



## BOOK REVIEWS

Történetírás és történetírók az Árpád-kori Magyarországon (XI–XIII. század közepe) [The writing and writers of history in Árpád-era Hungary, from the eleventh century to the middle of the thirteenth century]. By László Veszprémy. Budapest: Line Design, 2019. 464 pp.

The centuries following the foundation of the Christian kingdom of Hungary by Saint Stephen did not leave later generations with an unmanageable plethora of written works. However, the diversity of the genres and the philological and historical riddles which lie hidden in these works arguably provide ample compensation for the curious reader. There are numerous textual interrelationships among the *Gesta Hungarorum* by the anonymous notary of King Béla known as Anonymus, the *Gesta Hunnorum et Hungarorum* by Simon of Kéza and the fourteenth-century *Illuminated Chronicle* consisting of various earlier texts, not to mention the hagiographical material on the canonized rulers. For the historian, the relationships among these early historical texts and the times at which they were composed (their relative and absolute chronology) are clearly a matter of interest, since the judgment of these links affects the credibility of the historical information preserved in them. In an attempt to establish the relative chronology, philological analysis is the primary tool, while in our efforts to determine the precise times at which the texts were composed, literary and legal history may offer the most reliable guides. László Veszprémy has very clearly made circumspect use of these methods in his essays, thus it is hardly surprising that many of his colleagues, myself included, have been eagerly waiting for his dissertation, which he defended in 2009 for the title of Doctor of Sciences, to appear in the form of a book in which the articles he has written on the subject since are also included.

Veszprémy aims to shed light on “the most critical questions of medieval Hungarian chronicle research.” However, the focus of his discussion is the *Gesta Hungarorum* by the anonymous notary of King Béla III and the early chapters of the fourteenth-century *Illuminated Chronicle*, which narrates events from the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries. Later developments in the Hungarian chronicle tradition after the middle of the thirteenth century, such as the aforementioned *Gesta* by Simon of Kéza, fall beyond the scope of his analysis, though the author very clearly would have a great deal to say on the subject.

The first section of the volume offers ample testimony to one of the greatest virtues of Veszprémy's method. It provides an overview of the beginnings of and later developments in Hungarian historical literature against the backdrop of medieval European historiography. The rich tradition of history writing in Europe was available only to a limited extent to the first Hungarian readers, as indeed the analysis of the Pannonhalma library catalog demonstrates. However, demand for and interest in historical works date back to the eleventh century, even if the desire to revive the heroic pagan past (or rather, to construct it) was only fulfilled by the work of Anonymus around 1200. One could mention, as evidence of this early interest, the *Pozsonyi Évkönyv* ('Annals of Pozsony') and the annals of the Somogyvár Formulary, the latter of which Veszprémy discusses only briefly. Based on the layout of the pages of the codex of the *Pozsonyi Évkönyv*, Veszprémy came to the possible but not entirely compelling conclusion that the earlier material of the annals was edited and clarified in 1114, which unquestionably would fit into our understanding of the impetus given to writing practices in Hungary and the surge in interest in history under the reign of King Coloman the Learned.

It is common knowledge that the earliest foreign sources on which Hungarian historiography drew were the *Annals of Altaich* and Regino's *Chronicon*. We do not know, however, when the two narrative works came to the attention of Hungarian chroniclers. While news of the *Annals of Altaich* (which show a pro-German bias) may have reached Hungarian historiography already in the eleventh century (at least by 1108), during the long armed confrontation between the Holy Roman emperors and the Hungarian kings, the first Hungarian author to make use of Regino could hardly have been active before Cosmas of Prague (†1125), who was the first historian in the Central European region to have access to the *Chronicon*.

These questions lead us to one of the most important assertions made in the book. The Hungarian chronicles contain a great deal of unquestionably authentic information concerning the eleventh century, though critical analyses of style have suggested time and time again that the narrative was composed or written down in the twelfth century, particularly in the case of the *Gesta regis Ladislai*, which offers an almost epic account of the struggles for the throne between King Solomon and his cousins, the dukes Géza and Ladislaus (the future Saint Ladislaus I). This is also the section which bears the most affinities with the court romances of Western Europe. Veszprémy seeks to resolve this riddle with the suggestion that in the eleventh century only *historical notes* were

taken, the trace of which may have been preserved in the entries of the *Annals of Pozsony*. As the brief annalistic entries could hardly have grown into the vibrant narratives found in the chronicles, Veszprémy argues that these *historical notes* may have been more ambitious writings which covered longer periods of history, while they did not aspire to offer a unified account of Hungarian history. This hypothesis unquestionably offers an explanation for one of the fundamental questions of early Hungarian history writing, though it is perhaps made slightly less persuasive by the fact that Veszprémy, who has a thorough knowledge of the larger European context, makes no mention of any generic parallels which might explain why the individual historical notes were even created or what the intentions of the authors may have been.

After his discussion of the admittedly complex beginnings of Hungarian historical literature, Veszprémy turns his attention to the text of the fourteenth-century *Illuminated Chronicle*, which preserved many earlier works, including the abovementioned *Gesta Ladislai regis* and the *Gesta* by Simon of Kéza. The next few chapters examine the problems concerning the sections of the text which deal with the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Central to his discussion is the issue of authenticity, or in other words, the exact time at which the parts in question were composed. Veszprémy offers an informative analysis of the influence of Gregorian Reform on Hungarian literature. Saint Ladislaus embodies the vision of the ideal ruler at the time, who becomes king thanks to his Christian *idoneitas*, though quite against his will. Of particular interest are the chapters of the chronicle which, as we can conclude on the basis of a comparison with the *Gesta* of Anonymus, had undoubtedly been written before the anonymous notary was active (ca. 1200), i.e., the chapters concerning the Battle of Mogyoród and the Battle of Kerlés. Instead of using the vague expression *ancient gesta* (“ősgeszta”), which one often stumbles across in the modern historiography, Veszprémy consistently writes about a *pre-1200 chronicle redaction*. This conscientiousness about terminological precision constitutes an example worth following.

The next section focuses on Anonymus' *Gesta Hungarorum*, the study of which has certainly been one of the motivating forces for the rise of medieval studies in Hungary over the course of the past 250 years. Veszprémy's interest was captured by the rhetorical models of the work, which was composed in the decades following the death of King Béla III, and other elements which offer indications as to when it was written. Earlier, Veszprémy identified several citations which are from a Latin novel about the fall of Troy entitled *Excidium Troiae*. The work was not extremely popular, but it was definitely used in schools.

Now, Veszprémy has managed to determine that the version used by the anonymous notary resembled the text preserved in the Brussels manuscript of Guido Pisanus. This constitutes one more clue in the relatively long list on the basis of which Veszprémy concludes that Anonymus probably studied in Italy (though he does not rule out the possibility that he stayed in France, a notion which is often found in the secondary literature). Elements which indicate the period of the writing include the mention of the Black Sea, formerly known in the West only as Pontus, which appears in Anonymus as Nigrum Mare. As the expression was first used in western sources only in 1265, the occurrence of the term here used to be considered as one of the few reasons for a later dating of the relevant chapter of the *Gesta* (to the late thirteenth century). Veszprémy and Orsolya Csákváry, his coauthor, now point out that this name already appears in the Scandinavian saga literature in the first quarter of the thirteenth century, though the term may well have made its way to Hungary considerably earlier, during the golden era of ties between Scandinavia and Byzantium in the eleventh century. Veszprémy arrives, after a similarly exciting investigation, at the conclusion that the fate of the only surviving codex of the *Gesta Hungarorum* may be intertwined with the fate of the Turkish-language manuscript *Tarih-i Ungurus*, or History of the Hungarians, which has a considerable textual link to the Hungarian chronicle tradition.

