

BOOK REVIEWS

Climate and Society in Europe: The Last Thousand Years.

By Christian Pfister and Heinz Wanner. Bern: Haupt, 2021. 400 pp.

For historians interested in the history of climate change, Christian Pfister's name is very well known, and for climatologists, Heinz Wanner is a name that certainly rings a bell. Their joint undertaking to provide a concise overview of climate fluctuations, weather phenomena, and their societal impacts over the course of the last millennium in Europe is certainly a work that deserves attention. Both Pfister and Wanner spent most of their academic careers at the University of Bern in Switzerland, which (not independent of their activities) became one of the most important centers for climate history research worldwide. In the 1980s, Pfister worked out a system (referred to in the book reviewed here as Pfister indices) to interpret and quantify written sources and thus allow historians to enter into discussions in the growing field of paleoclimatology. His method has been widely accepted and used ever since, providing a common framework for historians and paleoclimatologists to study climate fluctuations using different datasets (proxies), including written sources.

In eleven chapters, the book provides a concise and accessible overview of European climate history over the course of the past millennium. It is a most welcome endeavor, as climate history in recent decades tended to use a language that became increasingly alien to many historians and others interested in climate change in human history. This approach is well reflected in Chapter 1 which explains the main concepts of historical climatology and the climate system, acquainting those who do not have any background in climate studies with basic terms, methods, and assumptions. Chapters 2 and 3 offer two case studies which serve different purposes. The first of these two chapters is on Ötzi the Iceman, the Neolithic man who lived in the Alps around 3200 BC and whose body was found naturally mummified at the site of his death in 1991. The research related to Ötzi (summarized in this chapter) offers an opportunity to address the main climatic trends of the Holocene and at the same time to put these processes in the context of the rapid global warming we have seen recently. Chapter 3 explains the complexity of the impacts of the 1815 Tambora eruption and the concept of vulnerability to extremes. While the chapter is an enjoyable read, it does not quite fit in the chapter structure of the book.

Chapter 4 provides a survey of the development of an interest in registering weather phenomena and climate fluctuations by drawing on the writings of ancient and medieval authors. It shows how this interest paved the way for the formation of scientific societies and networks, followed by the birth of scientific meteorology and climatology in the twentieth century. Chapter 5 is dedicated to the issue of how to use sources that have survived. It provides a survey of the main proxies, such as dendroclimatological data, stalagmite records, ice cores, and sediments and then gives a more detailed analysis of the variety of written sources that can be used by climate historians. The authors discuss the potentials and limitations of the different types of sources by providing examples of the ways in which these sources have been used.

Chapter 6 focuses on the main features of the present-day climate of Europe and then looks at the main fluctuations in the climate of the continent over the course of the past millennium as evidenced by sources from the natural sciences and simulations combined with meteorological measurements from the past. It addresses the reconstructions of regional temperature and precipitation patterns to show the main climatic trends of the last millennium, including the Medieval Climatic Anomaly (or the high Medieval Period, as it is referred to in the book) and the Little Ice Age.

Chapters 7 and 8 survey weather events and the main climatic trends by centuries. While the examples on which the two chapters draw are usually illustrative, their geographical coverage is somewhat unbalanced, and the presentation of some of the years is rather schematic. Chapter 9 shifts the perspective from weather events and climate change to their impacts on society. This term (society) is used in a most restrictive sense, as the authors focus almost exclusively on the demographic context of weather events and climate change, pointing to famine and death in various historical moments over the course of the past millennium. Other societal impacts, such as epidemics or the persecution of different marginal groups and elements of society, are mentioned only in inserts.

Following up on the data presented in Chapters 7 and 8, Chapter 10 presents seasonal climate fluctuations over the past millennium (the period that is adequately covered by the written sources and, accordingly, the Pfister indices, depending on the season, covers the last 500 to 800 years). From the point of view of readership, it is not evident why these reconstructions rely solely on the written sources and their quantifications when the introductory chapters put considerable emphasis on the variety of sources which offer relevant information concerning fluctuations in climate. The other main question with

the data presented here concerns their territorial validity. Most of the indices relate to Central Europe (although this is not necessarily explained), but the reconstructions presented are not limited to these areas. The final chapter of the book is dedicated to the recent global warming crisis and argues that, much as premodern societies that faced weather extremes and changing climate were vulnerable, considering the unprecedented global transformation of the past six decades, modern societies face similar challenges, despite their efforts to be independent of these phenomena.

