



BOOK REVIEWS

Az első 300 év Magyarországon és Európában: A Domonkos-rend a középkorban [The first 300 years in Hungary and Europe: The Dominican Order in the Middle Ages]. Edited by József Csurgai Horváth. Székesfehérvár: Alba Civitas Történeti Alapítvány, 2017. 335. pp.

In 2016, the Dominican Order celebrated the 800th anniversary of its papal confirmation. For this occasion, two scholarly conferences were held in Hungary, one of which dealt with the medieval history of the Order. The 16 papers which were held at the conference have been published in a collection edited by József Csurgai Horváth, the director of the Municipal Archives of Székesfehérvár. Since the papers are very different in geographical range (which spanned from Italy to Central Asia), time (from the beginnings to the middle of the sixteenth century), and topic, I review them according to theme.

The study by Balázs Kertész, entitled “The Settlement of the Mendicant Orders in the ‘Middle of the Country,’” presents the appearance of the four mendicant orders (Franciscans, Dominicans, Augustinian Hermits, and Carmelites) in the central part of Hungary in the thirteenth century. Kertész examines the early history of 22 cloisters and notes the important role of the towns in this region.

The following six papers deal with hagiography (half of them focus on Saint Margaret of Hungary). Thus, they reveal the most important tendencies of the Hungarian historiography on the Dominicans. In her article “Saint Margaret of Hungary and the Medieval Lay Piety,” Viktória Hedvig Deák analyses the connection between Margaret and the medieval lay piety by examining prayers. Using the *Legenda Vetus* and the canonization report of 1276, she points out that the piety of the Hungarian princess went beyond the usual requirements of her age. Ildikó Csepregi also uses the canonization report to study the miracles performed by Margaret in her article, entitled “The Miracles of Margaret of Hungary.” She adopts a very modern typology according to which she groups the miracles: 1. unique miracles; 2. timeless miracles; 3. miracles of the New Testament and early Christian period; 4. miracles with theological problems; and 5. miracles that were characteristic of the region and the age. Finally, in his article “King Matthias and Margaret of Hungary,” Bence Péterfi examines Margaret from a different perspective: during his reign, King Matthias tried to prevail on

the Church to canonized the princess. Péterfi has found a hitherto unknown group of sources in Rome regarding this effort, some of which are included in the appendix of this volume. As he points, the canonization of Margaret was nearly successful, but ultimately it was delayed until 1943 due to quarrels inside the Dominican Order in the second half of the fifteenth century.

In his contribution, entitled “Blessed Helen of Hungary and the Medieval Dominican Stigmatics,” Gábor Klaniczay deals with the stigmatization of another Dominican nun, Blessed Helen. He emphasizes that the case of Helen was just an act of the medieval Franciscan–Dominican dispute about the stigmas, and her legend was compiled only in the fourteenth century to promote the canonization of Catherine of Siena. In her article, entitled “Saint Catherine of Siena in Hungarian Codices,” Eszter Konrád examines the cult of Saint Catherine in Hungary. Using two Latin and two Hungarian late medieval codices, she reveals that the veneration of Catherine was brought to Hungary mainly by the Dominican observance practices in the fifteenth century.

In the last paper with a hagiographical topic, Ottó Gecser deals with the problems of the canonization of Saint Elisabeth of Hungary (“Cult and Identity. Saint Elisabeth of Hungary and the Dominicans in the 13th Century”). The princess, who during her life was attracted rather to the Franciscans, was canonized in the Dominican Convent of Perugia by Pope Gregory IX. Gecser examines the unusual circumstances: why Perugia and why the Dominicans? The Pope spent a year in Perugia because of his argument with the Roman city council, so this was accidental. The Dominicans, who went to Perugia only very recently, were chosen because within the Franciscan Order there were several quarrels about the third order. Furthermore, through the relationship of Elisabeth and Konrad von Marburg, Gregory could connect her person with the Inquisition and the proselytization in Germany led by the Dominicans.

The next thematic group of four papers addresses the question of literacy. The study and catalogue by Balázs Zágorkhídi Czigány, entitled “The Charters and Seals of the Medieval Hungarian Dominican Provincials,” analyses the 27 surviving charters of the Dominican provincials of Hungary from the point of view of the content and 16 seals showing a very conservative manner of use because of the early settlement of the Order. Since the legal documents concerning the life of the Hungarian Dominicans did not survive, in “The First Period of the Dominican Literacy,” Kornél Szovák examines the literary heritage of the Dominicans in the country, who had a very significant intellectual background. As he points out, the era was characterized by a diversity of

genres, including university and canon law notes through Paulus Hungarus, geographical and ethnological works thanks to the missions of friars Riccardus and Julianus, the *Vitas* of Blessed Helen and Saint Margaret, and finally a history of the order.

While the contributions by Zágórhídi and Szovák deal mainly with the source materials, the subsequent studies enrich our knowledge of the Dominicans with examinations of specific sources. In an article entitled “Use of the Language and Vernacular Literature in the Hungarian Dominican Reform. The Readings of the Hungarian Dominican Nuns,” Sándor Lázcs examines 16 codices in Hungarian owned by the Convent of the Island of Rabbits, on the basis of which he draws conclusions concerning the literacy of the nuns. He connects the phenomenon of the spread of vernacular literature in the middle of the fifteenth century with the Dominican observance practices which were brought to Hungary from the German territories, and he points out that these kinds of books were intended not only for the nuns but for the wider public. The contribution by Adrien Quéret-Podesta, entitled “Blessed Paul the Hungarian in the “*De ordine predicatorum de Tolosa in Dacia*,” offers an analysis of a short Danish-Swedish-Estonian chronicle as evidence of how Paulus Hungarus attracted the attention and admiration of someone in the far north.

Two of the last five papers deal with the missions of the Dominicans, while the other three deal with the general history of the order. Bálint Ternovác examines the Dominican missions of Bosnia between 1230 and 1330 in an article entitled “Dominicans in Bosnia from the Settlement of the Order until the Middle of the Fourteenth Century.” Through an examination of the careers of the bishops, Ternovác points out why the Dominicans’ strategy was unsuccessful in this region: they treated the population as heretics, but the locals were simply ignorant of the message of the Church. Szilvia Kovács takes the reader all the way to Chagatai Ulus in Central Asia, where an almost total ecclesiastical hierarchy formed thanks to the positive remarks of the Dominican missionaries (“Dominicans in the Central Asian Chagatai Ulus at the Turn of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries”).

Of the papers dealing with the general history of the order, Mária Lupescu Makó’s contribution, entitled “Benedict, the First Professed Bishop of Transylvania,” deals with the career of Benedict, who was the bishop of Transylvania of the Dominican Order in the early fourteenth century. The essay by Beatrix Romhányi, entitled “A Non-Mendicant Mendicant Order: The Dominicans in the Late Medieval Hungary,” examines how the Hungarian

Dominicans flourished economically after 1475 thanks to the observance practices. The author draws attention to the ways in which the Order, which was already officially not a mendicant order, how could finance its operations and how it mixed traditional activities with more modern tendencies. Romhányi also emphasizes the shadows which were cast over the prospering community.

The paper by Radu Lupescu, entitled “Utriusque ordinis expulsi sunt. Kolozsvár, March 15, 1556,” examines the end of the order. Since the mendicant orders, which settled in Kolozsvár in the age of the Hunyadis, became part of the society of the town, the evolving Reformation roused hostility among the local population against them. First the cloisters were sacked, and in 1556 the town council expelled the Franciscans and Dominicans.

In conclusion, this collection of essays constitutes a useful volume on the medieval history of the Dominican Order in Hungary, which will be of interest to readers curious to learn more about Church history, hagiography, and vernacular literature.

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Hatalom, adó, jog: Gazdaságtörténeti tanulmányok a magyar középkorról [Power, tax, law: Studies on the economic history of medieval Hungary]. Edited by István Kádas and Boglárka Weisz. Budapest: MTA BTK Történettudományi Intézet, 2017. 601 pp.

The book under review is the second collection of essays published by the Economic History of Medieval Hungary Research Group (allocated to the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Research Centre for the Humanities), which was founded in 2015 under the leadership of Boglárka Weisz. The essays are primarily the “customary” papers delivered at the conference held the previous year, which have been published now in an impressively voluminous tome. Like the previous collection, the work includes essays which are based on historical approaches and studies which are written from the perspectives of archeology and art history. Most of the essays share close affinities, since they tend to focus on the cities of the Hungarian Kingdom.

In his essay, Tibor Neumann addresses the question of royal taxation in the free royal cities of the Hungarian Kingdom at the end of the fifteenth century, both from “above” and from “below,” i.e. from the perspective of specific cities (Pozsony [Bratislava] and Bártfa [Bardejov], today both in Slovakia). He examines the extent to which the rulers’ taxation policies could be characterized as consistent, how much room for maneuver the cities had, and how constant the sums paid in taxes were. Years in which taxes were high were generally followed by milder years, and the royal taxes which were imposed were not carved in stone. In other words, there were always opportunities for haggling. In total, the urban burgesses paid surprisingly little in taxes per capita.

Judit Gál and Katalin Szende approach the question of the relationship between the cities and the king from above. Gál compares the royal and ducal privileges and gifts that were given to the Dalmatian cities and churches and the consolidation of these gifts and privileges. While earlier these two favored groups may have had very similar significance from the perspective of their numbers, by the end of the thirteenth century, far fewer gifts were bestowed on the churches. In the earlier period, the support of the church was necessary in order to maintain control over the city. By the end of the century, this was no longer the case, in part because of conflicts between the church and the city. This shift is reflected in the drop in the number of gifts bestowed on the churches. Szende examines the history of trade in the second half of the fourteenth

century and the permissions that were given to cities to allow large multitudes to live within their boundaries (these permissions were first given under the reign of King Louis the Great of Hungary, who ruled from 1342 to 1382). As Szende shows, these permissions, which were given in part at the initiative of private landowners and in larger part at the initiative of the royal court, were part of a deliberate trade policy. The king's primary goal may have been to strengthen foreign trade. It led to rearrangements in the social structures of the affected cities, and the rise of long-distance trade had an effect on the numbers and kinds of buildings in the cities.

In her generously illustrated essay, Judit Benda examines the sites at which local and long-distance (from London to Cracow, or from Lübeck to Florence) trade took place. She divides the buildings up into different groups on the basis of their form (from the small merchants' stalls to the large market halls), and she makes a catalogue of them. The region in which the types of buildings she is seeking are found can be very clearly demarcated. The best parallels are found in central Europe, or more precisely, in the German cultural sphere or the cultural sphere strongly influenced by it.

Katalin Gönczi's article on the role of the so-called Saxon-Magdeburg rights in the Hungarian Kingdom can be considered the other angle from which to approach this topic. Gönczi examines the various factors one by one, including the way in which the Magdeburg rights came to Hungary (in the form of legal transfer) and the spheres and milieus in which they gained relevance, as well as the influences they had among the Saxons of the Zips region (Szepes in Hungarian and Spiš in Slovak) and on the so-called *Ofner Stadtrecht*, a book of laws written in Middle High German in the beginning of the fifteenth century and used in Buda. It is particularly interesting to compare these organizational measures with the developments in the Polish territories. In the Kingdom of Hungary, the legal system did not lose its foreign ties, though with regards to questions of the dispensation of justice, the authorities customarily turned not to the city of Magdeburg, but rather to the master of the treasury (*magister tavernicorum*). The explanation for this lies in the strongly centralized power of the Hungarian king.

