroad. In addition to all this he taught the history of Hungary and the Habsburg Monarchy in the nineteenth century to generations of students at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University College London.²

This posthumous volume of studies contains the essays written during the last decade and a half of his life. The essays for the volume were chosen by László Péter himself, but the task of editing was carried out by Miklós Lojkó. Unfortunately the volume does not include a bibliography of the late author's scholarly oeuvre, and thus it is not always clear when certain chapters in the book were written.

László Péter calls into question several elements in the myths of Hungarian public law or—to put it more loosely—constitutional consciousness which had taken root by the nineteenth century. He initiates a debate with the practitioners of political and constitutional history in Hungary when he scrutinizes legal and political conceptual clichés used in scholarly life in minute detail. The author's intention can be unmistakably demonstrated, for instance, by the title of one of

1 László Péter, Martyn Rady, and Peter Sherwood, eds., *Lajos Kossuth Sent Word... Papers Delivered on the Occasion of the Bicentenary of Kossuth's Birth* (London: Hungarian Cultural Centre–School of Slavonic and East European Studies, 2003); László Péter and Martyn Rady, eds., *Resistance, Rebellion and Revolution in Hungary and Central Europe: Commemorating 1956* (London: Hungarian Cultural Centre–School of Slavonic and East European Studies, 2008). The latter book and Péter's life are reviewed by Gábor Gyáni, "The Hungarian Tradition of Resistance – and 1956," *The Hungarian Quarterly* 50, no. 193 (2009): 126–36.

2 He published a selection of his studies appearing up to the mid-1990s for the Hungarian public: László Péter, *Az Elbától keletre. Tanulmányok a magyar és kelet-európai történelemből* [East of the Elbe. Studies of Hungarian and East European History] (Budapest: Osiris, 1998).

his essays that appeared in Hungarian: “Why Is Hungarian Constitutional History in Need of Radical Revision?”³ At the same time in this article he stated from the outset that he did not expect significant change because researchers belonging to the mainstream had up until then received his views rather dismissively, if they devoted any attention to them at all. Here Péter was thinking first and foremost of those researching the 1848–49 Revolution and constitutional transformation, whom in another one of his essays he divided into two camps: “old hats” and “closet revisionists.”⁴ Nor does it appear that Hungarian researchers of this period have been really receptive to Péter’s conclusions and methodological proposals since then. It is a welcome development, however, that more and more historians dealing with the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are relying on his results.⁵

The purpose of László Péter’s book is to demonstrate the imprecise and obscure usage of older and modern legal and historical works, as well as to trace the deliberate reinterpretation of certain basic concepts (constitution, sovereignty, revolution, country, crown, etc.). He hastens to declare that these concepts must be cleansed of the interpretations later accreted to them and must be examined in their original context. Through analysis of the contemporary political and scholarly discourses László Péter reconstructs the meaning of the aforementioned concepts, as well as the original political conceptions forming the country’s fundamental laws.

Nineteenth-century legal texts and constitutional works form the book’s basic sources, which the author occasionally supplements with quotations from contemporary parliamentary papers and newspaper articles.

The work encompasses a significantly longer time period than its title indicates. László Péter discusses historical problems from the Middle Ages right up to the recent past: his studies equally address the revival of the cult of the Holy Crown as well as the country’s evolution as a society and a *Rechtsstaat* following

3 László Péter, “Miért szorul gyökeres revízióra a magyar alkotmánytörténet?” [Why Is Hungarian Constitutional History in Need of Radical Revision?], in *Emlékkönyv L. Nagy Zsuzsa 70. születésnapjára* [Festschrift for Zsuzsa L. Nagy’s 70th Birthday], ed. János Angi and János Barta (Debrecen: Multiplex Media–DUP, 2000), 183–89.

4 László Péter, “Old Hats and Closet Revisionists: Reflections on Domokos Kosary’s Latest Work on the 1848 Hungarian Revolution,” *The Slavonic and East European Review* 80 (2002): 296–319.

5 István M. Szijártó, *A diéta. A magyar rendek és az országgyűlés, 1708–1792* [The Diet. The Hungarian Estates and Parliament, 1708–1792], (Budapest: Osiris, 2005); Kees Teszelszky, *Az ismeretlen korona. Jelentések, szimbólumok és nemzeti identitás* [The Unknown Crown. Meanings, Symbols and National Identity] (Pannonhalma: Bencés Kiadó, 2009). Both authors were stimulated to write their own monographs by László Péter’s approach.

the change of regime in 1990, including, for example, the reconsideration of the relationship between church and state in the first half of the 1990s. Despite the book's subtitle and the declared aims of the series the European outlook, the aim to provide a more in-depth comparison, is for the most part missing from the volume (this occurs to the author more as an idea for research only).

The fourteen studies of Péter's volume touch upon essentially three major themes. In my review I shall attempt to present the central ideas of each of these topics.

The first essay, running to more than one hundred pages, deals with the cult of the visible and invisible crown and is accompanied by two shorter analyses: one on the role of the right of resistance in Hungarian political life (from the Middle Ages to the 1956 Revolution), and another on the significance of István Werbőczy and his *Tripartitum* in native legal and political thought.⁶

The basic idea of Péter's opening study, one which he seeks to prove with perceptible vehemence across many pages, is that the doctrine of the Holy Crown is nothing more than an artificially created, so-called "invented tradition,"⁷ its history can be traced back only to the late nineteenth century. The elaboration of this tradition is linked to several figures of the era's scholarly and political life, who shaped it partly independently of one another and not always consciously. The professed organizers of its rites are substantially easier to identify: they were the ones who used the relic and the doctrine connected to it for the sake of quite palpable, current governmental goals (e.g., at the 1000th anniversary of the Magyar conquest of Hungary in 1896, as well as the celebration of the millennium of the founding of the state in 2000).

The author is quite perceptibly fascinated much more by the modern tradition of the invisible crown, that is, the development of conceptions tied not to the physical object but rather to its spirit. For this reason he discusses the cult and sacral veneration of the visible crown, which has existed since the eleventh century, only briefly. Avowedly following in Ferenc Eckhart's footsteps,⁸ he presents in chronological order those political situations when the concept of the Holy Crown was enriched with further and further layers of meaning: how

6 Already his doctoral dissertation treats this topic: László Péter, *The Antecedents of the 19th Century Hungarian State Concept: An Historical Analysis. The Background and the Creation of the Doctrine of the Holy Crown* (PhD diss., Oxford, 1965).

