

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.

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