Matching nicely to the remarks of Katalin Göncz, Renáta Skorka offers an explanation, in connection with the conflict between the tanners and cobblers of Nagyszében (Hermannstadt in German, today Sibiu in Romania), of why the city of Buda played a prominent role in the court of the master of the treasury and the administration of justice in connection with the cities of Hungary. She also works with the assumption that the systematic summarizing of rights in

Buda in all likelihood played an important role in the emergence of the city's leading role.

István Kádas examines the relationship between county society and two free royal towns, namely Sáros County and the towns of Bártfa and Eperjes (today Bardejov and Prešov, both in Slovakia), from “below.” While the county did not have any authority over the royal towns, the burghers and the nobility of the county had innumerable ties, and many of them profited from these ties, as Kádas illustrates with several revealing examples. Closely tied to this is Adrian Andrei Rusu's article on the material culture and financial relationships of the nobility of “eastern Hungary.” Rusu examines the opportunities the nobility had (in farming, mining, commerce, etc.), and Kádas' conclusions and examples also offer answers to some of the questions he raises.

Dorottya Uhrin uses a wide variety of source materials in order to shed light on the cults of Saint Catherine of Alexandria and Saint Barbara in the mining cities of Upper Hungary (what today is Slovakia). She examines the possible thirteenth-century origins of the veneration of the two saints and then considers the various physical artifacts which can be tied to the cults (the mining city seals, coats-of-arms, churches, and altarpieces). In cases in which the cult of the saint was tied to a city seal (the cities of Kőrmöcbánya [Kremnica] and Szomolnok [Smolník] in Slovakia), she also clarifies, for the sake of thoroughness, the uses of the seal in the given city in the Middle Ages.

The book also includes three valuable archeological essays on medieval settlements and materials, which are important and revealing from the perspective of the economic history of the Middle Ages. Szabolcs Rosta presents the hand scales which were found in the course of the excavation of the former settlement of Pétermonostora in southern Hungary, as it so happens in remarkably large numbers. The spread of this implement, which clearly is a sign of vibrant commerce, was by no means restricted to the important economic centers of the country. We should also expect to find them in settlements of regional significance (such as Pétermonostora some 120 kms south of Budapest). The Mongol invasion of Hungary in 1241/42 was a genuine caesura in the life of the Árpád-era settlement, and it was probably then that the hand scales ended up underground. György V. Székely and Csaba Tóth examine the weights that were used with the Pétermonostora scales in a separate essay. They identify the three divisions of weights that were used (one half, one fifth, and one twelfth). The standard unit matches the unit used in Buda almost exactly. Since the weights, like the hand scales, were also hidden during the Mongol invasion and the first

reliable mention of the Buda mark is from 1271, the question of the precise relationship between the two is a task that still awaits an answer. Ágnes Kolláth and Péter Tomka add to the number (and our understanding of the relevance of) the weights and scales with their presentation of the findings of excavations currently underway on the main square of the city of Győr in western Hungary. The most interesting aspect of their article, however, is perhaps not the findings, which are indeed significant from the perspective of economic history, or even the archeological materials, but rather the fact that they offer answers to old topographical questions. Certain signs suggest that the irregular network of roads may have existed as early as the thirteenth century. In other words, historians who have contended that the urban planning which took place in the settlement was undertaken in the sixteenth century are mistaken.

The volume also includes essays that are less directly related to the urban economy. The contribution by Boglárka Weisz on the so-called Jazygian people, one of the peoples which settled in the Hungarian Kingdom in the Middle Ages about which we know the least, adds more to our knowledge of economic history than it does to urban history. Until now, historians have remained uncertain as to what kinds of taxes and sums the Jazygian people had to pay to the king. Weisz uses the cases of other, similar peoples (for instance the Cumans and the Saxons) who settled in the Hungarian Kingdom as analogies and arrives at a methodical grasp of the taxation system in Hungary in the late Middle Ages. Along with her fellow contributor, Renáta Skorka, Weisz uses newly discovered charters to examine the careers of two people in Hungary who played roles in the chambers in the cities of Kassa (today Košice, Slovakia) and Körmöcbánya in the 1420s and 1430s. Presumably, they both came from Thorn (today Toruń, Poland), a city found in the territory under the control of the Teutonic Order. Weisz and Skorka use the existing secondary literature and sources newly discovered in and outside of Hungary to dispel persistent misconceptions and shed light on the roles of the two men.

Two essays deal with the topic of customs, transportation, and trade routes, which are particularly important in the study of economic history. Magdolna Szilágyi offers a general overview. She shows a particular interest in the routes that were used between the eleventh and the fourteenth centuries and, to a lesser extent, the people who used them. She approaches the question less from the perspective of an archeologist and more from the perspective of historians. She draws on a broad base of secondary and primary sources in her discussion of the protections that were used for the routes and the people who traveled

on them and the measures that were taken by the king in connection with the travel routes. Viktória Kovács examines how the Roman legal principle ‘*qui prior est tempore, potior est iure*’ was used in fourteenth-century trials concerning customs duties. This kind of reasoning was used in other types of cases in the 1300s. By the first quarter of the fifteenth century, it was found in judgement letters and royal command letters. In other words, by that time it must have become familiar in wider circles.

I left the ambitious essay by Pál Lővei, which is the most loosely tied to the subject of the book, to the end of my review. Lővei offers a detailed examination of the activities and products of a stone masonry workshop in Buda over the course of several generations. The most distinctive works created in the workshop were the gravestones which were ordered by individuals or families who were members of the Order of the Dragon established in 1408 by King Sigismund of Luxemburg. Lővei demonstrates that, because of certain parallels with Salzburg, the store and stock of the Buda workshop was later probably refreshed.

In sum, the value of the individual essays as innovative or new contributions to the secondary literature varies, but the book itself nonetheless addresses a significant need, since it makes an attempt—hopefully successful—to restore and even popularize a discipline which has vanished almost entirely from the secondary literature in Hungarian today. One can only hope that this effort will prove enduring (in the form of additional works of scholarship) and even contagious and will inspire other ambitious researchers to pursue further study of the subject.

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The Noble Elite in the County of Körös (Križevci) 1400–1526.
By Tamás Pálosfalvi. MTA Bölcsészettudományi Kutatóközpont
Történettudományi Intézet, 2014. (Magyar Történelmi Emlékek:
Értekezések.) 526 pp.

Since the 1990s, there has been a proliferation of works by Hungarian historians on the history of the lands we think of today as Croatia. As the many Croatian-Hungarian conferences (which have become almost a regular fixture in academic life), the research projects involving the region from the Árpád era until the era of national awakenings, and the many collections of essays by Hungarian and Croatian historians make vividly clear, a vibrant and productive relationship has developed between the historians of the two nations. The new book by Tamás Pálosfalvi, a seasoned scholar at the Institute of History of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, is part of this trend, and from the perspective of its depth and focus, it is an outstanding part.

Pálosfalvi's book is essentially an edited version of his dissertation, which he defended in 2012 at Central European University in Budapest. The scholarly work on which it is based, however, stretches back to the beginnings of his academic career. Even in his earliest articles, Pálosfalvi wrote on the problems of government and governance in Slavonia in the late Middle Ages, and thus he began to study “noble elite,” to use the term used in the title of the book, of Körös (or Križevci in Croatian) County.

This ambitious book consists of four long chapters and appendixes with carefully organized data that will help the reader get her bearings. In the introduction, Pálosfalvi begins by clarifying what he means by “noble elite.” In the secondary literature in Hungarian, one finds a variety of ideas concerning the nature and characteristic features of the nobility, but these ideas and concepts create a very broad framework within which the group most frequently referred to in the sources as “egregius” moves. For the sake of precision, Pálosfalvi excludes baronial families from his inquiry. From the perspective of upward mobility in this hierarchy (i.e. seen from “below”), the border was much more flexible, and in Pálosfalvi's enquiry a mere mention did not suffice to put someone in the group examined. With regards to the individuals mentioned in the sources, Pálosfalvi only considers them “egregius” if this status is confirmed several times. Pálosfalvi needed to draw this clear distinction, because even with this limitation there were still some 100 families or individuals belonging to

the “noble elite,” which constitutes a larger number than in other parts of the country. As his discussion makes clear, the “egregius” worked in the service of aristocratic families and families of the court. Their estates were somewhere between 50 and 500 tax-paying plots, but this did not actually determine whether or not they belonged to the noble elite of the county.

In the Middle Ages, Körös County was one of the largest and most developed counties in the country. Before Pálosfalvi’s book, we knew almost nothing about noble society in the county. Given the family ties and the county officers presented in the book, however, one cannot help but wonder if perhaps it would have made sense to include the neighboring Zagreb County in the discussion, since the local families of Körös had innumerable ties to Zagreb County. Considering the nature of the sources, however, Pálosfalvi’s decision was entirely justified, for in the absence of written sources from the county level, he was compelled to examine the structure of the noble society on the basis of family and local archives.

The second chapter (pp.25–307), which contains biographies of the individual families, constitutes the bulk of the book. First, Pálosfalvi explains the criteria he used in order to decide whether or not to include a given family. This is followed by the biographies of the families or individuals in alphabetical order. The reader is given more than 250 pages of detailed narratives of families’ “lives,” as it were, beginning with the first ancestors who are mentioned in the sources or who moved to the region from other parts of the kingdom. Pálosfalvi then gives an overview of the most important family ties, in some cases information concerning schooling and education, and services performed in the courts of aristocrats or the king. As his overview illustrates, almost all of the individuals who occupied positions of influence at the beginning of the sixteenth century began their careers in the court of John Corvin, natural son of King Matthias, and claimant to the Hungarian throne after his father’s death. One might think, for instance, of members of the Alapi, Gersei Pető, or Batthyány families. The other major patrons of the “egregius” were the bishops of Zagreb, which makes it clear why the Catholic Church was able to maintain its influence in the region even after the defeat of the Hungarian army by the Ottomans at the Battle of Mohács in 1526. It is also clear from the narrative that Pálosfalvi used almost exclusively primary sources, and the data he provides offer a good portrait of everyday life in the province.

The next chapter contains a social examination of the landed gentry (pp.307–415). Pálosfalvi divides the individual figures and families into groups

on the basis of their ancestry, and he explains the ways in which they are mentioned in the sources. As his inquiry makes clear, most of them began to rise to prominence in the fifteenth century. Their rise was due less to the patronage of the king or titles bestowed by the royal court and more to their ties to the aristocracy. People who relocated to the region came for the most part from other parts of the Kingdom of Hungary. Only three people are mentioned in the sources from Croatia and Bosnia. Similarly interesting is the question of which families were in possession of the individual market towns, manor houses, and castles in the period under discussion. As far as one can tell from the sources, each family had at least one “castellum,” and the wealthiest families had considerably more estates. Nonetheless, very few of them actually managed to make it into the circles of barons. Even if they held baronial titles (for instance, the title of palatine), once they left office they were again denoted as “egregius.” It might have been preferable, instead of offering a study of social ascent, to have considered the question at hand in a longer timeframe. For as it so happens, in the sixteenth century, many of the families did manage to acquire the title of baron, for instance the Kerecsény family (1559), the Ráttkay family (1559), the Dersffy family (1564), the Kasztellánffy family (1569), the Alapi family (before 1582), and the Túróci family (1599). They won this recognition through service in the court and in the military. Thus, it seems that for a few decades—precisely at the time when Slavonia was becoming a genuine “regnum”—some of the Slavonian “egregius” families successfully adapted to the new situation.

