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Modernity Bottom-Up: How Popular Perceptions and Practices Changed the Ideas of Modernity

Veronika Eszik
Special Editor of the Tematic Issue

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How to Study Early Popular Engagement with Nationalism: Sources, Strategies, Research Traditions

Ágoston Berecz
Central European University
oguszt@gmail.com

The social history of nationhood has been a busy and innovative field since the late 1990s, and a significant chunk of it has dealt with early popular responses to modern nationalism. "Early," in this case, could embrace several generations. The spread of national loyalties and national mindsets was less straightforward, more elusive, and perhaps lengthier than initially thought, and the sources often present contradictory evidence on how far national frames mattered to people in the past. The question of when people began to feel and behave as conscious nationals has remained relevant for the specific nations, but historians are now also interested in how and in what contexts they did so and how far the nationalisms they embraced were the same as the nationalisms of the elites.

The adoption of bottom-up perspectives has been the most consequential thing in the historiography of nationalism, as it has opened up the field for anthropological approaches and reclaiming agency for the people. Whereas intellectual and political histories of elites and counter-elites had dominated research until the 1990s, today's historical accounts of nationalism also feature middle-class and lower-class men and women as full actors and often give prominence to their everyday culture, practices, and perceptions. And conversely, engaging with the question of what sense ordinary people made of nationalist

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messages and how these messages resonated with them has been among the most prominent uses of the bottom-up perspective. My article provides an overview of the field from a methodological angle, focusing on scholarship about the lower classes and incorporating relevant work from other research agendas. My goal is to give a broad sense of the methodological challenges of writing history "from below" within the narrow thematic confines of my survey.

I give pride of place to the literature on Central and Eastern Europe, which I know best and which has been one of the powerhouses of innovative research, and I limit myself to the long nineteenth century, ending with the First World War—a convenient time limit for the early phase of most nationalisms in the region. Therefore, peasants—understood in the minimalist way as people doing agricultural labor for a living—will be my main protagonists. Some would argue, and with good reason, that state-backed and minority, oppositional national projects marked out two separate pathways to nationhood; the two had different channels at their disposal, and the latter could better exploit social and other grievances. I will cover both types. The distinction between the two is often lost on historians from other parts of the world, who may even associate nationalism with independent statehood. More importantly, a closer look at nineteenth-century Central and Eastern Europe also shows that this distinction was not always a sharp one, and national projects are better placed on a continuum according to the state power they could wield.

Ordinary people's adherence to (or rejection of) state nationalisms and national movements in this early stage is a subject bound up with the question of their involvement in high politics, which creates a close affinity with the research paradigm sometimes referred to as "the politicization of the countryside," harking back to Maurice Agulhon. Another conceptual framework with overlapping interests, focusing on "political cultures," is also relevant here, because András Cieger sketched out a survey of source types on the political culture of Dualist Hungary (although largely disregarding the peasantry).[1] On the other hand, the bundle of problems described here stands distinctly apart from the field marked by such diverse names as Hermann Bausinger, Orvar Löfgren, Arjun Appadurai, and Claude Karnoouh, which explores how national cultures were canonized and everyday cultures were nationalized by drawing on elements from folklore and folk life.

1 Cieger, "Magyarország politikai kultúrája."

At the foundation of all histories of becoming national stands Eugen Weber's magisterial *Peasants into Frenchmen* from 1976, the story of how peasants in the backwaters of France came to feel and think of themselves as French and, indeed, learned French between 1870 and 1914. The book met with instant criticism for its narrow and late dating of the process, propped on Weber's foregrounding of the most backward regions.[2] This was a legitimate objection, but the book also came too early and did not have much influence in continental Europe until the 1990s. Only after seminal intellectual and macrohistories of nationalism had prepared the way did historians truly appreciate its focus on the nationalization of the masses, which offered a corrective to the reigning elite-centered view.[3] Then, as Weber's book had started to inspire research on nineteenth-century national integration, the same impetus towards bottom-up perspectives ended up challenging it from a new angle.

New social histories of nationhood built on history-writing from below, a trend popular since the 1960s.[4] The representatives of this trend—British Marxist historians like E. P. Thompson, the Alltagsgeschichte movement, and the Subaltern Studies group—were interested in retrieving popular agency and showing that ordinary people played an active role in shaping their world.[5] From their perspective, then, Weber's book portrayed peasants as pawns of forces beyond their control. In line with modernization theories, Weber understood nationalization as a top-down process, with peasants soaking up readymade ideology and culture transmitted to them through the agencies of change around which he structured his book: compulsory schooling, military service, economic progress, centralized administration, better communications, and cheap reading material. Studies in the 1990s and 2000s gradually transformed this explanatory model of one-way indoctrination and trickle-down into one in which the non-elites negotiated their national membership. In more recent understandings, people could appropriate nationalist messages on their own terms, turn them to their own ends, and even reinterpret them, upending upper-class meanings. In concert with the new focus on how the nationalist paradigm had been received and reproduced, there has also been a shift towards sources that can illuminate people's experiences. Weber based his tableau of a modernizing countryside on

2 Cabo and Molina, "Long and Winding Road of Nationalization," 267–70.

3 Ibid., 270–74.

4 Beyen and Van Ginderachter, "General Introduction," 4.

5 Eley, *Crooked Line*.

external accounts and statistics. Newer scholarship has sought to complement such sources with egodocuments, long exploited in social histories from below.[6]

Since nationalism was originally constructed by the elites, the top-down view has not lost its legitimacy. In this vein, some research traditions that rose to prominence in the 1990s set out to unpack the nationalist discourses encoded in textbooks, monuments, architecture, pageants, etc. These subjects are still popular today, but rather than tacitly assume that people interpreted them according to the deciphered meanings, historians have realized the need to capture people's reactions.

This task requires a focus on the micro scale. Although the books in this category can span several decades, they often consist of a string of local-based stories interspersed with analyses and narrative passages written from a bird's eye view. At the same time, microhistories confined entirely to specific localities are rare, mainly because the body of high-quality or eloquent evidence needs to be pieced together from various places. Another popular strategy is the complex analysis of text corpora, and there have also been sporadic studies analyzing datasets.

In the last 15 years, two new approaches have emerged. Drawing on theories proposed by Rogers Brubaker and Michael Billig, the paradigm referred to as everyday nationalism emphasizes the contextual, dynamic, and contingent nature of nationhood. Membership in a national category does not matter equally across social domains and roles. Further, nationhood "happens": national frames are recreated in specific situations; this aspect was arguably even more relevant as long as national categories and symbols could not be taken for granted. The other trend is to look for instances of "national indifference." In Tara Zahra's formulation, this concept is built around the idea that in the era of clamoring nationalism, the lack of national allegiances was necessarily a reaction against nationalist agitation. In practice, however, the label refers rather freely to non-national behavior or any behavior that did not comply with upper-class creeds of national orthodoxy. To some extent, it applies the reverse of everyday nationalism's interpretive matrix, but it holds more appeal for historians interested in demystifying nationalist narratives.[7]

Following a section on a few conventional indicators of national allegiances, the central part of this paper will be organized according to the source types

6 Cabo and Molina, "Long and Winding Road of Nationalization"; Van Ginderachter, "Nationhood from Below," 127–30.

7 Zahra, "Imagined Noncommunities."

that historians of the long nineteenth century have utilized to explore the changing relationship of the lower classes to the national paradigm: archival sources, folklore and ethnographic material, various sorts of egodocuments, press reportage, readers' columns, and non-narrative sources. I will address the interpretive issues that each source types raises, featuring methodological reflections by other historians and giving abundant examples from the literature, including my own research.