7 Eric Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions," in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1984), 1–14.

8 Ferenc Eckhart, *A Szentkorona-eszme története* [The History of the Concept of the Holy Crown] (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1941).

the concepts of king and crown became separated from one another; the way in which the expression “members of the Holy Crown” began, under the influence of Werbőczy’s work, to mean not just the landed gentry but also the landless nobility. Finally, the concept of the political community symbolized by the Holy Crown was extended, under the nineteenth-century Liberal program of legal emancipation, to the country’s entire population. Nevertheless, the traditional interpretation, according to which the crown is the synonym for royal power, remained in use throughout.

Allusion to the country’s territorial unity also appears among the meanings from the eighteenth century on, when the expression “Lands of the Hungarian Crown” begin to be used in legal and political texts, obviously in the interests of integrating the hitherto separately governed territories. After the Treaty of Trianon (1920) this semantic content was particularly strengthened in political discourse because of the detached areas of the country. During the period of the kingdom without a king in the 1930s the courts even announced their judgments in the name of the Hungarian Holy Crown.

Péter examines at length the role that specialist literature on public law played in the modern evolution and rapid dissemination of the doctrine of the Holy Crown. It is particularly interesting to observe how the professors of the Law Faculty of the University in Budapest—the main scene for the training of the political elite—(e.g., Győző Concha, Ákos Timon) in their textbooks canonized the “correct” reading of the concept, which condensed the competing interpretations bearing these numerous meanings. According to the public-law explanation that crystalized by the turn of the century the Holy Crown expressed the sovereignty of the Hungarian state, which was jointly held by the king and the nation, or the parliament representing it, as the head and body of the Holy Crown (organic state concept).

The myth of the Holy Crown in constitutional law was associated in Hungarian public thought with several “supplementary” myths. Among these Péter separately discusses the unshakable faith in Hungarian exceptionalism: the “thousand-year-old Hungarian constitutionalism” with respect to its rank and age may be compared at best to British legal development. The myth of the glorious kinship appeared in political and subsequently public thought in the early eighteenth century. Paradoxically the theory of the British-Hungarian parallel flourished most precisely at the time when in the early twentieth century the opinion of the English press about Hungary had begun to change in a negative direction.

The second major theme of László Péter's book deals with the country's evolution as a *Rechtsstaat* and the state of civil society. According to his opening assertion, which he details in some five studies, the reason the Communist takeover of power after the Second World War could be carried out relatively rapidly in the country and the region as a whole was that civil society was weak vis-à-vis the central will. This weakness is not a twentieth-century development, however, but rather in a peculiar way stems from centuries-old native political culture and constitutional traditions. The persistent political dialogue with the (foreign) ruler, the parliamentary negotiations between the king and the estates (*dietaelis tractatus*) on the one hand resulted in a limited autonomy in domestic politics, which at the same time formed an obstacle to the incorporating aspirations of Habsburg absolutism as well, while on the other hand it shaped a strong attitude to public law and constitutional self-consciousness. Thanks to the enduring defense of the country's rights, "Hungary's constitution may have been the most effective in Central and Eastern Europe after the partition of Poland" (p.159). However, constitutional freedom of the country did not also mean the freedom of the citizen. Péter in one of his studies calls this "Montesquieu's Paradox," referring to the French thinker's work *The Spirit of the Laws*. Hungarian constitutionalism was in fact quite limited in scope; successive parliaments could make their voices heard in only a couple of issues, and most matters affecting the lives of the state and the citizenry came under the exclusive authority of the ruler. This changed in 1848 and 1867 only in that, under the pressure of negotiation and later external compulsion, the king entrusted the exercise of some of his rights to responsible governments.

Only a handful of laws extended the liberty of the citizen with general validity and in a declarative manner. The later laws granted additional rights to certain groups of citizens only on an ad hoc basis and to a limited degree: see, for example, the cause of religious freedom or nationality rights. The Hungarian (and—according to Péter—the region's) legal order was not on the side of the citizen but instead ensured greater freedom to the state. In the event of a legal dispute the burden was on the subject to prove his case against the state, by citing laws. According to Péter, in Western Europe the state could do only what the law permitted, while to the east of the Elbe only a few laws set boundaries to the state's unrestricted action. But nor did the state's scope for action have an identical extent everywhere in this region: in the Austrian half of the Habsburg Empire liberal forces attempted to entrench the citizen's freedom through the passage of several laws after 1867. By contrast, the Hungarian political elite

believed that the state had to be strengthened in the interests of maintaining the leading role of the Hungarians, and precisely to replace the weak civil society. The Hungarian governments regulated questions affecting fundamental rights at best in decrees that could be amended at any time, and thus it was the logic of virtually unlimited power that was able to mold the country's legal system. Péter calls this the assertion of the autocratic principle of the law.

Several elements of this sweeping historical conception have received justifiable criticism earlier as well, and it is also true that Péter produces only scant evidence to support his claims.⁹ Yet his raising of the problem and his characterization of Hungarian legal development and constitutional conditions still strike one as novel and are an inducement for further thought.

Examination of the constitutional system established by the so-called Compromise of 1867 (“Settlement” in Péter’s terminology) forms the volume’s third major theme. The author above all attempts to cleanse the creation of Ferenc Deák and Gyula Andrássy of the interpretations by politicians and historians that were deposited on it during the past century and a half or more, in order to be able to present the reality of the program, which resulted in the solution of the political crisis and lasting stability, as well as the positive role it played in the process of embourgeoisement. According to Péter, the Compromise cannot be explained as a surrendering of rights or a creative reinterpretation of a previous constitutional situation (e.g., the Pragmatic Sanction, 1723). The creation of the political system in 1848 can be regarded much rather as a deviation from the centuries-old tradition of Hungarian constitutional development and political culture: legislation crystallizing through protracted parliamentary negotiations. The settlement that seemingly came about under duress between the king and the country in the spring of 1848 very likely would have resulted in conflict-prone political functioning even without armed battles. It is precisely for this reason that the author disapproves of the use of the expression “lawful revolution” widespread in native historical works—taken from István Deák’s book—to describe the constitutional turning point of 1848.¹⁰

9 See Gyáni’s criticism and his debate with László Péter: Gábor Gyáni, “A magyar *Sonderweg* története” [The History of the Hungarian *Sonderweg*], *Holmi* 13 (2001): 1547–1553; László Péter, “Levél a szerkesztőhöz” [Letter to the Editor], *Holmi* 14 (2002): 129–31; Gábor Gyáni, “Levél a szerzőhöz” [Letter to the Author], *Holmi* 14 (2002): 259–60; László Péter “Levél a szerkesztőhöz” [Letter to the Editor], *Holmi* 14 (2002): 824–25.