The book includes numerous inserts that present case studies and weather-related phenomena summarized in a page or two. These additions are well-chosen and are entertaining, making the book a more enjoyable read. The one written on the Black Death and the climatic, military, and political background of the events involved is presented based on the seminal book by Bruce Campbell (*The Great Transition*, 2016) but omits recent works that highlight the mistakes in Campbell's narrative.

Despite some of the flaws mentioned above, this book, which was written by two of the foremost experts on the subject, offers one of the most accessible overviews of the climate history of Europe over the course of the last millennium. In most parts of the book, they do so in a style that will be readily understood by undergraduate students and the wider public as well. The visual materials (graphs, maps, and illustrations) were carefully chosen, and they make the text easier to comprehend. This will certainly make this volume (which has also been published in German) an important basic handbook for many courses dedicated to environmental and climate history.

András Vadas
Eötvös Loránd University
vadas.andras@btk.elte.hu

Christians or Jews? Early Transylvanian Sabbatarianism (1580–1621).

By Réka Tímea Újlaki-Nagy. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2022. 292 pp.

An intense debate about the nature of God took place in Transylvania during the middle decades of the sixteenth century. Within an emerging Antitrinitarian movement, domestic voices and exiles living in Transylvania advocated a range of positions about how to worship the one true God. One key matter of disagreement concerned the question of whether adoration of Christ was required of the faithful. These debates were conducted in the context of nascent Antitrinitarian communities, most notably in Kolozsvár (today Cluj-Napoca, Romania). The ambition of those involved was not merely to establish an Antitrinitarian church as an institution in Transylvania but to revive Christianity on the basis of accurate Biblical teaching, while some sought to explore how Antitrinitarian Christianity might be reconciled with other monotheistic religions.

Újlaki-Nagy's excellent study focuses on one of the outcomes of these debates in the religious tradition known as Sabbatarianism. Újlaki-Nagy analyses this religious tradition from within and recaptures Sabbatarian beliefs and worship practices. This is no easy task, given the impact of centuries of persecution of Sabbatarians. Expelled from the Unitarian church, Sabbatarians were the targets of state persecution in the 1630s. The Reformed church supported this campaign against Sabbatarians and also sought to take advantage of this opportunity to undermine their rivals in the Unitarian church. Sabbatarian communities endured imprisonment, loss of property, and forced conversion. Reduced to a small remnant in some isolated villages, Sabbatarians were later targeted by the Habsburg authorities in the mid-eighteenth century, with soldiers and monks sent into Sabbatarian villages to force further conversions. A remaining Sabbatarian community survived in the village of Bözödújfalú (today Bezidu Nou, Romania) until the 1860s, when many converted to Judaism in the wake of the emancipation of Jews. In 1944, Sabbatarian-Jews were taken from their homes in Bözödújfalú to the ghetto in Marosvásárhely (today Târgu Mureș, Romania). Some people were released on the grounds that they were not of Jewish descent. This reversal was partly thanks to available scholarship on Sabbatarians which had been completed in the 1880s by the Neolog rabbi of Pest, Sámuel Kohn. Újlaki-Nagy notes that, even while in the Marosvásárhely ghetto, Sabbatarian-Jews were asked by others who were curious about their identity (“Hát maguk zsidók,” or “so are you Jewish?”) (p.253).

Újlaki-Nagy's inquiry focuses on the beliefs and religious practices of early Sabbatarian communities. The author begins by establishing the origins of the Sabbatarian movement in the confessional politics of the 1560s and 1570s. Antitrinitarian preachers claimed legal protection under the terms of the 1568 diet decision in favor of ministers who preached the Gospel according to their understanding of it. However, an Antitrinitarian church was not specifically named in Transylvanian laws on religious rights until 1595 (when it was described as "Arian"). A law against doctrinal innovation had been passed in 1571 with the aim of preventing the spread of non-adorantism within the Antitrinitarian community. However, this law failed to prevent ongoing debate about the nature and authority of Christ. Notably, Matthias Vehe-Glirius (educated at Heidelberg) came to teach in Kolozsvár, although he was soon expelled by the council. The leadership of the Antitrinitarian church after Ferenc Dávid's death supported a clear adorantist theology. Sabbatarians and other non-adorantists were able to remain under the umbrella of the Unitarian church until they were formally expelled in 1606. By that time, Sabbatarianism had taken root in communities on the lands of András Eőssi (who was influenced by the ideas of Vehe-Glirius), and Eőssi then transferred his lands and legacy to Simon Péchi in 1598.