It is interesting and worth noting that for these families a career in the Church was less of a goal, though the large chapter of Zagreb and the influential chapter of Csázma (or Čazma, to use the Croatian name) would have offered promising opportunities. It is true that no member of this group ever managed to hold the position of bishop of Zagreb until the middle of the sixteenth century, when Farkas Gyulai and Pál Gregorjanci were given this distinction. Later, however, the familiar system was restored, and the bishop of Zagreb was usually someone from one of the lower social strata. Careers in the Church did indeed offer poorer members of the lesser nobility a promising alternative. János Csezmicei and István Brodarics, for instance, who were both members of this social stratum, were both given titles as bishops after they had completed studies in Italy.

The book contains several appendixes, a kind of registry of the nobility, and an archontology of palatines and vice palatines, as well as family trees which provide a good overview of the family ties discussed in the book.

In the case of a monograph like this, one makes critical remarks only because of the obligations one has as a reviewer. In all likelihood, the use of English versions of the proper names detracted from instead of adding to the value of the book. Since the readership will consist first and foremost of Hungarians and Croatians, it might have been preferable to have used the Latin versions of the names (and the foreseeable readership might have preferred this). It is not immediately obvious why Pálosfalvi included the map at the end of the book. It is tremendously useful to the reader on the one hand, but on the other, it is quite difficult to find some of the settlements on it. It would have been considerably more useful if it had been made in color and it had included the granges and estate centers of the noble families. The almost innumerable small settlements, alas, do not further an easier or more subtle understanding of the text, and the title of the map is a bit misleading too (“Körös County in the Fifteenth Century”), since most of the market towns indicated on the map were only mentioned in the sources at the very end of the fifteenth century or the beginning of the sixteenth.

These minor shortcomings detract in no way from the value of the book. A good book does not need a preface or an afterword, and Tamás Pálosfalvi's book is encumbered by neither. It will undoubtedly be cited innumerable times in upcoming decades by scholars of Hungarian and Croatian history, and it will be indispensable to the next generation of scholars.

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Keresztesekből lázadók: Tanulmányok 1514 Magyarországról [From crusaders to rebels: Studies on Hungary in 1514]. Edited by Norbert C. Tóth and Tibor Neumann. Budapest: MTA Bölcsészettudományi Kutatóközpont, Történettudományi Intézet, 2015. 376 pp.

The rebellion known in historical scholarship as the peasant war of György Dózsa (May–July 1514) has, despite its brevity, long been thought to have played a crucial role in shaping late medieval Hungarian history. Before 1945, emphasis was put on the consequences of the revolt: the supposed general ban on the freedom of movement of the peasantry, which would have led to the emergence of a so-called “second serfdom,” and the prohibition forbidding peasants from bearing arms, which contributed, it was claimed, to the quick and definitive military breakdown of Hungary between 1521 and 1526. After 1945, attention inevitably shifted to the social roots of the movement, and the Hungarian peasant war quickly took its place among the great “anti-feudal” revolts of late medieval Europe. Ironically, it was a “fictive anniversary,” officially created to commemorate the supposed birth of Dózsa in 1472, which (partly undermining the very intentions of the communist regime) yielded the scientific findings which have since framed all approaches to the issue: a meticulous reconstruction of events based on the overwhelming majority of the surviving source material; the realisation that the social basis of the revolt was not constituted by the destitute masses of the landless peasantry oppressed by their lords, but rather the economically most active tenants of market towns, whose commercial activities were being blocked by the rival interests of the nobility; and an equally thorough reconstruction of the ideological background of the movement, with the observant Franciscans and their ideas of social justice taking center stage.

After 1990, the 1514 peasant war quickly lost its ideological connotations, retaining only, before all in non-scholarly public circles, its pivotal role as a symptom of the corruption and internal decomposition of Jagiello Hungary, especially when compared to the vitality and military might of Matthias Corvinus’s Central European “empire.” Another memorial year, however, this time commemorating the five-hundredth anniversary of the revolt itself, has recently revitalized the languishing interest in Dózsa and his crusader peasants, and it has produced a set of essays which claim to undermine several of the assumptions which have been widely shared elements of the “Dózsa problem” since the 1970s.

The essays in the volume reviewed here all contribute to reassessment and demystification. In the first paper, Árpád Nógrády argues, on the basis of evidence exclusively from the western fringes of Hungary, that if crisis there was, it was certainly caused not by economic depression but, on the contrary, by a land hunger effected by a marked agrarian boom and the parallel increase, within the peasants' landed assets, of the proportion of leased lands as opposed to customary seigneurial tenements, and the consequent decrease of the number of "tenant" peasants in the traditional sense as compared to the swelling ranks of "landless peasants" (*inquilini*). Examining the evidence from Slavonia, Szabolcs Varga questions the key role now traditionally attributed to the market towns and the Franciscans in triggering the revolt of 1514: the fact that the region between the Drava and Sava Rivers, which was densely spotted with market towns and was certainly sufficiently populated by Franciscan friaries, remained completely immune to the rebellion certainly calls for a revision of the prevailing understanding of its social roots.

Apart from these two, rather short, papers, no effort is made in the book to examine the social background and potential causes of the peasant war. The two papers authored by Norbert C. Tóth endeavor to reexamine the origins of the crusade initiated by archbishop Tamás Bakócs and the political and military events that led to the first major encounter between the rebel troops and their noble opponents. In addition to examining the composition of and the decisions taken by the hitherto unknown diet held in the spring of 1514, he also seeks new answers to the questions of why the crusade was eventually proclaimed despite the serious misgivings voiced by some of the Hungarian political elite, as well as what its original aims may have been, why it deviated from the original idea, and why the would-be rebels took the route which finally led them to the crossing of the Maros River at Apátfalva. The long paper by Tibor Neumann examines the events of the peasant war in Transylvania and the neighboring regions, with a clear focus on the young voivode of Transylvania, János Szapolyai. He proposes a radically new and very convincing interpretation of events, arguing, among other things, that the revolt left the whole of Southern Transylvania intact. He also emphasizes the unprecedented level to which taxation had been brought in the years immediately preceding the revolt, though these tax increases were not accompanied by any parallel military achievements against the Ottomans, thereby drawing attention to a possible reason for discontent which has not been considered so far. In a paper consisting of a chain of case studies, Richárd Horváth refutes the long-held view according to which the peasant armies

successfully besieged major fortifications, proving that the fortified sites that were taken by the rebels were in fact either abandoned by their defenders or opened through voluntary collaboration, or, in some cases, the siege story itself was construed by noblemen who tried to profit from the troubles to consolidate their contested lordship.

The remaining papers in the volume address themes which are only indirectly connected to the history of the peasant war itself. Bálint Lakatos examines the circulation of news in connection with the events in Hungary, establishing an extremely careful typology according to form, source of information, and news communicated. He also contributes to the establishment of a better chronology of events in some cases. He reconstructs the international network within which the news from Hungary was received, transformed, and eventually transmitted, drawing into focus a great number of hitherto unused documents. Gábor Mikó, the author of two essays in the volume, explores the process through which the decrees accepted by the postwar diet gained their final formulation. This is a sensitive issue, given the supposed consequences of the punitive measures taken against the peasantry. Comparing all the extant copies, Mikó convincingly argues that the “official” ratification of the dietary decrees was preceded by heated debates and frequent alterations to the text, a process that went on long after the diet itself had been dissolved. He also highlights and accounts for the conspicuous antagonism which can be observed between the two notorious passages dealing with the ban on the peasants’ freedom of movement, one apparently proclaiming a general prohibition, the other limiting punishment to tenants who had been convicted of participation in the revolt. The closing paper, by Bence Péterfi, examines the peasant war that ravaged the Inner Austrian provinces in 1515 and looks for possible connections and influences, essentially in vain, for, as he argues, neither did the Austrian rebels refer to the Hungarian example nor did the neighboring Hungarian territories, which had not been affected by the revolt led by Dózsa, show any sign of sympathy with their Austrian fellows.

As emphasized in the preface, this volume is not a comprehensive history of the Dózsa revolt, but a collection of studies the authors of which, depending on their respective fields of research, examined various aspects of a complex problem. This accounts for the occasional contradictions between the individual contributions. For instance, whereas C. Tóth opines that originally the crusade was intended as an essentially defensive operation, with the participation of both crusaders and regular forces in anticipation of a major Ottoman attack (e.g. p.71), Neumann calculates with an offensive plan designed to restore the Ottoman–

Hungarian border to its pre-1512 state (p.117). The problem obviously concerns the contested issue of the Ottoman–Hungarian truce and the reasons for the quick foray of voivode Szapolyai into Ottoman Bulgaria just before the outbreak of the revolt. These problems certainly need further inquiry. I would raise at least two questions. First, if an offensive campaign was indeed considered, why did the Hungarian government publicize the Ottoman–Hungarian truce officially as early as May, thereby risking popular indignation, instead of using the gathering forces to accomplish the original plan, at least in a more modest version, before the agreement with the distant sultan was officially confirmed? And, second, if the crusade was initially conceived as a defensive move, why did Szapolyai venture into Bulgaria, only to return two weeks later, without even waiting for the other troops and the crusaders to gather? And why did he attack at all if his fellow commanders (István Bátori and Péter Beriszló) were apparently ordered to stay put and wait for reinforcements? Was his campaign really part of the planned operations?

While the great majority of new interpretations and reassessments offered by the contributors to the volume are persuasive and thoroughly documented, and the achievements of a previous generation of scholars (especially those of Gábor Barta, who was forced to complete his monograph in a hurry in preparation for the commemorations of 1472) are repeatedly emphasized, in some instances the rejection of earlier views and approaches seems unwarranted. It is certainly somewhat presumptuous to relegate the ideas of Jenő Szűcs about the potential role of the Observant Franciscans in forging the crusaders' ideology to "the realm of legends" in a single footnote (p.89), especially since several of the regions known to have been affected by the revolt are not even examined in the book. After all, Szűcs himself never argued that this supposed ideology was created *ex nihilo* during the six weeks of the revolt.

These critical remarks by no means detract from the merits of this volume, which has successfully reopened an issue which seemed settled for more than four decades. The essays, which are accompanied by excellent maps, tables, and occasionally source publications, have broken new ground and raised questions which need to be addressed. Each aspect of the peasant war, including its aims, the events themselves, the ideology which may have shaped it, and the terminology with which it is described, has to be revisited by applying the exemplary methodology used by the authors in the volume. Only then will it be possible to offer a new history of this tragic year and its consequences. For, regardless of the term with which we refer to it and quite independently of the

actual number of rebels (which we will never know exactly) or their (in)ability to seize fortified sites, a rebellion broke out in 1514 which ravaged considerable sections of Hungary. A bishop was impaled, tax collectors were killed and robbed, and noble residences were devastated and burned down. Obviously, this cannot be “relegated to the realm of legends.”

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The Teutonic Order in Prussia and Livonia: The Political and Ecclesiastical Structures 13th–16th C. Edited by Roman Czaja and Andrzej Radzimiński. Cologne–Weimar–Vienna–Toruń: Böhlau Verlag / Towarzystwo Naukowe w Toruniu, 2016. 423 pp.