10 István Deák, *The Lawful Revolution. Louis Kossuth and the Hungarians, 1848–1849* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1979).

One by one László Péter takes a number of those moments in Dualist-era domestic politics when Ferenc Deák's work, the text of Law XII of 1867 (Compromise), was deliberately reinterpreted or distorted under the impact of current political aims. Such, for example, was the recurring (and increasingly poisoned) debate that unfolded around the royal prerogative with respect to the army. At the turn of the century the opposition now emphasized that the Compromise was not a bilateral contract but rather a law which could be amended unilaterally by the will of the parliamentary majority. The legally unrestricted legislature shared complete sovereignty with the king, which meant a denial of the ruler's reserved rights. Thus, instead of constitutional monarchy the model of parliamentary governance came to be seen in Law XII of 1867. It was essentially at this time that the text of the Compromise became obscure. In politicians' speeches, and later in legal texts, the word "state," which became the expression of Hungarians' claims to supremacy and sovereignty, cropped up more and more frequently. At the same time, a debate on the interpretation of the constitutional system commenced in Austria as well. Lurking behind the animated theoretical discourse was in reality the permanent cessation of the willingness of the various political forces to cooperate.

And yet, according to Péter, it was not the deepening crisis of public law that proved the greatest failure of the last two decades of Dualism; rather, it was the inability of a new social group, a bourgeoisie independent of state power, to develop as a replacement for the discredited traditional elite and which could have been the engine of modernization. In the twentieth century it was "the *bivatalállam*, the East European authoritarian state," that attempted to fill the void (p.342).

Reviewing László Péter's interwoven ideas it becomes understandable why the historian once declared of his research that "I have always considered the state itself to be the main protagonist, at least in Central and Eastern Europe."¹¹ In his opinion the state was a sort of replacement for elements such as social cohesion, an autonomous citizenry, the legitimacy of the political system(s) and the actual leading role of the Magyars.

By Péter's own admission, as a doctoral student at Oxford he once excoriated "the sins of Hungarian etatism" with such vehemence during a conversation

11 László Péter, "Mindig az államot magát tartottam a főszereplőnek" [I Have Always Considered the State Itself to Be the Main Protagonist] (Interview), in Péter, *Az Elbától keletre*, 385–94.

that he was struck by a car when he carelessly stepped off the sidewalk.¹² It can be clearly seen that he clung to the main pillars of his historical conception in almost unaltered form until his death. The ideas he wrote down in England for a long time did not resonate in Hungary. Twenty years after the fall of the Iron Curtain the time has come for historians of Hungary and the surrounding countries to reflect on the conclusions of this thoughtful life's work in their own research. An edition of the author's collected essays could provide help in this project.

Translated by Matthew W. Caples.

András Cieger

12 László Péter, "Magyar nyelvű műhelyem és megpróbáltatásai" [My Hungarian-language Workshop and Its Tribulations], in *Számolás. Hollandiai Mikes Kelemen Kör (1951–2001)* [Reckoning. The Kelemen Mikes Circle of Holland], ed. Melinda Kónya, Áron Kibédi Varga and Zoltán Piri (Pozsony: Kalligram, 2001), 124–26.

A tiszaezlári dráma. Társadalomtörténeti látószögek

[The Tiszaezlár Drama. Social History Aspects].

By György Kövér. Budapest: Osiris Kiadó, 2011. 749 pp.

The history of anti-Semitism in Hungary occupies a relatively small part of the extensive international literature on anti-Semitism. Although Hungarian workers in psychoanalysis and social psychology have done much to explore the psychological background to prejudiced thinking, and empirical sociological studies offer an insight into the motifs of contemporary anti-Jewishness, there has been little work on the historical-cultural components, particularly as regards the nineteenth century. Indeed, it seems that interest waned in the 1990s, just when studies of the history of Hungarian Jewry started on a broad front. This is also true of the story of the Tiszaezlár blood libel. On Saturday before the Passover of 1882 (1 April), in a village in eastern Hungary, the disappearance of a Christian housemaid, Eszter Solymosi, prompted the village inhabitants and the authorities to make an accusation of ritual murder against the local and some other Jews who were visiting for the election of the cantor and the kosher butcher. The events swelled into a criminal case that elicited national and international attention, and finally the case ended with the acquittal of those accused. The protagonists on each side of the barricade developed their own narratives after the trial, and the subject has inspired works of literature and film, however György Kövér's monograph is the first attempt to research the extensive and diverse sources and produce a comprehensive historical treatment of the contemporary discourses and subsequent narratives.

The book breaks from the tradition of blood-libel studies by lifting the affair from the context of Jewish-Christian antagonism.¹ In a way unique in the international literature of the subject, he attempts to reconstruct the events using the tools of microhistory and mentality history, analyzing the fault lines of society in this village by the river Tisza to build up a picture of the hostilities against the Jews as one of many disruptive local conflicts.

1 The study of blood libels in the Jewish-Christian and Jewish-non-Jewish contexts is rooted in the Jewish historiographic tradition. It is from this viewpoint that some of the work produced in the framework of Jewish Studies, which has emerged from American historiography analysis, classifies and compares medieval and modern blood libels. The most recent review in a broad time frame is Hillel J. Kieval, "Blood Libels and Host Desecration Accusation," in *The YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe*, ed. Gershon David Hundert, vol. 1 (New Haven–London: Yale University Press, 2008), 195–200.

The aim of elucidating psychological situations alluded to in the title shows up in the use of some elements of social drama theory methodology.² The author takes the approach of Victor Turner and distinguishes from formalized structures the social-conflict-generated “temporary structures” which “emerge in the minds of the actors as the purpose of actions and efforts and carry with them alternatives. These may be identified by analysis of “psychological factors” and are “recognizable to observers retrospectively, after the event” (pp.10–11). He elaborates the great drama as an “extended case history” from the multitude of small dramatic situations, set against the formalized structures explored in a monographic treatment of the village.

Although the two main parts of the book—the social history of the village and the micro-analysis of the case—are set on different timescales, they interweave at several levels. The social history, which covers changes over a period of about a century, provides the wider context always present behind current problems, while the analysis of the case, defining the history a very short period, frequently refers the reader to the first part, thus filling out the social background and character of the protagonists. Kövér also informs us of the driving forces behind the protagonists’ role and their actions in the affair. It is the longer of the two timescales which dominates, however, because it is the setting for the chronicle of the shorter period.