The third major section of the book contains case studies which concern reports on Hungary found not in Hungarian sources but rather in sources from abroad, such as Adémar de Chabannes and the Bavarian traditions of Scheyern. Among these studies, only the one on the European sources of the Hungarian Hun tradition which is very clearly tied to the subject indicated in the title of the book. Veszprémy very clearly feels that the association of the Hungarians with the Huns and with Attila predates Anonymus. This association, however, could hardly have stretched back to the period before the Hungarian conquest of the Carpathian Basin and rather should be attributed to intellectuals familiar with the German Attila tradition, who traveled in great numbers to the Kingdom of Hungary in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

László Veszprémy's book thus offers an engaging intellectual adventure, and as far as the content is concerned, the reader will not be disappointed. The organization and editing of the book, however, at times leaves something to be desired. I myself was somewhat annoyed that Veszprémy discusses some of the more significant problems (such as the relationship between Anonymus' *Gesta* and the earliest textual layers of the *Illuminated Chronicle*) in isolation, following

the structure of the studies that had been published earlier as articles. The book is not always sufficiently didactic, a problem which is also related to the manner in which the boundaries between the various studies have not been adequately transcended. This will make the book more difficult to use as a handbook on early Hungarian historiography. True, that was not Veszprémy's goal, but given the source material in the book and the new findings which are presented, the specialist readership will undoubtedly hope to use this beautifully published book in this capacity.

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Earthly Delights, Economies and Cultures of Food in Ottoman and Danubian Europe, c. 1500–1900. Edited by Angela Jianu and Violeta Barbu. Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2018. 534 pp.

The absence of modern writing on Eastern European food history is sometimes rather conspicuous. It was therefore a pleasant surprise to find that Brill has recently published a volume titled *Earthly Delights, Economies and Cultures of Food in Ottoman and Danubian Europe, c. 1500–1900*, which is part of its Balkan Studies Library series. The volume, edited by Angela Jianu and Violeta Barbu, contains 17 studies by various authors spanning 534 pages and comes with color illustrations and a general index at the end. The collection starts with the editors' introduction, which is well written and informative. There are also brief biographies of the participating authors, a short historical chronology of the Balkans starting from 1456, and notes on translation and transliteration.

The project was divided into five thematic parts, each containing two to five studies. The first part focuses on the Ottoman world, the second deals with ingredients and kitchens, the third shifts its attention to trade and food supply, the fourth discusses local cookbooks, and the last part examines the issue of representation, in other words how Balkan food, cooking, and (in)hospitality were perceived by foreign observers.

The essays in the collection generally speaking fall into two categories. Some authors strove to present the reader with an overview of a broadly outlined topic, like Moldavian or Wallachian cuisine in the early modern era, while others delved deep into the details of one particular theme, e. g. when and how olive oil replaced butter as the primary source of fat in Turkey. In the following paragraphs, I briefly comment on each study and then share a few general remarks.

After the excellent introduction by the editors, the first study written by Suraiya Faroqhi from Istanbul Bilgi University deals with the gradual introduction of olive oil into Turkish cuisine. It presents an interesting perspective, demonstrating that the dominance of olives was not as absolute as one would have expected in this area based on what we know about ancient Roman and, later, Italian cuisine. It also introduces the topic of cultural resistance, when Faroqhi explains that the relative reluctance of Turks to use olive oil as a staple of Mediterranean cuisine might have been caused by its popularity among Greeks.

The next study, by Hedda Reindl-Kiel, provides a well-written overview of the sources available on Early Modern Eastern cuisine, including a seventeenth-

century Persian cookbook, shopping bills, and lists of food distribution from the sultan's court. This last item is particularly illuminating, and Reindl-Kiel demonstrates how food distributed in the upper echelons of Ottoman society surpassed simple nutritional functions and gained an important symbolic value. As reports written by contemporary European observers, such as the one by the Habsburg ambassador to the High Porte, Heōman Èernín of Chudenice (1576–1651), suggest, foreigners often misunderstood the distinctive role of food in Turkish society.

Özge Samancı's chapter on cuisine in nineteenth-century Istanbul lists a broad variety of foodstuffs utilized in early Turkish printed cookbooks, the oldest of which appeared in 1840. Margareta Aslan's work contains a discussion on the history of food in Transylvania with particular focus on Turkish influence. She points out some interesting comparative differences in food culture between Romanians, Turks, and Hungarians (e. g. the use of sweeteners in certain contexts or diverging preferences for various spices in the Balkan regions). The first part of the collection comes to a close with an essay by Olivia Senciuc dealing with the attractive theme of coffee and tea in eighteenth-century Moldavia and Wallachia. Perhaps Senciuc's most interesting conclusion is the realization that despite the constant Ottoman political, economic, and military influence, the wealthy boyar families began to consume coffee relatively late, only in the second half of the seventeenth century, which coincided with the adoption of caffeinated drinks by upper classes in the other regions of Central and Eastern Europe.

The second section of the book, titled "Ingredients, Kitchens and the Pleasures of the Table," opens with Kinga S. Tüdös's study of early modern festivities in Transylvania. For a readership particularly interested in Hungarian culture, this is perhaps the most relevant passage, as Tüdös brings into focus the Hungarian group of east Transylvanians, called Székelys. Tüdös's extensive use of inheritance inventories resembles similarly oriented research on the cultural history of the dining customs of the early modern noble classes, which became a subject of considerable interest in Bohemia in the 1990s and early 2000s.<sup>1</sup> The study draws heavily on the manuscript cookbook of Princess

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1 For example, South Bohemian nobility was discussed by Václav Bůžek and Josef Hrdlička, eds., *Dvory velmožů s erbem růže: všední a sváteční dny posledních Rožmberků a pánů z Hradce* [The courts of noblemen with rose in the coat of arms: mundane and festive days of the last members of Rosenbergs and lords of Hradec] (Praha: Mladá fronta, 1997); Václav Bůžek and Pavel Král, eds., *Slavnosti a zábavy na dvorech a v rezidenčních městech raného novověku* [Festivities and entertainment at courts and residences in early modern period] (České Budějovice: Historický ústav Jihočeské univerzity, 2000).

Anna Bornemisza (1630–1688), which prompts me to suggest that it might be beneficial to compare this source with a collection of three mid-seventeenth-century handwritten cookbooks attributed to the Czech nobility and preserved in the National Museum and Strahov Library in Prague. These Czech collections are nearly contemporary to Anna Bornemisza's cookbook and reflect a similar socioeconomic background.

The following study by Maria Magdalena Székely draws the readers' attention to another historical region, the principality of Moldavia. Székely does not rely exclusively on the scarce written historical records, but also introduces information gleaned from archeological, archaeobotanical, and archeozoological sources which provide an additional perspective. Székely's work offers a comparative analysis of early modern food culture in Moldavia, which will help other Central and Eastern European historians better contextualize their own research. Violeta Barbu, the author of the next study on early modern food culture in Wallachia, uses an equally broad approach, basically providing a textbook-like delineation usable by any historian searching for comparisons with findings in their own research. Like Székely, Barbu also makes creative use of the sources, for example *Rituale Romanum*.

