



BOOK REVIEWS

Ottoman Law of War and Peace: The Ottoman Empire and its Tributaries from the North of the Danube. By Viorel Panaite. Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2019. xxiii+470 pp.

The first edition was a disaster. Diacritical marks were wrongly placed, the numbering of endnotes went so awry that it was almost impossible to couple the statements with their references, and the text badly needed proper editing. Nevertheless, we were using it since it was the only serious attempt available in English to define the status of the tributary states of the Ottoman Empire, and it offered many important insights into the ideological vocabulary used by the sultans in their communication with the outside world, not to mention the logic that shaped their thinking. Now, with the second edition, the content has finally found adequate form.

Viorel Panaite wrote his book for a Romanian public, and this was fortunate from some perspectives for the English version and unfortunate from others. Sometimes the non-Romanian reader wonders why some questions which seem commonplace to anyone familiar with the international secondary literature have to be discussed in detail and (the reader must remind himself that sometimes he also cannot avoid entering debates with his national historiography when writing for broader audiences) or why the Romanian version of specific terms in Ottoman political thought also has to be provided (some of the sources Panaite used were written in Romanian, which explains this detail). Nevertheless, the fact that the work was written for a non-Ottomanist public makes it a very thorough and clear introduction into how research on the Ottoman law of war and peace should be done. The book is also a useful handbook on the sources available on Ottoman political language.

The question Panaite aims to answer is not primarily concerned with an assessment of the Ottoman system of making politics in the international scene or, more specifically, creating and maintaining the tributary status from the present perspective of long-term “development of the nation” (which generations before him saw as their task). Rather, he wants to understand the attitude of the sultans on their own terms. His chapters offer a meticulous analysis of documents by focusing on their terminology, contrasting the notions found in the religious sources of Islamic thought and legal treatises with ideas found in the sultans’ correspondence, and identifying the logic according to

which the Ottoman state explained the legitimacy of its deeds. Thus, the image presented here is built on an admirable array of sources representing the various facets of the Ottoman way of understanding international power relations and the empire's place within them. At the same time, with his keen interest in the question of tributary states, Panaite also gives a voice to them and listens to how the tributary states reacted to the ideology of the the Ottoman state. This double perspective makes his survey even more intriguing.

The structure of the book by and large follows that of the first edition, but much has happened in the research concerning the Ottoman Empire and its tributaries in the more than twenty years since its first publication in 1997, so the second edition offers more not only in its form, but also in its content. The material used in the second edition highly exceeds the number of sources used for the previous version. Consequently, thanks in part to additional documentation, Panaite's theses become even more convincing, especially when it comes to controversies in Romanian historiography. For instance, Panaite offers a detailed discussion concerning the establishment of the two voivodates' tributary status and a lengthier explanation of why they should be seen as part of the empire. These debates offer an intriguing read and important lessons even for the readers who are not familiar with the works Panaite refutes. Panaite has written an excellent survey about Ottoman legal thought concerning war and peace, with particular emphasis on the status of the tributary principalities, even more specifically of Moldavia and Wallachia.

The question is whether Panaite's results can also be extrapolated to other Ottoman tributaries. In the chapter that promises a chronological survey of the process by which the tributary states submitted and accepted their status as tributary states, Panaite gives accounts of a number of events in other states and territories, discussing the various Greek and Balkan principalities, the Khanate of Crimea, Ragusa, and Transylvania. Later short-lived attempts to establish tributary states, such as the case of Cossack Ukraine, appear in other chapters in footnotes, while some territories, such as the Upper Hungarian Principality (or in its Turkish name, Middle Hungary) of Imre Thököly are given no attention at all. This is less of a problem, since the book does not promise a comprehensive analysis (although the last example is definitely north of the Danube, thus it is implied by the title). Throughout the book, Ragusa remains the most often cited example. Documents related to the city state are mentioned frequently as contrastive material or illustration for general statements concerning the use of legal terminology. For such a bulky volume, it would perhaps have been too

much to ask for even more, although Ragusa could have been a useful case to show how local interpretations could diverge from the Ottoman perspective concerning their status. The examples Panaite cites from the Moldavian and Wallachian cases are less suitable to show the potential of research on the double-faced self-representation of the Ottoman tributaries in two different international societies, both of which they claimed loyalty to.

In any case, the Ottoman attitude towards the tributaries was based on the same assumptions everywhere, and thus the legal vocabulary that Panaite examines in his analyses of the sources related to any of these specific territories enriches our knowledge and validates his point, even if the dissimilarities between the positions occupied by the specific states, mirrored by political practice, are left in the shadows, as he only addresses the terminology of the official documents. When it comes to the discussion of specific territories, however, we reach a weak point in Panaite's reconstruction. The most frustrating aspect of this for me, with my background in the research on Transylvania, is how little Panaite seems to know or, perhaps, care about this territory and its history. There have been long-running controversies in the Hungarian and Romanian secondary literature on Transylvania, plagued with mutual accusations of nationalist bias, but I can assure my reader that my objection here has nothing to do with this. Panaite fails to take into consideration some of the important findings from the Hungarian historiography, but he also does this with some of the relevant conclusions found in the Romanian secondary literature on Transylvania. Throughout the book, he mostly quotes the same five or six documents from the Transylvanian material, and although Sándor Papp's bulky collection of Transylvanian inauguration documents from the sixteenth century was published after the first edition of Panaite's monograph, it is remarkable that no single document is ever cited from it in the revised version. Whereas, as noted above, Panaite made liberal use of the sources of local origin related to Moldavia and Wallachia, in the case of Transylvania, he seems to have ignored both the Hungarian and the Latin sources (more accessible to a Romanian scholar). While he devotes considerable attention to Moldavia and Wallachia, it is hard to escape the impression that Panaite was simply less interested in Transylvania, a state with social, political, and cultural structures very different from the other two.

To mention but a few problematic cases, there might be points at which one could argue with Papp's conclusions in the abovementioned source publication (and various later papers), but to state that, after Süleyman I's rule, the princes were appointed only with sultanic *berats* (pp.268–69) is to show disregard for

the facts and extrapolate from the Moldavian and Wallachian cases. In the last two decades, a number of Hungarian and German historians have repeatedly pointed out at various conferences and in publications that in the first period of the Transylvanian principality, the members of the Szapolyai/Zápolya family saw themselves and were treated by the Ottomans as kings of Hungary and not as princes of Transylvania, a fact that is altogether disregarded in this survey (cf. pp.125–27). Cristina Feneşan's very thorough account of the changes in the sum of the Transylvanian tribute in the seventeenth century also seems to have escaped Viorel Panaite's attention, thus he claims that after István Báthory's rule, the sum remained the same until the principality was incorporated into the Habsburg Empire in 1699 (p.300). Of course, everyone has blind spots, and one cannot explore every minor segment of a question with equal thoroughness. The problem is that Viorel Panaite claims that his book is about the three states, and he suggests in more than half of the cases that his statements are valid for each of the three, while in most instances, his analysis focuses on Moldavia and Wallachia.

This is sad, especially because the monograph will serve as a handbook for students of the Ottoman Empire's tributary states, a function otherwise well deserved. The analyses Panaite offers on the Ottoman chancellery's vocabulary and legitimation techniques, the role of customs in the Empire's political system, the framework of the tributaries' legal status (including the privileges they enjoyed and the obligations they had to fulfil), and the turning points in the tributary status of Moldavia and Wallachia are new and convincing, and they will certainly provide a springboard for further in-depth research. I can only hope that readers will concentrate on these chapters and look for information concerning Transylvanian history elsewhere. If so, this monograph will be of great benefit for historians of southeastern Europe and the Ottoman Empire.

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Tábori sebesültellátás Magyarországon a XVI–XVIII. században [Care for the wounded in the field in Hungary in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries]. By Katalin Mária Kincses. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó, 2019. 180 pp.

Katalin Kincses' book offers a narrative of the history of care for the wounded in the field in Hungary in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries and situates this narrative in the larger context of European history. As she notes in her introduction, her work moves on the borders of several areas of the scholarly endeavor, including medical history, military history, cultural history, and the history of the sciences. This is one of the reasons why the subject has not been given the attention it merits in the earlier secondary literature. Kincses endeavors to address this oversight. In her monograph, using an array of interdisciplinary tools, she presents the history of medical care in the field in Hungary in the early modern era.

The book begins with a short historiographical introduction and then presents relevant antecedents from the Middle Ages (for instance the surgeons' guilds, which provided training, the appearance of surgeons in the army beginning in the thirteenth century, the development of field hospitals at the end of the fifteenth century, and the transformation of the hospitals that were run by the religious orders into secular hospitals in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries). Kincses then turns to a discussion of the advancements that were made in military technology in the early modern era, or in other words, the military revolution and its consequences and innovations in the military sciences, which were influenced in no small part by developments in the natural sciences and which, beginning in the seventeenth century, led to the foundation of military engineering schools and educational institutions which ensured higher levels of theoretical knowledge.

In the next longer chapter, Kincses presents developments in the medical sciences in the early modern era in part through a discussion of the endeavors of the major figures of the time (Paracelsus, Hans von Gersdorff, Ambroise Paré) and in part through a discussion of some of the major books (for instance, Hieronymus Bock's *Kreuterbuch*). She also calls attention to the importance of practical experience in the flourishing of surgery, in particular in Italy (names like Giovanni de Vigo and Bartolomeo Maggi come to mind). I cannot help but note that, given his importance, Hieronymus Brunschwig should have been discussed in the main text and not simply in a footnote.