Identifying Nationalism

No matter what sources are being studied, their significance for the field lies in what they reveal about people's actions, thoughts, and emotions. Historians have privileged certain kinds of behaviors, thought patterns, and symbols as signs of national allegiances, many of them now contested or fallen out of favor. Before I move on to the sources, let me dwell on some of these customary indicators. Since they tend to go together with specific source types, it often makes better sense to postpone discussion of others for a later section. Voting for nationalist parties, for example, will be discussed together with electoral data among non-narrative sources.

Short of further evidence, popular support for nationalist discourse or politics does not necessarily imply national feelings or thinking. Especially where class, status, or religious boundaries concurred with the ascriptive national categories, it is hard to disentangle the exact role that the various factors played in collective action.[8] However, some forms of action seem more straightforward. For instance, the fact that most Volga German emigrants headed to the Americas between 1870 and 1917 and few settled in the German Empire speaks to the weakness of sentimental ties to their aspiring kin state.[9]

The study of rumors furthers an interpretation of this kind of collective action by placing it in context and offers a rewarding view of vernacular political imaginaries, as well as people's fears, hopes, and expectations. The local grapevine is of particular importance in the lives of communities with very low literacy or scarce access to reliable news, where strangers are regularly debriefed on what they heard elsewhere and the scraps of information about designs of "the lords" often change beyond recognition as people try to reassemble them. The rumors

8 Himka, *Galician Villagers and the Ukrainian National Movement*, 205.

9 Long, *From Privileged to Dispossessed*, 55.

British officials in the Raj had heard were a staple part of their reports, and they are also found in administrative reports from nineteenth-century Eastern Europe, particularly in moments of tension.[10] Such references in the archives help Irina Marin depict Romanian peasants' knowledge of the outside world at the time of the 1907 peasant revolt in amusing and disturbing detail, and Andriy Zayarnyuk also uncovers the reasons why Greek Catholic peasants from the Sambir District stayed away from the 1846 Galician uprising by studying sources containing alleged rumors among the members of this community.[11] (Rumors are foregrounded in Veronika Eszik's contribution to this thematic bloc.)

Devotion to the homeland may stand behind titular majorities' voluntary compliance with the state's requirements, but the relationship is too messy to be used as a measure. For Bourdieu, "the progressive development of the recognition of the legitimacy of official taxation is bound up with the rise of a form of nationalism."[12] Eugen Weber indeed utilized tax dodging as a negative indicator of patriotism, but later authors did not make much of it.[13] On the other hand, Weber's recourse to draft evasion figures was picked up in similar studies of the 1990s, even though they are of questionable value: self-mutilation and escape from the draft were old strategies mostly without political motives, and compliance certainly should not be taken as a sign of patriotic devotion.[14]

Until recently, turnout at national festivals counted among historians as another favorite indicator of national affinities, and with better justification. Alon Confino dedicated a large portion of his book on Württemberg under the Second Empire to exploring what groups celebrated Sedan Day and the meanings they attached to it.[15] Some studies even focus on peasants. Thus, Patrice Dabrowski gives an insightful account of the religion-imbued Sobieski bicentennial in 1883, which attracted to Cracow over twelve thousand peasants with Polish cockades from all corners of Galicia.[16] The initiative still came from above. By 1903, Polish peasant activists were organizing reenactments of a 1794 battle to highlight the role of peasant insurgents in the Kościuszko uprising.[17]

10 Guha, *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency*, 252.
11 Marin, *Peasant Violence and Antisemitism*, 28–72; Zayarnyuk, *Framing the Ukrainian peasantry*, 1–34.
12 Bourdieu, "Rethinking the State," 7.
13 Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen*, 106.
14 Lyons, *Writing Culture of Ordinary People*, 136.
15 Confino, *Nation as a Local Metaphor*, 30–93.
16 Dabrowski, "Folk, Faith and Fatherland," 397–404.
17 Struve, "Civil Society, Peasants, and Nationalism," 28–29.

Xenophobia is by no means unique to the national paradigm. Indeed, strangers to be feared or held in contempt could appear more numerous until the national paradigm imposed at least a modicum of solidarity with millions of personally unknown fellow-nationals and blurred some dividing lines. In his nationalist chef-d'oeuvre, Gandhi described the hatred between Hindus and Muslims as an evil to be cured for the good of the nation, but he nevertheless urged his readers to "go into the interior that has yet not been polluted by the railways, and to live there for six months" in order to learn Indian patriotism.[18] And yet, peasants in the back country were more likely to harbor deep aversions to the opposite religion than to share Gandhi's vision of an Indian nation.

Likewise, confessional endogamy does not have anything inherently national about it. The same goes for language loyalty, but it gained in importance as literacy boosted exposure to nationalist content, and the withdrawal of public recognition from the standard language that people could handle stoked frustrations.[19] Depending on the context, the domain, and one's language repertoire, language choices can signal nationalist dispositions. Martyn Lyons' idea of considering conformity with abstract linguistic authorities a benchmark of national solidarity is also not without some worth, given the alliance between nationalism and standard language ideology. Nevertheless, it is easier to explain the difference between French and Italian soldiers' facility with the linguistic standards, which Lyons noted, by the French Third Republic's relative success at mass schooling over prewar Italy.[20] Moreover, some other, typically Lutheran regions had already achieved high literacy rates by the time the age of nationalism set in, which loosened the association between nationalism and the standard language. Finally, it is also not uncommon for standard languages and linguistic authorities to straddle national lines (e.g., English in Ireland, German in Switzerland).

The criteria of nationalism must be contextualized on a case-by-case basis, and ethnonyms highlight this fact more than any other subject. Some ethnonyms on which modern nationalists seized as national epithets had already enjoyed a wide currency for centuries, despite the occasional ambiguities and regional differences. For instance, the "Romanian lads" and "Romanian girls" that turn up in Romanian folk songs from Transylvania are nothing unusual or unexpected.[21] Other new or reinvented ethnonyms, on the other hand, index

18 Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj*, 70.

19 Leerssen, "Medieval heteronomy, modern nationalism."

20 Lyons, *Writing Culture of Ordinary People*, 91–112, 136–43.

21 Mitu and Bărbulescu, "Romanian Peasant Identities in Transylvania," 274.

engagement with the modern nation. Such is the case with calling oneself *ellin* ("Hellene") in the nineteenth-century Balkans, an identity label that radically rebranded Greekness and inadvertently redefined membership in it. Another example is *polák* ("Pole"), until the nineteenth-century a status-exclusive category largely referring to nobles. Catholic, Polish-speaking former serfs of Galicia called themselves *mazur* ("Masurian"), and in his own words, the future Dzików mayor Jan Słomka did not know he was a Pole until he started to read books.[22]

But even national ethnonyms that had been applied to commoners for centuries may have mattered only to make some contrasts and coexisted with sundry regional labels. Regional self-identifications were more common in a world in which the boundaries of a district often marked one's widest circle of solidarity, and regional labels also hinted at alternative paths. According to Fred Stambrook, for example, the survival of Bukovinan identity in the Canadian diaspora indicates the distance that Orthodox Ukrainians in Bukovina felt from Galician Uniate Ukrainians.[23]

Archives

Despite the appreciation for egodocuments in the field and the premium on exploring new source types, historical work on nationalism and the masses still most often draws on archival material and the local press. Whether they derive from government or minority agencies, archives are home to secondhand sources that typically cover ordinary people "from above" in one of three ways: they report on their actions, quote them, and assess their mood, feelings, and ideas. Significantly, archival sources on national minorities can provide key evidence on the forms that state policies took on the ground beyond the information they contain on minoritized people's reactions to these policies. Finally, in the minutes of local governments, parishes, and associations, ordinary people also come to the fore as empowered agents.