This work is dedicated primarily to a description of the organization and internal structure of the territorial authority wielded by the Teutonic Knights in Prussia and Livonia. The book is a collection of essays written by Polish and German historians and art historians from the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń and translated into English.

In order to give a broad overview of the power of the Teutonic Knights, the authors approach the topic from different points of view and discuss a wide range of topics. These topics include the formation of political borders, administrative divisions, defensive architecture, the urbanization of the country, and ecclesiastical structure and divisions.

The work is basically divided into three main parts. The first describes the internal structure and territorial authority in Prussia, and the second is devoted entirely to Livonia. The second part is especially valuable, since most of the existing German and English literature on this topic deals with Teutonic Prussia, and in most cases Livonia is neglected. The third and final main part of the book contains lists of different dignitaries and officials in Prussia and Livonia. The first chapter of the third part enumerates dignitaries and officials (including *vogts*, procurators, and commanders) of the Teutonic Order between the end of the twelfth century and the sixteenth century (it was compiled by Bernhart Jähnig). The second chapter deals with these positions in Livonia starting with the time of The Brothers of the Sword and concluding with the end of Teutonic rule (it was compiled by Klaus Militzer). In the last chapter of the third part, one finds a collection of names of archbishops, bishops, and episcopal *vogts* (compiled by Andrzej Radzimiński).

The essays on varying topics are included in the first two parts of the book. In most cases, articles dealing with a given topic both in Prussia and Livonia were written by the same author. For example, Janusz Tanddecki examines the administrative divisions of the state of the Teutonic Order both in Prussia and Livonia, and Andrzej Radzimiński considers church divisions in Prussia in the first main part and the same topic in Livonia in the second one. The only exception is Marian Biskup who wrote about two different topics. Biskup

examines parishes in the state of the Teutonic Knights in the first main part, but in the second he writes about territorial governance in Livonia. This general structure of the book furthers a comparative understanding of the political and ecclesiastical systems in Prussia and Livonia. This is one of the most important merits of this work. Given the limits of this and any review, I would like to call attention only to two important lessons provided by the different chapters on the parallels and differences in developments in Livonia and Prussia.

Marian Arsyński highlights the main features of fortification architecture of Teutonic Prussia and Livonia. He argues that, since the Teutonic Order exercised absolute territorial sovereignty from the outset, it was the only agent in the development of castles and strongholds. The Order decided on their functions, forms, and territorial distribution. In contrast, in Livonia one had to take different political entities into consideration, from the bishoprics and the archbishopric of Riga (who exercised or usurped territorial self-government) to The Brothers of the Sword (1202–37), not to mention the Danes (1219–1364), who held the northern part of Estonia. As a result, numerous autonomous construction projects took place in Livonia led by different entities. It is also worth emphasizing the significance of local Cistercians and the secular vassal knights who made no contribution to fortified masonry architecture in Prussia.

Another interesting topic is the comparison of the urban networks in these two territories by Roman Czaja. As Czaja shows, the most important difference was the lower degree of urbanization of Livonia in comparison with Prussia. In Prussia, there was one town for every 700 km², though they were very unevenly distributed, as most towns were located along the Vistula River and in the western and central part of Prussia proper (75 of the total 96). However, in Livonia, by the mid-sixteenth century there were still only 19 towns in total, which was one for every 6,000 km². An interesting phenomenon was the importance of the small Livonian towns in the great Baltic trade. It should be noted, however, that their commercial role was limited to local trade, and they acted mostly as intermediaries between producers and large towns (Riga, Reval, and Dorpat). It is remarkable that until the mid-fourteenth century these large towns had closer connections to other Hanseatic towns than to one another. Only after 1350 were there signs of cooperation among the large Livonian cities, when local conventions became common. These conventions served rarely for debates regarding internal matters concerning Livonia. Rather, they were forums for the discussion of maritime trade and the election of delegates who would represent Livonian interest at the Hanseatic conventions.

As was the case in Prussia, where 93 percent of the cities were under 10 hectares in territory, the Livonian towns were also mostly confined to small areas. The biggest ones did not exceed 30 hectares, and smaller ones covered an area ranging between 5 and 8 hectares and had only about 80 plots on average within their boundaries. Regarding the residents of these towns, while roughly 8,000 people lived in Riga in the fifteenth century, and Reval and Dorpat also had a population of around 5,000, most of the towns were inhabited by only a few hundred people. In contrast, the population of the largest Prussian towns could well reach 10,000 people. The ethnic diversity of Livonian towns was characteristic of urban development. By analyzing local tax lists, Czaja showed that in spite of the dominance of the Germans in larger cities (in Riga more than 50 percent of the population, and in Reval more than 40 percent), the indigenous population formed a considerable share of the population (Livs and mostly Latvians made up 33 percent of the population of Riga and Estonians made up 41 percent of the population of Reval). Furthermore, the smaller towns, with the exceptions of Alt and Neu Pernau, were dominated by indigenous population and even by Ruthenians. However, the high proportions of the native residents as a percentage of the total population did not correspond to a similarly proportional share of power, since the Germans constituted the richest layer of the society because of their prominent role in trade. Most of the locals (hired laborers and craftsmen) hailed from the middle or the poorest layers of the society. Rich Livs, Estonians, and Latvians who tried to increase their influence in urban affairs met with strong opposition from the Germans as of the end of the fourteenth century (in Reval, only as of the beginning of the sixteenth century). The leading circle of Germans tried to hinder or even forbid the “Undeutsche” from acquiring property in the cities or entering merchant guilds by issuing discriminative statutes. In Prussia, Germans dominated in the ruling groups and the middle classes, but the cities were also inhabited by many Prussians and Slavs, especially in cities near the Polish border. By 1450, in Kulm and Thorn their proportions reached 23–27 percent of the population within the city walls and 52 percent in the suburbs.

It is regrettable that the book does not include detailed footnotes, so in some cases it is a bit hard to find the original source to which an author is referring. However, each article is followed by an extensive and excellent bibliography, which makes up for this shortcoming. Nevertheless, this book will be of great interest to anyone curious to glean comparative insight into the territorial authority of the Teutonic Order in Prussia and Livonia.

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Alchemy and Rudolf II: Exploring the Secrets of Nature in Central Europe in the 16th and 17th centuries. Edited by Ivo Purš and Vladimír Karpenko. Prague: Artefactum, 2016. 870 pp.

This lavish volume makes a striking first impression with its sheer dimensions and weight, and the cover, which features the painting “Allegory” by the Dutch master Hendrick Goltzius (in which Hermes offers Pandora to King Epimetheus), further suggests something rich and meaningful. The sensory experience continues when one opens the book and browses through the nearly six hundred beautiful illustrations, many of which are color illustrations from contemporary manuscripts. The sumptuousness of this volume befits its subject, Emperor Rudolf II, and the various ways in which he and quite a few of his subjects in Central Europe delved into alchemy. The editors, Ivo Purš and Vladimír Karpenko (who also authored many of the articles in the volume), have dedicated decades to the research on this subject, and they invited some of the best-known scholars of the history of alchemy in the Early Modern era to contribute. This edition is the English translation of the Czech original published in 2011 with only one new article and some additional bibliographical notes.

The result is a rich collection of articles indeed, covering the widest range of subjects while also acknowledging that there is always room for further research and never aiming to have the last word. Still, what is immediately clear about this book is that it is a work of love, or, as Purš puts it, “a humble homage to the philosophers ‘per ignem,’” (p.13) i.e. the men, including the emperor himself, and a few women who devoted much of their time and money to exploring the secrets of nature in *laboratoria* set up in households, workshops, or any suitable space.

With a subject so vast, complex, and often elusive, the volume had to be structured around four main topics. The first part offers a more general overview of alchemy in Central Europe and imperial Prague. The introduction by Karpenko aims to provide an up-to-date definition of what alchemy is. Karpenko accepts Maurice Crosland’s 1962 formulation, according to which “alchemy may be viewed as a lengthy experiment that compares human abilities to natural processes, with the former attempting to surpass the latter” as closest to grasping the essence of it. The article he coauthored with Purš in this section and the one by Purš look at the fortunes of alchemy in the lands of the Bohemian crown,

from the interest of the Habsburg rulers to the involvement of their aristocratic subjects. The timeline of alchemical interests in these territories shows that in Bohemia alchemy was known and practiced as early as the fourteenth century. One could mention Konrad Kyser, for instance, the author of *Bellifortis* and the personal physician to Wenceslas IV, or Jan of Láz, who published the first alchemical treatise in Czech in 1457. As is noted in the introductory articles, Rudolf II was not the first Habsburg to take an interest in alchemical medicine. His grandfather Ferdinand I probably met Paracelsus in person, and he was open to the new medicine propagated by the Swiss physician. Alchemy thus had strong roots both in Bohemia and Moravia, and in the Habsburg family itself.

After this overview of antecedents, William Eamon's article also looks at beginnings as Eamon redraws the picture of Rudolf's education at the Spanish court and its long-term effects on his personality. In contrast to the earlier scholarship, he emphasizes the rich cultural milieu that surrounded the young Habsburg prince in Madrid and the positive influences to which he may have been exposed, given the scientific projects supported by Phillip II. These projects included a search for a panacea and attempts to manufacture "Lullian" quintessences, which may very well have fueled Rudolf's later interest in Lull's works. Purš's last contribution in this section is a massive overview of Rudolf II's patronage of the "natural sciences," which meant support for the stars of the show, Tycho Brahe and Johannes Kepler, but also lesser-known but highly important figures in the emperor's circle, such as Johann Anton Barvitius and Johannes Matthias Wacker, who were friends of Kepler. Purš even gives some clues as to where the *laboratoria* in Rudolf's time might have been in the Prague castle.

Rudolf Werner Soukup continues this line of research into the material evidence of alchemical experimentation in his article. Soukup considers the actual (chemical) processes that were carried out in the emperor's circle. Drawing in part on reports from the Imperial *laboratorium* in Prague, Soukup depicts a very vivid image of the type of experiments, characters, and promises (some of them naive, others simply false) surrounding Rudolf II. In the subsequent study, Karpenko provides an analysis of the sixteenth-century processes, and especially transmutation, from the point of view of modern chemistry.

The second part of the volume contains a series of individual case studies, each focusing on a particular personality and his work: Michael Sendivogius, Michael Maier, Oswald Croll, Matthias Erbinäus von Brandau, Tadeáš Hájek, Tycho Brahe, Edward Kelly, Anselm Boëthius de Boodt, Martin Ruland (both

the Elder and the Younger), Simon Thadeas Budek, and Cornelius Drebbel. It also includes an article on how the First Chamber Servants of Rudolf II encountered alchemy.

The third part of the book contains four studies on various aspects of science and economy in Rudolf's time. John Norris looks at the highly successful developments in the Jáchymov and Kutná Hora silver mines and the way metallic transmutation and the mercury-sulfur theory of metallic composition (generally associated with alchemical literature) found their way into sixteenth-century mining treatises. Pavel Drábek's contribution deals with pharmacy and the growing popularity of chemically prepared medicine from the second half of the sixteenth century on. The fourth and last part of the volume focuses on the period that followed Rudolf II's loss of the throne. Karpenko dedicates an article to Daniel Stolcius and his emblematic alchemy, and Josef Smolka's study deals with Joannes Marcus Marci, an outstanding and highly influential scholar in the second half of the seventeenth century. In conclusion, the editors sum up, once again, what they deem important about the beginnings of alchemical interest in Bohemia, the key figures surrounding Rudolf II, and the generation that followed, i.e. those whose work built on this legacy.