By the sixteenth century, surgery had become the leading branch of the medical sciences because of the experiences doctors gathered with armies in the field and the many technical innovations. By the end of the seventeenth century, however, internal medicine had usurped its place, in part because it put theoretical questions in the foreground and in part because it built on clear knowledge of the anatomy. Kincses attempts to reconstruct the practices of surgery in Hungary during the era of the wars with the Ottoman Empire in part on the basis of monographs on surgery (which, regrettably, have survived in only a woefully incomplete and fragmented form). All over Europe, surgeons who worked for armies at the time could only perform their jobs if they were specifically entrusted and commissioned to do so. Thus, there were hardly enough of them to address the needs of a massive army.

The next chapter presents the history of care for the wounded in Hungary in the period of the Ottoman occupation by drawing on several specific examples, such as the siege of Eger in 1552, the camp hospitals of the Fifteen Years' War, and their plans. Kincses devotes particular attention to Miklós Zrínyi's plans for care for the wounded in the field, which are found in his writings on military strategy and the science of war. Kincses notes that Zrínyi was well acquainted with and made use of the contemporary European literature on military science, and thus he was very much aware of the issue of providing medical care for the wounded in the field.

In the next section, Kincses presents shifts in both organizational structures and attitudes which took place in the second half of the seventeenth century. She draws, in this discussion, on the writings of figures like Raimondo Montecuccoli and Luigi Ferdinando Marsigli. Surgeons, doctors, and pharmacists became indispensable parts of the army, as indicated by the fact that the Habsburg Army had physicians with the status of camp surgeon, and for the first time on the level of the regiment with the artillery. During the siege of Buda in 1686, a camp hospital was established on the Margaret Island, which also indicates the increasing importance of military health care.

During Rákóczi's War of Independence, the 1705 letters patent on the development of regular regiments and the 1707 *Regulamentum universale* were of tremendous importance from the perspective of military health care. Simon Forgách, Rákóczi's general, drew on the ideas of Zrínyi and the practices in the Habsburg army and had surgeons among his regiments. These surgeons were paid members of the military personnel, and this constituted an important innovation.

The last longer section of the book focuses on the reforms introduced by Joseph II and the Josephinian Military Academy of Surgery in Vienna. Kincses also touches on the Josephinum's wax figures, its collection of books, and the commemorative medals found in collections in Hungary which have some attachment to the Josephinum. In my assessment, in comparison with the earlier chapters, this chapter lacks an adequate presentation of the medical sciences at the time and the training and education provided for doctors and surgeons. Given the importance of the larger European context, it would have been worth mentioning the Prussian parallel, for instance alongside the Collegium medico-chirurgicum, the Pépinière in Berlin, which was a kind of "partner institution" of the Josephinum.

The amount of printed sources and the secondary literature on which Kincses has drawn in her research is impressive, but one still notes with some frustration that, in the case of the Hungarian secondary literature on medical history, some of the most recent publications went unused, even though they would have been relevant to the discussion. Kincses would have done well to have included the writings of Enikő Rüsz-Fogarasi, for instance, who has published on the history of hospitals in the Middle Ages and the early modern era, not to mention Zoltán Péter Bagi's essays on military health care during the Fifteen Years' War and the plan for a camp hospital and Péter Balázs's volumes on the eighteenth-century legal health regulations, which were valid for the entire empire. The works of András Oross on military history at the turn of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries also would have merited mention. Although Kincses draws on archival sources several times, additional archival research and the use of publications based on archival sources might have added a degree of nuance to her discussion. The medical history of the siege of Eger in 1552, for example, is familiar to us not only from Tinódi's narrative. Archivist István Sugár wrote an exhaustive study of the barber-surgeons of the siege, and he studied the different types of wounds (and thus also the roles of firearms) on the basis of a 1553 application for aid for the wounded.

All in all, Katalin Kincses' monograph draws attention to a subject which so far has received little attention in the secondary literature on medical and military history. Her work may well form the foundation for further research on the topic. The chapters offer new insights into the changes which took place in the conditions of the army, developments in medicine in the early modern era, and the continuous interaction of the two in medical care for the military in the field.

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Styrian Witches in European Perspectives: Ethnographic Fieldwork.

By Mirjam Mencej. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017. 454 pp.

It may seem self-evident that the study of witchcraft is one of the most eminent fields in which various interdisciplinary endeavors have intermingled in both historical and contemporary contexts. This has been particularly true since the 1970s, a decade that bore witness to the anthropological turn in the discipline of history, in which witchcraft studies played a significant role, and extended the methodological toolkit and framework of historical studies and brought the individual agents of history (people) to the forefront. This shift explains in no small part why Peter Burke could famously state in 1993 that “witchcraft has moved from the periphery of historical attention to a place near the center.” From this point onwards, history has had even stronger connection to anthropology, which it should maintain, since modern anthropology can investigate existing analogue structures, modified by time, which can be relevant to historical investigations. Therefore, the works of anthropologists who are exploring the contemporary and present continuations of witchcraft are indispensable to any subtle understanding of the constantly reoccurring personal roles and social tensions brought to the fore by witchcraft, which in varying forms has persisted over time.

The work of Mirjam Mencej is an excellent example of this melting pot of social sciences (social history, cultural and social anthropology, ethnography, etc.). Although her work is rooted in many fields, the applied methodology is mainly anthropological and ethnographical (semi-structured personal interviews), with the extensive use of both historical and contemporary parallels from the available secondary literature (pp.23–33). This conforms well to her focus on the continuation of witchcraft and its contemporary and transformed forms and manifestations. Her study sheds light on the present status of a post-Yugoslavian hinterland while also emphasizing many local social aspects of the traditions of witchcraft. Thus, the work can be regarded as a reference point for historical investigations as well, since it suggests that traditional forms of witchcraft still endure in this region.

One of the most important virtues of Mencej’s monograph is the combination of the empirical and theoretical approaches towards the study of witchcraft. As an overall remark, the reader is grateful for the frequent citations from the sources and interviews, which are so abundant that the quoted texts can be seen as an incorporated source edition, which is fortunate because of the

language barriers. However, because of the colloquiality of the cited texts, they are rather hard to follow in some cases, though they nonetheless persuasively suggest that, for those people who are in the focus, witchcraft is an everyday narrative and explanatory system.

Mencej's study is based on semi-structured interviews with direct informants recorded in 2000–2001 and 2013–2015 by a number of participants (the main researcher, university students, etc.) in a collective research study. The fieldwork was conducted in the undeveloped rural region of Styria in northeastern Slovenia, a remote area with a decreasing population, limited economic opportunities, and major problems concerning the accessibility of general public infrastructure (for example, public transportation) and essential services (education, healthcare). It is a highly self-sufficient, close-knit agricultural society which was only recently (and partly) reached by the processes associated with modernization. Because of this, the study had to grapple with the general problems faced in contemporary witchcraft studies (the high age of the people interviewed, the relatively fast transformation of the outer cultural milieu, etc.). However, since many interviews (260) were done and a relatively dense body of material was available from many settlements, Mencej's study addressed these problems.

As a starting point, Mencej describes a standard type of historical witchcraft with the general features (shapeshifting witches, inflicting *maleficium* on different levels etc.) characteristic of the Habsburg territories and a relatively late decriminalization process in the middle of the eighteenth century. She examines the major discourses on local witchcraft (witchcraft, Christian, rational, new age). Although this may seem self-evident, these narrative explanations intermingle. One should note that the role of the devil in cases of witchcraft in this region is surprisingly uninfluential, and the matters of witchcraft are essentially interpersonal and less communal. Furthermore, as Mencej's discussion of these discourses reveals, one of the most significant issues concerns the belief in witchcraft itself. Mencej points out that even the most skeptical people may commit acts the meanings of which seem to be shaped by the narratives on witchcraft, though all the while they deny their beliefs (for example, by stating that the act of hiding an egg on someone else's property to counteract malicious acts against fertility of animals is not witchcraft, but when it is committed not as a response to a malicious act, it is witchcraft).

As a general statement and main idea, Mencej states that witchcraft is of social origin and she claims that it should be discussed as such. So, within this framework the notion of bewitchment is an explanatory strategy for

misfortune and malfunctioning social interactions. Mencej differentiates between three classes or types of witches and builds her book around them. Her first and main category is the “neighborhood witch,” to whom she attributes the cases of “normal” bewitchment between people who are acquainted with each other. Her second category is the “village witch,” who is accused of having committed acts of witchcraft or is acknowledged as a witch by the whole or a major part of the community. She notes that the people interviewed usually used these individuals as scapegoats who allegedly had caused harm to the whole village (for example, weather problems) and usually had distinctive physical signs (such as a limp, ugly features, eyebrows grown together, etc.), a bad family reputation, and a lower social and economic status. They were also believed to own magical objects (for example, magical books). As a third category, Mencej describes the “night witches,” which was the least “personalized” category. The so-called night witches seem to more resemble figures from folk beliefs who cause people supernatural problems and often lose their way (for example, they walk around in familiar places or cannot find their way out of the bushes).