From the conceptually broad studies, we move back towards microhistory at the beginning of the third part of the collection. It begins with a paper by Enikő Rűsz-Fogarasi describing food supply in the Romanian city of Cluj in the early modern period, in which Rűsz-Fogarasi builds on her previous interest in the history of hospitals in Transylvania. This text is valuable for its focus on a comparatively early period (1550–1650), but it also shows how challenging it is to work with relatively scarce written sources. Analogically, Mária Pakucs-Willcocks's study focuses on a single Transylvanian place as well, the city of Sibiu. Her paper therefore works very well in comparison with the previous chapter. Pakucs-Willcocks begins with an examination of import fees and other legal contexts for trade with the Ottomans and later delves into detail when discussing the individual types of food. I would highlight her attempt to shape often limited sources into series of data, systematically tracking certain commodities.

While the two previous studies dealt with trade more or less exclusively in Transylvania, Gheorghe Lazăr's paper shifts the focus to trade in eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century Wallachia. Lazăr divides his interest between what he calls "the big retail trade," which means the export of horses, cattle, and grain and "the small trade," referring to the import of luxury goods. Both

are equally valuable, but quite distinct from the perspective of writing about the history of food culture, as they offer testimony to differing socioeconomic realities.

The fourth section of the book, which is also the shortest, consists of two chapters examining historical Balkan cookbooks. First, Castilia Manea-Grgin describes two early modern handwritten collections of recipes: “Compendium on the Preparation of Day-to-Day Dishes,” owned originally by Miklós Zrínyi (1620–1664), and the slightly more recent “Book in which Dishes of Fish, Crayfish, Oysters, Snails, Vegetables, Herbs, and Other Dishes for Fast and Non-fast Days are Written, In their Due order.” The origin of this second manuscript is uncertain, but it is likely a seventeenth-century source possibly linked to Constantin Cantacuzino, who served between 1675–1677 as the Great Steward to the Wallachian princes. It is worth noting, however, that the analysis avoids the food-related parts of both collections, focusing instead on related topics, such as the management of orchards, gardening, and viticulture. Nevertheless, the study is still quite useful for food historians, because these topics are related to the history of nutrition, and Manea-Grgin also provides a thorough examination of the foreign influences she was able to detect, particularly in the Romanian collection.

In the following article, Stefan Detchev writes about the oldest printed cookbooks in Bulgaria, which were published in the 1870s. As this is a very modern topic, it is well outside my area of expertise, but I imagine that a comparative study with other cookbooks of the period, for example, might yield interesting findings related to the birth of modern femininity in the Central and Eastern European context.

The introductory study of the last section was written by Andrew Dalby, the prolific British historian of food, who examines several travelogues written by foreigners about their stays in late eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century Romania. Although mostly focused on modern history, this chapter does occasionally delve into much older, seventeenth-century reports by William Lithgow, John Smith (of Pocahontas fame), Robert Bargrave, and Edmund Chishull. Dalby’s text is an excellent read and very entertaining, though it does present (understandably) an exclusively outsider’s perspective of the Balkans, as Dalby does not read local sources.

Fortunately, Angela Jianu, the author of the following chapter, addresses this issue in her analysis of travelogues from the mid-nineteenth century. Unlike Dalby, Jianu provides feedback on information published by the travelers mentioned

in her paper. She also pays careful attention to concepts like “commensality” and “otherness” in the Balkans, which she describes as a region “in-between” the East and the West. The penultimate study by Anna Matthaïou draws on a plethora of information concerning modern food culture in the Balkans, while also commenting on its fractured nature. This study chronologically extends well into the twentieth century and provides interesting insights into the construction of Hellenized “national” cuisine and the homogeneity versus the diversity of local traditions.

Finally, Andrei Oișteanu draws the readers’ attention to the Jewish tavernkeepers in Romania with an emphasis on prejudice and stereotypes associated with the life of this minority in nineteenth-century Eastern Europe. His chapter also brings up broader contexts and is worth reading for those interested in Judaic history from the seventeenth century to the twentieth.

Overall, *Earthly Delights* presents an intriguing and critically important collection of studies. The volume is well organized, and the shortcomings to which a reviewer might draw attention are only minor. There are a few typographical errors, but not more than one would expect in such large project. I particularly appreciate the fact that most of the studies were written by authors with clear links to the Balkans and not by foreigners theorizing about the region. This is necessary due to the difficult linguistic landscape of the region, as shown for example by the painstakingly documented trilingual toponyms in passages related to Transylvania.

For foreigners like me, the study highlights certain issues inherent to Balkan historiography. For example, I find it interesting to observe the propensity of Romanian historiography towards the French theoretical tradition of the *Annales* school. In Czech historiography, this source of inspiration is filled mostly by German scholars and, recently, the growing importance of English historical writing.

Another general observation I would make concerns the relative lack of written sources, which became more abundant only after the mid-seventeenth century. It can be partially supplemented by archeological and archaeobotanical findings, but I suspect that this form of research requires levels of funding which are not yet readily available in Eastern Europe.

Perhaps the most striking feature is visible particularly in the final chapters, where readers are continually reminded of the Protean nature of the Balkans as a simultaneously backward, static place where time stands still (and good inns are hard to come by), while it was also a place of tumultuous change in a “melting

pot” of cultures, nationalities, religions, languages, and political interests. The editors appropriately reflect on this phenomenon in the introduction when they claim that globalization and multiculturalism are not modern inventions, as regions like Transylvania were faced with similar challenges centuries before these terms became fashionable, contentious issues for present culture wars. Overall, *Earthly Delights* is an essential read for any historian of food, especially a historian focusing on the seventeenth century and later periods.

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Estates and Constitution: The Parliament in Eighteenth-Century Hungary. By István M. Szigjártó. Translated by David Robert Evans. New York–Oxford: Berghahn, 2020. 350 pp.

Readers interested in the history of Austria, the Habsburg Monarchy, and its successor states may have become accustomed to the high academic quality of the series *Austrian and Habsburg Studies* (edited by Howard Louthan and published by Berghahn Books in association with the Center for Austrian Studies, University of Minnesota), which covers a wide range of themes in fields from ethnic conflict and nationalism to *fin-de-siècle* culture and women's history, to mention only a few of the subjects which have been covered since 1996, the year in which the first book in the series was published. István M. Szigjártó's new book (the 30th title in the series) fits perfectly in this trend both because of its subject and by virtue of its complexity and rigorousness. Szigjártó's outstanding monograph offers an admirable example of a work of scholarship on complex problems in the somewhat "exotic" history of early modern East Central Europe which both conforms to the local (in this case, the Hungarian) historiographical tradition and meets the standards of the Anglophone academic world. In the case of the latter, credit is also due to the excellent work of the translator, David Robert Evans.

Szigjártó's endeavor is unique in the sense that he attempts to bring close to non-Hungarian readers the history of the Hungarian Diet, a topic which has been "grievously neglected in international scholarship," to use the words of Robert John Weston Evans from the back cover of the book. This is not to say, however, that the subject has been entirely ignored in recent non-Hungarian historiography. One could mention, perhaps first and foremost, the monograph by Jean Bérenger and Károly Kecskeméti, *Parlement et vie Parlementaire en Hongrie 1608–1918* (Paris, Honoré Champion Editeur, 2005). Yet *Estates and Constitution* offers more than a work written in the traditional vein of parliamentary history in its narrower sense. To support this statement, it is worth taking a look at Szigjártó's earlier works in the field to understand their evolution and determine their places in relation to one another. This is all the more important, since Szigjártó himself felt it necessary to point out at the beginning of his work that his book is "the product of almost three decades of research" (xi).