Újlaki-Nagy's work is one of reconstruction of this persecuted religious tradition that adopted many Jewish practices. Újlaki-Nagy acknowledges the limits of what can be pieced together about early Transylvanian Sabbatarianism, and the author treads carefully where needed to avoid speculative commentary. The key surviving sources used by Újlaki-Nagy are manuscript collections (largely copies) of songs and prayers. There are three surviving collections of songs written before the 1620s with nine further collections copied after this period. Újlaki-Nagy focuses on about 90 songs from available manuscript sources which were likely written towards the end of the sixteenth century. Clear themes about the religious ideas prevailing within Sabbatarian communities emerge from these songs. Újlaki-Nagy highlights that Sabbatarians were convinced of the inspired and perfect character of the Old Testament. Moses was the ultimate figure of authority, and other Scriptural writings were seen by Sabbatarians through the lens of Mosaic teaching. The figure of Christ was identified as the expected Messiah, born to human parents and not to be adored in worship. Christ's death was not required for the benefit of the faithful. Sabbatarians viewed obedience to Mosaic law as the pathway to salvation, and they awaited a physical millennial kingdom.

Újlaki-Nagy explores the results of these beliefs in Sabbatarian openness to Jewish ritual practices. The balance of adoption and adaptation of Jewish ritual

amid some retention of Christian ritual goes to the heart of the complex character of early Sabbatarianism. Old Testament feasts inspired the structure and themes of Sabbatarian song collections. Celebrating Jewish feasts was not the result of Sabbatarians wanting to be similar to Jews. As Újlaki-Nagy argues, this was rather an expression of Sabbatarian desire “to be part of the covenant of the law, as they believed this to be the only way to salvation” (p.191). The number of songs written for the Sabbath suggests that was the day when meetings and services were held. Manuscript collections include songs to be sung to celebrate the new moon. There were songs for Passover which spoke to the hope of an anticipated messianic kingdom and songs of forgiveness and repentance to be sung on the Day of Atonement. These surviving songs offer evidence about Sabbatarian purity laws concerning the consumption of meat, the importance of fasting, and ritual bathing for women. Újlaki-Nagy emphasizes the importance of worship practices and ritual in sustaining Sabbatarian identity. The author concludes that “we find a rather strong rejection of the Christian ritual heritage on the one hand and an occasionally clumsy but nonetheless intense openness towards Jewish traditions” (p.236).

Early Sabbatarians did not conceive of themselves as “Judaizers,” a term used as a slur by their opponents. Sabbatarians looked to Jews as having knowledge of God that was essential for understanding the Scriptures. The failure of Jews to recognize Jesus as the Messiah was viewed by Sabbatarians as an error. However, Sabbatarians viewed Trinitarian Christians as having sinned by embracing idolatry. This Trinitarian mistake had contributed to the failure of Jews to recognize Jesus as Messiah. As they became part of the camp of Israel, Sabbatarians could contribute to overcoming this Jewish misunderstanding about Jesus as Messiah in advance of an expected messianic kingdom. Újlaki-Nagy’s clear analysis of complex sources draws out the context in which Sabbatarian ideas developed as well as the internal dynamics of this religious tradition in Transylvania. In the 1980s, the Ceaușescu regime decided to build a reservoir, and this led to the deliberate flooding of Bözödújfalú (a decision no doubt influenced by anti-Hungarian sentiment). The impact was that the last redoubt of Sabbatarianism was eradicated from the Transylvanian landscape. Újlaki-Nagy’s work has done great service in recovering and exploring the ideas and religious practices once followed in this lost Sabbatarian village.

Graeme Murdock
Trinity College Dublin
murdock@tcd.ie

Párhuzamok és kapcsolódási pontok a spanyol és a magyar politikai emigráció történetében 1849–1873 [Parallels and connections in the histories of Spanish and Hungarian political emigration 1849–1873]. By Viktória Semsey. Budapest: Line Design, 2023. 194 pp.