In the most intriguing sections of her work, Mencej introduces the smallest locality and narrowest kinship aspects of witchcraft (neighborhood witches) and dwells on its complex connections to everyday life. In doing so, she defines the most common forms of local conflict situations and their connections to economic interactions, family ties, and marital problems. She also considers the common objects or targets of witchcraft from the perspectives of their economic importance in the household (for example, crops and livestock, especially cows) and their vulnerability due to poor living conditions (for example, the health of children). Offering a colorful tableau of various acts of bewitchment, Mencej enumerates the magical practices and modes of malicious acts, separating them by the acts of *maleficum* (touching, looking, speaking, and other magical practices) and their other manners (for example, acts of speech such as praising or threatening). Her discussion of these practices and the beliefs concerning them offers insights into the social ambient of the communities and the manifold ways in which witchcraft narratives are constructed and the various functions they serve, which are neatly emphasized in the book.

Many of these acts are embedded in a historical context (see, for example, the discussion of the evil-eye: pp.142–48.) or are shown to have various parallels (for example, magical milking, etc.). All in all, the most captivating elements of

the presentation of these local beliefs and practices are the explanations of the functions, roles, and physical and psychological effects of witchcraft. Mencej describes many problems, for example, whether the acts allegedly committed are mere elements of the narratives constructed by the accusers or victims and exist only on the level of discourses. She points out that even the physically possible and explainable practices can be perceived and presented as supernatural. For example gathering dew or moisture with a sheet of linen can be seen as an act which causes damage to crops, though in the biological sense it really can do harm when it is done in the right time. Furthermore, even simple crimes committed out of envy (such as poisoning animals) can be described within the context of the witchcraft discourse, even if there are rational explanations. Like the witches are generally accused to turn into toads as shapeshifters and approaching houses and barns, and cause harm on many levels. But it is true that the phlegm of toads or salamanders can cause different conditions in animals and humans. However, Mencej also points out that it is possible that some of the practices are actually happening or could have happened, since some of the acts are even confessed or admitted, especially in case of counter acts (for example, killing the toad-witches and put them on the end of the forks near to borders), or generally perceived less harmful acts (for example, someone claim the she has an evil-eye). Mencej also includes an interesting discussion of mental disorders and psychosomatic diseases, which can be understood as responses to or repercussions of imagined bewitchments (for example, because of the severe depression of one family member, the general conditions of a household can worsen), and she explains how the consequences of diseases can fall back onto the actual accuser. And this is connected to accusations which are continuously being raised, since the alleged signs of bewitchment, acts committed in response to a perceived act of witchcraft, and even the ritual burning of evidence are constantly alternating between victims, accusers, witches, and their helpers, the “unwitchers,” and sometimes these acts create physical evidence.

Mencej astutely observes that any attempt to capture, in a scholarly monograph, the entirety of witchcraft in a region is a complicated undertaking: it is rather difficult to write synthetically of the various aspects of witchcraft. She claims that the common idea behind these social acts is the notion of “othering,” the belief that the deeds and persons perceived as malicious should be of another nature, and that this other nature differentiates these individuals from the majority and can explain all problems which arise in a community.

The difficulty of this task notwithstanding, Mencej's efforts to describe this composite system of beliefs and acts in one comprehensive work have been fruitful. Its complexity makes her book original, since she has not only written a book about witchcraft in a region of Slovenia but has also managed to provide a thick description of everyday life which offers a good example to scholars of other regions.

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The Habsburg Civil Service and Beyond: Bureaucracy and Civil Servants from the Vormärz to the Inter-War Years. Edited by Franz Adlgasser and Fredrik Lindström. Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2019. 300 pp.

The historiography on the Habsburg Monarchy has undergone significant shifts in recent decades, including a reevaluation of the role nationalism played in society and a revision of the economic, social, and political disintegration of the empire prior to the Great War. *The Habsburg Civil Service and Beyond*, the result of a workshop organized in 2015 in Vienna, contributes to an understanding of these shifts and proposes new perspectives on the history of the civil service. The empirical case studies in the volume, assembled in a more or less chronological order, reflect on two key issues identified in the two introductory chapters (by Fredrik Lindström and Gary B. Cohen). One goal is to overcome “the dominance of nation-state centred historiography in East-Central Europe,” which undermines “the foundation for a proper Habsburg historiography” (p.25). The problem of methodological nationalism is that national and nationalist historiography builds on an analytical category—the nation—that does not spring from scientific concerns but rather from ideological and political influence. Furthermore, the focus on the institutional framework of the Habsburg conglomerate state (multilayered both horizontally and vertically) allows the contributors to the volume to concentrate on the relationship between state and society. Three points stand out in this regard: governmental structures seem to have been more dynamic and adaptable than previously thought, there was a growing popular demand for new services on the part of the state, and the relationship between governmental authority and the citizenry fundamentally changed due to increasingly variegated civil society, political parties, and interest groups.

Many of the case studies adopt a social history perspective and describe recruitment patterns and professionalization tendencies in the civil service as well as the social origin, social status, and prestige of the bureaucrats themselves. The common rationale is to provide “biographical and collective biographical research on individuals and groups of civil servants,” which is missing from the works of pioneers such as Waltraud Heindl and Karl Megner (p.7). The micro-level analysis of civil servants outlines considerable cultural and social commonalities in both parts of the Habsburg Monarchy in a manner that helps establish the Habsburg perspective beyond the currently dominant national frameworks. For

instance, in terms of the connection between educational qualification, title of nobility, and career perspectives, legally trained civil servants (*Konzeptsbeamter*) in Moravia and Silesia (the chapter by Andrea Pokludová) produced patterns similar to the patterns which prevailed in the high civil service corps of the Hungarian ministries (the chapter by Julia Bavouzet). Accordingly, noble or aristocratic origin represented a valuable asset at the beginning of one's career, but the influence of social origin faded in senior positions, and work performance mattered more in career advancement. The relative importance of family background, family ties, and networks also made possible the survival of the pre-1848 elite in the era of the Dualist Monarchy, as Judit Pál points out in the case of Transylvania. The list of attributes attached to the impending nomination of a lord-lieutenant in Arad sums up the qualities associated with civil servants: "practical knowledge of public administration, excellent personal abilities, distinguished family and social ties, independent financial status, complete trustworthiness in politics and good sense in leading and handling public life" (p.162). Social expectations, nonetheless, put an often unbearable financial burden on the rank and file in the civil service (appropriate housing, clothing, keeping a servant, and so forth) and could create a financial barrier to entry into the profession, much as in the case of independent judges in the Austrian administration.

There were considerable non-bureaucratic actors at play in the evolution of the civil service on the micro-level. One, of course, was politics. For instance, the Young Czech party regularly tried to intervene to ensure favorable decisions concerning the president and higher officials of the supreme court in Bohemia. According to Martin Klečáček, the financial difficulties faced by lower level judges made them seek help wherever possible, and political parties welcomed these demands. Because of the rather vague promotion procedures, "judges became, more or less voluntarily, the hostages of political parties, their deputies, and ministers" (p.127). Non-state experts also interfered with the administrative apparatus, as Peter Becker observes. The complex interdependence among the government, the provinces, political parties, interest groups, and the populace made the administration seek expert opinions from non-state actors in a bid to fill gaps in the state's knowledge of itself. The debate on who the "lay persons" were according to civil servants reveals a great deal about the functioning of the state administration itself: the problem with technical experts was their assumed permeation of subjectivity in decision making and the perception that they lacked a sense of responsibility. This view rested on the notion of a strong link between objectivity and non-partisanship, each of which were reserved

solely for legally trained bureaucrats. Becker's conclusion is relevant for the whole volume: "The growing interdependence of social, economic and state stakeholders was a consequence of technological changes, the complexity of supply systems, the expansion of participation in the educational sector and the overall challenge of balancing a plethora of competing interests in the provision of public good." (p.256). Although civil servants pledged to be non-partisan and neutral bureaucrats, they remained part of the social and political networks.

The only shortcoming of *The Habsburg Civil Service and Beyond* is that it fails to provide a comprehensive account of developments in the Habsburg Monarchy. Some of the case studies are firmly embedded in their own national historiography and provide glimpses into the history of the civil service in a given region. Thus, the individual contributions together form a mere comparative history of state bureaucracy, an inapt approach given the theoretical standards set in the introductory chapter by Lindström. Still, the volume is a welcome contribution to Habsburg historiography. It provides a fresh look into the scholarship on the civil service in Austria-Hungary and successfully sets the agenda for further research.

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Az uradalom elvesztése: Nemesi családok a 19. századi Békés megyében [The loss of the estate: Noble families in Békés County in the nineteenth century]. By Adrienn Szilágyi. Budapest: Hungarian Academy of Sciences Research Center for the Humanities, Institute of History, 2018. 380 pp.

With this monograph, which draws heavily on basic research, Adrienn Szilágyi offers several insights and conclusions which represent an important step forward in the social history of county elites in Hungary. She uses an array of methodologies and approaches in her quest to determine where the nobility of the county in the southeastern corner of today's Hungary was recruited from and how a conglomerate of large estates in the hands of a single family functioned, in particular with regard to the needs of individual family members for credit. A question also relevant to the recruitment of the nobility concerns the kinds of marriage strategies that were typically used by the county nobility.