The first significant fruit of Szigjártó's long-term research project was his 2005 monograph *A diéta. A magyar rendek és az országgyűlés, 1708–1792* [The Diet. The Hungarian estates and the parliament, 1708–1792] (Budapest, Osiris), which

became the fundamental work in the field. Although attention was paid to the social historical background (first and foremost to the fundamental role of the *bene possessionatus* nobility, the prosperous landowning gentry in the counties, and, later, the Diets) both in this monograph and in Szijártó's subsequent collection of studies, entitled *Nemesi társadalom és politika: Tanulmányok a 18. századi magyar rendiségről* [Noble society and politics: Studies on the history of the estates in eighteenth-century Hungary] (Budapest, Universitas, 2006), in his later works, Szijártó offered more thorough and nuanced discussions of the social-historical aspects of institutional change. In his 2016 book *A 18. századi Magyarország rendi országgyűlése* [The Diet in eighteenth-century Hungary] (Budapest, Országgyűlés Hivatala) and in his 2017 DSc thesis *Emberék és struktúrák a 18. századi Magyarországon: A politikai elit társadalom- és kultúrtörténeti megközelítésben* [Individuals and structures in eighteenth-century Hungary: The political elite from the perspective of social and cultural history], he provided a thorough analysis of the roles of the *bene possessionatus* nobility and the career paths of political actors. However, in these works, the change of perspective became manifest on another level, namely in Szijártó's growing interest in questions concerning cultural history and the history of political discourse. In fact, these latter aspects come to the fore in *Estates and Constitution*, too, which is a "modified, extended, and restructured" version of Szijártó's abovementioned 2016 book in Hungarian (p.xi). In a sense, Szijártó's recent monograph in English can be seen as a concise account of the main findings of this long-term research project, adjusted to the extent necessary to specific circumstances arising from the situation when a scholar aims to speak to a "global" audience about historical problems rooted in chiefly "local" contexts.

The structure of the book is quite user-friendly, and although its primary character is that of a monograph, it could also be used as a handbook. It has been broken into three sections, each of which is divided into chapters, which again have several subsections, most of them a few pages long. Broadly speaking, each of the main parts covers a fundamental aspect of eighteenth-century politics and is written from a specific analytical viewpoint. In the first part (Chapters 1–2), the principal structural elements of early modern Hungarian politics and the machinery of the Diet are outlined; in the second (Chapters 3–7), the parliament is presented as a functioning institution and the main locus of political practice; in the third (Chapters 8–10), some aspects of the political discourse and social-cultural history are in the foreground, alongside the historiography of the early modern parliament.

One of the main strengths of the book is its primarily holistic outlook. Szijártó presents institutional, social-cultural, and intellectual issues as different aspects of one and the same history. If one reads the analyses carefully, one gets a detailed picture of their complex interrelations, at least in the context of the eighteenth-century parliamentary history of Hungary. In addition, Szijártó's essentially holistic approach goes hand in hand with his highly sensitive insights into grassroots level phenomena. Big processes and large structures are handled in close relation to the dimension of human agency and everyday practices of parliamentary life, and individual occurrences are never treated as mere illustrations of general tendencies. This feature of the book seems to be all the more important, since the mutual interdependence of these two dimensions becomes manifest on various levels throughout the analyses. Accordingly, the most common narrative structure of the subsections is a sequence consisting of a general account of the overall trends, followed by a thorough analysis of the most relevant cases supporting, nuancing, or modifying the original statements. Of course, this manner of writing history is only possible on the basis of a vast corpus of historical sources, and indeed this can be seen as the backbone of the whole work.

Chapter 1 provides a summary of the most crucial elements of eighteenth-century Hungary's political system. Szijártó pays particular attention here to the dualism of king and estates, which made eighteenth-century Hungary an estate polity (*Ständestaat*), and he emphasizes the paramount importance of the *tractatus diaetalis*, the process of negotiation between the two sides of the political chessboard (pp.12–17). The long-term functioning of the Diet as the main locus of the bargaining process between king and estates demonstrates that the power of the latter proved much more durable in Hungary than in other parts of the empire, since the Habsburgs felt it necessary to convoke the Diet in the country “even after a hiatus of five, ten, or even twenty-five years” (p.18). The historical fundament of the Hungarian *Sonderweg*, as Szijártó stresses several times in the book, was the Rákóczi War of Independence and the compromise between crown and country which came in its wake, codified in the Treaty of Szatmár, which “stabilized the position of the Hungarian estates, restoring the dualism of king and estates of the previous era” (pp.2, 98–99). The significance of the separate path taken by Hungary became manifest during the War of the Austrian Succession, in the course of which the Hungarian estates remained loyal to Vienna and, as a result, Hungary (unlike the Hereditary Lands and the Czech provinces) was left out of the centralizing and rationalizing reforms of

Haugwitz, which “represented a turning point in the political development of the Habsburg Monarchy” (p.99).

After portraying the main institutional factors of the workings of the Diet in Chapter 2, Szijártó goes on to outline one of the main findings of his book, and he demonstrates that in the eighteenth century, a profound change took place in the political agenda of the parliament, leading from confessionalism to the emergence of the dualism of king and estates dominated by constitutional questions. Religious issues, after dominating the debates in the 1710s and the 1720s, were (at least until 1790) omitted from the discussions of the Diets. Denominational divisions lost their former importance, and the defense of different aspects of noble privileges came to the foreground in parliamentary politics. As the investigations in Chapter 4 show, this process made it possible for the estates to take a strong line against the ruler in questions concerning the size of the yearly contribution (*contributio*) and the nobility’s exemption from taxation. The new situation induced the decrease of the level of polarization within the estates and gave rise to a new form of antagonism vis-à-vis the crown, narrowing the possibility of compromise between king and estates considerably. In Chapter 6, this sharpening of divisions between crown and country is also demonstrated on the level of the political decisions of the deputies, displaying the process in the course of which “oppositonality and government loyalty” became “mutually exclusive choices” (p.171).

The main social-historical component of this process was the emancipation of the well-to-do gentry, the *bene possessionatus* nobility from the aristocracy, which came to dominate the political life of the counties in the course of the first half of eighteenth century. In the background of this process, which is described in Chapter 9, we find the dissolution of the old networks of *familiaritas* between the aristocracy and the lesser nobility and the takeover of the power of the landowning prosperous gentry in the counties. The breaking up of the system of patron-client relations resulted in a significantly higher degree of social and political independence of the *bene possessionatus* nobility. On the institutional level, the growing significance of the well-to-do gentry manifested itself at first at the county assemblies, where it became the leading political force.

However, several aspects of the institutional development of the Diet in the eighteenth century (most importantly the decision-making mechanisms and the increase of the importance of the county deputies, as shown in Chapter 7) make it clear that the *bene possessionatus* nobility was able to reassert itself on the level of parliamentary politics as the predominant political factor. Undoubtedly,

the “noble-national” movement in Hungary in 1790 was part of this process: in fact, it can be seen as an attempt by the well-to-do gentry to reshape the political system of the country according to its own interests and values, aiming to convert its local dominance in the counties to real political power on the “national” level.

At this point, the relevance of the perspective of intellectual history, from which Chapter 8 is written, becomes clear. Through textual analyses of various sources, Szijártó verifies his thesis concerning polarization between king and estates as the “central tendency of politics” (p.263) on the level of political discourse as well. Szijártó demonstrates *inter alia* the rise of the term “constitution” in the political parlance of the Diets, a process that can be seen as a main element of the conceptual foundations of nineteenth-century developments in political discourse and in the politics of grievance in general.