The monograph *Parallels and Connections in the Histories of Spanish and Hungarian Political Emigration, 1849–1873* examines the history of ideas and politics in the two countries through the relations between their political refugees. The present book builds on decades of research. It reveals which Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, and Hungarian politicians came into contact with one another during their emigration from 1849 to 1873 and which political writings, parliamentary speeches, and articles bear witness to their direct and indirect interactions. Although the title of the work focuses mainly on the Spanish and Hungarian aspects, Semsey could have used the adjective “Portuguese” as well, since there are more than one hundred references to Portuguese-Hungarian and Portuguese-Spanish connections in the text. Indeed, this omission seems even more unfortunate when we see that the idea of an Iberian Union linking Spain and Portugal is a subject that does not allow Portugal to be ignored. On this basis, the book under discussion here is more than the title suggests, and may well be of interest to Spanish and Hungarian scholars, but it may well also constitute a significant contribution to the larger international scholarship.

The monograph is divided chronologically into six chapters and thematically into twelve subchapters. In the first thematic chapter, the author briefly reviews the history of nineteenth-century Spain and Spanish political emigration and compares it with Hungarian historical events. In the case of both countries, political, social, and economic issues arising from civic transformations ultimately led to ideological struggles and, for many people, flight from the country. Hungary’s approach to the issue of national independence, however, was markedly different. The Spanish political émigré communities were formed over the course of a longer process, as a result of several changes of power, and its members therefore played a greater role in Spanish politics. In contrast, the Hungarian political émigré community came about as the result of a single historical event, the 1848–49 War of Independence, and this community thus came to play a visible role only after 1849.

The second chapter focuses on the revolutionary events of 1848–1849 and their impact. Semsey first examines the prevailing perceptions of the Hungarian War of Independence among Spanish progressives and conservatives and

then turns to the idea of the Iberian Union. She reviews the political period of General Ramón María Narváez (1799–1868) and compares Hungarian and Spanish liberties. She points out that, although there were no major armed clashes in Spain and Portugal during the European revolutionary wave of 1848, the politicians and public writers of the period were nonetheless influenced by these events and reacted to them.

In the next subchapter, Semsey draws a parallel between Spanish and Hungarian ideas of federalism. On the Iberian Peninsula, the idea of a federation emerged as one of the possible political solutions to the national aspirations that were gaining strength and the social and political problems that were becoming increasingly pressing in the mid-nineteenth century. Its proponents hoped that the unification of Spain and Portugal would lead to economic prosperity and allow Spain to reclaim its status as a great power. These concepts were also shared by politicians in the Spanish and Portuguese émigré community, who were present in Paris and London in large numbers between 1848 and 1853, precisely when the Hungarian émigré community in these two major political centers suddenly became a significant presence. The idea of a federation of states also gained currency among the Hungarian emigrants. The so-called Danube Confederation plan would have united people living on the territory of the historic Kingdom of Hungary according to federalist principles, thus (in theory) remedying national differences and socio-economic problems.

The second chronological chapter examines the years 1851–1854, but the period is not entirely consistent here, as the first subchapter focuses on 1851 and the second on 1851–1853. In 1851, Lajos Kossuth, the leader of the Hungarian War of Independence and of the Hungarian political émigré community, made a brief and forced stopover in Lisbon during his sea voyage from the Ottoman Empire to the United Kingdom (Lajos Kossuth's trip to Lisbon was earlier examined by István Rákóczi). In the Portuguese capital, Kossuth met and had conversations with well-known politicians. He was even given an invitation by the mayor of the city, on which sensational reports appeared in the Portuguese press.

In the next chapter, Semsey discusses Spanish-Hungarian (and Italian) relations in London between 1851 and 1853. The Italian politician and revolutionary Giuseppe Mazzini (1805–1872), who was already in contact with the Spanish and Portuguese Iberians before the 1848 revolutions, is mentioned at the beginning of the chapter. According to Semsey, Mazzini and the European Central Democratic Committee were a common point of contact and mediation among members of the Hungarian, Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian émigré

communities. She suggests that Kossuth and José María Orense (1803–1880) and Fernando Garrido (1821–1883) met in London at this time.