The volume opens with a three-pillar historiographical introduction which summarizes the main findings and insights (mostly from the scholarship bearing on Hungary) in the history of the nobility, the history of the institution of the noble estate, and historical demography, primarily of relevance to Hungary. The chapter entitled “A Study of the Certified Nobility in Békés County” begins on page 39. It is the first chapter which is not essentially introductory in its function. Szilágyi draws on sources from 1730 and, in particular, the period after 1790 to determine where the nobles who came to the county (357 people) heralded from. The second longer chapter, “The Estates and Large Estate Owners of Békés County,” explains the genesis of Harruckern's “empire,” which covered five sixths of the county. Szilágyi shows how the endeavors of the Harruckern family and the workings of the county were intricately intertwined and how this remained the case in the first half of the nineteenth century. From the point of view of the social history of the local elite, the distinction of being a member of a noble family of non-Hungarian origin was important. While the group of so-called “integrated” nobles took part in the life of the county (in particular the Wenckheim and Bolza families), the so-called absentee nobles resided in Vienna and profited off the incomes of their estates, but otherwise had few ties to the county (Trauttmansdorff).

In the third thematic section, entitled “Private Administration in Public Administration,” Szilágyi presents the family networks and careers of the heirs. She offers two analyses which are important from the perspective of social history. She analyses the family gatherings of the Harruckern heirs in the period

between 1776 and 1853. This is the first analysis in the secondary literature of the system used by the family to make decisions and, essentially, function, a system which was in use for decades. As the estates and sometimes residences were in Békés County, it seems perfectly likely that the sites where negotiations were held were also in Békés County, but as of 1808, the family archive was held in Pest, as “governance from a distance hampers effective administration” (p.127). The chapter also examines how the shared elements of the estates were administrated and how their incomes were used. In the interests of cutting costs on the estates, they used officers who were paid out of common funds (two fiscal officers, one treasurer, one archivist, one surveyor, and two liveried attendants). The incomes from the commonly owned livestock went into the family coffer, and these monies could be used by the members of the family as capital available as credit, or in other words, as a kind of family bank. Thus, the members of the family were able to avoid usurers, and though they paid six percent on their loans, at the family gatherings, no one actually paid strict attention to the payment of interest or installments, so most of the money actually simply went “missing” (p.162).

One of the other interesting findings presented in the book concerns the estate structure of the county. The resettlement and revitalization of Békés County in the eighteenth century was essentially connected to one large landowning family, the Harruckern family, and this had far-reaching consequences even in the first half of the nineteenth century. Instead of a real, complexly layered aristocratic society, in the case of Békés County, we find one large client-building estate that exerted a strong influence on the county administration. The personnel and staff of the Harruckern estate and the staff of the county administration were intricately intertwined. In the subchapter entitled “Leases, or Emolument Lands,” Szilágyi offers a series of examples showing how members of the county administration could lease land from heirs as a kind of salary supplement, though these lands could be taken back at any time. As a result, there was widespread cronyism and nepotism, which, the sources suggest, may have been common knowledge, and other county members looked down on these office bearers because they were beholden to the Harruckern family.

In the fourth chapter, Szilágyi continues her discussion of this program. She presents the legal background of the sale of property in the late feudal system and then offers a history of a specific instance of indebtedness followed by sale. In the case she presents, the Stockhammer family of Moravia encumbered their estates in Békés County with all their debts. The Harruckern heirs protested

against this, but in vain. They had no money to purchase the debts, and the new legal order, which was often based on insider interests and which was considered stronger, triumphed over the old feudal order. As one consequence of this process, Móric Wodianer, a banker from Pest, came to the county as a new large-estate owner. But as an analysis of the circle of the smaller estate owners who purchased from the estates shows, these owners of smaller estates, as the followers of the families that were heirs to the Harruckerns, appeared at the family gatherings as estate attorneys, fiscal officers, and sometimes even creditors so that, as soon as the opportunity arose, they would be able to use their monopolies on information and buy themselves into the Stockhammer estates. From then on, they took part in these family gatherings, as the gains made by (for instance) Tamás Csepcsányi, Zsigmond Omaszta, Antal Szombathelyi, József Beliczay, János Hellebrandt, and Kajetán Simay illustrate.

In the last three chapters of the monograph, Szilágyi again uses more complex social history methods. While in the earlier sections of the book one of the strengths of her discussion is the thorough scrutiny to which she subjects of a body of sources which either had not previously been made the subject of study or which is simply difficult to gain access to, here her work merits praise for the manner in which she uses an array of very different kinds of sources. In the chapter entitled “The Estate Owners and Estate Relations of Békés County” she makes the prudent decision to draw on sources from the period after 1850, including for instance the 1895 statistics concerning agriculture. By doing so, she stretches the chronological range of her inquiry by another century and offers the reader a detailed portrait of the estate-owning elites of the county. In 1893, the order of the estate owners on the basis of the sizes of their estates, from largest to smallest, was the following: Wenckheim, Wodianer, Károlyi, Blanckenstein, and Almásy: “By the end of the century, essentially only the heirs to the Harruckern estate and the noble families with ties to this estate remained as large estate owners” (p.229).

In the next chapter, entitled “The Multi-positional Local Noble Elite in the County,” Szilágyi offers an analysis from four perspectives: 1) county and estate positions on the basis of cash incomes, 2) social status as reflected by forms of address, 3) the sizes of estates, and 4) the incomes of the estates. She divides the county elite into four different groups. In harmony with the conclusions she has proposed so far in her discussion, here too she confirms that the county nobility was strikingly small from the point of view of its numbers, but the new individuals who were rising to the top were increasingly dominant.

In the last chapter, which is particularly exciting, Szilágyi examines “Marital Relations of the County Lower Nobility between 1790 and 1848.” Her demographic and social history analysis persuasively refutes several conclusions which have become clichés in the secondary literature. While the earlier secondary literature suggested that there was very little exogamy in the feudal order, Szilágyi shows that in the case of Békés County, this was not the case. She examines 588 marriages, two thirds of which were held between 1830 and 1848. The marriages were usually held on site and “between nobles and non-nobles” (p.225). She summarizes her conclusion strikingly, according to which, in Békés County, “feudal exogamy and local endogamy” were common. Even in the case of the marriages among the elite in the county, only roughly half of these members of the elite had married into in the “network of relatives” (p.259).

The analyses offered by Szilágyi are consistently accompanied by useful summaries. The book also contains 29 charts, two illustrations, three maps, and a large illustration of the relationships of the family networks to the estates.

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Deszkafalak és potyavacsorák: Választói magatartás Pesten a Tisza Kálmán-korszakban [Plank walls and freebee dinners: Voter behavior in Pest in the era of Kálmán Tisza]. By Péter Gerhard. Budapest: Korall, 2019. 371 pp.

How do social circumstances or social background influence the choices people make when they vote? In his recent book, historian Péter Gerhard focuses on this question and other issues involving voting habits and trends. As one of the most relevant fields within political science and political sociology, clearly these concerns have not escaped the attention of scholars, but Gerhard raises these questions in the context of a period in the history of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy when only a small percentage (6–7 percent) of the population could vote, and those who voted did so in open elections. According to the prevailing image of elections in the Dualist Era among laymen (an image which is based in no small part on depictions of the elections in works of contemporary literature), the process involved manipulation and corruption. Among historians, however, over the course of recent decades, numerous new perspectives have been taken into consideration, and a much more nuanced understanding of this image has emerged. Gerhard has contributed to this with his research, in which he has focused on Budapest and the elections to the national assembly in three of the voting districts of Budapest (Belváros, Terézváros, and Ferencváros-Kőbánya) in 1878, 1881, and 1884.

Gerhard's investigation, which draws heavily on the theoretical literature in political sociology and political science, seeks first and foremost to draw a map of the social status of voters and the party preferences of the various social groups and their attitudes towards the prevailing social relations. He also examines the roles of the people and authorities who represented (local) power.

One of the most strikingly innovative features of the monograph is the groups of sources on which the examination draws and the systematic way in which Gerhard compares them. The foundation of the discussion is a database which is built on three kinds of documents (voter registries, election records, and voting lists). Clearly, these sources made it possible for Gerhard to provide a quantitative analysis. He does not content himself merely with these sources, however, as a structural analysis will not capture individual decisions which, in the case of voting trends, necessarily add shades of nuance to the general image that emerges on the basis of statistics. Gerhard recognizes this methodological

problem and complements his analysis with two case studies in which he draws on ego-documents (diaries, letters) and articles from the press at the time.

Gerhard essentially approaches the questions he raises from two methodological perspectives. First, drawing in part on tendencies in the sociological study of elections, he follows a tendency which began to emerge prominently in historical research in England in the 1960s, which used quantitative analyses to examine voting habits from the point of view of the social circumstances of the individual groups of voters. Second, he borrows from the trend in the historiography which takes into consideration the various “turns” and their relevance to the study of elections. These works tended to focus on the cultural turn and usually examined the symbols and the language used in political campaigns. In his discussion of the campaigns, Gerhard also uses the methodology inspired by the spatial turn.

The title of the book (“plank walls and freebee dinners”) indicates one of Gerhard’s basic premises, namely that campaigns had a decisive effect on voter behavior, as did efforts to mobilize voters and techniques used by those in power to exert influence. This idea also finds expression in the structure of the book. After having familiarized his reader with the theoretical framework of his investigation, Gerhard offers two chapters (the second and third) in which he provides a detailed picture of the legal and social context.