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Rampart Nations: Bulwark Myths of East European Multiconfessional Societies in the Age of Nationalism. Edited by Liliya Berezhnaya and Heidi Hein-Kircher. New York–Oxford: Berghahn, 2019. 416 pp.

At the height of the European refugee crisis in 2015, Jarosław Kaczyński, head of the ruling Law and Justice (PiS) party in Poland, explained his strong anti-immigrant position by claiming that the Polish nation had a historic mission to defend Christian Europe from enemies who wanted to destroy it. He has also used this argument to justify homophobia and attacks on women's rights. Similar claims resound across Eastern Europe. Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán has made similar claims about Hungary, as has Slovenian Prime Minister Janez Janša for Slovenia. Pro-Western Ukrainians intent on joining the European Union also see their country as a bulwark protecting Europe, albeit against a different enemy: Russian imperialism. In each case, nationalist leaders look back in time and translate histories of wars fought against Bolsheviks, Ottoman armies, and Tatar invaders into myths of heroic martyrdom in order to cast themselves at the center of present-day struggles to define where Europe is and what it should mean to those who live there. Eastern Europe today abounds with visions of nations vying with one another to be the rampart of Europe, a bastion protecting a continent surrounded by enemies. Why are these myths so ubiquitous? And what gives them such power?

The urgency of these questions today makes *Rampart Nations: Bulwark Myths of East European Multiconfessional Societies in the Age of Nationalism*, edited by Liliya Berezhnaya and Heidi Hein-Kircher, especially welcome. The fourteen essays in the volume analyze examples of rampart or bulwark nation myths in a variety of contexts, ranging across the region from Russia and Ukraine to Hungary and Romania and in time from the late fifteenth century to the present-day. A helpful introductory essay by the editors frames the entire volume, highlighting the power of these myths to create meaning through the cultural imagination of space. Bulwark discourses abound, they write, “where it is necessary to strengthen identity and culture, to define a society in demarcating it from Others and to imagine a territory” (p.11). They suggest that competition in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to define imperial spaces as national space made Eastern Europe especially fertile ground for this kind of myth-making, imparting fantasies of national sacrifice and civilizational defense with a cultural power still felt across the region today.

Many of the essays in this volume illuminate the ways in which visions (and narratives) of borderlands and border security are so often shaped by beliefs in a civilizing mission. In her own contribution, Heidi Hein-Kircher shows how the city of L'viv (Polish: Lwów) was imagined in late nineteenth-century travel guides as an outpost of Polish civilization surrounded by barbarism. Echoes of this theme can be found in other essays, for instance Paul Srodecki's comparison of anti-Bolshevik ideology in interwar Poland and Hungary, Philipp Hofeneder's account of Polish and Ukrainian history textbooks in Habsburg Galicia, and Steven Seegel's fascinating analysis of maps and the politics of mapmaking in East Central Europe. Volodymyr Kravchenko explains that bulwark myths were largely absent from Ukrainian national discourse until the late nineteenth century, when historian Mykhailo Hrushevskyi made this trope a staple element in the national historical imagination. By contrast, several essays—Stephen Norris's on the complex afterlives of artist Viktor Vasnetsov's famous painting *Warriors* and Kerstin Jobst's on the cultural construction of an Orthodox Crimea—reveal how Russian imperial ideology legitimized itself through historical myths about the origins and early history of Slavic Orthodoxy. These studies show that the bulwark myths so central to the cultural geography of Eastern Europe were not always imagined in opposition to enemies from the East. Sometimes the threat came from the West.

Other contributors highlight the sacral power that modern nationalist bulwark myths drew from older languages of religious threat. Kerstin Weiand locates some of the earliest instances of a pan-European bulwark discourse in late fifteenth-century speeches made to the Imperial Diet by Enea Silvio Piccolomini, councilor to Emperor Frederick III and later Pope Pius II. In them, he called on Christian Europeans to unite against an implacably savage Ottoman Muslim enemy. His warnings, which circulated in print form throughout Europe, found especially receptive audiences in Poland and Hungary. Centuries later, nationalists in both countries would refashion this history into dramatic myths of resistance and martyrdom on the eastern marches of European civilization. But this ideological transformation was not peculiar to Catholic societies. According to Liliya Berezhnaya, the Russian Orthodox monks of the Pochaiv Lavra monastery remade their collective memories of conflict with an expanding Ottoman Empire into a vision, updated for the nineteenth century, of Orthodoxy under attack from Jews, Polish Catholics, and a host of cultural ills coming to Russia from the West. Zaur Gasimov proposes that the religious origins of modern bulwark myths were even more malleable, showing in his

essay how émigré Turkic intellectuals from the Soviet Union imagined Atatürk's Turkey as a (non-Christian) bulwark defending Turkish and Turkic culture from Communism.

This collection reflects the diversity of bulwark myths in Eastern Europe. It has less to say about causes: why do bulwark myths spring to life at some times and lie dormant at others? The volume also leaves readers to draw their own connections between bulwark discourses in Eastern Europe and myths of civilizational defense at work in other places. Today, no less than in Piccolomini's age, calls to defend the bastions of Christian civilization resound throughout Europe and across the Atlantic. As this volume shows so well, bulwark myths persist in many places. *Rampart Nations* is an excellent guide to a problem that shows no signs of going away.

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The Matica and Beyond: Cultural Associations and Nationalism in Europe. Edited by Krisztina Lajosi and Andreas Stynen. Leiden: Brill, 2020. 367 pp.

Over the course of the last thirty years, we have seen a growing amount of research in the field of cultural nationalism in Central and Southeastern Europe. Most of these endeavors have aimed to examine, within multidisciplinary frameworks, the complex political, economic, and social roles of the various kinds of cultural activities in the area of great empires and “small nations.” *The Matica and Beyond* is indeed the twenty-first book in the National Cultivation of Culture series published by Brill.

The book is a collection of fifteen works written by cultural historians from all over Europe. The fifteen texts result in a surprisingly consistent volume, as the essays are methodologically and thematically very similar, and they draw on an array of exciting new sources and offer similarly engaging conclusions. The editors of the book, however, faced challenges in combining the essays to form a meaningful whole.

As far as the geographical range of the studies is concerned, the book consists of six manuscripts dealing with cultural organizations in the Habsburg Monarchy, whereas the rest of the papers deal with other European associations, though these organizations and associations all had the same essential purpose: to enhance national and ethnic awareness among members of a certain nation.

In the introduction, Joep Leerssen presents the structure of the book and explains the extent to which the phenomenon of *Matica* has been investigated or marginalized both politically and in the scholarship. Leerssen also calls attention to significant similarities and links in the national movements under discussion and the surprisingly important role of the *Maticas* in linguistic turns and geopolitical changes.

The first essay, Zsuzsanna Varga’s “The Buda University Press and National Awakenings in Habsburg Austria,” is about the roles of publishing in strengthening national consciousness and identity among Slavic peoples. Varga examines numerous books written in vernacular languages and spellings, especially works by Serbs, who played a leading role in the struggle of the Empire’s Slavic nations for autonomy and independence.

Magdalena Pokorna provides the first essay in the collection that offers insights into a *Matica*’s activity. Pokorna offers a detailed discussion of one of the crucial *Maticas* for the Slavs, the Czech one. It is nicely complemented by

“The Slovak *Matica*, Its Precursors and Its Legacy” by Benjamin Bossaert and Dagmar Kročanová. Due to the different political circumstances, these two *Maticas* did not have similar operational policies, but they did have the common aim of establishing stronger connections with the other Slavic nations (Croats, Poles, Serbs, Slovenians, Bulgarians, etc.) in order to achieve greater cultural and national independence in opposition to the dominant German culture. The fourth essay is a short overview by Miloš Řezník of actions taken by Lusatian Serbs, Ruthenians, and Czech Silesians. Řezník offers insights into the ways in which regionalism and nationalism often collided.