In the third chronological chapter of the book, Semsey traces the characteristics of the Iberian plans for the confederation in the 1850s and the political changes that took place during this period. In this section, she pays particular attention to Sinibaldo de Mas y Sanz's (1809–1868) *La Iberia* (1853) and the Hungarian press's interpretation of the events of the Spanish Revolution of 1854.

The fourth chapter of the work tells the story of the Iberian Legion, which was organized to help the struggle for the unity of Italy. The armies, led by Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807–1882), were joined by a group of over one hundred men and organized by Sixto Cámara (1825–1859) and Garrido at the instigation of Mazzini, with funding from Spanish progressives and democrats. The Iberian Legion and the Hungarian Legion in Italy shared the principle of international assistance and solidarity, but their motivations were different. While the Spaniards were motivated by the aforementioned comradeship, the Hungarians were driven by the desire for independence and freedom from Habsburg rule.

The next chapter draws attention to the fact that, in 1862–1871, the idea of the Iberian Confederation remained present in political thought, but in Spanish and international political conspiracies the Italian and German unification efforts and international events came to the fore. While the Spanish and Portuguese parties were preoccupied with the idea of an Iberian Union, the idea of a Danube Confederation was reinforced among members of the Hungarian political émigré community following the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867.

Semsey has devoted a special subchapter to the history of the Spanish Revolution of 1868, which she also examines from the perspective of the Hungarian press. Semsey has also uncovered a closer link between Kossuth and Orense, the founder of the Spanish Democratic Party. Like Kossuth, Orense lived as a politically persecuted exile in various large European cities. The penultimate chapter of this monograph deals with the main parallels and connections between 1867 and 1873.

The concluding chapter summarizes Semsey's various findings. The book also includes a thematic chronology and indexes of personal and place names. The research, based on a comparative methodology, reflects Semsey's extensive use of secondary literature in several languages, archival materials, and press materials. Her narrative contains little-known stories and interesting contributions to the history of Spanish-Hungarian relations. It illustrates but

does not overemphasize the problems and characteristics of Hungarian domestic politics of the time. For the moment, it has only been published in Hungarian, making it difficult for the international academic community to read it, and it would be worthwhile to publish it in English, Spanish, or Portuguese, as this would make it part of the international scholarly discourse.

Ádám Tibor Balogh
Eötvös Loránd University
baloghadam.bp@gmail.com

Multicultural Cities of the Habsburg Empire 1880–1914. Imagined Communities and Conflictual Encounters. By Catherine Horel. Budapest–Vienna–New York: CEU Press, 2023. 556 pp.

Catherine Horel is unquestionably one of the most outstanding non-Hungarian historians engaged in the study of the history of both Hungary and the entire Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Horel has published extensively in the field, including a monograph on the history of Budapest, a biography of Miklós Horthy, and some further books and studies on various aspects of the history of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. As a scholar who lives and works in Paris, she is a prominent member of the international community of historians, and she holds important institutional positions, among others in the Comité International des Sciences Historiques and several other professional bodies.

Catherine Horel's recent book is a unique product of history writing in our time. The program of transnational history writing, which seeks to transcend both the intellectual and the topical frameworks of the national paradigm, is now on the agenda. Still, relatively few positive examples may be mentioned for it. In addition, even the precise notion of a transnational historical paradigm is somewhat obscure, not to mention suitable methodologies.

Concerning the empires of the modern era (first and foremost the Habsburg Empire and the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy), one finds only a few comparative or transnational history narratives. This is regrettable, since these kinds of investigations would lessen the effects of the national and sometimes even the nationalist approaches to the study of the history of what was a substantially multinational, multicultural modern state and society. One explanation for the rarity of these kinds of studies is perhaps the challenges historians face as scholars who are accustomed to conceptualizations of their topical field within the frameworks of national historiographies. These conceptualizations have tended to predominate even when the national past in question constitutes an integral part of a once imperial state construction. Thus, anyone trying to embark from a transnational historical perspective in discussing the past of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy must make a concerted effort to avoid any commitment to a national and especially a nationalist historical viewpoint. Catherine Horel offers a good example of this kind of scholarship, as she manages to remain untouched by this epistemological bias.