The fourth chapter offers narrative portraits of the individuals who ran as candidates in the elections in question, the distinctive aspects of the campaigns, and the events which took place on election day. Gerhard analyzes the campaigns and the efforts to mobilize voters from the perspective of uses of space. How did the authorities and the various groups of voters try to influence and monitor space? What roles did public and private spaces play in the course of the election campaigns? Gerhard comes to the conclusion that, with the exception of some events organized by the opposition, the events of the campaigns were limited largely to semi-public and private spaces. The “street,” as it were, was not as important as a political space at the time. The explanation for the limitation of events to semi-public and private spaces lies in the fact that this allowed the representatives of power to maintain control over the events surrounding the elections, which included opportunities to give voice to political opinion. However, public spaces still played two important roles in the campaigns and elections. They provided sites for candidates to make symbolically important public appearances and they also served as places where mass support found expression, for instance in flags, posters, and processions.

In his discussion of these questions, Gerhard considers the issue of maintaining order on the day of the election, a task in which the police, the military, and even men chosen by the individual parties took part. In order to ensure that the elections could take place smoothly and confrontations and fights could be avoided (and non-voters could be kept distant), one of the most important tasks was simply keeping the different voting camps separate (with the construction of plank walls or barriers). In the course of the elections on which Gerhard focuses in his investigation (with the exception of one), there were no incidents of violence. This was thanks to the professional conduct of the authorities and the parties, which worked together with them.

Additional campaign elements were used, alongside the other factors which influenced the outcomes of the elections. The local representatives of the parties (so-called “*honoráciorok*,” or “honoraries”) were responsible for the coordination of these efforts. These honoraries contributed to the campaign and the election process in several ways, ranging from the selection of the individual candidates (through the organization of the campaign) to participation in the electoral committees. Though the nuanced techniques used in political campaigns began to emerge around the turn of the century, the people behind these efforts already had a wide range of tools to mobilize voters. They organized dinners, for instance, which were intended to sway voters in part by offering them food and drink.

The analysis of voter behavior in the fifth chapter is, in light of all this, understandable, as are the two case studies in the sixth chapter. Gerhard examines the groups of voters from several perspectives (for instance profession, place of residence, and age), and he uncovers interconnections between the ways in which people voted and their social status.

With this examination, the book brings us closer to an understanding of the kinds of considerations which influence the ways in which people vote, a question which is of concern to many people today. More specifically, are people more swayed by what one might term “rational” considerations, or are they influenced by “emotional” factors? Are they swayed by social or political pressures, or do they sometimes seek simply to conform to the social circles within which they move? Since the elections were open, the last two questions can be discussed, as the analysis of the votes cast by office holders illustrates. Gerhard also offers insights into the ritual nature of the elections and their distinctive choreography, which made the whole process a kind of community event. According to Gerhard, those who refrained from voting both rejected

this ritual and refused to allow their political views to become a matter of public knowledge. Given this, one cannot help but find particularly interesting his conclusion that the least active people in this process were office holders of high status and members of the political and scientific elites.

The virtues of the Gerhard's inquiry notwithstanding, one cannot help but note a significant shortcoming. In a discussion of voter behavior, it would have been essential to have noted that the frameworks within which information concerning politics and political parties was communicated differed dramatically from the frameworks in the rest of the country, and these frameworks exerted an important influence on perceptions of both political issues and the individual parties.

Péter Gerhard's book constitutes a major contribution to our understanding of the political culture of the time by offering a rigorous look at the behavior of a segment of voters in the capital city during the Dualist Era. Furthermore, the book is interesting and enjoyable in no small part because of the excellent pictures, maps, and tables found in the appendix.

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Men under Fire: Motivation, Morale and Masculinity among Czech Soldiers in the Great War, 1914–1918. By Jiří Hutečka. Oxford–New York: Berghahn, 2019. 288 pp.

Jiří Hutečka's new volume contributes to the recent trend in the historiography of investigating the history of World War I from the perspective of the common man. He positions his work into a rather major gap in the historiography. It examines the combat experience of Habsburg soldiers from a gender perspective. Unfortunately, military history studies published in of about East Central Europe has focused for the most part on operational maneuvers and has neglected the war of the "common soldier." Only a handful of pioneering studies have focused on the gender aspects of the conflict, and these studies almost exclusively discussed the role of women in the conflict. In the historiography of the war from the perspective of the Habsburg forces, as Hutečka rightly remarks, "gender identities fall silent when the firing starts."

The main aim of this volume is to fill this gap and challenge the traditional oversimplified explanations of the behavior of Habsburg soldiers. It seeks to overcome the dual framework which interprets their actions in the duality of imperial loyalty and national identity. The volume analyzes, instead, how the Czech soldiers' gender identity influenced their attitudes, behavior, feelings, and morale during the war. To investigate this field, Hutečka uses published and unpublished memoirs, diaries, and letters, many of them have been only available in small, regional collections.

The book is divided into six major chapters. The first, entitled "Tournament of Manliness," discusses the mobilization of Austro-Hungarian soldiers in the Bohemian lands. The book provides a new explanation of the generally positive reaction of Czech recruits to the call of the Habsburg authorities in July 1914. It argues that people enlisted voluntarily in massive numbers because serving in the military was an integral part of the contemporary perception of masculinity. Fulfilling one's military duty could cement or even enhance a man's status in society, while remaining on the sidelines could endanger his position in the male hierarchy. Hutečka argues, for example, that industrial workers who stayed at home were losers in this tournament of manliness, while young student volunteers could achieve "full" adulthood earlier than in peacetime.

The second chapter, "Compromises of Manliness," discusses the experiences of common soldiers after they had entered military service. It argues that new recruits constantly had to reconcile their everyday experiences with their pre-

war perceptions of their masculinity. Due to the nature of military service, these men constantly lost control over their lives, thus losing one of the most important characteristics of their understanding of masculinity. The soldiers' eating habits, lodgings, and everyday routines were all determined by their superiors. Meanwhile, on the home front, women took over many "male" roles, thus endangering the soldiers' positions in society.

The third chapter, entitled "Transformation of Manliness," examined the responses of the soldiers to these challenges. Hutečka argues that comradeship developed among the soldiers. This could also be interpreted as a means of resolving this conflict between hegemonic masculinity and the realities of war.

In the following section, "Degradation of Manliness," the book discusses how the different practices of the Austro-Hungarian army led to the deterioration of the soldiers' morale. It claims that oppressive practices used within the military hierarchy offended the Czech soldiers' notions of their masculinity more than it did their national identity. For example, corporal punishment and the distrust of Czech recruits threatened the masculine identities of these soldiers. This was especially disturbing, because the elite of the Czech lands perceived the Czechs as the most civilized people of the empire, a nation whose members should not be disciplined with barbaric means. Similarly, their warrior self-image was deeply offended by constant accusations of cowardice and treason.

The fifth chapter, "Venue of Masculinity," investigates how soldiers' masculinity was challenged on the home front. It highlights, for example, the ways in which economic problems at home also profoundly affected the masculine identity of the soldiers on the fronts. Men stationed far from their homes were not able to fulfill their primarily male role as providers for their families. They could not oversee their households, and as they were absent, they could not monitor their wives' fidelity. Thus, their fundamental male role as father and husband conflicted with their identities as masculine warriors.

The last chapter discusses the combat experiences of the Czech soldiers on the frontline. It argues that soldiers did not universally embrace the concept of "glorious combat," but many of them perceived their first encounter with the enemy, "the baptism of fire," as a test of manliness. However, after four years of intense fighting, most of them rejected the masculine ideals of the propaganda. The most striking examples of this phenomenon were the large numbers of self-inflicted wounds. At the end of the war, soldiers were willing to hurt their own bodies (which were important symbols of their masculinity) to

escape the hardships of war. Hutečka argues that this act helped them to regain some measure of control over their destinies.

Hutečka concludes that the war which was waged in 1914–1918 was one “immense collective disappointment and shock” for the fighting men. At the beginning of the war, the enlisted soldiers were told that they would attain or retain their hegemonic masculinity status. In reality, the conflict profoundly undermined their position in society. This was true of all the Habsburg soldiers, but certain aspects (accusations of treason, being stationed far from home, etc.) effected the Czech soldiers particularly harshly. Thus, these people were lost by the Habsburg authorities not only as Czechs, but also as men.

Men under Fire is a well-written, thoughtful, and refreshing analysis. It applies a pioneering method and provides interesting and thought-provoking insights into the Habsburg soldiers’ experiences during the war. The findings of the book are convincing and open new fields for further investigation.

There are a few minor points, however, with which one might take issue. First, the book aims to overcome the nationalist approach of the historiography, but it is only partly successful in this effort. While his book convincingly provides alternative explanations of the behavior of soldiers, it still mostly analyses their actions within a national framework. Thus *Men under Fire* does not tell us a universal story about the Habsburg soldiers but rather explains why and how Czech soldiers were different (or not different) from soldiers belonging to other ethnic groups of the empire.

Second, Hutečka had to confront the problems caused by the lack of adequate primary sources. Due to lower levels of literacy, fewer ego-documents (especially diaries and letters) were produced by the Habsburg soldiers than their British or German comrades. Moreover, as Hutečka observes, these documents have never been systematically collected. Consequently, the book, like most studies on the region, often has to rely on post-1918 recollections. Hutečka tries to use these sources carefully, but sometimes he had to base his interpretation on these admittedly unreliable texts.