The Subaltern Studies Group's famous appeal to read government sources about the people "against the grain" boils down to interpreting such sources within the ideology and communicative situations in which they were grounded.[24] Government administrators' views on minorities were influenced by contradictory and situational tropes. On the one hand, the self-legitimizing

22 Słomka, *From Serfdom to Self-Government*, 171.

23 Stambrook, "National and Other Identities in Bukovina," 199.

24 Guha, *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency*, 15–17.

vision of the state made them prone to depict minorities as peaceful and immune to the siren calls of national movements. On the other hand, law-enforcers often attributed deep-seated, formidable national solidarity to minoritized people in order to raise moral panic, buttress lobbying efforts for resources, or justify harsh measures. The categories they used in that regard can detract from the value of their reporting. A case in point might be the insistence of Dualist Hungarian authorities on labeling Slovak cultural and political initiatives misleadingly as "Pan-Slavic" and thus obscuring important differences.[25] Further, it should also matter whether the narrators related firsthand experiences and whether their stakes are identifiable.

Historians may find government officials' views sufficiently convincing to quote or embrace them. Andrei Cuşco contends, on the basis of secret memos by Russian officials, that Romanian nationalist or separatist resistance was insignificant in Bessarabia before 1905, although at the same time he cautions that one can only draw tentative conclusions from this corpus.[26] In another typical example, Nenad Stefanov quotes the Serbian governor from 1878 on the confusion and opportunism that reigned over questions of nationality in the Pirot region.[27]

Most of the relevant government files, however, do not pass such judgments but deal with ongoing or looming conflicts. His archival finds on the conflicts between the Bosnian population and the Habsburg authorities convinced a reluctant Siniša Malešević, who a few years earlier had still found "no evidence" that Serbian nationalism "was widespread among Serbs living outside the Serb state,"[28] that popular resistance to government policies had "attained proto-nationalist and in some cases fully fledged nationalist contours."[29] Contested linguistic attributions in censuses and the ensuing recounts are the topic of Emil Brix's monograph from 1982, which paved the way for a slew of research on how ethnic classification used in censuses inadvertently reinforced self-identification with the categories on offer.[30]

Interrogations and witness testimonies are privileged places of reported speech in the archives and have been a popular hunting ground for historical

25 Vörös, "'Veszedelmes pánszlávok'," 184–85.

26 Cusco, *Contested Borderland*, 214–15.

27 Stefanov, *Die Erfindung der Grenzen auf dem Balkan*, 141.

28 Malešević, "The Mirage of Balkan Piemont," 142.

29 Idem, "Forging the Nation-Centric World," 685.

30 Brix, *Umgangssprachen in Altösterreich.*

anthropologists. They require caution and must be read in context, since people, especially peasants, could go to great lengths to dissimulate, feign ignorance, and find out what the interviewer wanted to hear. Zayarnyuk retrieves the rumors circulating among Galician Greek Catholic peasants in 1846 from what they later told investigators.[31] Confidential administrative and police reports often informed higher authorities about the general mood, the rumors that were circulating, and the popularity of national movements. In early twentieth-century Hungary, the police officers overseeing minority political rallies often wrote down the speeches in shorthand and described the audience's reactions, which elevates the surviving reports to the status of first-rate sources.[32]

Historians of oppositional nationalisms, in particular those biased towards them, have tended to underplay the sources coming down from antagonistic governments and rely on the self-documentation of national movements: the nationalist press, accounts by activists, and the paper trails left by ethnic associations, churches, and parties. Of these, activists' correspondence is especially worth revisiting in a critical light for the references these activists make to their claimed constituencies. In a confidential letter to the Greek consul of Philippopolis/Plovdiv from 1862, a Greek nationalist from Stanimaka (today Asenovgrad in Bulgaria) recalled unsentimentally and perceptively how local people had received Hellenism twenty years earlier, after a Greek school had opened in the town:

> The first ideas about Greek nationality were, so to say, romantic, they were pleasant to hear, but they were immediately considered mere ideas, theories of teachers not having any weight (…) any idea of a close relation of the local population to Independent Greece, of a real kinship and familiarity, was either absent at all or it was a misty and indiscernible one.[33]

In their letters, nationalists often aired frustration over the alleged lack of responses from the people. Such complaints, however, should be read in their psychological and rhetorical context. Moreover, as Laurence Cole warns, even if the people in question truly felt indifferent to the given aims and efforts, this does not mean that they were simply "non-national."[34]

31 Zayarnyuk, *Framing the Ukrainian peasantry*, 1–34.

32 Several such reports are found in Romanian National Archives, Bucharest, Cancelaria CC al PCR, Arhiva CC al PCR, fond 50, Documente elaborate de organele represive.

33 Lyberatos, "The Nation in the Balkan Village," 172–73.

34 Cole, "Differentiation or Indifference?," 106–7.

To the extent that local councils were autonomous, democratic bodies, the minutes of their meetings can represent voices from below. Florencia Mallon makes use of such sources to reconstruct alternative, "subaltern" forms of nationalism in two regions of nineteenth-century Peru and Mexico.[35] I studied local protests against the Magyarization of locality names in the 1900s partly based on the transcripts of council meetings. Since the dust had long settled over the renaming law, the actual measures caught ethnic Romanian local councils off guard. They did not try to hide their outrage, but their protests were improvised and seldom drew on nationalist (pre-)historical narratives or etymologies.[36]

Folklore

Apart from government officials, occasional visitors like travel writers and academics also commented on the national consciousness of specific local communities, and sociologically-minded intellectuals increasingly made it an object of scholarly investigation. In particular, historians can tap into a rich source base of ethnographic writing. Early ethnographic descriptions, of which Eugen Weber already made abundant use, raise other problems than the interwar trend of village monographs. While the former frequently arose from or were based on accounts of local priests and schoolteachers—participant observers but not full members of their subject groups—the latter were typically the work of outsiders with a more systematic approach, not shy of interviewing all grownup members of a community in the space of a few weeks. The Gusti school's 1934 fieldwork in Clopotiva provided the most tangible piece of evidence of status-based Hungarian national loyalty among the Byzantine-rite, Romanian-speaking former nobles of the Haţeg Basin.[37] Around the same time in Transdanubia, a collective of young "village researchers" documented how the Calvinists of Kemse felt superior to their Croat neighbors but had neither an appreciation for Hungarian state nationalism nor respect for national holidays, which they believed were a stratagem invented by the "lords" for an unknown purpose.[38]