The book is a beautifully presented and important contribution to our knowledge of the science of alchemy under Rudolf II's reign which sheds light on both the precursors to the developments in this science and its aftermath in the lands of the Bohemian crown. It can almost be read as a picture book which tells the story through allegorical and technical illustrations from alchemical literature, but the texts also deliver topnotch scholarship in which every reader can find something new and intriguing.

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‘Das Fluidum der Stadt...’ Urbane Lebenswelten in Kassa/Košice/Kaschau zwischen Sprachenvielfalt und Magyarisierung 1867–1918. By Frank Henschel. (Veröffentlichungen des Collegium Carolinum, Band 137.) Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2017. 360 pp.

“The spirit of the town was Hungarian, but after dinner, in slippers and without their jackets, even the gentlefolk switched to German.” This remark is among the recollections of writer Sándor Márai of the language situation in the city of Košice (Kassa in Hungarian, Kaschau in German) in the early twentieth century. Until now, shifts in the ethnic composition of the multilingual and multi-confessional city in the eastern part of what today is Slovakia have mainly attracted the attention of Hungarian historians, as Košice is a significant site of memory in the Hungarian national narrative. Only a few Slovak and German scholars have taken much interest in this topic. Recently, Frank Henschel, a researcher at the University of Kiel, began dealing with the spheres of urban life “between linguistic diversity and Magyarization” at the time of the Dual Monarchy. The book under review contains his reworked doctoral thesis, which he defended at the University of Leipzig in 2014.

Henschel examines the agents and tools of ethnic and nationalist practice and the penetration of national patterns into the “Lebenswelten” (i.e. specific areas of everyday life) in Košice, where individuals and institutions formulated, negotiated, and used national and non-national semantic schemes. He offers a detailed examination of the ways in which the inhabitants and institutions bordered one another in the specific “Lebenswelten,” for instance in local politics and elections, the local theater, cultural and social societies, churches, public schools, economic and labor unions, public remembrance culture, and the politics of identity.

Henschel considers the main result of his research to be a confirmation of the hypothesis that Magyarization (the promotion of the exclusive use of the Hungarian language in public and private life and the creation of individual emotional bonds to the Hungarian nation) was never fully successful in Košice. In Košice, traditional dynamics and characteristics endured in spite of the efforts of the Hungarian state before 1914 to craft policies that would ensure the use of Hungarian in almost all spheres of public life, and the communities within the city, which as noted were linguistically, culturally, and denominationally diverse, did not allow themselves to be “magyarized” or completely integrated into the

state narrative of national loyalty. Even by the time of the outbreak of World War I, most of the inhabitants of the city had not begun to structure their everyday lives around ethnic or national classifications. (p.306). Henschel's conclusions concerning the lack of success of Magyarization in the territory of present-day Slovakia are not new. Slovak ethnocentric historians have emphasized the violence of the policies implemented by the Hungarian state on the one hand and, on the other, the ineffectiveness of these policies, each of which, they often contend, contributed to the rapid Slovakization of the public sphere after 1918. Hungarian historians, in contrast, have concentrated on different factors, specifically migration, the allegedly voluntary and spontaneous nature of assimilation, models of social prestige, and the processes of linguistic homogenization before the onset of violent Magyarization. In recent decades, more scientific works have appeared which move beyond the ethnocentric dichotomy of the "perpetrator and victim of violent nationalization." They analyze the overlap of language-cultural urban spaces and interpret the transformation of ethnic identification or loyalties through the concepts of situational and hybrid identities and national indifference. The most recent review of this secondary literature (including an evaluation of it) is found in the dissertation by Ondrej Ficeri, defended in Košice in 2017.

Henschel's work is of great importance because it analyses, in depth and in its entirety, the process of the nationalization of the cities in what, before 1918, was known as Upper Hungary. Henschel's study examines this process many of the spheres of everyday practice, and without the construction of limited ethnic groups. He consistently writes about "Germans," "Magyars," and "Slovaks" and the German speakers, the Hungarian speakers, and the Slovak speakers. He comments that the local political institutions were neither ethnically nor religiously segregated, and that by the 1890s the town published its official decrees in three languages. Municipal politics were the exclusive domain of the townsmen (burghers or the *Bürgertum*). When modernizing the infrastructure, they preferred the town center at the expense of the suburbs, which were inhabited by the socially inferior, predominantly Slovak-speaking classes, so local politics had features of social discrimination enriched by ethnic categories. In municipal elections, importance was given to competence, professionalism, and pragmatism. In parliamentary elections, most of the candidates were elected according to party affiliation, not nationality.

The theater, which served as an important arena for culture and communication for the *Bürgertum*, was dominated by the Hungarian language. The theater committee did not allow performances in other languages beginning

in 1877. Henschel devotes considerable attention to voluntary associations. After the publication of his work, Nikoleta Lattová defended her dissertation thesis, in which she essentially confirmed Henschel's conclusions and empirically documented them on an even wider scale (although she refined his estimate of the number of voluntary associations from more than 50 societies at the beginning of the century to 77 in 1910 and 88 in 1913). In principle, the social societies (especially the casinos) of the Košice upper class were not the primary arenas of Magyarization, because the nationalist models and Hungarian language habits had already been integrated into the *Bürgertum's* everyday life in the public arenas. The parallel functioning of three Magyar Educational Societies was counter-productive. They competed with one another, they were also financially overburdened and their administration and activities were time-consuming. State and county activists were members of numerous societies, so they constituted an integral part of civil society. In most societies, however, despite the nationalist rhetoric, the traditions of non-national perception and practice prevailed, and the societies preferred to meet the cultural, religious, and social needs of members with their activities.

While the followers of ethno-national models in communal politics and cultural institutions primarily interacted with one another, larger and more heterogeneous audiences met in non-elite societies, churches, and public educational areas. These more open and less exclusive spheres could therefore remain multilingual despite political and social pressure throughout the Dual Monarchy. Basically, campaigns for economic nationalism in Hungary notwithstanding, the economic unions and labor movement essentially maintained a similar character. The ethnic labeling of economic activists and social groups gradually changed. At the turn of the century, "guardians of the nation" focused on the displacement of the German language and criticized "Germanizing" businessmen and middle-class traders. Henschel does not deal with the reasons why German-speaking inhabitants were willing to recognize Hungarian supremacy in public life. However, he notes that the German language did not disappear and that it continued to be an important means of social distinction between the townsmen and the members of the lower classes. After 1900, Hungarian national activists focused more on disrespecting Slovak as the language of day laborers and servants, and they labeled Slovak-speaking salesmen and workers collaborators with the "Pan-Slavic" movement.

For the promotion of Hungarian as a measure of national loyalty, the Hungarian national ideal was important as a representation of unity within

the (for the present) multilingual and multi-ethnic political nation. Since this idea was based in part on an assertion of its legitimacy through a particular interpretation of history, in the public reminders of the Revolution of 1848/49, the Hungarian millennium of 1896, the rule of Emperor Franz Joseph and his wife Elizabeth, and the celebration of the central cult of Ferenc II Rákóczi in Košice, promoters of the Hungarian nationalist ideal did not seek examples of segregation, but rather strove to produce evidence of former cooperation in the struggle against a common enemy. In her 2015 book on public festivities, Alica Kurhajcová, who has studied the celebration of opposing traditions (anti-Habsburg or “*kuruc*” and pro-Habsburg or “*labani*”) in two “Slovak” towns in Upper Hungary (Banská Bystrica and Zvolen) and two “Hungarian” towns (Lučenec and Rimavská Sobota), reaches similar conclusions. Although Košice was stylized as a “*kuruc* town,” the figure of the king crowned with the sacred Crown of Saint Stephen and the presence of the imperial and royal garrison required the reconciliation of conflicting memorial narratives. The extensive Magyarization of street and square names came relatively late, in 1912. Henschel examines the results of the politics of identity on the basis of a census, the results of which he does not consider representative, and changes made to family names.

Unlike in the Cisleithanian towns, in Košice, a variety of separate, competing movements, camps, or milieus based on national stereotypes never emerged. As Henschel convincingly points out, through solid historical analyses of the specific “*Lebenswelten*” of this medium-sized town, a policy of Magyarization existed, but it was a townsmen project for townsmen, and most of the inhabitants remained indifferent to national classifications in everyday life. This approach may help scholars move beyond historiographical disputes about the “ethnic” character of Košice before and after 1918.

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A Modern History of the Balkans: Nationalism and Identity in Southeast Europe. By Thanos Veremis. London–New York: I. B. Tauris, 2017. 188 pp.

Thanos Veremis's new history of the Balkans attempts, in the words of its author, "to pursue the pervasive nationalist theme that went hand in hand with other significant Western influences in the Balkans" (p.vii). His short book is concerned, in essence, with modernity's impact on the region, assessed primarily through the prism of nationalism, irredentism, and state-building processes since the early nineteenth century.

The book is organized into three parts. Part I ("The Balkans from the Nineteenth to the Twenty-first Century: The Building and Dismantling of Nation States," pp.3–92) is by far the longest, with ten chapters, which are largely historical in nature and account for half of the book. Part II ("The Balkans in Comparative Perspective," pp.95–138) has four chapters which are thematically structured and look at identity politics, economic development, the role of the army in Balkan politics, and "Western Amateurs and the End of History." This last chapter (chapter 14 in the book) examines Western misconceptions of the region and appears to be based on one of Veremis' previously published articles. Part III ("Unfinished Business," pp.141–81) has three chapters, which examine the current problematic status and possible futures of Macedonia, Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina. An epilogue ("The Chances of Post-Modernity in the Balkans," pp.182–88) serves as a conclusion of sorts.

This short book is by no means a conventional history of the nation state in the Balkans, but rather combines a narrative (or chronological) account in Part I with a more thematic discussion in Parts II and III. For the most part, the conventional historical sections are concise, and they also provide a cursory assessment of the broader historical trends over the past two centuries. There is very little in the way of detailed analysis of the political and socioeconomic trends in any of the individual Balkan states, while the discussion is often somewhat imbalanced from one Balkan state to the next. The author undoubtedly knows Greece best, and his discussion of Greek domestic and foreign policies is well-informed and often incisive. But here too his discussion is often imbalanced and has serious omissions. For instance, in chapter 13 ("The Army in Politics"), Veremis provides an overview of the military's role in Balkan politics, but he focusses almost entirely on the communist states during the Cold War. There is oddly no reference to the army's significant role in Greece in the twentieth

century, most recently during the so-called Regime of the Colonels (1967–74). And while Veremis treats the post-communist dissolution of Yugoslavia at length and puts substantial blame on Western pressures and underlying economic causes (e.g. p.107), there is no discussion of the origins of the Greek sovereign debt crisis which has loomed large over the region over the last decade. Nor is there a section on the European Union's role in the consolidation of the post-authoritarian transitions in the Balkans after 1989 or in Greece after 1974.