Despite these minor points, Jiří Hutečka’s recent volume is a very valuable and inspirational contribution to contemporary scholarship. His book is a must-read for historians interested in World War I in East Central Europe and scholars examining gender roles in armed conflicts.

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The Fortress: The Great Siege of Przemyśl. By Alexander Watson. Allen Lane, 2019. 333 pp.+index.

Last year saw the publication of a book by the British historian Alexander Watson, well known as an author of many academic articles and monographs on World War 1. This time, Watson has decided to write about the Siege of Przemyśl in 1914–1915. This topic has long merited discussion in a major academic publication. Watson has used a wide range of sources, analyzing materials and books in many languages, including German, Polish, Hungarian, Russian, and Ukrainian. Without a doubt, his use of books and documents in this array of languages has allowed him to present the whole context of the history of the fortress during World War I, including the challenges faced by its residents (civilians, its defenders and later liberators), the importance of the site to the army of the Central Powers, the goals and methods of the invaders (the Russian army), and the ways in which both sides used Przemyśl in their war propaganda.

The book is divided into seven chapters. The introduction shows that the town had long been a fortress with military functions and a place where “the East met the West.” Watson presents the background of the construction of the fortifications on that site; he discusses how the economic situation influenced the ultimate decision to build a fortress in Przemyśl. He also tries to situate these considerations in the larger context, taking geopolitics into account. He argues that the pact of three emperors in 1873 posed a question about the necessity of the fortress. Still, at the end of the nineteenth century, Przemyśl as a fortified defense gate became very important again. Watson claims that the fortification of the town proved very expensive, but the stronghold still did not offer solid protection for the empire, because after 1906, all funds were allocated to reinforce the Austrian-Italian border. In the introduction, Watson provides information on how the militarization of Przemyśl was a factor in developing the town. He also reminds the reader of the specific multicultural nature of the community, which was home to many Poles, Ukrainians, and Jews.

Chapter one is entitled “Broken Army.” This title perfectly describes the actual conditions of the Austrian army. After having suffered defeats to the Russian army, units were forced to withdraw westwards, leaving the garrison of the fortress under siege to its own devices. Drawing on Austrian sources, Watson describes the campaign, putting it in its tactical and military context, based on decisions made by the highest-ranking officials.

Chapter two is entitled “The Heroes,” and the article and noun are deliberately put in quotation marks in the actual table of contents, suggesting some measure of irony. The notion of heroism analyzed in Watson’s discussion seems ambiguous at best. Watson presents the backgrounds of the garrisons’ soldiers, showing differences among the members, and he provides a good portrait of the multi-ethnicity and multilingualism of the Habsburg army. The question seems to be the extent to which the soldiers’ behavior could indeed be characterized heroic, especially with regard to their treatment of civilians. Watson gives examples of how civilians were treated, in particular those of Ruthenian origin. He cites numerous examples of people being arrested, interned, and even executed in accordance with verdicts reached by court martials.

Chapter three, “Storm,” describes the actual “storm” that was to hit soon, namely the first siege of the Przemyśl Fortress. Watson begins with the perspective of Russian units, focusing on the tactics of Russian commanders. As an experienced narrator of soldiers’ perceptions of war, Watson also takes the vantage point of the other side, i.e. of the garrison facing the “storm.” He analyzes their wartime experiences, and he does not spare the reader graphic descriptions of what the soldiers faced, physically and mentally, and how they reacted to the unfolding events. He finishes the chapter with a discussion of how the battle shaped a heroic image of the Austrian army. The victory of the fortress garrison played a significant role in the propaganda, and it was widely used to boost the morale of the soldiers.

In chapter four, “Barrier,” Watson shows how the fortress was not only a military barrier to the advancement westwards of the Russian army, but served above all as an impediment to influences, ideas, and systems from the Russian Empire. The confrontation between the civilizations of the East and West was very clear here, as Watson shows through the attitudes of the Russian army soldiers towards the people in occupied Galicia: the Jews, who had often been harmed by czarist Russia, but also the Ruthenians, whose Ukrainian identities the Russians sought to erase entirely through a process of Russification.

In chapter five, entitled “Isolation,” Watson narrates the second siege of the fortress. This time, the title refers to the literal isolation in which Przemyśl found itself, both the garrison and the civilians. As a result, the front line moved westward, Przemyśl became “an island” among Russian occupying forces. Watson describes the equipment and provision in the fortress and the wartime routine of the civilians and the military. He offers an interesting study of the functioning of an isolated fortress, where there were shortages of everything.

Meanwhile, in some respects, Przemyśl was even more bustling than before 1914. Entertainment was provided in the railway station, and prostitution flourished in the fortress.

Chapter six, “Starvation,” starts with a so-called Przemyśl joke about the difference between Troy and Przemyśl, where in the case of the former the soldiers were inside the horse and in the case of the latter, it was the other way round. This seemingly trivial comparison was actually a brutal truth about supplies in Przemyśl during the war. In the fortress, almost everyone was starving. The title thus conveys not only the literal meaning of suffering from lack of food; it is a symbol of the utter exhaustion of the whole crew and civilian residents, which was accompanied by brutal and inhumane scenes of war executions.

Chapter seven, “Armageddon,” describes the last efforts of the physically and mentally broken garrison of the fortress, which had no choice but to surrender. They started to destroy the fortifications from the inside so that no structures would remain that could be used by the enemy. Certain unanswered questions come up in the reader’s mind about how the civilians were expected to react. Were they expected to be happy to see the end of the apocalyptic siege and starvation? Or would they fear the Russian occupation? It would have been interesting to have seen some discussion of these questions on the basis of the available primary sources, especially personal documents from Przemyśl.

Watson’s study of the siege and surrender of the Przemyśl Fortress during World War I ends with an epilogue entitled “Into the Dark,” in which he includes reactions to the fall of Przemyśl in the press and how the fall of the fortress was used in the propaganda on both sides of the conflict. What happened to the garrison and the civilian residents of the besieged Przemyśl? Both went “into the dark.” The soldiers were to be sent into exile in the farthest corners of czar’s Russia, where they would experience humiliation and the fate of prisoners of war. Civilians often faced a darker fate, including repressive measures already tested on the Ukrainians from occupied Eastern Galicia and attempts to Russianize them, while Jewish people were to be driven away. After the successful military operation at Gorlice–Tarnów, another chapter started for the town, and its residents faced subsequent wartime problems until 1918. In the epilogue, Watson skims over the history of the town during the German invasion of 1939, when Przemyśl was hit by another historical cataclysm.

Generally speaking, Alexander Watson’s book is a valuable study of the fate of the Przemyśl Fortress during World War I, offering insights into the roles of different actors in war, including defenders, invaders, and civilians. What seems

to be lacking is a more extensive discussion of the work of medical and pastoral services in Przemyśl. After all, the fortress forces suffered both in flesh and in spirit. However, this observation is by no means intended as a substantial criticism of the author, who has done a very good job. The book will draw attention to this important historical event among English-reading audiences, and it also constitutes an important academic monograph. The biggest problem for non-Polish readers of the volume perhaps will merely be the proper pronunciation of the fortress' name.

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Tiltott kapcsolat: A magyar–lengyel ellenzéki együttműködés 1976–1989 [A forbidden relationship: Oppositional cooperation between Hungarians and Poles, 1976–1989]. By Miklós Mitrovits. Budapest: Jaffa, 2020. 304 pp.

The new book by Miklós Mitrovits, a historian with several volumes to his credit whose research until now has focused primarily on Poland in the postwar period and on Polish-Hungarian relations, explores unauthorized forms of cooperation between the oppositional forces in the two countries in the decade and a half leading up to 1989. Drawing on a wide range of documentary evidence, contemporaneous samizdat publications, and thirteen original interviews with key participants, *A Forbidden Relationship* covers different shades of political and cultural opposition in Hungary to propose a convincing if not entirely original thesis: the opposition in Poland had a significant impact on the formation and development of dissident and oppositional thought and practice in Kádár's Hungary, especially around the time of the “Solidarity crisis” in 1980–81.

Mitrovits studies political-ideological connections that went beyond the idea of a “traditional friendship” between the two peoples. He is primarily interested in the reception and impact of Polish developments in Hungary, especially among leading (male) members of the democratic, human rights-based opposition (Gábor Demszky, János Kis, Ferenc Kószeg, Bálint Magyar, and others) as well as autonomous thinkers and writers (such as Sándor Csoóri and László Nagy), several of whom (Grácia Kerényi, Csaba Gy. Kiss, István Kovács) were also professionally into Polish Studies. In other words, Mitrovits employs a rather well-rehearsed concept of dissent and opposition and focuses primarily on actors who have already been canonized as leading participants in such initiatives. At the same time, Mitrovits' book also addresses the question of mutuality, transmitting the admittedly more modest resonances Hungarian trends had in Poland.

The nine chapters of the book evince an equal interest in experiences abroad and their reception “at home,” political inspirations and technical learning, repressive measures and intellectual solidarity, adaptation attempts and societal differences between the two countries. They draw on meticulous original research and cover a host of relevant subjects, without however developing a clear and precise analytical language to distinguish different types and levels of impact and reception.