Past identifications and attitudes are not a subject where oral history can yield valid results beyond the informants' lifetime. Even so, Edit Fél and Tamás Hofer's participatory fieldwork in the 1950s and 60s managed to recreate a

35 Mallon, *Peasant and Nation*.

36 Berecz, *Empty Signs, Historical Imaginaries*, 225–29.

37 Conea, "Nemeşi şi rumâni în Clopotiva."

38 Elek et al., *Elsüllyedt falu a Dunántúlon*, 53, 91.

plausible picture of political culture in Átány around 1900, one decidedly more in line with upper-class trends than that of interwar Kemse. Locals had been avid supporters of the so-called forty-eighter Independentist party, which they considered the patriotic choice. Átány peasants, however, for the most part prosperous smallholders from the most Independentist-leaning county of Dualist Hungary and many of them with noble titles, were not necessarily representative of the Magyar peasantry, all the less so as they lived near a prominent lieu de mémoire, the site of an important battle from 1849.[39]

E. P. Thompson advocated the use of folklore collections to probe oral worlds of "customary culture." But the extent to which folklore material can and should be used to study social imaginaries is a question dividing historians working on different contexts. Thomson himself quotes second-rate poetry and church hymns more often than anonymous, orally transmitted lower-class creations in his *Making of the English Working Class*.[40] For Ranajit Guha, ostensible folkloric evidence presents insurmountable interpretive problems in a thoroughly illiterate culture, where whatever survives in written form is by definition privileged and tainted by an elitist point of view.[41] His blanket skepticism, however, already met with an objection in James C. Scott's preface to his book.[42]

While some folklore genres, such as dance shouts, better reflect actuality, others are more refractory to change, can preserve pre-national patterns, and are slow to herald peasants' engagement with the national paradigm.[43] Both Jaroslav Hrytsak's analysis of Ivan Franko's folklore collection from Nahuievychi and Sorin Mitu and Elena Bărbulescu's cursory analysis of Romanian folk lyrics from Transylvania reconstruct pre-national mental maps, symbolic geographies, and ethnic labels.[44] When it comes to the inroads of nationalism, however, the problem of source criticism risks becoming circular, since it is precisely the occurrence of national motifs that raises a red flag.

The main problem is how closely what intellectuals recorded reflects what lower-class people consumed and reproduced for their own purposes. From the perspective of the discussion here, the age of the folklore material and the

39 Fél and Hofer, *Proper Peasants*, 370–78.

40 Thompson, "Folklore, Anthropology, and Social History"; Thompson, *Making of the English Working Class*.

41 Guha, *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency*, 14–15.

42 Scott, "Foreword," xiii.

43 Mitu and Bărbulescu, "Romanian Peasant Identities in Transylvania," 273.

44 Hrytsak, *Ivan Franko and His Community,* 103–20; Mitu and Bărbulescu, "Romanian Peasant Identities in Transylvania."

question of peasant or "bookish" origins are irrelevant, but these were not irrelevant details for the collectors, who chased a different kind of authenticity and thought that external accretions could be separated from genuine folklore. Early, Romantic collections, notorious for their authorial interferences and mystifications, are the hardest nut to crack.[45] They sneaked national or prehistoric content into folklore texts or created the sense that national history deeply mattered for the people, as Vuk Stefanović Karadžić did, for instance, by transferring to Herzegovina the epic songs he collected about Prince Lazar near his burial site much farther north.[46] If the goal is to spot the early emergence of nationalist themes, comparing different variants to filter out such interventions can be of little help, since it is precisely the eccentric variants that are the most likely to turn up evidence.

These issues do not devalue the testimony of folklore, especially if taken in a loose sense. Some relevant folk creations can be dated with more or less precision. For instance, one song recorded from Volga German transatlantic migrants in the 1870s praises Russia as the "dear, dear Fatherland."[47] Then, there are observations made on the margins of folklore. At the end of the nineteenth century, one historian from Mostar noted that the same stories told by the surrounding Orthodox population about Saint Sava had been attributed to Saint Martin, Saint Nicholas, or even Archangel Michael a couple of generations earlier. This statement is significant for what it tells about the penetration of the nationalist cult of Saint Sava.[48] Finally, there is the testimony of local communal memory and mnemonic cues, such as minor place names. Investigating Frigyes Pesty's toponymic survey from 1864, I found that the learned Romanian tradition of descent from Trajan's legions had only entered local memory where people could attach it to nearby ruins.[49] This chimes in with the opinions of some rural intellectuals, according to whom what they called history (strictly chronological history in national frames) had little place in the world of Romanian peasants.[50] However, local tradition could no doubt sustain the memory of battles or military campaigns at a distance of a hundred years or more, as Guy Beiner

45 E.g., Bîrlea, *Istoria folcloristicii românești*, 27, 36, 49, 95–100, 135–49, 198–200.

46 Pavlović and Atanasovski, "From Myth to Territory."

47 Long, *From Privileged to Dispossessed*, 54.

48 Grunert, *Glauben im Hinterland*, 124.

49 Berecz, *Empty Signs, Historical Imaginaries*, 78–82.

50 E.g., Mărăscu, *Monografia comunei Sudrigiu*, 63.

shows in his analysis of the "folk history" of the 1798 Irish rebellion and French military intervention.[51]

Egodocuments

As the rise of history from below and Alltagsgeschichte revalued lower-class egodocuments, several collections and archives of popular writing came into being in Western and Southern Europe.[52] With the exception of Poland, the situation is worse in the states of Eastern Europe, not only because historians have paid less attention but also because, until late, fewer people knew how to write. Entire genres that Western European historians have used prominently to inquire about lower-class loyalties (pauper letters, nationalization applications) are missing or hard to come by, and the surviving material mostly comes from males. The task of finding relevant egodocuments becomes especially hard with a half-illiterate peasantry. The volume of eyewitness accounts written *about* nineteenth-century peasants dwarves that of the surviving material written *by* them. The voices of peasant communities were for a long time mediated by the priests, teachers, village notaries, and clerks who wrote requests on their behalf, recasting their utterances in a middle-class language and logic. But even in the rare cases when they wrote personal letters, they did so because of a disruption in their everyday world. Pervasive illiteracy or half-literacy also raise an important but ultimately unsolvable dilemma: to what extent can the literate few, who had readier access to reading matter, be assumed to represent an illiterate majority?