Marijan Dović offers an essay on the work of the Slovenian *Matica*, in which he explains how this organization was not just a place for book publishing, but also for self-education and common thinking about issues like the school system and the media culture.

Daniel Barić discusses the emergence of the Dalmatian *Matica* and how it later became part of the Croatian one. Barić claims that “the first maticas were founded in the South Slav area in a time of redefinition of the nation, hence there were competing terms in use” (p.119). He also states that “the multiple engagement of the Croatian maticas mirrors the efforts made to cultivate and celebrate a distinctiveness within a multicultural environment” (p.134). Ljiljana Guschevska’s essay on Macedonian societies details how intellectuals struggled to form a multilayered Macedonian identity.

The essay entitled “Language, Cultural Associations, and the Origins of Galician Nationalism, 1840–1918” deals with the strengthening of language identity, which was meant to be a source of power in boosting nationalism. Philippe Martel offers another example of a struggle for more powerful nationalism through language use in an essay focusing on the “Impossible Occitan Nation.” Martel foregrounds the absurdity of the idea of Occitania due to language and identity anachronisms.

In the Netherlands, in contrast, the rule was one language, two states, and many nations. The essay “Educational, Scholarly, and Literary Societies in Dutch-Speaking Regions, 1766–1886” by Jan Rock deals with three main types of organizations and clubs: philological, intermediating, and non-governmental. These clubs strengthened the language identity of different communities in Netherlands. The author also perceives the similarities with the model of governing the *Maticas*, although “one major difference lies in the political contexts and therefore in the nature of governmental support” (p.204).

The struggle for independence among the Welsh sought cultural and linguistic autonomy rather than political autonomy. Marion Loffler, in her contribution to the volume, presents a nuanced comparison of Welsh cultural nationalism with the aspirations of Slavic people and explains the major differences between pan-Slavism and pan-Celticism. Similarly, Roisín Higgins emphasizes the importance of newspapers in strengthening the Irish nation. She relates the Young Ireland movement with the Illyrian one which began to rise to prominence in the middle of the nineteenth century in Croatia.

Jörg Hackmann focuses in his essay on the roles of school associations in the rise of national consciousness. Through school associations and struggles for language rights in the gymnasiums in bigger, linguistically mixed cities such as Riga, Tartu, and Jeglava, the Estonians, Latvians, and Germans tried to resist the russification of their communities.

Iryna Orlevych presents the activities of a crucial organization which was responsible for cultivating a sense of national consciousness in Austrian Galicia. During almost a century of its existence, *Matica* was a very powerful pillar of the Church and an important element of Galicia's cultural identity. Later, it lost its fundamental role (to strengthen cultural identity) and became a political organization of the Russian Empire.

The last paper in the book deals with specific aspirations of Tatars, among the most marginalized people in the Russian Federation. The author of the paper, Usmanova, examines Tatarian cultural and educational opportunities in Russia, touching on all the obstacles to a possible strengthening of the Russian Tatars' identity.

In a slightly complex conclusion, Alexei Miller claims that "the *Maticas* and comparable organizations were part of the history of European peripheral nationalisms, but they were also a part of the history of Empires" (p.362). Therefore, as Dović formulates it, *Maticas* were the "heart in the body of the nation and [...] literature was its blood" (p.104).

*The Matica and Beyond: Cultural Associations and Nationalism in Europe* is definitely a unique and successful scientific project which has the novelty to give a detailed overview of the activities and roles of cultural organizations, such as the *Matica* itself, in Central and Southeastern Europe. It unquestionably constitutes a contribution to the secondary literature which will be of interest to historians, sociologists, and scholars of culture, since it concerns a very dynamically developing field and draws attention to an array of intriguing topics, such as the role of individuals in these organizations and the complex

relationship between regional and national identities. The volume is particularly interesting in part because of the way in which it treats key moments and the *Maticas*' key roles in the so-called national awakenings among Slavic nations. Some papers would definitely have been more interesting if they had been accompanied by explanatory figures. Overall, the book offers an overview of and insights into the ways in which the *Maticas* and many other associations, such as councils, clubs, cultural and art societies, and political parties, acted in order to strengthen regional and ethnic components of nations in Europe. The book successfully fulfills its ambition to emphasize in a multidisciplinary way the importance of cultural associations in the political and social histories of "small European nations."

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## Genealogies of Memory 2020 – The Holocaust between Global and Local Perspectives. Conference report.

Organized by the European Network Remembrance and Solidarity (ENRS), the conference entitled *Genealogies of Memory 2020 – The Holocaust between Global and Local Perspectives* took place in the form of eight sessions between November 4 and 26, 2020. Due to the ongoing pandemic, instead of an in-person event, the organizers conducted the conference online, streamed via Zoom and Youtube, thus making it accessible to a wide international audience.

The most important goal of the conference was, according to the website of ENRS, “to assess the current state of Holocaust memory research” in the light of increasing globalization, as well as various new trends. Through seven key topics and a final roundtable discussion, the speakers explored issues connected to the interaction of universal and local Holocaust memory and ethical questions related to them. Each session started with a keynote address, which was followed by presentations by young and established scholars and the observations of a commentator.

The first session, which addressed the practical ethics of Holocaust memory, started with Piotr Cywiński’s (Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum) keynote, in which he delineated the development and major turning points of Holocaust remembrance. The following four presenters highlighted certain episodes and practices of the memorialization process, such as the role that Raul Hilberg, eminent scholar of the Holocaust, played in the establishment of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Olof Bortz emphasized that Hilberg wanted to make the museum’s exhibit as authentic as possible, which generated tensions between different views on how to present the past and thus contributed to the discussion on commemoration.

The second session was dedicated to the Ringelblum Archive, a collection of documents compiled by the Oneg Shabbath group in the Warsaw ghetto, which is considered “the earliest historiography of the Holocaust.” Keynote speaker Omer Bartov (Brown University) linked the Ringelblum Archive to the main topic of the conference by discussing four factors: the increasing importance of history writing from below, local histories, the Holocaust as a first-person history, and the benefits of these new approaches. According to Bartov, the term “industrial killing,” which is so often applied to the Holocaust, is problematic because it obscures the fact that in many cases the victims stood face to face with the perpetrators before they were killed. Research on these atrocities and the

relations between Jews, their neighbors and the Germans, as well as individual experiences can further an understanding of the nuances and dynamics of the Holocaust.

Bartov's points were supported by the following presentations, which discussed various characteristics of the Ringelblum Archive. Katarzyna Person, for instance, focused on the situation of women who were forced to become prostitutes in the ghettos and the assessment of their role by the historians of the archive. By placing a relatively small group in the center of the investigation, Person could provide a more detailed picture of their agency, the difference between sexual barter and rape, and the specificities of how they were written about in the archive.

The third session, which dealt with "borderland memories," began with Éva Kovács's (Vienna Wiesenthal Institute) keynote lecture. Kovács explored and compared various spaces of remembrance: a private Holocaust museum in Rwanda, an exhibition about Srebrenica in Budapest, and the efforts to uncover mass graves of Holocaust victims in Minsk. She then elaborated on the intertwining local and transnational memory, touching on idealized or suppressed local remembrance too. The following panel presentations also addressed the topics of landscapes of memory and remembrance culture, among them the project description of Nadja Danglmaier and Daniel Wutti. The educational project aimed to integrate the common cultural history (including the Holocaust) of Carinthia, a border region between Austria and Slovenia, into school curricula on both sides of the border.