The book is based largely on English-language secondary sources, although several Greek-language publications are cited. The bibliography is by no means exhaustive, however, and it is highly selective on most topics with several important gaps. Furthermore, many proper names (mainly South Slavic and Albanian) are misspelled (e.g. pp.35, 65, 153, 157) and there are some factual errors. Emir Kusturica would surely be surprised to see that he has been characterized as a Bosnian Muslim (p.138), and the Croat politicians Franjo Rački and Josip Juraj Strossmayer did not advocate “the creation on the ruins of the Habsburg monarchy of a federal south-Slavic state that would include Serbia and Montenegro” (p.35). Similarly, the discussion of some contemporary problems in the Balkans lacks appropriate balance and historiographical nuance. While I do not agree with some of Veremis's interpretations, notably concerning the causes of the former Yugoslavia's demise, his discussion of the Macedonian Question in particular is largely consistent with the official Greek narrative. Veremis is highly critical of the Republic of Macedonia's allegedly irredentist and implicitly expansionist positions, which imperil Greek borders, but allows no room for the existence of a Macedonian Slavic minority in Greece, to which he refers to simply as “slavophone Greeks” (e.g., p.70) or people of “alleged ‘Macedonian’ ethnicity” (p.73). The characterizations represent views which most scholars outside of Greece regard as inconsistent with the facts and the historical record.

The book is well-written and interesting, and it raises legitimate and occasionally provocative questions about the inconsistent role of the international community in the Balkans over the last two hundred years and especially since the collapse of the communism. Veremis is correct when he concludes that the resolution of the region's remaining issues, whether in Macedonia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, or Kosovo, “will not depend entirely on foreign priorities. Self-determination is a powerful medicine that should be applied equitably. To attain post-modernity states must first resolve their modern conflicts” (p.188).

Mark Biondich
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Staatskunst oder Kulturstaat? Staatliche Kunstpolitik in Österreich 1848–1914. By Andreas Gottsmann. Vienna: Böhlau, 2017. 245 pp.

The entanglement of the Habsburg dynasty in the creative work of artists, composers, and writers in the late nineteenth century has been discussed seemingly endlessly. Carl Schorske's groundbreaking studies published some fifty years ago focused on the disaffection this caused: Viennese modernism was a kind of revolt against the stifling effects of the imperial court. Surprisingly, however, there have been very few analyses of the attitudes of the court and government to culture and the arts. This important topic is the focus of this book. It asks some fundamental questions: to what extent can the imperial government in Vienna be said to have had a policy towards the arts? What was this policy and what were its aims? There was certainly no shortage of government or court support for the arts, but to what end? Based on extensive archival research, Gottsmann attempts to answer these questions by examining policy papers of government ministries.

As Gottsmann declares, this is very much a *top-down* inquiry, focusing on the reasoning and motivations of officials in Vienna-based ministries. The book is particularly useful because of the examinations it provides of the attempts by Count Leo Thun, Minister of Culture and Education in the 1850s, to initiate a coherent policy towards the arts. Central to this was reform of the key institutions: the art academies in Vienna and Milan, which had singularly failed to train Austrian artists to a standard comparable with those in France or even in major German centers, such as Munich and Düsseldorf.

This focus on institutions characterizes the basic approach of the book as a whole, and it provides useful summaries of the founding and early histories of important organizations, such as the Austrian Museum of Art and Industry, the School of Design, the Modern Gallery (later the Austrian State Gallery), and the Central Commission for Monuments. The book also examines support for the artworld in all the crownlands, and it provides valuable information on government funding for theaters, academies, and museums in, for example, Bohemia, Tyrol, Galicia, and Moravia. Although financial subventions were provided only sporadically, evidence suggests that officials in the central administration in Vienna took seriously the notion of supporting institutions and artists in the various crownlands in order to create a common Austrian cultural landscape and identity.

There is much to admire about this book. Its focus on policy-making, rather than on art world actors at a local level, provides a valuable additional layer of insight into the workings of the cultural landscape. Yet it is difficult to ignore the questions raised by its approach. Commendably, the book covers the whole of Habsburg Austria, but this makes it all the more baffling that all the sources on which it is based are in German. This could perhaps be explained by the fact that the focus is on policy making in Vienna, but then the absence of other voices makes it difficult to assess the successes or failures of these policies; we are offered a view of the crownlands as seen through a telescope from the imperial capital. It is also a pity that virtually no reference is made to Hungary, except to a now outdated opposition between a cosmopolitan Austria and a Hungarian administration concerned with imposing a unitary Magyar national identity. Yet we know that the debate was much more nuanced than this simple duality suggests; institutions such as the Hungarian National Museum were far more than an expression or instrument of a narrow nationalist ideology. At the very least, proper comparison of Hungarian and Austrian cultural policy might have brought the specificities of Austrian policy into sharper relief, as might comparison with other European states. Rudolf Eitelberger, who was influential in cultural policy from the 1850s to the 1870s, saw France as the model, even though it was a major competitor. He also envied the centralized power of the French government over cultural affairs.

The focus on ministerial papers ensures the book is underpinned by impressive source material, but it lacks a compelling narrative or framework that might allow for more probing and self-reflective scrutiny. We learn that Thun's first objective was to improve the quality of the arts, but to what end? And what did that *mean*? The Museum of Art and Industry, for example, was founded to improve the competitiveness of Austrian design, but Eitelberger understood this purely in terms of taste, whereas others, such as Wilhelm Exner, argued that the priority should be embracing the latest technology. Likewise, the desire to improve artistic prestige could be read in different ways. Long ago, the Marxist critic Herbert Marcuse talked about the affirmative function of art; in other words, it provided an imaginary resolution of social problems and acted as a kind of safety valve. The Habsburg cultivation of the arts has often been seen in a similar light, for it is only a short step to the embrace of the theatricality of which many contemporaries were so skeptical. This issue is implicit in the book's subtitle: *Staatskunst oder Kulturstaat?* which promises a debate that is never held. The meaning of this opposition is thus not properly explored. Liberalism

is mentioned, but its pertinence also requires analysis. There was a remarkable convergence of the ideas of Conservatives such as Thun and the ideas of Liberals such as Eitelberger, and this surely deserves some kind of comment. Similarly, Liberal attitudes towards the question of national identity informed cultural policy making, and also ensured its limitations, but there is little discussion of this issue here.

This book addresses an important topic, but it tries to cover too much material in too little space. To do justice to such a major topic would require a considerably larger study, but due to its length, this book offers a schematic account with little interpretative depth. It should be seen as providing valuable preliminary work, and in this sense, it is of unquestionable value, but its omissions and self-imposed limitations mean that analysis of the successes, failures, and significance of cultural policy in the Habsburg domains still remains to be done.

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Dealing with Dictators: The United States, Hungary, and East Central Europe, 1942–1989. By László Borhi. Translated by Jason Vincz. Bloomington–Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2016. 548 pp.

László Borhi's thoroughly researched *Dealing with Dictators* is based on evidence drawn from various Hungarian archives, the U.S. National Archives, U.S. presidential libraries, the Library of Congress, published documents, interviews with U.S. and Hungarian diplomats and policy-makers, and a wide range of secondary sources in several languages.

The book can be read, to great advantage, on two levels. Its declared focus is U.S.–Hungarian relations. Starting in 1942, perhaps the darkest year of World War II, it moves steadily from the Nazi occupation through the Communist takeover of postwar Hungary, the revolt in 1956, the harsh return of pro-Soviet orthodoxy, and the slow but steady domestic liberalization under the surprisingly shrewd János Kádár to the implosion of the Communist system in 1989. In addition to discussing these comparatively familiar events, it delves into a number of less well-known but important episodes, such as the case of Cardinal József Mindszenty, the István Deák affair, and the return of the Crown of St. Stephen to Budapest.

But Borhi offers much more than an overview of nearly five decades of the asymmetrical relationship between Washington and Budapest. He paints a larger picture of the U.S. (and also British) attitude toward Eastern Europe, addressing parallel events in Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, and Czechoslovakia. The recurring theme here is that the United States and other Western powers preferred to keep Eastern Europe stable and quiet, even if it amounted to *de facto* acceptance of the Red Army occupation, which they occasionally denied for the record. This is not to say that Washington and its allies did not exploit fissures in the Eastern “bloc.” But when they did, as Borhi shows, they tended to offer enticing benefits to the wrong recipients, most notoriously to the tyrannical Elena and Nicolae Ceausescu.

Borhi knows well that these observations are not altogether new, but he strengthens our understanding of the matter by providing original insights and valuable details. His book demonstrates that Washington came to regard Soviet hegemony over Eastern Europe as permanent and irreversible. Some U.S. policy-makers went further and began to construe it as a cause of the region's “unprecedented stability” (p.184). This attitude was strongly promoted by,

among others, Henry Kissinger and Helmut Sonnenfeldt. Borhi quotes the latter as telling a shocked Romanian official in 1976, “Countries have areas of national interest. . . . One cannot change geography . . . the USSR cannot help but have an interest in you” (p.292). It is precisely this sort of “geographic” argument that was used by the Czechoslovak president Edvard Beneš, who had to defend himself in Washington in late 1943 against accusations of being pro-Soviet. By the 1970s, the view that “the map trumps everything” had been adopted by State Department officials.

This sort of prudent pragmatism was practiced in Washington even by those who were later given laurels as alleged liberators of Eastern Europe from communism (Ronald Reagan) or who falsely claimed them for themselves (George H. W. Bush, Helmut Kohl, and Margaret Thatcher). When Reagan talked about the “crusade for freedom,” when he sent Marxism-Leninism to the “ash heap of history,” and when he invited Mikhail Gorbachev to “tear down this wall,” he presented his “ultimate vision,” not “immediate goals,” according to John Whitehead, deputy secretary of state (p.356). Borhi quotes another source who confirmed that Reagan had “absolutely no intention of detaching the states of Eastern Europe from the Soviet Union” (p.326). It is a curious paradox that, as Borhi notes, Reagan took the declaration of martial law in Poland in December 1981 “as a personal affront” (p.339). This is quite possible. But what is still missing from the historical record is an explanation of why the Reagan team did nothing with the detailed, accurate, and actionable intelligence it had obtained from Colonel Ryszard Kukliński regarding the imminent assault on Solidarity—intelligence it had possessed since the colonel’s arrival in the U.S. thirty-one days before the imposition of martial law on December 13, 1981? The chasm between the Reagan administration’s sense of affront and their twiddling their thumbs at a time when Solidarity activists could have been warned was symptomatic of Washington’s ambivalent attitude toward Eastern Europe during the Cold War.

As Borhi notes, the super-pragmatic George H. W. Bush went further than his predecessor and repeatedly praised Kádár (formerly known as the Butcher of Budapest) for Hungary’s “human rights record” (p.398). Wojciech Jaruzelski, the man who had worked in the service of the Soviet occupation of Poland his whole life and had imposed the martial law that had so offended Reagan, could hardly have imagined that he would one day receive a personal letter from president Bush praising him for “advancing the cause of democracy in Poland” (p.398). One understands the requirements of diplomatic comity, but this probably seems surreal to many Poles who lived under the general’s regime.

The book begins in 1942, when Miklós Horthy's Hungary secretly approached the Allies to explore the possibility of withdrawing Hungarian troops from the front, improving the conditions of Jews, and discussing terms of surrender. U.S. Intelligence, which was already devising methods to separate the satellites from the Third Reich, was interested. The OSS sensed that Hungary would accept "unconditional surrender" in return for being treated as "a liberated country, like Austria, and not to be saddled with a government unsupported by popular will" (p.41). In the spring of 1944, the allies were focused on the impending invasion of occupied France. In March, the United States launched Operation Sparrow, headed by Colonel Florimond Duke, who came to Hungary to discuss armistice terms. Only three days later, Hitler invaded Hungary, one of the few places in Europe where close to one million Jews had been relatively safe, beyond the reach of the Nazis.