Collective petitions in support of oppositional nationalist causes, drafted by priests or other rural notables and signed on behalf of the illiterate locals, linger somewhere on the margins of egodocuments.[53] They reveal little about their signatories' worldviews or values, even of those who signed them themselves but under pressure from religious authority. At a minimum, however, they probably imply some knowledge of the cause, and their language is often suggestive of the framing that the priests used to promote it. Parish diaries *(historiæ domus)*, supposedly also representative of their communities, reflect the priests' viewpoint but often chronicle local events and rumors, with varying depth and regularity. Testing the established narrative about the tug of war over Old Slavonic liturgy that unfolded between the Ricmanje parish (near Trieste)

51 Beiner, *Remembering the Year of the French*.

52 Burnett et al., *Autobiography of the Working Class*; Lyons, *Writing Culture of Ordinary People*.

53 Josan, *Adeziunea*, 115–304; Hull, *Malta Language Question*, 46.

and the Trieste bishopric in the 1900s, Péter Techet turns to the historia domus. He shows the limitations of the nationalist interpretation but suggests that, as the fight for Old Slavonic liturgy escalated, it transformed local mindsets.[54] In a 1991 edited volume on "national differentiation processes," the study of the parish and school diaries in two Carinthian market towns affords a close view of the sudden breakup among the locals into Catholic Slovenes and anticlerical Germans.[55]

The revaluation of egodocuments has entailed revisiting lower-class memoirs that had already achieved the status of classics in their national historiographies. Tara Zahra and Jakub Beneš, for example, draw conflicting conclusions about the brick factory worker and poet Heinrich/Jindřich Holek's and his father Wenzel/Václav's linguistic identities from their oft-quoted memoirs.[56] A masterpiece of Polish autobiographical writing, also available in English, is Jan Słomka's gripping and wonderfully detailed portrayal of peasant life in nineteenth-century Galicia. His organizing principle is the contrast between past and present, including an opposition to the bygone times of national apathy, when peasants harbored dislike for the idea of Polish independence.[57] Słomka's memoir fits into a large body of peasant autobiographies from interwar Poland, more than 1,500 of them written in response to a call.[58] Alongside readers' correspondence, these autobiographies provide the material for Jan Molenda's monograph on the nationalization of the Polish peasantry.[59]

Egodocuments are not unmediated sources. Between the historian and the remembered, external or inner experiences stand the autobiographer's memory, their permanent quest to reproduce an integral self, and the rhetorical devices required for storytelling. Quite independently from self-fashioning, autobiographers cannot escape making sense of, interpreting, and imposing coherence on their lived experience. In addition, the political and communicative context also influences what kinds of selves they want to present to themselves and their audiences. Since most surviving egodocuments originate from the elite, for example, descriptions of childhoods spent in peasant milieus increase the value of social risers' autobiographies. In the new or newly enlarged interwar

54 Techet, *Umkämpfte Kirche*, 126–68.

55 Moritsch, "Der nationale Differenzierungsprozess," 58; Kuchar et al., "Nationale Differenzierung als Ausdruck 'ungleicher Entwicklung'," 192.

56 Zahra, *Kidnapped Souls*, 27–22; Beneš, *Workers and Nationalism*, 51–52, 60–61, 66.

57 Słomka, *From Serfdom to Self-Government*, 171–73.

58 Struve, "Polish Peasants in Eastern Galicia," 48–49.

59 Molenda, *Chłopi, naród, niepodległość*.

states, however, this comes at the price that the authors often owed their careers to the change of sovereignty, and thus were particularly likely to emplot their life stories in the master narrative of national suffering and fulfillment. At any rate, interwar memoirists had to reposition themselves with regard to a changed category of the nation, a process that Stefan Berger analyzes in the published autobiographies of nine prominent German and seven British Socialist activists.[60] Evaluating the details in the context of the whole and looking for content that deviates from the master narrative can help bypass the resulting interpretive dilemma. Besides, social historians seldom study such sources in isolation for what they reveal about past experiences.

The narrative (re)production of the self necessarily relies on the prop of authorized discourses, but peasant and working-class writers sometimes adapted the language of the authorities or their superiors, even when they otherwise remained strangers to it. Although it is not a foolproof measure, historians are then on solid ground to prefer more elaborate formulations or ones that suggest personal involvement against ritualized, formulaic writing that rehashes clichés from above. Clear contextualization thus entails an interpolation with upper-class discourses.

Distance from the recalled past presents problems of its own. In oral interviews conducted between the 1950s and 1970s, some former British working-class volunteers in the First World War apparently projected their experiences of the Second World War.[61] David Silbey probes a total of 1,702 egodocuments in search of reasons why working-class men rushed to colors in 1914, combining this set of egodocuments with statistical evidence. Silbey acknowledges that patriotism could serve as a justification for other reasons or a convenient gap-filler for memory, but he insists that dismissing these accounts as false patriotism is like fitting them to a paternalistic preconceived theory.[62]

Historians sometimes fall back on recollections compromised by the immediate purpose they were meant to serve. Among the 110 autobiographies investigated by Wiktor Marzec from the perspective of the politicization and nationalization of the Polish industrial working class before and during the 1905 revolution, there are semiofficial autobiographies of party cadres, including some written in Soviet exile. In the latter case, however, Marzec argues that the early, "'Polish' part of the memoir was relatively free from the direct constraints put

60 Berger, "In the Fangs of Social Patriotism."

61 Silbey, *British Working Class and Enthusiasm for War*, 6.

62 Ibid., 5–10.

on writing."[63] To investigate the life world of rural Macedonians around 1893–1903, Keith Brown draws on a sample of 350 pension applications that self-claimed participants in the Ilinden Uprising filed between 1948–54. Although these applications were written with an obvious agenda, Brown justifies his choice with reference to the lack of a canonical narrative about the uprising at the time and the diversity of the recollections. Moreover, he uses entire dossiers complete with witness testimonies, rejection letters, appeals, and reviews.[64]

Alongside autobiographies and interviews, letters and diaries are also widely used types of egodocuments. Diaries were a largely middle-class genre, but literate peasants in nineteenth-century Western and Central Europe (including Banat Germans) kept *livres de famille*. These served the chief function of recording loans and borrowings but were interspersed with notes on the harvest, natural catastrophes, and occasionally political news.[65] Peasants also left miscellaneous manuscripts. A local musician's manuscript from 1858–1869, for example, testifies to the "Romaic" (pre-national Greek) identity in Arbanasi above Veliko Tirnovo.[66] Rarely conceived as diaries in the strict sense, these manuscripts often mix in borrowed texts alongside chronicles and personal utterances, and not everything copied into them necessarily reflects their creators' beliefs. One Romanian manuscript history of Transylvania from 1836 mentions Romans without linking them to Romanians, laments the depredations wrought by Wallachian armies, and does not feature Transylvanian Romanians until 1763. All this may sound unexpected, as it was written by a Uniate village schoolmaster, were it not clear from the consistently applied Transylvanian Saxon viewpoint that he copied or compiled Saxon sources.[67]

Very little of ordinary people's epistolary activity has come down to us. Illustrated postcards (on the market since the 1890s) had a better chance of surviving, and Karin Almasy shows that they offered novel ways to index self-identifications.[68] However, aside from the problem of disentangling contemporary markings from the later additions of collectors or traders, most peacetime postcard senders were also members of the middle class.

63 Marzec, *Rising Subjects*, 212.

64 Brown, *Loyal unto Death*, 35–40.

65 Lyons, *Writing Culture of Ordinary People*, 222–44; Siebold, *Deutsches Bauernleben im Banat*.

66 Kitromilitides, "In the Pre-Modern Balkans," 26–28.

67 Coman, *Hronica Ardialului.*

68 Almasy, "Linguistic and Visual Portrayal of Identifications."

Work migration and military service provided occasions to sit down and write private letters, with or without recourse to a collection of letter samples. William I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki purchased a corpus of Polish peasant letters written during the First World War and addressed to transatlantic migrants, and they wove these sources into their monumental narrative about the breakup of old solidarities and the transformation of social norms. This five-volume classic also includes a chapter on the integration of peasants into national life.[69]

An unusual number of egodocuments from World War I have survived thanks to censorship bureaus and POW camps. Since the front experience, war economy, and special measures on the home front heightened the relevance of national frames, wartime egodocuments are not necessarily indicative of prevailing attitudes in earlier decades. The correspondence between soldiers and their families went through open censorship, which imposed conformism, meaning alignment with official patriotism and the avoidance of oppositional nationalist statements. On the other hand, intercepted letters show an obvious bias towards politically subversive content, although many letters were withheld for other reasons, most notably for data on the positions of troops.