The session "Overlooking the Local Dimensions of the Holocaust," which raised questions concerning linguistics and translation, started with a keynote lecture by Mindaugas Kvietkauskas, Minister of Culture of Lithuania and an academic, about the diaries of Jewish children in Vilnius. Three of the panelists then discussed Claude Lanzmann's documentary film *Shoah*. Dorota Głowacka, for instance, explored the mistranslations in the movie's languages: Polish, Yiddish, German, French, and how this implicitly conveyed an image of anti-Semitic Poles who were ignorant of Jewish culture. Roma Sendyka's presentation, on the other hand, suggested a possible solution to this problem, namely the re-translation of the Polish bystanders' lines.

The fifth session addressed current shifts and methods in Holocaust studies, such as avantgarde environmental history, as discussed by keynote speaker Ewa Domańska (Adam Mickiewicz University), which aims to reveal the complex relationship between the events of the Holocaust and their environment and

thus to construct holistic knowledge. In her presentation, Hannah Wilson presented three objects connected to survivors of the Sobibór death camp and how the meaning of these objects changed from generation to generation.

Jackie Feldman of Ben-Gurion University delivered the keynote for the sixth session. Feldman touched on the digital turn, the end of the age of the witness and the ways in which various technological solutions may alter the existing memoryscape. Liat Steir-Livny's presentation on the short film *Eva.Stories* was strongly linked to this topic. The movie, which is a compilation of Instagram stories, managed to foster interest among masses of young people, and Steir-Livny analyzed the components of its success.

The topic of the seventh session was the connection between global and local memory, to which Daniel Levy of Stony Brook University provided an adept background in his keynote address. The entanglement of national, cosmopolitan, and global memoryscapes was also tackled by Agnieszka Wierzycholska, who discussed the difficulties that emerged when she was pressed to satisfy the expectations of both Polish and German audiences with her research on social relations in pre-war and post-war Tarnów.

During the final roundtable discussion, Éva Kovács, Ewa Domańska, Daniel Levy, and Jackie Feldman summarized the core issues of the conference, raising new questions and discussing new trends and possibilities in Holocaust research. All in all, the conference offered a rich variety of topics examined by some of the most eminent researchers, and it offered young scholars opportunities to talk about their research. Since the sessions were recorded, they are still available both on the Youtube channel and the Facebook site of ENRS. Thus, those who missed the original event can still listen to them. This can be recommended not only to Holocaust scholars but to anyone interested in contemporary history.

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Interwar East Central Europe, 1918–1941: The Failure of Democracy-Building, the Fate of Minorities. Edited by Sabrina Ramet. London and New York: Routledge, 2020. 360 pp.

The volume, published in the series “Routledge Studies in Modern European History,” brings together ten internationally renowned scholars to discuss the challenges that interwar Europe faced. The preface positions it in the wake of other all-embracing volumes looking at interwar Central and Eastern Europe, the most recent examples being Josef Rothschild’s *East Central Europe Between the two World Wars* (1974), and Ivan T. Berend’s *Decades of Crisis: Central and Eastern Europe before World War II* (1998). Recent years have witnessed the emergence of new scholarship drawing inspiration from entangled history and looking at continuities in the post-imperial areas, as well as the impact of nationalizing policies on the processes of democratization. Nonetheless, these trends do not seem to have exerted much influence on the structure of this volume, which is articulated through national unities.

Sabrina Ramet uses the first chapter to clarify the aims of this effort: to trace the roots of the failure of democracy in East Central Europe, as well as the impact of this failure on the statuses of minorities, looking at both domestic (instability and political violence) as well as external factors (the economic crisis and the expanding role of Nazi Germany).

In the second chapter, M. B. B. Biskupski investigates the two alternatives with which the Polish leadership was faced, the one represented by Józef Piłsudski, who envisioned a large and inclusive Poland, and the other, a vision of a smaller and nationally homogeneous Poland, championed by Roman Dmowski. Biskupski, who regards these views as respectively “civic patriotism” and “ethnic nationalism,” blames external factors, which led to a downsizing of Poland’s geopolitical perspective and made the federalist option unfeasible. Chapter three, by Sabrina Ramet and Carol Skalnik Leff, focuses on interwar Czechoslovakia, the only country in the area whose political system is usually praised for its democratic nature. Nevertheless, its major weakness was what the authors describe as the “securitization of democracy” against external enemies. In this context, both the Slovak population and minorities (the German, Hungarian, Jewish, and Ruthenian communities) found themselves in a position of subalternity and unevenness. In chapter four, Béla Bodó examines the Hungarian case, focusing on both minorities within the country and Hungarian minorities abroad. While revisionism remained a central issue of foreign policy,

minorities enjoyed diverse statuses, ranging from that of the Germans, whose fate was increasingly entangled with the relationship between Hungary and the Third Reich, to the Jews, who were subjected to early anti-Semitic legislation which culminated in the late 1930s. The roots and the idea of the “ethnic privilege” enjoyed by the “state-forming nation” in Romania are central to the chapter written by Roland Clark (chapter five). Clark offers an overview of the social, ethnic, and religious context of the country, which included Transylvania, bringing into the country significant Hungarian and German minorities, and saw antisemitism across the political spectrum. As Clark argues, interwar Romania established itself as an exclusionary type of democracy, which drew on the idea of homogenization of minorities. In chapter six, Christian Promitzer explores the case of interwar Bulgaria, retracing its political evolution from the first postwar years of the Agrarian bloc, marked by land reform, to the following shift towards authoritarianism, albeit not fascism, as the later head of the Communist Party, Georgi Dimitrov, would have claimed. This was reflected in the attitude towards the Turkish minority, which was characterized both by increasing discrimination and an attempt to forge an alliance with its most conservative sectors in order to marginalize Kemalism. This marked a difference between the treatment of the Turkish minority by the Bulgarian state and the treatment of Bulgarian-speaking Pomaks, whose assimilation was actively pursued. Promitzer also shows that the contemporary influx of Bulgarian refugees was directly connected with increasing pressure on internal minorities. In chapter seven, Stipica Grgić offers a focused discussion of the Yugoslav state, whose weaknesses and disparities in standards were laid bare in its process of unification. In the background of the rising tensions between centralist and federalist strands as well as widespread instability, non-Slavic minorities experienced pressure, enacted also through the land reform, but they nonetheless tried to establish agreements with government parties. In chapter eight, Bernd J. Fischer offers insights into the turbulent interwar years in Albania, with the ascent to power of King Zog, who created an authoritarian power in a (mostly unsuccessful) attempt to achieve modernization, unity, and stability. While minorities did not represent a troublesome issue for interwar Albania, the existence of an ethnically Albanian population outside the border of the state conditioned both domestic and international relations. The only thematic contribution (Chapter nine) to the book, authored by Robert Bideluex, focuses on peasant parties across East Central Europe. Rejecting the image of backwardness often attached to the agricultural world in Eastern Europe, Bideluex argues that, should they have risen to power, peasant parties

would have pursued an alternative (and more human) pattern of development in respect to both liberal capitalist and communist forces. The afterword to the volume, written by Stefano Bianchini, traces similarities and differences among the case studies and positions the political threads of the region in the interwar period, with an initial minimalistic approach to democracy, which included fair elections but not a real democratization of society, and a gradual shift toward authoritarianism, which accelerated after the beginning of the global economic crisis in 1929.