Borhi states that, after the war, Duke speculated that, possibly, "his mission had been designed to provoke the Germans' invasion of Hungary," thus removing from the battlefields in France some of the Wehrmacht divisions Hitler had to deploy to occupy Hungary. Borhi makes clear that there is no direct evidence to support this theory but, he notes, "such a response [by Hitler] had to have been foreseeable" (p.45). The occupation of Hungary was followed by the near-annihilation of the Jewish community, cost the lives of countless Hungarian civilians, and brought about the destruction of Budapest. Borhi concludes that Hungarian politicians were tragically unrealistic if they thought they could simultaneously satisfy the demands of the Allies and avoid Hitler's brutal reaction to their clandestine contacts with the enemy.

The rest of Borhi's story is better known but no less tragic. The book covers the imposition of a communist dictatorship in postwar Hungary and follows the more than four decades of U.S. policy toward Hungary under its Communist rulers and Eastern Europe in general. As Joseph Stalin continued to build his empire, America was initially passive and confused. This evolved into an "explosive and dynamic' policy of liberation," which was followed by the policy of "gradual transformation" (p.110). Eventually there came acceptance, even appreciation that the Soviet presence in Eastern Europe contributed to stability and predictability on the international scene. In the fall of 1989, as multitudes celebrated the fall of Communism, undersecretary of state Lawrence Eagleburger confessed his nostalgia for the "remarkably stable and predictable atmosphere of the Cold War" (p.397). Members of Thatcher's cabinet shared this view and said so at the time.

I found very few factual misstatements in this book, which is impressive if only because it is more than 500 pages long. Borhi says that Czechoslovakia received back the gold that had been seized after the war by the United States in the “mid-seventies” (p.64), but this in fact took place in 1982. Vladimir Kazan-Komarek was most definitely not an agent of U.S. Intelligence. He was recruited by and carried out missions for the French Deuxième Bureau. He could not have been “sent back from the United States [to Czechoslovakia] in 1948 to organize an anticommunist resistance network” (p.103), since his first trip to the U.S. took place in 1953. William E. Griffith was not “president of Radio Free Europe” (p.225). Rather, he was its senior political advisor. When writing about the spying that the Hungarian Communist intelligence services ran in Germany in the 1970s and 1980s, Borhi states that U.S. authorities learned of its existence from István Belovai, the former Hungarian military attaché in London (p.361). This is quite likely, but I doubt that Belovai’s cooperation with the U.S. was then revealed to the Communists by Aldrich Ames, as Borhi claims, because Ames started his treasonous contacts with the KGB in April 1985, while Belovai was arrested in 1984.

Although László Borhi’s new book is scholarly in every respect, it reads like a fine novel, and I enjoyed it immensely. His detailed study of U.S.-Hungarian relations will be informative even for specialists, while his treatment of Washington’s attitude toward Eastern Europe overturns the self-serving and misleading record established post factum by several Washington policy-makers.

Igor Lukes
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A magyar sajtó és újságírás története a kezdetektől a rendszerváltásig [The history of the Hungarian press and journalism from the early years to the political transition]. By Géza Buzinkay. Budapest: Wolters Kluwer, 2016. 548 pp.

Over the course of the past two decades, several attempts have been made to renew the study of the history of the media. An increasing number of monographs with a strong focus on methodological questions have been published, and they have sparked discussions and led to a restructuring and novel rethinking of our existing knowledge. Media historians have started using models borrowed from cultural studies, political science, and media studies/communication sciences. For example, the 2015 conference of the Communication History Section of the European Communication Research and Educational Association in Venice concentrated on this interdisciplinary challenge. This tendency resulted in the increasingly prominent discussion of new and exciting topics, such as historical audience research (Wagner et al, “Historische Rezipient innenforschung,” 2017).

The new book by Géza Buzinkay is linked to these efforts aimed at the reform of media history, while at the same time it is also a traditional, so-called first-generation work on media history. With regard to the latter aspect, the book discusses the history of journalism and the press chronologically, presenting the main editorial offices and media outlets and offering glimpses of the great journalists of the given period. The periodization is essentially traditional, with two exceptions: the period between 1918 and 1921 is discussed as a separate era (pp.319–30), and the decades between 1945 and 1989 are treated as one single period (pp.391–447). Neither solution is fully warranted. First, from the perspective of the history of journalism and the media, the disparity is too large between the 1918 democratic regime and the short-lived Hungarian Soviet Republic of 1919, or even between the 1945–47 period and the Stalinist dictatorship. Furthermore, in the latter case, the periodization is based on the efforts of two actors, the Communist Party and the Soviet Union (“pre-Stalinization”), while the other players (other parties, journalists, publishers, readers) are simply ignored. Second, this solution disregards continuities, for example, the fact that 1945 cannot be considered a “year zero” from the perspective of media history.

Buzinkay’s work belongs to the newer strands of media historiography in the sense that the most important aspect of the narrative is the history of the journalistic profession in Hungary. This is basically a “modernized” history of journalism, in the sense that the author examines the “evolution” of the profession

in a broader context: the book is an example of the application of journalism's sociology model (McNair, *The Sociology of Journalism*, 1998), although Buzinkay does not state this. Yet this is precisely what he practices by recurrently covering the economic, legal, political, cultural, and social circumstances which influenced the work of journalists. And although Géza Buzinkay does not focus on readers (reading newspapers), they nonetheless play a major role in the narrative, as the popularity and circulation of certain types of papers are frequently analyzed.

The perspective chosen by the author has a great advantage and one drawback. The advantage is that the book's clearly-stated central issue (the history of journalism) narrows down the possible topics in a justifiable way and along straightforward lines. For example, the non-Hungarian press is only important if it influenced journalism, the journalistic profession, and the development of the journalism sector in Hungary. Thus, some German-language outlets of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are mentioned (*Pester Lloyd* is presented in detail, for instance), but minority journals are ignored, and in the chapters on the twentieth century, there is practically no mention of German-language papers. One might nonetheless come to believe that Buzinkay's narrative is ethnocentric, since he writes about the minority Hungarian press in the neighboring countries in two subchapters without actually discussing the organs of this press from the main perspective of his inquiry. Readers are left wondering how the Hungarian press in Romania, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, or the Soviet Union is linked to the major trends of journalism in Hungary.

With regard to the drawback of Buzinkay's choice, one shortcoming stands out. It is hard to justify the fact that the book includes practically no mention of the radio or television, or, to be more precise, if the book's narrative revolves around the history of journalism, radio and television should have been included in the chapters on the years following 1945, since they shaped journalism, too. (The absence of any discussion of radio, the cinema, and newsreels in the Horthy era is perhaps justified, since the intermedial conditions that could be observed in Great Britain by the 1930s had not yet emerged in Hungary.) Radio and television shaped journalism the same way as it did the visual elements of newspapers, from layout to illustrations, and these elements are mentioned in the presentation of the individual papers. However, even here, visual elements are not given sufficient emphasis: in the chapter "The periphery of politics: Humor Magazines and Caricatures," the discussion is detailed (pp.297–300), but more of the descriptions of the picture weeklies and magazines from the turn of the century or the Horthy era is devoted to the writings than to the pictures (pp.300–04, 374–77).

Of course, one cannot expect a book presenting the complete history of the Hungarian press and journalism to cover all aspects of this history with equal thoroughness. And as there is only one author, it would be even less fair to expect this. This is particularly true in the case of this book, since the analysis of pictures requires a different methodology than that of texts, and these kinds of differences in analyses make it difficult to write a uniform history of the media: one only has to consider the fact that historians of film and historians of the press regard different issues as relevant, so it is extremely difficult to develop a uniform methodology. I mentioned the lack of discussion of the visual elements of newspapers not only because only one product is discussed (so more attention to the topic would have been easily justifiable), but also because Buzinkay has published scholarship on the history of visual communication (Buzinkay, *Borsszem Jankó és társai: Magyar élclapok és karikatúrák a XIX. század második felében* [Borsszem Jankó et al.: Hungarian humor magazines and caricatures in the second half of the nineteenth century], 1983; Buzinkay, ed., *Mokány Bercezi és Spitzig Itzig, Göre Gábor mög a többiek... A magyar társadalom figurái az élclapokban 1860 és 1918 között* [Berczi Mokány and Itzig Spitzig, Gábor Göre and the others... Figures from Hungarian society in humor magazines between 1860 and 1918], 1988).

Géza Buzinkay's work is basically a handbook which summarizes the research results of others, adding conclusions from Buzinkay's studies. This raises the question of whether a single author is able to provide a nuanced overview of such a large and complex topic. In the case this book, the answer is a resounding yes. One reason for the success of the volume is Buzinkay's work as a teacher (he is a professor of journalism and the history of the press at the Eszterházy Károly University of Eger) and his many "preliminary studies" (Kókay and Buzinkay, *A magyar sajtó története I: A kezdetektől a fordulat évéig* [The history of the Hungarian press I: From the early years to the year of the transition], 2005; Buzinkay, *Magyar hírlaptörténet 1848–1918* [History of Hungarian newspapers 1848–1918], 2008; Buzinkay, *Hírharang, vezércikk, szenzációs riport* [Newsmonger, editorial, sensational report], 2008; *Magyar sajtótörténeti antológia 1780–1956* [Anthology of the history of the press in Hungary 1780–1956], 2009). This does not mean that scholars of a specific period might not find an error or a debatable contention in the book, but this work will provide new information and insights for all readers, both experts on the subject and the wider public.

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Gendered Wars, Gendered Memories: Feminist Conversations on War, Genocide and Political Violence. Edited by Ayşe Gül Altınay and Andrea Pető. London–New York: Routledge, 2016. 300 pp.

A methodologically versatile volume with a broad variety of case studies encompassing a wide array of materials and geopolitical locations, *Gendered Wars, Gendered Memories: Feminist Conversations on War, Genocide and Political Violence* emerges as a concise, focused book. The focus falls on the thus far only sporadically explored interconnections between memory studies and military and war studies, which the volume investigates through a feminist analytical lens. In doing so, it touches on delicate subjects, such as militarized sexual violence, repressed and sanctioned memorializations of gendered wartime experiences, and the instrumentalization of victim-narratives for present-day political purposes. A laudable feature of the book is that most of the papers go beyond the methodological preparedness and courage necessary for any serious discussion of such difficult questions and show a resolute commitment to creating an increasingly complex and inclusive discursive arena. This inclusivity and the readiness to challenge disciplinary, methodological, and political confines marks the agenda of the editors, Ayşe Gül Altınay and Andrea Pető.

The volume aims to offer cutting-edge feminist insights into the overlapping—and thus for mainstream analyses often obscure or downright invisible—areas of gender, memory, and war research, and it does so with the adoption of editorial solutions which also make it accessible to the wider academic audiences. One such solution is the inclusion of expert commentaries at the beginning of each of the four main sections of the book. Each of these sections—*Sexual violence: silence, narration, resistance; Gendering memories of war, soldiering and resistance; Fictionalizing and visualizing gendered memories; Feminist reimaginings*—is comprised of case study-oriented papers, most of which, while digging deep into their specific topic, also show an awareness of and offer reflection on the state of research in their respective field or subfield. The expert commentaries help the reader orient him or herself among the various layers, e.g. past and present research agendas, debates, commonly held views, and radical alternatives from many ends of the spectrum, thereby furthering a more nuanced understanding of the disciplinary and political conditions and circumstances with which the papers deal. Furthermore, the expert commentaries also bring to the fore the common aspects of the papers within each section, so the transversal interconnections

among texts discussing geographically and temporally distant events and their effects become more apparent.