The theme of the book is the town or the city. The precise way Horel approaches it may be labeled as transurban study, a strikingly new genre of

sorts in the field of urban history. This kind of study is not wholly unknown in the scholarly discourse, although these studies almost exclusively address the histories of the metropolises of the northern hemisphere. Small and middle-sized towns have been largely neglected by historians until recently. As far as the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy is concerned, only a few Austrian historians have devoted some attention to the problem in this way by adopting a comparative perspective (Wolfgang Maderthaner, Hannes Stekl, and Hans Heiss, for instance). These narratives, however, have focused especially or exclusively on the cultural settings and everyday life of these localities. At the same time, they have also been limited mostly to urban history in Cisleithania and have largely ignored urban history in Transleithania.

Catherine Horel's book is a pioneering work from at least three perspectives. First, she discusses the urban past of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy within a highly extensive comparative framework and with great attention to detail. She does this in part by choosing a somewhat shorter time period for her study (three and a half decades around the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries). This enables her to carry out a spatially extensive inquiry by focusing on many minute details of urban development on an empirical level. Her narrative resembles a microhistory narrative within a comparative framework. No similar undertaking has been accomplished in the field of urban history until recently, as the urban biography has been the dominant genre, an approach from which the town and the city are seen as entirely isolated spatial and social entities. Thus, urban historians rarely tend to place the town and the city in a comparative perspective with the explicit aim of seeking and finding more general patterns and explanations for the many particular developments going on within a single urban realm. Horel, however, breaks with this practice.

Secondly, historians who adopt a comparative perspective are usually content to rely entirely on secondary sources. This is in part a consequence of their inability to work in a multitude of relevant languages, which stands in fundamental contrast with the multicultural (multilingual) historical settings which are the subjects of study. Historians engaged in comparative research thus tend to use narratives available in one or a few world languages (English, German, or French), thereby failing to take into account the original narratives of national historiographies. Horel is an exception to this rule, as she reads and perhaps speaks almost every language used within the borders of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Indeed, her knowledge of this diverse array of languages may well make her unique in her field. The fact that she can draw on the relevant

primary sources and the historical narratives presented in the various national languages unquestionably adds to the merits of her narrative.

With regards to the main findings of the monograph, Horel initially clarifies that the midsize cities under discussion had multiethnic populations, meaning that several languages were in use. Thus, these cities offer a representative sample of the multicultural empire alongside the metropolises (Vienna and Budapest in particular). It might be worth mentioning a remark made by Stanislaus Joyce, James Joyce's brother, who referred to Trieste, where his great novelist brother lived for several years at the beginning of the twentieth century, as a "multiethnic salad."

Catherine Horel clearly strove to choose "typical" urban settlements for her inquiry, i.e., cities in which the striking structural diversity had actually existed, going even beyond the numerous native languages that were in everyday use. In other words, she chose urban communities that were as heterogeneous from the perspective of religious confessions as the empire itself. Accordingly, she decided to compare the following midsize cities with one another: Arad, Brünn (today Brno, Czech Republic), Czernowitz (today Chernivitsi, Ukraine), Fiume (today Rijeka, Croatia), Lemberg (today Lviv, Ukraine), Nagyvárad (today Oradea, Romania), Pozsony (today Bratislava, Slovakia), Sarajevo, Szabadka (today Subotica, Serbia), Temesvár (today Timișoara, Romania), Trieste, and Zagreb. These once Austrian-Hungarian cities are now found in seven different countries.

The main social and cultural characteristic of the midsize cities under discussion was that in spite of their diverse ethnic and national compositions, a single particular component of the local population was usually able to exercise decisive cultural and political authority. The possible variations in the ways in which power was exercised and contested, however, were wide. Sometimes, two ethnic communities could exercise authority on a more or less equal basis, for instance in Brno, where both the Moravian and the German populations wielded power. Most of the towns under discussion, however, followed a different pattern.