Investigating a vast body of intercepted letters and censorship records from the later years of the war, Péter Hanák found that by a long shot, Serbs, Italians, Romanians, and Czechs were the most likely among the Austria-Hungarian nationalities to air secessionist views and approve of desertion. Nationally subversive Italian letters stand out from the rest for the high percentage of middle-class senders. Hanák compares intercepted letters in Czech, more than three quarters of which expressed sympathy for Czech independence, with the hundreds of letters that Czech POWs sent to destinations outside of the Monarchy but that were misdirected and landed in the hands of the K.u.K. military censorship. Among these latter, 40 percent contained Czech nationalist views and 13.5 percent voiced support for Czech independence.[70] At the same time, the Austro-Hungarian POWs in Russia who wrote home were more likely to manifest what Alon Rachamimov calls "civic spirit" and criticize "specific practices and specific policies of the Habsburg state."[71]

Andriy Zayarnyuk explores a rare and serendipitous find from Austria-Hungary, namely a deposit of letters by soldiers on the frontlines and POWs that were actually delivered to the village of Zibolky, to the north of Lemberg. The

69 Thomas and Znaniecki, *Polish Peasant in Europe and America*, 1, 432–63.

70 Hanák, "Die Volksmeinung."

71 Rachamimov, "Imperial Loyalties and Private Concerns," 91.

authors had clearly paid deference to the censors, but also to the priest, who read the letters out to their illiterate families. According to Zayarnyuk, they expressed little anti-Russian sentiment and tended to define themselves as Galicians and members of the local community.[72]

The Italian front was best studied from this point of view. Scholarship on letters written by Italian soldiers in the First World War started in real-time, as the Graz philologist Leo Spitzer, employed as a military censor, utilized them to reconstruct the Italian "national psyche."[73] More critical of national categories, historians since the 1970s have drawn on this example many times to show how little ordinary Italians had assimilated the ideals of the Risorgimento.[74] Compared to the letters that the French intercepted from their troops in Alsace, who seem to have imbibed the lesson of revanchism, Martyn Lyons finds that soldiers of the Kingdom of Italy were quite confused about their country's war aims, their allegiances lay firmly with their home towns, valleys, and regions, and their patriotic slogans often appear insincere.[75] The situation was none too different among the Italian-speaking Tyrolese. The Archivio della Scrittura Popolare in Trento stores a large collection of war memoirs-cum-diaries written in the Kirsanov POW camp in Russia. Although Italians from the Tyrol spontaneously separated in the camp from other nationalities of the Dual Monarchy and later developed a new national attachment thanks to the cultural activities organized in an Irredentist spirit, this attachment remained utilitarian. It expressed POWs' need for strong solidarity under extreme living conditions and was conditional on the better treatment and provision one could receive as an Italian and the prospect of returning home, while POWs also feared for the safety of their families from the retaliation of Habsburg authorities.[76]

Press Coverage and Readers' Correspondence

In his discussion of how German and Czech journals in late Habsburg Bohemia blew up mundane conflicts and twisted them into national frames, Pieter Judson discreetly cautions against historians' all-too-convenient reliance on newspaper

72 Zayarnyuk, "'The War Is As Usual'," 200.

73 Spitzer, *Italienische Kriegsgefangenenbriefe*.

74 Lyons, *Writing Culture of Ordinary People*, 118–19.

75 Ibid., 91–112, 136–43.

76 Ibid., 143–52; Mazzini, "Patriottismo condizionato"; Bellezza, "From national indifference to national commitment."

reporting. Rather than first-order sources, he suggests, press reports should be seen as propaganda tools aimed at nationalizing a-national populations: "complicated, messy events were reduced to their most recognizable elements and compressed into intelligible stories about battling nations."[77] A piece of news run in 1908 in two German nationalist papers (*Deutsche Volkszeitung* from Reichenberg and *Bohemia* from Prague) alleged that German gymnast-activists had faced aggression crossing Czech-speaking Stachy:

> Attack on German gymnasts. As the Bergreichenstein [Kašperské Hory] gymnasts returned from their Easter excursion to Eleonorenhain through the Czech Stachau, the Czechs attacked them. Only the gymnasts' levelheadedness prevented a bloody brawl from breaking out.[78]

After the Ministry of the Interior launched an investigation into the affair, the local authorities cut this story down to size. They found that the gymnasts had been drunk and had picked a quarrel with passers-by shouting anti-Czech slogans. Furthermore, only a few children and one adult had run after their wagon throwing pebbles at them, without actually hitting anyone.

I need not dwell on Judson's choice of an example where the two renditions do not contradict each other in substance. The German informant may have fancied that the Stachy people should have swallowed their pride and let them get off scot-free with their affronts, but he certainly did not cross "the line between strategic exaggeration and outright lying."[79] It would not be difficult to quote similar, more egregious bending of the truth by the contemporary press. We know this because, although Judson is right that the German and Czech press could reinforce each other's nationalist framing, journals of opposing ideological stripes sometimes carried conflicting descriptions of the same event. There is often little way of knowing which account was closer to the truth, but the gap between them could be quite big. The catch is that when a story emerged from various sources in a single version, this could also cast a shadow of doubt on its authenticity, especially when there was a high chance that no eyewitness from the supposed scene of the incident would read the coverage.

More problematic is Judson's assumption that the contrasting accounts can be verified against an objective benchmark to be found in the archives as if the local authorities conducting the investigations had been impervious to national

77 Judson, *Guardians of the Nation*, 178.

78 Ibid., 183–84.

79 Ibid., 183.

and other biases or, should the question be whether an incident took place at all as if they could have no interest in hushing it up. To the extent that the imperial authorities were involved, this belief may have some basis regarding Dualist Cisleithania. But it becomes untenable where, as in most contexts, the authorities had an ideological axe to grind in nationalist incidents or were typically involved in them. In 1910, for instance, one Romanian newspaper from Hungary published an official press release on an incidence of bloodshed in a Transylvanian village only to rebut it with a different, purportedly the local, narrative.[80] Despite the differences between the two accounts, both boiled down to gendarmes killing two peasant boys who wore belts with the Romanian colors, hence there is no reason why Judson would not extend his skepticism of nationalism from below to the official account, which reproduced the gendarmes' side. In fact, reports on gendarmes seizing "foreign symbols" in the villages were a regular feature in both Hungarian and minority papers, often with mention of the fines levied on the offenders and references to the administrative officials in command.