For instance, the common denominator of the section on militarized sexual violence (Part I) is resistance to the temptation to use ready-made dichotomies, such as dichotomies, which place victims into the categories of honorable or dishonorable or their stories into the told or the untold. The case studies engage with sexual violence against Jewish women during World War II, the atrocities against women in Japanese-occupied Hong Kong, and narratives of torture in incarceration during the Greek (1967–74) and the Turkish (1980–83) military juntas. However, the essays all manifest an aspiration to reach beyond dichotomies in order to reveal the factors that influenced sexual violence in these instances and address the questions of who broached the topic, with what intentions, and to what effect. The recurring theme of Part II, which focuses on how women's militarized subjectivities were constructed in a range of settings, such as the Warsaw Uprising, Mussolini's Italy, and the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, is an attempt to address a perceived deficiency in the existing scholarship. According to these papers, most conceptions of women's military service fail to take into consideration a great variety of factors which may have affected an individual's decision to join or abandon the armed forces.

The third part of the book, which deals with fictional and visual accounts of gendered wartime and conflict-zone experiences (accounts found, for instance, in memoirs on the Spanish Civil War, photographs of female perpetrators convicted by the people's tribunals in post-World War II Hungary, and art installations in the service of conflict reconstruction in Aceh, Indonesia), takes as its leading thread reflections on the meanings of absence, lack, and silence in the sources. Papers in the final part of the book, while engaging in longitudinal studies of intergenerational and intercultural accounts of violent experiences, also address the limits of such explorations. Dealing with deeply traumatized communities (Armenian women survivors of the genocide and women peace activists in Northern Ireland, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Palestine, respectively), the two closing papers consider the sometimes unavoidable failure to make meaning and the knowledge—or perhaps wisdom—which may arise as a result.

As this brief overview of the four sections suggests, the volume is characterized by a relentless complexification of the issues at hand and a constant alertness of the researcher's own positioning. This is mainly because, as noted in the book's editorial "Introduction," two classic feminist conceptual grids are at the forefront of the book's methodological choices. Intersectionality

theory defines the way in which the authors of the volume aim to approach their subjects; and awareness of the situatedness of knowledge production practices (in other words, a reflection on one's own positionality) marks how the researchers approach themselves while approaching their subjects. Thinking intersectionally incites constant attention to detail, even more so if it shakes up the existing, entrenched views on a subject. On the other hand, awareness of the situatedness of knowledge production and its effects entails a continuous dialogue with oneself, with one's material, and with one's fellow researchers. The editors of this volume used both of these techniques, resulting in a book which—though it consists of semi-autonomous units—reads as an engaging, often subversive, and almost always thought-provoking exchange among expert partners. The subtitle of the book, *Feminist Conversations*, could not be more fitting.

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Jeanssozialismus: Konsum und Mode im staatssozialistischen Ungarn
By Fruzsina Müller. Göttingen: Wallstein, 2017. 277 pp.

Fruzsina Müller's *Jeanssozialismus: Konsum und Mode im staatssozialistischen Ungarn* is the first cultural historical monograph on the history of consumption in socialist Hungary which enquires into the politically stabilizing role of fashion. Based on the author's dissertation submitted at the University of Leipzig and winner of the award for junior researchers of the Southeast Europe Association (SOG) in 2017, the book draws not only on archival sources of state and factory records but also on oral history interviews with central actors within the state bureaucracy and the producing entities, as well as on published sources in professional magazines and to a lesser extent on literary sources. It is somewhat surprising that a monograph on this subject was only published nearly thirty years after the political changes, especially since the case of Hungary is in many ways unusual within the socialist bloc. Taking both legal and informal forms of purchase into consideration, Müller characterizes Hungary as a "consumer paradise" (p.9), and the country indeed offered a more colorful, diverse and Western world of consumption to its citizens than any other country in the Soviet sphere.

Those acquainted with the contemporary self-description and identity-shaping categories of "Goulash Communism" and "Fridge Socialism" in Hungary might think that Müller is trying to coin a comparable third category with the introduction of the term "Jeans Socialism" into academic discourse. However, she actually emphasizes that "Jeans Socialism" is not meant as an analytical category, but should merely be understood as a play on words. Nonetheless, she underlines the importance of jeans as both a clothing and a fashion item which was practically as central in the rise of consumerism as food and household durables (p.12). This particular commodity is surely a good choice as a marker for a consumer society which by the beginning of the 1970s was experiencing a relatively stable provision of everyday goods, while prestigious fashion items, pieces of furniture, and the purchase or construction of properties were becoming much more central to the lives of Hungarian citizens. The importance of jeans throughout all strata of society, but especially among members of the younger generations, and the changing nature of jeans due to fashion trends also serve as an excellent indicator of how the regime and the population were engaged in negotiations. At the same time, as Müller emphasizes, the shift towards a progressive consumption policy after the uprising

of 1956 was calculated in order to secure the political power of the Hungarian Socialist Worker's Party (*Herrschaftssicherung*) (p.20).

The author rightly points to the growing economic difficulties in the 1970s, especially in the context of two global oil crises in 1973 and 1979. Nonetheless it is noteworthy that individual consumption was continuously on the rise and that the economic crisis started to affect Hungarians in a more tangible way only towards the end of the decade. Therefore, Müller asserts, the 1970s witnessed a loss of faith in the communist utopia, and the party strove to compensate for this with new techniques of domination (*Herrschaftstechniken*), including a further stress on consumption (p.17).

However, this statement might be a simplification of what was in fact a more intricate picture. We could equally raise the question as to whether the shift in policies to consumption played a role in the loss of the vision of a communist utopia, while nonetheless taking into consideration the fact that consumption was an integral part of how the socialist party imagined a communist utopia. Müller would have done well to have examined the relationship between the projected utopia and actual policymaking in a more complex manner and striven for a more nuanced understanding of the role of consumption in the legitimation of the party state.

Müller's book is divided into two major parts: the first deals with the official discourse on consumption and fashion and the second focuses on the agents and their space for manoeuvre. Müller first examines the perceptions of the Hungarian Socialist Worker's Party of consumption and fashion, including in relation to growing Western influences. In the subsequent chapter, she analyzes the "lifestyle" debates of the 1960s as pursued in the official media about the degree to which consumption was encouraging petty-bourgeois behavior in opposition to collectivist values. Müller highlights these debates as self-legitimizing strategies of the party state which in her assessment had only a marginal impact on the population (p.74). Chapter three in turn is devoted to the specific consumer group of teenagers. The state attached importance to gaining the support of the younger generations by responding to their articulated needs, which they used to distance themselves from the generation of their parents.

In chapter four, blue jeans are discussed in depth as a key part of these articulated needs. At first a controversial and marginalized clothing item in Hungary, jeans finally gained acceptance during the 1970s. According to Müller's analysis, the party state managed to neutralize the symbolic but also political and ideological value of blue jeans by depoliticizing them (p.116). Thanks to this strategy, jeans

could finally become a ubiquitous fashion item in a socialist society. In the final chapter of the first part of the book, Müller deals with various consumption practices, such as queuing, shopping tourism, black market activities, and “virtual shopping,” such as visiting consumer fairs and browsing catalogues and magazines from the West. She points to the legitimizing role of informal shopping practices as they enriched the consumer world in a command economy (p.133).

The second part of the monograph describes the agents within the state and the fashion industry. Whereas chapter one of this part introduces the major economic reforms of 1968 as having a positive effect on the fashion industry, chapter two concentrates on state and later cooperative-based retail spaces, like the *Skála* department store, and private initiatives, such as fashion boutiques, which began to spread mainly in the 1980s. As Müller shows, the mix of retail outlets was, especially from the mid-1970s, beneficial for the development of a more competitive and up-to-date fashion industry. Focusing more specifically on the development of a jeans industry, the subsequent chapter addresses the conditions of socialist jeans production while aiming to assert the role of political will. As blue jeans became a notable economic factor, many different production sites started to be inspired by them, and they likewise applied modern (and Western) means of marketing and advertisement; the socialist brand *Trapper* became a landmark of domestic jeans production.

In chapters four and five Müller explores the concrete examples of cooperation with Western brands like Levi's and the sport shoe producer Adidas, and in this context she also discusses the conditions for the establishment of brands in the 1970s. Interestingly, by then, Hungary was already committed to legal protection of consumer brands. Although socialist brands were very successful in establishing themselves on the domestic and broader socialist market, as Müller points out, they never attained the same popularity as their Western counterparts; Levi's jeans and Adidas sport shoes were considered state of the art both during and after socialism. Nonetheless, in the context of nostalgic tendencies, certain socialist brands grew in popularity again after 2000.

In her conclusion, Müller highlights the often contradictory standpoints of the Hungarian party state, which at the same time promoted and rejected consumption, and with it also fashion, something that became obvious in the public debates of the 1960s and 1970s. Likewise, Müller considers the Hungarian case revealing as part of an Eastern European history of consumption, and she also makes the point that Hungary was relatively successful at providing for its population (p.247). Widespread and identity-shaping practices such as shopping

tourism, smuggling, and black-market activities were as central for Hungary as they were for the other socialist countries.

At the same time, it is noteworthy that Hungary was the only socialist country producing authentic jeans fabric. In this context, Müller shows how fashion was promoted as beneficial to the economic performance of the country after the introduction of reforms in 1968 with a stress on teenagers as an important group of emerging consumers. Throughout the book, Müller argues for the cultural and communicative importance of blue jeans in a socialist society. However, for a more precise assessment of the socialist characteristics, she would have needed to offer a more detailed contextualization of the Western youth movements.

Müller states in her conclusion that the distribution of Western fashion items and international trends led to the downfall of the socialist regime after having maintained that the consumption policy of the party state helped the regime secure its hold on power (p.241). This argumentation is not entirely convincing, as she does not provide any deeper explanation as to how Western products undermined the legitimacy of socialist rule. Furthermore, she is very right when pointing to growing social inequalities, especially in the 1980s, which meant increasingly vast differences in the participation of different strata of the population in the world of consumerism (p.247). However, her argumentation should have examined how growing social inequality affected individual perceptions of opportunities for consumption and what this implied for the stability of a socialist society. Similarly, the book would have benefited had Müller drawn on more recent English publications on socialist consumption, e.g. the pioneering volume *Communism Unwrapped*, edited by Paulina Bren and Mary Neuberger.

Although Müller remains somewhat vague about broader questions concerning socialist consumer culture, through the example of blue jeans she provides an insightful and highly readable account of the mechanisms of how fashion was produced, communicated, used, and interpreted during socialism. She manages to shed new light on the question of how command economies adapted to meet the various demands of their citizenry. The Hungarian example is one which to a certain degree challenges the famous characterization of the Soviet-dominated party states as “dictatorships over needs,” to borrow the term from the title of the 1981 book by Ferenc Fehér, Ágnes Heller, and György Márkus. In sum, Müller’s book is a must-read for all those who wish to understand better the cultural and political relevance of consumption in socialist countries.

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