Mitrovits combines an essentially chronological treatment with thematic intermezzos to explore the beginnings of a relationship in the mid- to late 1970s; the “Solidarity crisis” and its reception by and impact on the formation of a new type of Hungarian opposition; changes in these connections brought about by the implementation of martial law in Poland; the reactions of the Hungarian Socialist Workers’ Party and Hungarian society (which admittedly slightly exceeds the scope of his core subject); the presence of the Hungarian opposition and the continued remembrance of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 in Poland; discourses around the Central European idea; university students and especially their peace activism; and Polish-Hungarian connections on the eve of regime changes in 1989. These diverse chapters allow Mitrovits to cover practically all essential aspects of his subject, even if he does so at the price of several rather sudden shifts between different subjects and levels of analysis.

The opening chapter, entitled “Parallel Realities,” contrasts the socialist regimes of Hungary and Poland in the 1960s and 1970s, at one point even calling the former socially inclusive and the latter exclusive (p.20). Mitrovits thereby aims to account for the fact that the opportunity structures for oppositional activities differed radically in the two countries. After all, the institutional foundations for political opposition, societal-worker resistance, and a high level of Catholic independence were all present in Poland, and this was hardly the case in Hungary. Mitrovits subsequently explains that numerous Hungarian dissidents were interested in programmatic articles published in Polish as well as the more mundane techniques of producing *samizdat*. These dissidents (Bálint Magyar and Gábor Demszky were perhaps the two most notable among them, and their stories and political affairs are covered rather extensively in the book) repeatedly visited Poland from 1977 onwards to experience a political awakening and learn its lessons. However, it was the meteoric rise of Solidarity in 1980–81 that added dynamism to the main flying university in Budapest, the so-called Monday Free University (*bétfői szabadegyetem*), and catalyzed the launch of various *Samizdat* initiatives in the country.

Mitrovits is right to conclude in this first section of his book that the newly formed Hungarian democratic opposition, which consisted mostly of sociologists, economists, and philosophers, developed its own fora and conceived of practically all its initial political acts under the impact of recent developments in Poland. He is also correct to note that the involvement of workers in the Hungarian democratic opposition’s activities remained miniscule, and this significantly distinguished it from its Polish counterpart. Put more bluntly, the

Hungarian democratic opposition may have seemed much like KOR but without the latter's crucial relationships to workers. It is rather telling, regarding context, timing, and scope, that *Beszélő*, the main Hungarian samizdat journal of the 1980s, which was indeed edited, published, and distributed in line with Polish conspirational methods, started to appear only around the time when Wojciech Jaruzelski introduced martial law, and even then, as was critically remarked by György Dalos at the time, no open expressions of “solidarity with Solidarity” could be recorded in Hungary (p.145).

The imposition of martial law in Poland strictly limited personal contacts between opposition members in the two countries. It was also a time to draw new lessons and debate oppositional prospects and strategies in Hungary. As Mitrovits shows, the example of Poland remained pivotal to participants in Hungary's democratic opposition well beyond December 13, 1981. Demszky's independent book publishing venture *AB* would soon release three volumes of Polish writings, and János Kis' analysis of the Polish and wider regional crisis inaugurated the first extended debate in the pages of *Beszélő*. However, as Mitrovits rightly notes in one of his rather occasional remarks regarding the history of political thought, such reflections and inspirations could not hide the fact that Hungarian contributors often rehearsed ideas already familiar in Hungary, for instance ideas concerning the need for a “third-way compromise” and the introduction of a new social contract (p.123).

Mitrovits shows that, despite the notable activities in Poland by the likes of Waclaw Felczak and (Warsaw-based Hungarian) Ákos Engelmayer and despite some interest in subjects such as the activities of the Hungarian democratic opposition, the lives of Hungarian minority communities abroad, or the aspirations and unfolding of 1956 (which, unlike in Hungary, could be freely discussed and even commemorated in Poland), the relationship clearly remained asymmetrical. The case of Hungary simply did not emerge as a key subject among the much more numerous members of Polish oppositional circles. But translations of historical, literary, and cultural works assured a degree of cross-fertilization, and autonomous intellectuals in the two countries were brought closer via what Mitrovits calls their “legal cultural opposition,” which was chiefly expressed through their “post-colonialist re-imagining” of the Central European idea. As Mitrovits shows, the Hungarian youth of the 1980s may have been vested in a host of new issues, but like its predecessors, it came under the impact of novel forms of Polish activism, such as those practiced by the Freedom and Peace (*Wolność i Pokój*) movement. This was especially true for university students

at the Bibó Special College (*Bibó Szakkollegium*), who would soon play key roles in launching the Alliance of Young Democrats.

Mitrovits' closing reflections on 1989 reveal how intertwined and still how different the two countries' respective exits from their communist regimes were. While the establishment in Hungary of an independent trade union and the initiation of roundtable talks indeed appeared to have closely followed the “Polish recipe,” when parts of Hungarian oppositional forces refused to compromise on fully free parliamentary elections and this intransigence sharply divided the local opposition, Hungarian developments quickly moved beyond their purported model. The foundation of Polish–Hungarian Solidarity and the visit to Hungary of several prominent Poles in 1989 could change little about the fact that Hungarians drew rather different conclusions. By 1989, Poland's impact may have been widely and profoundly felt, but it was less than decisive.

The monograph thus tells the story of a major foreign inspiration and catalyst behind Hungarian liberal democratization, a catalyst the impressive societal organization and specific political path of which its dedicated Hungarian sympathizers were ultimately unable to imitate. In other words, Miklós Mitrovits has written a book on the impact of Polish ideas, developments, and solutions on Hungary between 1976 and 1989 as well as the clear limits of their influence. Historians of East Central Europe with an interest in late communist regimes and oppositional activities will certainly appreciate Mitrovits' research, which, all in all, is perhaps more impressive for its abundant detail and precision than as an attempt to reconceptualize its subject.

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Dissidents in Communist Central Europe: Human Rights and the Emergence of New Transnational Actors. By Kacper Szulecki. London–New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2019. 257 pp.

Dissidents in Communist Central Europe, the first monograph in a Palgrave book series exploring the history of social movements in the modern era, fits well into the recent historiography on dissident movements in East Central Europe, which has tended to strive towards more complex understandings of dissent and opposition and move beyond simplistic interpretations of the “communist monolith.” By adopting a transnational perspective, Szulecki contributes to more recent historiographical trends which challenge the traditional understanding of communist regimes as isolated nation states by pointing toward the links, networks, and transfers which existed between the so-called “East” and “West.”

What sets Szulecki’s work apart from other studies on dissident movements in East Central Europe is the type of problem it addresses. It explores the meaning of the term “dissent” itself and the history of this term using theoretical insights from cultural sociology and political science. The word dissident, Szulecki points out, invokes certain meanings; his study traces what these meanings were and where they came from. Chapter 2 provides the conceptual framework of the monograph, while Chapters 3–9 offer empirical analyses of the emergence and development of dissidence in Central European states, more specifically Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, and East Germany. Finally, drawing on an array of sources ranging from *samizdat*, *tamizdat*, memoirs, (auto) biographies, and interviews, Szulecki arrives at an analytical category which he dubs “dissentism,” an -ism which has been adopted and used in non-European contexts, so that today, as he points out, we hear about dissidents in Cuba, Russia, Iran, China, and Belarus.

Szulecki identifies three elements of the “dissident triangle” which he contends are essential to the rise of dissentism. First, dissidence must be open and public and must find expression in legal and non-violent acts of dissent that risk sanction and repression. Thus, the first necessary condition for the emergence of dissidence was de-Stalinization. As Szulecki points out, dissent in Central Europe grew out of post-totalitarian roots and was not initially anti-Marxist. Moreover, Szulecki highlights that dissidence, unlike resistance, exists in a gray zone between legality and illegality. Instead of breaching the rules of the

system, or employing violence, it works “within” the system, while concurrently challenging the status quo.

The second element of the “dissident triangle” is requisite domestic recognition. In Chapter 4, Szulecki examines the ways in which dissidents become known as names and faces. For instance, the leaders of the Prague Spring became renowned in the domestic scene and beyond. As Szulecki explains, the public activity of dissidents allowed the communist regimes to label them “foreign intruders” and enemies, which in turn seemed to confirm and strengthen the logic of the totalitarian systems. The “public enemy” was a role ascribed to figures like Václav Havel, Jacek Jan Kuroń, and Adam Michnik, and the imminent threat allegedly posed by a clear and present enemy also justified the presence of the secret police, one of the key institutions of a totalitarian society. Almost simultaneously, a “public enemy” at home became a “prominent dissident” abroad. Western recognition, the third element, was pivotal for dissidentism. Drawing on the insights from Michnik and Havel, Szulecki highlights that international attention, achieved through transnational contacts, transformed individual grievances into political activism.

These two elements became increasingly intense as dissenters employed the language of human rights and were given more and more coverage and attention in the Western media. By using the language of human rights, Eastern European intellectual dissenters were able to mobilize international support. Adopting the claim that the concept of dissident was utilized by the West for the non-Western “Other,” Szulecki argues that transnational contacts and international recognition were crucial. In Chapters 5 and 6, he examines the ways in which human rights language was adopted as a lingua franca with which to articulate the goals of dissidents. By 1977, as he explains, all three elements of the “dissident triangle” were present, and it was the opposition in Central Europe that managed to connect them for the first time. A new, transnational actor appeared: the dissident, although being labeled a dissident did not depend solely on the public display of civil courage and self-sacrifice; rather, it was selective. Western newspaper editors and academics selected a few dissident thinkers and fashioned them into a transnational “pantheon” of dissidence which was also entirely androcentric.