The effort to put together such a comprehensive volume is noteworthy, though the contributions could have been further harmonized. Moreover, the book acknowledges, with uneven efficacy, the entanglements between domestic and international factors in the treatment of minorities in East Central Europe, which, for the first time, found a theoretical protector in the League of Nations. Furthermore, it shows the social background of the authoritarian drive which led to the demise of democracy in the region by the end of the 1930s.

Nonetheless, the reader might get the impression that, in some of the contributions, nations are regarded as pre-existing entities and multinational states are deemed to fail as not founded on consensus. A further contextualization within the wider European context would have shown that the crisis of democracies was hardly exclusive to the Eastern part of the continent. Furthermore, a deterministic view of the fate of Eastern Europe seems to emerge from time to time, reenforced by the fact that the only country geographically located in Eastern Europe which did not turn to socialism after the Second World War—but shared many features with its neighbors in the interwar period—Greece, is excluded from this analysis. While several contributions stand out for clarity and represent recommended reading for students, specialists might have aspired to some more coherence and transnational insights within the volume. However, the volume is timely in analyzing from a historical perspective two issues that still challenge contemporary Europe: the dialectic between liberal democracy and authoritarianism and the relation with the Other.

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Alternative Globalizations: Eastern Europe and the Postcolonial World.  
Edited by James Mark, Artemy M. Kalinovsky, and Steffi Marung.  
Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2020. 352 pp.

Recently, a small yet growing number of researchers have been working on the transnational history of the socialist countries during the Cold War. Their studies make clear that the socialist countries after the 1950s were far from isolated or autarkic and that these countries developed various transnational connections with the Global South and other parts of the globe. However, while they shed light on various concrete cases of these interconnections, it is often not easy to situate these findings in a larger picture of postwar globalization. The present volume edited by James Mark, Artemy M. Kalinovsky, and Steffi Marung makes an important contribution to the scholarship, not only by illuminating various aspects of the East-South interconnections, but by also synthesizing these case studies into a wider history of “alternative globalizations.”

The book consists of an introduction and fourteen essays on political, economic, and cultural aspects of the Soviet and Eastern European connections with the Global South. Many contributors do not adopt the simplistic view of the Cold War as a mere binary confrontation between the two camps and instead depict the story of the East-South entanglements in connection with the activities of the Western counterparts. Furthermore, they often do not regard these relations as a one-sided transfer of socialist modernity from the developed East to the Global South and point out various unintended or surprising impacts on the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. The introductory essay by the three editors deserves particular attention, since it integrates the essays of the volume and situates the interactions between the Eastern and Southern peripheries in a broader process of postwar globalization.

The first essay, by Mark and Yakov Feygin, offers a well-written overview on the rise and fall of the alternative, anti-imperialist visions of global economy presented at the fora of the United Nations by the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe from the 1950s to the 1980s. As Mark and Feygin show, while the socialist countries initially advocated these visions, their adherence to economic bilateralism, the halfway commitment to them, and the accumulating debts to the West fundamentally weakened such visions. The provocative yet stimulating essay by Oscar Sanchez-Sibony also focuses on Soviet economic relations

with the Global South in the 1950s and 1960s, but from different standpoint. According to Sanchez-Sibony, none of the visions of an alternative modernity were the main motive behind the Soviet economic entanglements with the Global South. Rather, these entanglements were motivated by the desire to increase economic exchange with the outer world in the margins of capitalist globalization. While these two articles differ widely from each other on the role of socialist modernity, they are, in fact, mutually complementary and are of special value in that they both further a rethinking of the processes and characteristics of postwar economic globalization.

On a more concrete topic of the interconnections, Alena K. Alamgir and Christina Schwenkel explore Vietnamese labor migration into Eastern Europe. The Vietnamese labor program was initially designed as a means to help Vietnam, but as the economic crisis and labor shortage in Eastern Europe deepened, it became a source of a cheap workforce in the receiving countries. Massimiliano Trentin also examines the attitudes of non-Soviet actors by investigating East German policy in the Middle East. He points out that because of its rivalry with West Germany and its own economic interests, East Germany sometimes behaved autonomously in the region.

As to the cultural relations with the Global South, Łukasz Stanek investigates the interactions between Eastern Europe, West and North Africa, and the Middle East in the field of architecture. To deal with their “weak” bargaining positions, Eastern European actors in West Africa and the Middle East behaved flexibly, which made them highly instrumental for local elites in these areas. Marung examines Soviet Africanists’ activities concerning African agricultural problems. The failure of the Soviet agricultural model in Africa urged these scholars to rethink Soviet agricultural policy at home. The impact of transnational relations on the domestic politics of the socialist countries was also examined by Kalinovsky. He analyzes the interrelations between the Soviet policies in its own South and in the Global South, and he concludes that the Soviet attempt to instrumentalize the regions of Central Asia and Caucasia as a showcase for development in the Global South backfired. In fact, it revealed the weaknesses of the model and encouraged resistance against the regime in these Soviet republics. Maxim Matusевич focuses on the strained relations between the Soviet authorities and the African students at Soviet universities. Whereas the Soviet authorities wished to educate African students about socialist modernization, in practice, these students often emerged as educators of their fellow Soviet students. These interesting case studies make clear that

socialist entanglements with the South were not a simple diffusion of a certain model, but the developed socialist countries were also influenced and reshaped by the South.

At the same time, it should be noted that the transnational approaches by the socialist countries, like every other such endeavor, had its limits. In the case of socialist globalization, the actors from the East often did not show great interest in thinking and acting within a global framework, preferring instead to maximize their own interests. For example, Bogdan C. Iacob presents an interesting case of Balkan scholars' encounters with the Global South in UNESCO. Using the UNESCO project as a platform for their cause, these scholars emphasized the shared experience of Western European colonialism in the Balkan region and the Global South. But since their aim was Eurocentric rather than transregional, they lost momentum in the global arena. Such limits were also present in the transnational relations cultivated by the oppositional movements in Eastern Europe. Kim Christiaens and Idesbald Goddeeris examine transregional collaboration between the Polish *Solidarność* and the oppositional movements in the Global South and conclude that the engagement of *Solidarność* abroad remained limited in scope, as its reserved attitude toward the anti-apartheid struggles in South Africa suggests. Adam F. Kola approaches the limitedness of the Eastern European intellectuals' internationalism from a different perspective. He examines the reason why Polish intellectuals in the late socialist period avoided postcolonial discourse in emphasizing the "Soviet colonization" of Poland.

While these essays analyze the Soviet and Eastern European entanglements with the decolonizing countries, the essay on Sino-Soviet competition over the Global South by Péter Vámos broadens the scope by introducing the Chinese factor to the discussion. In response to the Chinese attempt to forge a worldwide anti-Soviet coalition, the Soviets coordinated the policies of bloc countries vis-à-vis China in an attempt to isolate it globally. Hanna Jansen examines the intellectual thaw under Khrushchev and the activities of Soviet Orientalists in the context of Sino-Soviet disputes. Quinn Slobodian focuses on East German grassroots internationalism, which emerged as a result of the Tiananmen Square massacre of 1989.

The book thus covers geographically and thematically wide-ranging topics of global interconnections that emerged after decolonization in the 1950s. The introductory essay provides a good reference point to position these cases within a wider framework of postwar globalization. On the whole, the book enhances

our knowledge of the socialist postwar global entanglements with the Global South, and it will be of use and interest to readers who are curious to know more about the subtle, as yet lesser-known aspects of globalization.

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