What makes the local social history special is that the author has gone beyond the hard sources (censuses, registers of births and deaths, tax registers, cadastral documents, etc.) and drawn on the publicity generated by the case itself, using documentation, press material and the narratives of the protagonists. We get a clear view of the village through his account of the settlement structure, major sections of society, social classes, families, individual mobility routes and local conflicts. In the course of this “perambulation”, he develops a picture of a village on the periphery, a place which has remained isolated despite geographical and structural changes. Tiszaeszlár emerges as being distant from almost everything, a situation aggravated by loss of internal centre of gravity as its territory expanded, coupled with the constant threat posed by the Tisza and

2 The first to use the four-phase drama theory to explore a Hungarian historical subject was cultural historian Mary Gluck, in her investigation of an event that lay close in time and theme, the duel between the Israelite member of parliament Mór Wahrman and Győző Istóczy. Mary Gluck, “A Problem Seeking a Frame: An Aesthetic Reading of the ‘Jewish Question’ in Turn-of-the-Century Hungary,” *Austrian History Yearbook* 22 (1992): 91–110.

the rapid growth of the Catholic and Jewish communities alongside the majority Reformed Church population.

In his examination of the dynamics of the social structure, the author has used censuses and reports produced at different times, and based on different criteria, to describe the structural changes of the nineteenth century, the persisting elements of feudal society, and the tangible features of class society. This empirical approach challenges at several points the validity of the theoretical categories assigned to different sections of society. The analysis of the “nobility” shows above all a decline in wealth of large landowners. Of the three landed noble families who owned the fields around the village, only Pál Ónody had prospered after the freedom of the bonded peasants, and even his son was obliged to sell and take a lease on his part of the Tiszaeszlár estate. Gusztáv Kállay was also forced to sell his estate, and the new owner, the Dessewffy family, did not even live in Tiszaeszlár. The history of the local lesser nobility directly refutes the view that they formed a homogeneous group: by 1870 only the Farkas clan could boast of a viable estate, and many of the landless nobles had been assimilated into peasant society even before the emancipation of the serfs.

The central phenomenon among the peasantry in Tiszaeszlár was the swelling of the landless peasant (*zsellér*) population to twice its size within the space of fifty years. Beyond differences within the basic feudal/landless divide, inside of the latter category, beside distinction between those with, and those without their own households separate groups of craftsmen and servants can be seen, too. The analysis of the social structure also shows up the gradual settlement and spatial differentiation of Jews, a group which is difficult to describe in feudal terms. In the part of the village called Ófalu [old village], they occupied the traditional traffic intersections, but in Újfalu [new village], resettled after the 1855 flood, they were not segregated, and their houses lay on the farmers’ street and the outer landless peasants’ street. Kövér directs attention to the least-known section of the Jews in Hungary, the village-farmer Jews, finding little local evidence for the system proposed by the macro-theories: domination by the trading network all the way from the Jewish peddler to the great merchant, a functional unit without a fixed community-organizational structure.

The classification of the population according to election rights, property and taxation tells us about conditions after the emancipation of the serfs. The author’s terminology is close to the class definitions of Max Weber, who considered class-based society to have been interwoven with, rather than

displaced, feudal society. This classification is refined by a cluster analysis demonstrating the extreme compartmentalization of Tiszaeszlár society in a more differentiated structure. The landholding structure was uneven even by national comparison. There was a negligible proportion of rich peasants, and three great landowners held 80 percent of the land, while the 86 percent of peasants in the lower category, owning 0–5 cadastral holds, owned only 2 percent. The tax burden was also highly unequal by national and even county comparison: in 1864, taxpayers paying between 1 and 5 forints (“*osztrák értékű forint*”) formed the majority, there was a complete absence of the middle category (those paying between 50 and 100 forints) a substantial group elsewhere in the county, and a strong representation of the upper category (payers of between 200 and 1000 forints) which was very small in national terms.

The study of the social structure gives a static picture, if in multiple time frames, but is followed by an investigation of three channels of mobility between and within classes and generations. We see the parallels of spatial mobility and social differentiation in Újfalu, newly built after the 1855 flood, where the households of the farmers and landless peasants were separated after the relocation of the village. An exceptional source, the Reformed Church’s poor list, illuminates the elusive phenomenon of poverty, and case studies embedded in family histories mark out the various routes to impoverishment. A third type of movement, indicating the recruitment of incomers, is the rapid turnover and multiple generation-changes of educated people in the village.

According to the basic thesis of the book Eszter Solymosi’s disappearance was not an isolated event, but fitted into a series of traumatic local conflicts. Kövér thus devotes a whole chapter to the complex interrelationships of a community fraught with local squabbles and clashes, and the personal and communal aspects of the nineteenth-century structural changes. We get a glimpse into the landowning Kállay family’s legal actions over their estates, antagonism between landlords and tenants, and quarrels among tenants. The author traces the origins of the term *zsidó bérlet* [Jewish landlease] and examines how the resentments against Jewish tenant farmers actually reflected on the whole system of landleasing. The activities of the Christian tenants on the Kállay lands and the Jewish tenants on the Bánffy lands do not bear out the claim that Jewish tenants moved on faster than their Christian counterparts, or that they did not cultivate the land and, having acquired a lease at “robbery price” in the middle of the century, sold it on at the highest price at the end. The Tisza flood of 1876 divided the village between those who wanted to relocate

and those who wanted to rebuild the levee. The conflicts between congregations and priests give an insight into quarrels within Christian denominations. The brawling which accompanied the local authority elections of 1881 betrays the uncertain position of the local leadership. Names of the protagonists become familiar as they periodically recur, the same members of the local community giving voice in different disputes, their roles varying accordingly. Through the networks of kin and neighborhood, we see who had a dominant presence and acquired experience in the local and county techniques of conflict management.