One of the merits of the book is that it acknowledges the absence of women in the historiography of dissident movements in East Central Europe. As Szulecki observes, this was due not only to the persistent machismo within the opposition circles, but also to the fashioning of the dissident figure, which was

mainly constructed by the Western media, public, and scholars. Women, however, although absent from the constructed “dissident pantheon,” enabled dissidence to function: Szulecki notes that due to their language skills, women were primary sources of information for the Western media outlets. Furthermore, Szulecki presents a nuanced narrative of the convergences and divergences that existed between the perceptions of dissidents in Central Europe and the Western media and public. Dissidents could at times reject the label “dissident” or could take advantage of it. In any case, the label was rather homogenizing, for it was applied to a diverse array of ideological positions that existed at the time within the democratic opposition in Central Europe. Szulecki highlights the complexities of these strategies, which involved various actors, including interpreters, mainly exiles in the West, who interpreted the ideas and stances of the dissidents and mediated between their home countries and the Western media and public.

On the other hand, because the study draws predominantly on sources which belong to the established traditional canon of dissidents’ writings, such as Havel’s *The Power of the Powerless* and Miłosz’s *The Captive Mind*, it necessarily stays within the framework of the dissident historiography which it aims to revise. Furthermore, it would be beneficial if the study could engage more with its starting point, namely that the idea of the term “dissident,” as we know it today, ought to be traced back to the Central European democratic opposition of the second half of the twentieth century. The study focuses on a “Central Europe” that includes the aforementioned non-Soviet states of the Eastern bloc. The study also refers to “Eastern Europe,” encompassing Russia and state socialist countries in Europe (e.g. Bulgaria, Romania, Yugoslavia,) which, as Szulecki explains, had profoundly different contexts and practices of dissent from their Central European homologues. Yet, it would have served the study well—not least because the book’s underlying claim is that the phenomenon of “dissidentism” is comparable across the world—if the monograph would have included these different contexts, even if asymmetrically. Not only would it serve better to explain the uniqueness of Central European dissidence, but it would also have helped clarify the reasons for which the notion of “dissidentism” travelled around the globe—something that makes the study of the history of social movements relevant in today’s context, in which variations of “illiberal democracy” are now thriving around the world.

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Corn Crusade: Khrushchev's Farming Revolution in the Post-Stalin Soviet Union. By Aaron Hale-Dorrell. New York: Oxford University Press, 2019. 344 pp.

This book gives a detailed picture of the corn-planting movement which was implemented by Khrushchev to enhance the wellbeing of the population in the post-Stalin era. Aaron Hale-Dorell's aim is to analyze the influence of Khrushchev's corn policy on agriculture, society, and politics while avoiding the often schematic depictions of the era. Although the corn-planting movement constitutes the main focus of the book, the reader also gets a detailed picture of the problems faced by Soviet agriculture, the positioning of the leaders of the communist party, and the directorate of kolkhozes.

Hale-Dorell supports his argument with a broad range of sources. The analysis is primarily based on declassified materials from the Moscow archives of the Communist Party and the government (the Center for Preservation of Document of Socio-Political History of Moscow, the Central State Archive of Moscow Oblast, the Russian State Archive of Contemporary History, the Russian State Archive of Economy, and the Russian State Archive of Socio-political History), though he also draws on the archives of the local administrations in Vilnius (the Lithuanian Special Archive), Kiev (the Central State Archive of Social Organization of Ukraine), and Stavropol (the State Archive of Contemporary History of Stavropol Krai and the State Archive of Stavropol Krai). As Hale-Dorrell observes, these documents defined the policy and outlined the implementation of Khrushchev's agrarian reform. In the book, he includes issues that were not publicly addressed by officials but were nonetheless important in Soviet agrarian policy.

This book contains eight thematic chapters. These chapters engage with the ideals, goals, technology, organization, management, and wage systems that shaped the process of establishing new corn plantations and reflect Khrushchev's efforts to expand industrial farming. Hale-Dorrell offers reliably sourced information concerning why the implementation of Khrushchev's reforms failed. Chapter by chapter, the reader is given insights into rural policy after Stalin's death in 1953. The chapters discuss agrarian economic policy with regard to the corn crusade and situate corn technology within Soviet agricultural expertise. Furthermore, they investigate the implementation of corn policy in agriculture and its widespread propaganda coverage.

In the first chapter, Hale-Dorrell offers a history of Soviet agriculture which includes discussion of the main problems faced by the kolkhozes and the living conditions of the kolkhozniks (members of the kolkhoz) during the Stalinist era. He contends that Khrushchev embarked on a program of reforms to solve problems such as the shortage of workers and the backwardness of the agrarian sector by integrating the rural parts of the country into the industrial economy. In the second chapter, Hale-Dorrell describes how the Soviet Union's agricultural policies were integrated into the larger framework of reforms. In this chapter, the study trips taken by experts in the field of agriculture in the Soviet Union to the United States (trips which contributed to the corn crusade and the modernization of agriculture in the Soviet Union) are discussed in detail. As Hale-Dorrell observes, Khrushchev was convinced that industrial farming was the solution to the Soviet Union's problems. Corn became the engine and the symbol of industrial farming, as Khrushchev considered corn a cheap source of the livestock feed that could be quickly and relatively easily produced. In other words, it would be precisely what was needed to ramp up meat and dairy output. In this interpretation, corn did not represent just a crop; it signified as the driver of the Soviet Union's wellbeing.

The third chapter focuses on corn politics and the disorderly implementation of the corn-planting policy. The lack of equipment, machines, the lack of clear instructions, the failures of the implementation process, combined with the disinterest of the kolkhoz and secretary leaders, made the corn yields fall short of even minimal expectations. The fourth chapter gives a detailed analysis of the mass media campaign in the corn crusade. Corn as "queen of the field" became a constant theme in the press, radio broadcasts, and newspapers. Corn came to play an important role in the All-Union Agricultural Exhibition as well. As Hale-Dorrell concludes from Khrushchev's speeches to mass audiences and the visual imaginary of the time, the entire era was pervaded by the idea that corn was something special, even exceptional. Publications attempted to integrate corn into readers' daily lives and culture.

The fifth chapter examines the role of the Komsomol in corn planting. The Komsomol corn-growing competitions involved mass participation in corn-planting activities, but the events were mismanaged by kolkhoz and local leaders. For example, in many cases, young people were forced to work in the fields without clear instructions. The sixth chapter outlines the changes in kolkhoznik life. Guaranteed wages, machines, chemicals, and other technologies made work easier and more productive. In one significant change, the introduction

of pensions revived rural people's interest in farming. Hale-Dorrell states that Khrushchev's labor reforms fell short of expectations because of poor management by local leaders, who misunderstood the kolkhozniks and their moral economy. The benefits of social statutes and regular wages did not make the kolkhozniks efficient corn growers. The seventh chapter shows how the Soviets adopted modern technology from the United States for planting, cultivating, and harvesting corn and other crops. But Hale-Dorrell highlights recurring problems: the necessity of using developed machinery, the hybrid seed program and the negative effects of slow production as well as mistakes in practices which resulted in low yields.

The eighth chapter analyses the roles and mistakes of local kolkhoz leaders in the corn crusade.

Hale-Dorrell's book is not just an analysis of the propaganda accompanying the popularization of corn planting. It is a detailed assessment of Soviet agrarian policies. It gives a nuanced picture of the mentality of Soviet leaders and workers as well as that of Khrushchev, who believed that his reforms, especially corn planting, would make the success of communism possible. As a result of Khrushchev's reforms, the kolkhozes lost many of their distinctive features, and kolkhoz workers became wage earners. In this period, industrial farming principles began to define practice. Mechanization and industrial-scale wheat farms, together with initiatives to put genetics, chemistry, and engineering into farming integrated industrialization into everyday agricultural activities. This reform was a part of the transnational agrarian movement.

Hale-Dorrell examines not just Khrushchev's mistakes in the implementation of the corn crusade, but also mistakes that had nothing to do with Khrushchev. The corn-planting project faced obstacles that remained from Stalin's era: the resistance of bureaucracy, the obstinacy of secretaries from the directorates in regions where corn planting was rejected, the people who cheated and fiddled the statistics to meet the quotas, the adoption of inappropriate agricultural practices, and the lack of concern for harvesting and fertilizing properly and in a timely fashion.

The importance of the book lies in its multifaceted analysis of corn policy. The book contributes to a rethinking of Khrushchev's agrarian reforms and discusses both its immediate results and the lasting consequences. The reader gets a picture of the corn crusade in the Soviet Union and Khrushchev as a leader, a man who was enthusiastic in his vision of corn as the driver of the Soviet Union's wellbeing.

Aaron Hale-Dorrell concludes that the corn crusade was not pointless, even if its permanent legacy was one of failure. The effects of the agrarian reform changed Soviet rural life and exposed Soviet agriculture to a worldwide movement. This book will be useful for historians of the Soviet Union, agrarian historians and non-specialists who are interested in broader issues of Soviet management, the state socialist modernization project, and the transformation of rural regions under state socialist regimes.

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