Press coverage should be compared with archival evidence whenever it is accessible, not losing sight of the ideological positions and power interests behind both types of sources and the censorship that occasionally restricted press coverage. In practice, and not just since the advent of searchable online collections, news items lead researchers to archival files more often than the other way around. Measured in the sheer number of references, the local and regional press is the bread and butter of the field. This also holds true for Jeremy King's seminal book on late Habsburg Budweis/Budějovice, which relies mostly on local German and Czech papers to craft a narrative akin to Judson's about an ethnically ambiguous middle class that separated into Germans and Czechs over the span of two generations.[81]

Readers' correspondence, sometimes published in a separate column, is hardly safer terrain for the unwary historian. Ideally, it contains genuine first-person utterances by ordinary people, but ostensible readers' letters were at times cut out of whole cloth. Between these two extremes, editors probably interfered with the content and the style in most cases. It is hard to make guesses about their procedures in the absence of the original documents. At best, the context of the given journal might offer clues.

80 Anonymous, "Martirii tricolorului."

81 King, *Budweisers into Czechs and Germans.*

According to Ostap Sereda, the editors of Galician Polish and Ukrainian papers routinely fabricated letters under peasant-sounding names in the 1860s and 70s to lure literate peasants to their fold until real peasant correspondents turned up on the horizon.[82] In later decades, the Polish peasant movement of Galicia produced its own crop of populist journals under the editorship of peasant-born activists. With these, the question becomes the representativeness of the peasant correspondents' views. Aside from manuscript memoirs, Keely Stauter-Halsted's splendid *The Nation in the Village* uses the testimony of such journals, especially readers' correspondence, to explore how Polish-speaking Roman Catholic peasants emancipated themselves by subverting nationalist discourses about peasant values and constructed a peasant identity in parallel with a national one.[83] Against the background of similar developments in the Galician Ruthenian political field, Andriy Zayarnyuk foregrounds one regular peasant correspondent, also making use of his letters surviving in manuscript collections.[84]

For his monograph on Flemish workers' political loyalties between 1880 and the First World War, Maarten Van Ginderachter unearthed a rare format that transmits readers' voices in an unaltered form and thus comes closest to an egodocument. In exchange for donations beyond membership dues, Belgian Labor Party members from Ghent could place so-called "propaganda pence" in a dedicated column of the local party newspaper: short messages of unrestricted content which came out anonymously. Ginderachter calls them "proletarian tweets." It is well-known that the Socialist movement provided alternative forms of sociability beyond and perhaps even above ideology. It can be nonetheless surprising to learn that the abstract political values touted on the first pages did not find much echo in these tweets. Even fewer workers thought to share their views related to Flemish or Belgian identity, the center of Ginderachter's interest, with their comrades. Only 305 in Ginderachter's sample of 27,500 "tweets" made references to a national, linguistic, or ethnic category. The overwhelming majority engaged in promoting identity as organized Socialist workers (what Ginderachter calls *Organisationspatriotismus*), confirming their authors' solidarity with the movement and slamming class enemies and Catholics.[85]

82 Sereda, "'Whom Shall We Be?," 210.

83 Stauter-Halsted, *Nation in the Village*.

84 Zayarnyuk, *Framing the Ukrainian peasantry*, 215–316.

85 Van Ginderachter, *The Everyday Nationalism of Workers*, 125–43.

Propaganda pence offer a unique angle on the views of their authors, and one can only wish for similar sources in other research contexts. Like so many other kinds of sources, however, they do not provide an unmediated view. Genre constraints appear loose at first glance, but a consensus had clearly formed that this column was to be used as a site for "grooming talk," communication with a primarily bonding function. The fact that patriotism and ethnicity were not themes that Dutch-speaking organized Ghent workers would often bring up at leisurely party meetings may be significant, but that does not necessarily imply they had no feelings and (admittedly less articulate) ideas on the matter. To identify these feelings and ideas, Ginderachter complements the testimony of propaganda pence with more conventional sources.

Non-narrative Sources

Quantitative evidence can be broad in its sweep but tends to be reticent and vague. The print runs of newspapers and magazines, for instance, have long been used as indicators to assess the spread of nationalist ideas. As much as the evidence they provide is extensive, however, it is also circumstantial and shallow, primarily because people may not have read a certain paper for its nationalist content, and even when they did, the size of a readership reveals nothing about its reactions to specific messages. To the extent that reliable circulation figures are available, they gain a real significance when compared across multiple press organs in the same market.[86] But circulation figures are often elusive and inconsistent, based as they were on the editors' own reporting. State regulation and technological aspects also need to be taken into account. The fact that minority papers were not sold at newsstands in Dualist Hungary, for example, limited their outreach. On the other hand, Linotype machines drove down production costs around the turn of the century, which led to skyrocketing print runs and the mushrooming of "penny papers." Most significantly, newspapers reached a much broader audience than the number of copies sold, as people passed them on and, in the countryside, read them aloud to others in evening gatherings.[87]

Membership counts of associations, which scholars have often used as a means of gauging the followings of national movements, are perhaps even more ambiguous. High enrollment figures in the Polish cooperatives of Prussia on

86 As seen in Himka, *Galician Villagers*; Lorman, *Making of the Slovak People's Party*.

87 Stauter-Halsted, *Nation in the Village*, 193; Fél and Hofer, *Proper Peasants*, 182.

the eve of the First World War suggest that a large segment of the peasantry had recognized the economic benefits these cooperatives offered and that the Polish minority elite had established one massive channel to communicate with the masses. Taken by themselves, however, it is doubtful how far they can demonstrate the popularity of national ideas.[88]

The extension of male suffrage in nineteenth-century Europe coincided with the rise of nationalist politics, making electoral data an easily accessible gauge of the support that nationalist ideas received from large populations. On this basis, Abigail Green concludes that no more than one-quarter of the German male population shared the enthusiasm for unification under Prussian auspices in the immediate aftermath of the victory over France, since of the 50 percent who bothered to vote at the first Reichstag election, only half voted for parties aligned with this solution.[89]

The fact that electoral data are available in successive and often comparable data series invites longitudinal treatment of such data. Reconstructing the failed Polish attempt at national mobilization in Upper Silesia, James E. Bjork regularly revisits electoral outcomes.[90] In most contexts, however, some parties with pronounced nationalist profiles came to enjoy massive popular support, which is very hard to disregard. In southern Bukovina, for instance, 95 percent of Romanians voted for a Romanian nationalist (although typically not irredentist) ticket on the eve of the First World War. In his doctoral dissertation, political scholar Ionaş Rus follows the spread of national consciousness among them with the help of electoral results, but he complements these with "qualitative" data.[91] Recently, a cross-sectional analysis of the 1907 Reichsrat election results in the Czech lands has challenged revisionist accounts of Czech and German nationalization campaigns. Looking at the strategies used by nationalist parties to attract voters, a team of political scientists established a correlation between the share of peasants and the nationalist vote, with rural districts being the most likely to vote for nationalist parties. This suggests that by 1907, nationalist ideas had resonated widely with the peasantry.[92]

This said, engagement with nationalist politics must be differentiated from nationhood understood as a habitus, i.e., the tacit and routine acceptance of

88 Lorenz, "Civil Society in Polish Cooperatives," 40.

89 Green, *Fatherlands*, 298–99.

90 Bjork, *Neither German nor Pole.*

91 Rus, "Variables affecting Nation-building," 45.

92 Howe et al., "Nationalism, Class, and Status," 846–47.

national categories. The latter crystallized more linearly through the succession of life cycles, an incremental change that built up the possibility for national frames to congeal into action.[93] Engagement with nationalist politics, on the other hand, could undergo sudden surges, breaks, and relapses. Moreover, the perceived stakes of an election, the availability of potent non-nationalist alternatives, and the messaging of the given party must also be taken into consideration. The nationalist outlook of a party or a candidate was not their only potential appeal; nationalist parties often adopted leftist or pro-smallholder economic platforms, defended traditional religious values, etc. Local developments could also favor their popularity, and it would be instructive to juxtapose voting behavior with communal action, social trends, and civil society in small sets of well-documented localities.