In the chapters up to this point, the protagonists appear as small components of the social structure, cropping up apparently randomly as participants in the conflict. By contrast, the multi-generation family reconstructions focus on the principal figures in the story. The story of the Ónodys, and particularly Géza Ónody, gives an alternative explanation for the noble family's impoverishment. Kövér considers the possibility that the second generation changed over from accumulating to dissipating its wealth, although the opposite may also be true. The story of a prominent Jewish tenant, Mór Lichtmann, and his sons, gives new insights into tenant farming based on royal usufruct and the anti-Semitic stereotypes attaching to it. The Farkas family is an exceptional case of a prospering "peasant-noble" family and its ascent in the leading bodies of the village. An indication of the local influence of Gábor Farkas, elected magistrate in 1882, is that several people, including Károly Eötvös, saw in him the architect of the blood libel. An example of a family rising from the ranks of the peasants to be the village judge, was that of József Papp, while the condition of the poor peasants is illustrated by the story of the Solymosi family. In characterizing the Scharf family, the author breaks with a historiographic tradition of ignoring the adult memoirs of one of the key witnesses at the trial, Móric Scharf (because of doubts about its credibility). Through careful textual analysis of this unique source, he sifts out the details of childhood, loss of mother, schooling and relations with his step-mother. The author is inclined to treat the contradictions as factors which humanize the narrative rather than undermine its credibility.

Whereas the social history, spanning a long period and written in a loose, fragmented structure of self-contained stories in main chapters and smaller sections, forms a coherent whole, the description of the micro-world of the trial results in the narrowing-down of timescales. The key sources are: the investigation records and the trial transcripts; the hitherto unexplored legacy of manuscripts and later reports by the examining magistrate, József Bary, and the defense attorney, Károly Eötvös; the local and national press; and every

other document with useful information, such as pictures of the protagonists. This great bulk of material, much of which recorded events on the basis of the contemporary logic of the two opposing sides—i.e. those who accepted and those who rejected the guilt of the Jews—presents a strong demand for contextualization of the sources. Kövér softens up the rigid divide by constantly contrasting reports and witness statements. The story of the trial ventures beyond the constraints of historiography, and the author had called on the aid of ethnography, criminology, cartography, pathology, forensic medicine, psychoanalysis, social psychology and legal history.

In reconstructing the blood libel, Kövér takes frequent recourse to changes of scale in time and space. He gives a minute-by-minute, step-by-step account of the day the servant girl disappeared, 1 April, 1882, in the parallel contexts of the Saturday before Passover and Palm Sunday, and then approaches from two directions the events in the month between the disappearance and the start of the investigation. When the official procedure starts, he returns to the longer timescale, following the story of the dead body found in Csonkafüzes and the clothing in a separate strand that runs right up to the final trial. In the meantime, we are removed in space from the world of the village towards county and national publicity, and the detective story, through the narrative of corpse smuggling and corpse flotation, takes us right up the eastern border of the country. We never actually find out what happened to Eszter Solymosi, but we gain an insight into the workings of public opinion in the village and beyond, the opinion-forming role of local personages and occasional women's coalitions, and the complex system of neighborhood and kin networks. The confessions extracted from the accused show how a suspicion incubated in village opinion set off institutional mechanisms and made the activities of the investigating and prosecuting authorities increasingly biased and absurd. We see an informal network which operated in parallel with the official procedure, passing news of the case from local personages to the national public. The mutually contradictory and withdrawn confessions reveal a “determination to lie” rather than pursuit of the truth. We also see the failure of conspiracy theory-based constructions of the trial on both the prosecution and defense sides.

Although the analysis points out that the dangers inherent in using sources for purposes removed from their original functions present historians with a serious methodological problem, the information gained from the confessions yields interesting anthropological descriptions on the local inhabitants' day-to-day lives and feast-day activities. In the reconstruction of Eszter's journey, we

have a glimpse into Passover preparations and pre-Easter spring cleaning, and even the details of local wine pricing. We learn about how the rhythm of work regulated peasant people's sense of time. The well-organized world of the river raftsmen is revealed to us, and we find out about the differences among various types and generations of Jews in north-eastern Hungary.

The author has passionately researched the driving forces behind the protagonists' behavior and taken into account the cultural dimensions and mentalities behind their decisions. He very subtly demonstrates the operation of centuries-old reflexes in the way the church servant József Scharf casts suspicion on his co-religionists. He puts in a new light the confession of Móric Scharf in Nagyfalu, regarding it as the result as a plea bargain to save himself and his father. He reveals the petty personal squabbles that lay behind the action of the enraged farmers' wives who took up the cudgels in accusing their Jewish neighbors and defending Christianity. In analyzing the conduct of Eszter Solymosi's mother when she did not identify her child in the corpse raised from the river Tisza, the author asks—in contrast to Eötvös, who stressed the widow's financial interests—whether she was actually driven by the desire to free the memory of her daughter from the moral burden of elopement or suicide.

We are introduced to several individual- and group-psychological aspects of the investigation and the trial situations, and at several points, the micro-history becomes a veritable psychohistory. The author draws on psychoanalysis to explain the behavior of the two Scharf boys. Using the ideas of Teréz Virág, he ascribes the words of five year-old Samu—who accuses the kosher butcher, his father and his brother—to castration anxiety. He also delves into the subconscious in search of an explanation for the greatest psychological mystery of the trial: what caused Móric to deny his identity and turn against his father. In contrast with Eötvös, who stressed the promises and threats, he explains the change in the child's personality to the isolation in the prison, the threats inherent in anti-Semitism and the desire for release from tensions within his own family.

No less interesting is the discussion of the role of the contemporary media. The analysis shows how press publicity interacted with the case itself: the newspapers attempted to shape the trial in their own image, resulting in the fateful polarization of press coverage. It also renders understandable the summary judgments of press history and the claim that the case opened a new chapter in the history of Hungarian journalism. The newspapers went beyond reporting and commenting, and became protagonists and determinants of events. A newspaper's position could affect its circulation and thus its

own future, and indeed open it up to the threat of litigation. A legal action was taken out against the Szabolcs County newspaper *Közlöny* for publishing the *Eszlári népballada* [Tiszaeszlár Folk Ballad]. Kövér identifies as the author of this gruesomely anti-Semitic verse the daughter of village magistrate Gábor Farkas, thus seriously challenging the alleged impartiality of the magistrate and his family during the investigation. The analysis subjects the enormous press material to diligent philological study, approach some details from different angles by setting newspaper reports against each other. Thus we find out about the cooperation between the Catholic priest in Tiszaeszlár and the Catholic daily newspaper *Magyar Állam* in making the disappearance public. It is also via press reports that an event mysteriously omitted from reports of the time, the “popular disturbance” of Whit Monday, is reconstructed.

A sub-chapter entitled “performers” adds new protagonists to the already long cast list. Seven small sections included in the chronology continue the personal threads of the family-history part of the social history, but now introduces the leaders of the investigation, the defenders, the public and private accusers, and the priests, journalists, doctors and stenographers. Presented with all of these career histories, the reader may be astonished at the number and diversity of professional people engaged in the case. We find out the individual and social motivations of the participants and perceive the effects of the trial on personal careers.