The main issue addressed in the book is how the existence of more than one ethnic group, living in the cities side by side, could shape and even determine urban life, both alongside and independently of class stratification. Or to put the question more precisely: in what forms and to what extent could these local societies actually integrate their inhabitants? With the aim of answering this question, Horel offers a detailed empirical examination of the problem of local school politics, autonomous confessional life, the intricate networks of civil

organizations (the associations), the many attempts to create and maintain an autonomous cultural infrastructure accessible to each of the ethnic communities separately, the many continuous efforts to control the urban public domain, political fights as indications of the actual multiethnic distribution of the population, and strivings to kindle a local sense of city patriotism and a local identity. As this list makes clear, Horel takes many issues into account to test the validity of her thesis statement, namely that despite all the centrifugal forces which heavily divided the urban populations everywhere in the monarchy at the time, the so called centripetal forces were also at work. These forces contributed to the integration (to some degree) of the diverse population into a local urban society that was unified at least on some level.

Horel ultimately concludes that, the diversity of these urban societies notwithstanding, mutual understanding and cooperation were still effective forces that historians cannot afford to ignore. The success of these forces, however, depended on the regional and local contexts, which differed significantly, especially in the Cisleithanian and Transleithanian contexts. As far as the former is concerned, the prevalence of a single colonization power (the German-speaking communities) proved not to be dominant in shaping or defining everyday life. Accordingly, beside the mass mobilization for a particular national project, other than the German one could also gain ground in these settings, mainly at the turn of the century. This factor created favorable positions for several non-German-speaking local forces in the local social and political hierarchy. Trieste offers a good example of this, as it was a flourishing city in which the Italian presence had the most influence, or one could mention Lemberg, where the Polish-speaking community prevailed, or Czernowitz, where Romanians and Ukrainians competed for control, or Sarajevo, where the Muslim and the Serbo-Croatian components of the town played key roles in managing the town life.

In Hungary, however, the officially forced national homogenisation policy did not leave any room for anything other than Hungarian (or Magyar) dominance over the other ethnic and linguistic groups, even in urban localities, where the ethnic Magyars actually represented only a minority (for instance in Pozsony and Temesvár). The deep difference between the two halves of the Monarchy in that regard go back to the special characteristics of the Hungarian national concept, the model for which was the French type nationalist conceptualization. This differed from the so-called *Volksstam* (“people’s tribe”) concept, which prevailed in the Cisleithanian part of the Monarchy. The latter provided some

real possibilities for the decentralization of local power and the representation of non-German national interests.

It would be a simplification, however, to explain these variations exclusively as consequences of the distinctively specific patterns which prevailed in the two halves of the Monarchy. Several local contexts also had an impact both on the intensity of the inherent tensions and the problems created by multilingualism and the multi-confessional makeup of the local population. Even the ways in which the conflicts were solved had some importance. Consequently, there were midsize cities in which the confrontations between or among the various ethnic and nationality components were sharper than the confrontations in other settlements. It is also true that not every ethnic segment was able to represent its own will on a public level with the same force. Jews, who were a presence in all the mid-size cities, were one of the social/ethnic/religious groups that were unable to exercise any serious political influence locally. Antisemitism, furthermore, was present everywhere. This followed in part from the fact that the assimilated Jews were usually thought to be supporters of stronger German influence, especially in the cities, where the rivalry between the non-German and German-speaking populations was acute (like in Brno). The Slovenes also played a similar secondary role behind Italians in Trieste, as did the Ukrainians in Lemberg facing the Polish rule.

The “culture of conflict” and the “conflict of cultures” fueled most of the community tensions in these urban settings. In addition to the role, they always had in setting the tone of the local public life, the integrative forces also fostered the creation of a kind of city identity or local patriotism. This local patriotism was tied to a prevailing sense of imperial loyalty, i.e., Habsburg patriotism. This element, however, was generally absent from the Transleithanian construct of identity. The establishment and maintenance of a national discourse always demanded active agency through rigorous local educational policies, and the ethnically-defined associations and cultural institutions created a physical infrastructure (theaters, museums, etc.). More than any other type of settlement, the city could thus become the place where openly political or easily politicized demands could appear in a visible form and could shape the public life of the citizenry. This explains why a comparative and transurban investigation is indispensable if we seek to arrive at a more nuanced understanding of the mentality of the citizens of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Catherine Horel’s amazingly informative and stimulating monograph opens a new chapter in the

urban history writing of Central Europe, as well as in the history of mentalities in this particular macroregion.

Gábor Gyáni
Research Centre for the Humanities
gyani.gabor@abtk.hu