The history of the origin of the autopsy report on the body recovered from the Tisza is an excellent example of contextualized analysis of sources. Working from the original wording of the autopsy report found in the notes of examining magistrate Bary, Kövér finds more than contradictions arising from medical and legal logic, and concludes that “the descriptive parts were retrospectively adjusted to what was later concluded to be the required opinion” (p.486). A philological comparison of the various text variants shows which protagonists “attempted to influence and manipulate identifiability in which direction” (p.503). We find out that opinions were probably formed collectively during the local investigation, while the exhumation report did not provide the positive evidence of the identity of the corpse which would have been needed for a conviction.

The last section of the main monograph analyzes the after-effects of the trial, the complex interrelationships of blood libel and collective violence in the context of the wave of violence that followed the acquittal, the election of county officials, and the 1884 parliamentary elections. He subtly reassesses the

political historians' picture of relative calm during the 1880s, and challenges at several points the theses of "Jewish provocation" and "*ab ovo* anti-Semitism" by pointing out the absence of high-ranking organizers in the acts of violence, the presence of popular-culture folklore elements, and the effects of antagonisms lurking in the deep strata of society. He also places Hungarian events and contemporary anti-Semitic movements and blood libels in the international context, but ascribes at most an indirect effect on local occurrences to events outside Tiszaeszlár and outside Hungary.

Although the author states in the introduction—perhaps to the disappointment of some readers—that he was not trying to solve the mystery surrounding Eszter Solymosi's disappearance, the book does not leave us unsatisfied. Instead of clearing up the disappearance, he brings to light much more important connections: we see the Tiszaeszlár drama unfolding at the intersection of several lines of force, and the story subtly elaborates the scapegoat-creating mechanisms of an "average" eastern Hungarian village. The blood libel thus started life as only one of many local conflicts but was formed by national attention into the focus point of local antagonisms. The analysis is a textbook example of how to use tiny clues to built up all of the causal relationships and contexts of an individual case. It is an excellent example of a researcher's ingenuity in using the same sources to bring out different points of view. For the micro-historian, there are no trivial details. Source criticism and continuous contextualization of sources clearly delineate the limits within which a document can be used. The author's analysis occasionally turns to irony, lighting up moments of comedy in the drama, but he refrains from neat judgments, and leaves the readers to draw their own conclusions.

Seeing the complex interrelationships within the story, we should not be surprised that both contemporaries and subsequent narratives reached for long-established myths as handles on the events. Building on an analysis of local society, Kövér has attempted to identify the mythological elements in the smallest of details, and indirectly challenges the liberal canon which "solves" the Jewish question and dismisses anti-Semitism. Having been touched by the deep strata of the drama, we are left with no illusions that the deeply-rooted prejudices and fixed cultural codes ceased with the acquittal of those accused. It is also doubtful whether the blood libel succeeded in repairing the village's "disintegrated group cohesion". A knowledge of the structural tensions rather implies that the metaphor of the atmosphere of the local community as a "seething, bubbling swamp" did not lose any of its validity. The book has the particular merit of

leaving a story which attracted so much national and international attention in its own medium, the “mud of Tiszaeszlár”, and thereby weakening the established contemporary and retrospective myths and the identities that feed on them.

Translated by Alan Campbell.

Anikó Prepuk

Gazdasági növekedés, fogyasztás, életminőség. Magyarország nemzetközi összehasonlításban az első világháborútól napjainkig [Economic Growth, Consumption, and Quality of Life: Hungary in an International Comparative Context, from the First World War to the Present Day]. By Béla Tomka. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 2011. 306 pp.

In the bibliography of Béla Tomka's book one finds no mention of Jenő Szűcs' essay on the three historical regions of Europe, nor for that matter of other works in which authors attempted, on the basis of older Hungarian historiography and sociology, to put Hungarian society in a larger European comparative context.¹ One finds no mention, for instance, of György Ránki's assessment of the three stages of modernization in Hungary, despite its prominence in the secondary literature on the subject.² Nevertheless, Tomka's book is still best seen in the context of these older works, and indeed at times seems to adopt a polemical stance towards them. Tomka raises anew the questions they address, but he does so from an entirely different perspective and according to an entirely different methodology, arriving for the most part, perhaps not surprisingly, at different conclusions. Tomka analyzes the question that was discussed at the time in essays that one might well characterize as intuitive by historians who to this day are held in high esteem (historians who built on the most outstanding works of historiography of the interwar period or the premises of modernization theory, which came to superseded Marxist approaches), but he does so using the conceptual apparatuses of international scholarly literature, and he marshals a vast amount of data in support of his conclusions. One of the central questions of his inquiry involves the insights to be gleaned from a comparison of the characteristics of Hungarian society and some of its various achievements, whether economic or affecting the quality of life in other ways, with Western European countries. Thus he does not seek to characterize social development in Hungary or Hungary's place in Europe according to the familiar approaches of earlier studies, in other words by constructing a typology of European societies and identifying Hungary's place in this spectrum. In all likelihood this tradition in historiography is no longer viable, for the concepts and terms that earlier were seen as self-evident and beyond question, concepts and terms that served

1 Jenő Szűcs, "The Three Historical Regions of Europe. An Outline," *Acta Historica* 29 (1983): 131–84.

2 György Ránki, "A magyarországi modernizáció történetéhez" [On the History of Modernization in Hungary], *Világosság* no. 10 (1987): 611–21, 611.

as the foundations of historical narrative modes and typologies, have since been interrogated and, more precisely, themselves made the object of historical analyses. This is true of the premises of modernization theory as well, since the essential teleology and normative content of the concept of modernization has now long been a subject of historical scrutiny.

Tomka is addressing questions essentially similar to those raised by an earlier generation of historians, and from this perspective his book is part of the larger tradition of Hungarian historiography. But nonetheless he clearly felt himself compelled to embark down new paths. He seeks to measure Hungary's place, both past and present, in comparison with the countries of Western Europe from the perspectives of economic growth, consumption, and quality of life, where possible on the basis of quantifiable data. The question itself is obviously interdisciplinary in nature, even if in his attempt to offer an answer Tomka can hardly hope for much help from the scholarship on economics or sociology. The secondary literature on theories of growth in principle provides an important pillar of his inquiry, but with regards to the history of the Hungarian economy over the course of the entire twentieth century, economic science offers little in the way of analysis. And while it deals with questions of lifestyle and quality of life, sociology does not provide comprehensive analyses of quality of life itself, and certainly not of changes in quality of life that have taken place over time. Tomka must rely primarily on analyses of economic history, though he can hardly accept the findings that have been reached without qualification, and indeed he often openly disputes the conclusions drawn by some of the authors of the earlier body of literature.

Thus Tomka for the most part is compelled to venture down untrodden paths. He devotes a separate chapter to his discussion of the methodological questions, the problems of the study of economic growth, the kinds of indices that can be used in comparisons, and the manners through which comparisons are drawn (pp.9–34). Following this chapter, the book is divided into three larger blocks. The first examines the process of economic growth. In his analysis of the performance of the Hungarian economy, both in isolation and in an international context, Tomka arrives at conclusions that differ strikingly from the propositions made in the earlier literature. According to Tomka, the Hungarian economy grew between 1920 and 1939 at an average rate of 2.7 percent per year. This is hardly a trifling rate of growth, even if one takes into consideration the fact that production was relatively low in the first year because of the difficulties caused by the war (in other words because of momentary and transitional causes), and

thus the actual rate of growth was somewhat less. Between 1890 and 1913 the average annual rate of growth was 1.6 percent. In other words, if one ignores the effects of 1920, which distort the larger picture, there was no real break in the tendency towards economic growth around the time of the First World War (p.109). Thus the oft made claim according to which the Dualist Era was a remarkable or even unparalleled period of economic growth is simply not true, nor is the contention according to which the country's economic performance in the interwar period was by comparison notably weaker.

If one examines not simply economic growth in Hungary, but also the level of economic output in a comparative international context, the picture is essentially the same. Tomka compares the growth in per capita GDP in Hungary with the Western European average, or more precisely bases his comparison on standardized data that takes into consideration the differences between West European countries. According to Tomka, in the decades leading up to the First World War Hungary approached, if perhaps slowly, West European levels. This means that at the time of the outbreak of the First World War the per capita GDP in Hungary was 60 percent of the West European average (p.62). The First World War caused a more drastic economic decline in Hungary than it did in Western Europe, but thanks to the upswing that began in the 1920s, by 1929 the Hungarian per capita GDP had returned to almost three-fifths of the Western European average (57 percent), and by 1939, in spite of the effects of the global economic crisis, this percentage had grown a little bit. The Second World War, however, altered this trend. Though the timing of the beginnings of this reversal of fortunes varies depending on whether one takes into consideration simply the Western European average or the standardized data, the tendency is nonetheless clear: the per capita GDP in Hungary continuously fell behind the per capita GDP of Western European countries. Even in the immediate aftermath of the war, the Hungarian per capita GDP was less than half the Western European average, and from then on it continued to fall, until it reached roughly 40 percent towards the end of the 1980s. Following the crisis of transformation that took place at the time of the change of regimes, the Hungarian GDP fell even more drastically in comparison with Western Europe. Only as of the middle of the 1990s did Hungary slowly begin to catch up, a process that one can see reflected in the data until 2005.

Having examined the history of economic growth in Hungary in the twentieth century, Tomka turns his attention to the development of trends in consumption over the past 100 years. Here he often has far fewer earlier sources

on which to draw than in his discussion of economic history. According to his conclusions, levels of consumption in Hungary in the interwar period did not fall as far behind Western European averages as levels of economic output, which was possible because of a more pronounced tendency to stockpile and store in Western Europe. Following the Second World War, this changed, because high levels of investment lowered the level of consumption, bringing it below than the levels actually made possible by economic output. In a manner that might seem almost paradoxical, the high level of investment did not contribute to growth in the GDP later either (which would have brought the Hungarian GDP close to the Western average), nor did it do much to increase consumption. Although in comparison with other states of the Eastern Bloc the supply of goods in Hungary could be considered relatively good (a peculiarity of Hungarian society that was made possible in the second half of the socialist era in large part through loans), nonetheless society suffered from a dearth of specific services, products, and a general lack of selection, thus one cannot really speak of consumer choice or freedom in comparison with western standards. In Tomka's view, the use of the term "consumer socialism" as a characterization of the Kádár era is therefore not really justified. If levels of consumption in Hungary lagged behind levels of consumption in the West throughout the dearth of specific services century, the structure of consumption nonetheless essentially followed patterns similar to those in Western European societies, whether one is speaking of the emerging economic phenomenon of leisure time pursuits or the inner workings of household expenditures, though the peculiarities of the socialist system distorted these as well for a time.

The third section of the book deals with quality of life, again comparing tendencies in Hungary with trends in Western Europe. Remaining true to his methodology, Tomka again basis the comparison on quantifiable factors. He offers an examination of the numbers of various relevant indices before deciding in favor of the Human Development Index (HDI, also used by the United Nations), which is a composite statistic based on life expectancy, education, and GDP at purchasing power parity per capita. Naturally this index also has shortcomings, since it is based on averages. In other words it fails to take social inequalities or differences in quality of life at different levels of society into consideration, and these differences can be significant. The HDI is nonetheless a far more sensitive indicator than a simple comparison of GDP would be, and GDP and HDI do not always move in parallel in individual countries. Indeed in some cases growth in economic output can be accompanied by a decline in

quality of life (this is shown more clearly by another indicator of quality of life, the so-called Index of Sustainable Economic Welfare, which also takes the value of household work, environmental risks and damages, and social inequalities into consideration, though the calculations are significantly less reliable (pp.182–183). In the comparison of international HDI values, differences in the scale of change are more important than the absolute numbers themselves (Table 4.2 p.192). This comparison shows that in 1913 Hungary was at the level of Western European States with the lowest HDI values, such as Italy and Finland, but in the interwar period the rate of growth according to the HDI exceeded the Western European average, and indeed was so high that it was only surpassed by the rate of growth in Finland, which developed with remarkable rapidity and consistency. However, in the period that followed the Second World War, in other words from 1950 to 1990, the pace of growth as measured according to the HDI slowed considerably, only to rise again rapidly in the period between 1990 and 2005. Following the comparative examination based on the HDI, Tomka offers a discussion of several demographic indicators, since in his view (and he refers here to the ideas of Amartya Sen, the Nobel Prize winning economist who helped to create the HDI) life expectancy data comprise numerous factors regarding quality of life that are otherwise difficult to assess and, in particular, difficult to measure or compare in quantifiable terms. From the perspective of quality of life, naturally one cannot simply consider raw data concerning life expectancy, since these data depend to a great extent on the demographic makeup of individual societies. Thus a comparison of these data would yield misleading results at best. Rather one must consider infant mortality or anticipated life expectancy at birth. From the perspective of anticipated life expectancy, in 1913 (again the year taken as the starting point) Hungary fell behind all of the countries of Western Europe, and from the perspective of infant mortality it was among the countries with the worst rates. In the interwar period, however, the infant mortality rate dropped rapidly and anticipated life expectancy grew—if perhaps from an admittedly low point of departure—more rapidly than in any of the countries of Western Europe. This suggests that Hungary had a significant capacity to modernize. Following the Second World War, however, this trend, as measured by these demographic indicators and others, was reversed. In spite of improvements in infant mortality Hungary still did not approach European averages. In 1990 the infant mortality rate in Hungary was twice the Western European average. This difference is even more striking from the perspective of anticipated life expectancy, for in the case of

life expectancy not only did Hungary not manage to catch up with Western averages, but the difference actually grew dramatically, and not simply because the anticipated life expectancy in Western European countries grew faster than it did in Hungary. In Hungary anticipated life expectancy actually declined under socialism. In no other country in Western Europe—or for that matter in the world—did anticipated life expectancy for men decline between 1960 and 1990. In 1990 average life expectancy for men in Hungary was five years less than the worst national average in Western Europe, and differences of seven years were also not uncommon, and indeed in comparison with the figure for some countries the difference was more than eight years. Average life expectancy for men in Hungary was 9.8 years less than in Norway and 9.7 years less than in Sweden.

The presentation in quantifiable terms of macro-trends in economic growth, consumption and quality of life naturally leaves numerous questions unanswered. While the data may appear to show a clear tendency, the various causes and forces that lie behind the data vary from period to period. Causes of economic growth and external circumstances that contribute to or conversely limit growth often change, even in a period as relatively short as the Horthy era in Hungary. In the case of Hungary in the interwar period, these included inflationary economic activity, the withdrawal of foreign capital, internal financing following the onset of the global economic crisis, and the economic activity that began with the outbreak of war at the end of the 1930s. In other words the causes of growth varied over time. But this does not change the fact that the Hungarian economy, or rather Hungarian economic policy, in general managed to adapt to the circumstances of the moment and find a path to growth in the interwar era. One cannot say this of the period following 1950. Data concerning consumption and the quality of life in the long term reveal little or nothing regarding how the acquisition of goods was experienced and assessed by members of society, or for that matter how the dearth of goods or changes in living conditions were perceived. Tomka's work has to some extent laid the foundations for further study of these questions.

If, having read Tomka's analyses, one returns to the fundamental questions of the older secondary literature on Hungary's place in Europe and the nature in general of the attainments of various periods in the process of modernization, the answer seems simple. Hungary follows patterns of social and economic development similar to those in Western Europe, and essentially constitutes merely a variation of these models. Even if from many perspectives it lagged

behind these countries, in the first half of the twentieth century it gradually caught up. The economic model of the socialist era, under which investments were not accompanied by any corresponding rise in productivity and the accumulation of capital remained low (while in Western Europe the amount of capital that actually went to employees grew considerably), made it impossible not only to approach Western European levels, but even to keep pace with Western development. Hungary also fell further behind Western Europe in other areas related to the quality of life in the socialist era, such as education and health care. One could hardly claim that the socialist era was an attempt at modernization. On the contrary, the political structure of state socialism essentially did away with the economic and social institutional frameworks that would have ensured progress from the perspectives of modernization and quality of life (p.220). Following the change of regimes, according to numerous signs until 2005 Hungary again began to approach Western European levels, without reaching them, however. Rapid growth in some indices, for instance life expectancy and the proportion of the population taking part in higher education, clearly seem to indicate that Hungary was making up for time lost during the socialist era. This suggests that social development in Hungary fundamentally should still be understood as a variant of Western European models, and the period of socialism represents a detour that was forced on the country.

Translated by Thomas Cooper.

Zsombor Bódy

Note on Nomenclature: City and Place Names

We have used place names in this volume either in their English form—if such exists—or in the form officially adopted by the states in control during the time period in question. For the first reference to each place, we will give alternative versions of the place name for that location. Here are the most frequently mentioned city and other place names in their various forms, for quick reference.

Bártfa (Bardejov, Slovakia, German: Bartfeld)	Kolozsvár (Cluj, Cluj-Napoca since 1974, Romania, German: Klausenburg)
Besztercebánya (Banská Bystrica, Slovakia, German: Neusohl)	Körmöcbánya (Kremnica, Slovakia, German: Kremnitz)
Bécsújhely (Austria, German: Wiener Neustadt)	Lőcse (Levoča, Slovakia, German: Leutschau)
Brassó (Braşov, Romania, German: Kronstadt)	Murány (Muráň, Slovakia)
Csáktornya (Čakovec, Croatia, German: Tschakturn)	Nagybánya (Baia Mare, Romania, German: Frauenbach)
Déva (Deva, Romania, German: Diemrich, Schlossberg, Denburg)	Nagy Mihály (Michalovce, Slovakia, German: Großmichel)
Eperjes (Prešov, Slovakia, German: Eperies, Preschau)	Nagyszeben (Sibiu, Romania, German: Hermannstadt)
Giródtótfalu (Tăuţii de Sus, Romania)	Nagyszombat (Trnava, Slovakia, German: Tyrnau)
Győr (Hungary, German: Raab, Slovak: Ráb)	Pozsony (Bratislava, Slovakia, German: Pressburg)
Homonna (Humenné, Slovakia, German: Homenau)	Selmecbánya (Banská Štiavnica, Slovakia, German: Schemnitz, Schebnitz)
Jászó (Jasov, Slovakia, German: Jossau)	Sopron (Hungary, German: Ödenburg)
Jernye (Jarovnice, Slovakia)	Szatmár (Satu Mare, Romania)
Jolsva (Jelšava, Slovakia, German: Jelschau, Eltsch)	Szepes region (Spiš, Slovakia, German: Zips, officially Scepusium before the late nineteenth century)
Kassa (Košice, Slovakia, German: Kaschau)	Temesvár (Timișoara, Romania, German: Temeswar, Temeschburg, Temeschwar)
Késmárk (Kežmarok, Slovakia, German: Käsmark)	Zsolna (Žilina, Slovakia, German: Sillein, Silein)
Kisszeben (Sabinov, Slovakia, German: Zeben)	

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