Most national movements introduced a string of historical or invented given names to index their vision of national history. The spread of such names among the people can thus serve as a rough proxy for the gradual embrace of this vision, at least in the first couple of generations, until their novelty value wore off and they became normalized or discarded. Choosing such a "national" name for one's child, with cultural allusions graspable only for the initiated, entailed a radical break with local custom and could expose the family to ridicule. Such names typically lacked patron saints, a big hindrance in contexts where peasants baptized their children according to the day they were born. Worse still, Ruthenians of Galicia attached a stigma to rare first names, which were traditionally reserved for illegitimate children.[94]

Jürgen Gerhards compared trends in baby naming in selected Protestant and Catholic German towns from the nineteenth century down to the Nazi times by occupational categories.[95] Stefano Pivato studied the frequency of republican versus dynastic first names in northern Italian towns of the liberal era to gain a general picture of the population's political sympathies.[96] Jaroslav Hrytsak dealt more specifically with new names of nationalist inspiration, charting the popularity of given names taken from the Rurik dynasty and the Cossack hetmanate in the families of nineteenth-century Ruthenian (Ukrainian) national awakeners and in a few parish registers. Judging by his sample, such names did not catch on in the Galician countryside before the First World War,

93 Brubaker, *Reframing Nationhood*, 19.

94 Hrytsak, "History of Names," 171.

95 Gerhards, *The Name Game*.

96 Pivato, *Il nome e la storia*.

apart from in one village, where they received a boost from the local landlord and the priest.[97]

I analyzed the diffusion of Latinate Romanian, medieval (including "pagan") Hungarian, and reinvented Germanic male given names in Transylvania and eastern Hungary between the 1840s and the 1900s based on a near-complete database of grammar school graduates and a massive collection of birth registers. I confirmed that peasants started to adopt the new names decades after the elites in all three contexts. Among Romanians, the first non-elite adopters were people who lived side by side with Magyars: craftspeople in small market centers, miners, and the personnel on aristocratic manors. In contrast, several Romanian-inhabited valleys located far in the outback registered no Latinate names until after the First World War. This finding highlights the role of boundary maintenance in the appropriation of nationalist content.[98]

Two exhibitions at the Hungarian Ethnographic Museum (from 1989 and 2016) displayed datable objects of known provenience featuring patriotic or national symbols and inscriptions, most of them fashioned or decorated by their lower-class owners.[99] The Hungarian colors and other patriotic imagery seem to have picked up in popularity after the defeat of the 1848–49 revolution, and a wooden cupboard from 1861 even had a Slovak inscription asking for God's blessing on the homeland around a carved and painted Hungarian coat of arms.[100] Such visual clues, as well as the many early-twentieth-century references to peasant women who wore ribbons with the Romanian colors, suggest that the spaces on garments, accessories, and household objects that had been traditionally decorated, and likely with changing motifs, were also an obvious site to introduce national marking.

In Lieu of a Conclusion

This panorama may have left readers with a giddy feeling of uncertainty. The sources are ambiguous, each source type comes with a proviso about its limitations, and, to restate, they often contradict one another. The same people seem to have been drawn to the call of the nation on the basis of one kind of source but were oblivious to it according to another. What does all this add up to? The name of

97 Hrytsak, "History of Names."

98 Berecz, *Empty Signs, Historical Imaginaries*, 25–44.

99 Selmeczi Kovács, *Nemzeti jelképek a magyar népművészetben.*

100 Ibid., 34.

the game is, as always, contextualizing, juxtaposing various kinds of sources and different perspectives, and comparing the same source types across contexts. This article has taken conceptual clarity and terminological precision somewhat lightly (let me offer as an excuse the explanation that I tried to avoid imposing my theoretical preferences on other people's works). But beyond familiarity with the historical setting under study, we, researchers, must also untangle, in light of our favorite theories, what the given evidence is supposed to reveal, and we must be specific about our assumptions. The dilemmas of interpreting early responses to nationalism force us not only to refine our methodological toolkit, but also to ground our analyses in a theory of social behavior, beliefs, and emotions and rethink what we are talking about when we talk about nationhood and nationalism.

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Rural Reactions to Modernization: Anti-Modernist Features of the 1883 Anti-Hungarian Peasant Uprising in Croatia

Veronika Eszik
Research Centre for the Humanities
eszik.veronika@abtk.hu

In the post-Compromise Croatia–Slavonia (1868–1914) several peasant uprisings indicated a deep crisis in the rural world. Previous literature abundantly discussed the economic and social motives of these protests and interpreted the tensions as signs of the peasantry's national awakening. In the present article, through a rereading of archival documents related to the 1883 protests, I draw attention to the perplexity of peasants when they should have identified national symbols. I argue, that the attitude of the peasants towards symbols turned against every kind of power symbol regardless of its link to a given nation. Adding a layer of nuance to the canonical explanations of peasant unrest allows us to draw attention to popular sensibilities to the ever-expanding state's intrusion into rural areas and to the state's modernizing interventions perceived as coercion. The ways in which the peasantry responded with hostility and violence to spaces, symbols, and figures associated with modernization make it very clear that modernization was seen by the peasantry as a potential danger (hence the anti-modernist epithet of the 1883 events). Thus, we should abandon the assumption that elite imaginations of modernity and modernization simply trickled down to the peasantry or that peasants accepted the teleology of modernization without criticism or anxiety. This article is also an attempt to read peasant rumors as historical sources independently of their truthfulness at the factual level, concentrating rather on what they tell us about the peasants' fears and motivations and the strategies they used to cope with rapid changes in their lifeworld.

Keywords: Croatia–Slavonia, Hungarian Kingdom, peasant movements, rural history, anti-modernism, rumor theory

Austria–Hungary's autonomous kingdom, the post-Compromise Croatia–Slavonia experienced peasants' protests, a clear indicator of a deeply troubled agrarian society,[1] roughly once every decade (namely in 1871, 1883, 1895/97,

1 The transformation of the rural world of late nineteenth-century Croatia included the dissolution of the so-called *zadruga*s, farming cooperatives on estates owned commonly by extended families, as well as the abolition of the Military Frontier and the privileged status of soldier-farmers with it in 1881, the introduction of more capitalistic practices in agriculture, and new cadastral surveys along with a new tax system. As the list suggests, an extreme level of adaptation was required to make rural life endurable.

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and in 1903). Given its broadness and supposedly nationalist undertones, the 1883 uprising, which has been characterized as both anti-Hungarian and anti-modernist,[2] stands out in terms of historiographical discussion. The seminal monograph by Dragutin Pavličević[3] and two exhaustive articles by László Katus[4] have meticulously reconstructed the social insecurities and the political loyalties that motivated the uprising, but none of the discussions in the secondary literature attempted to analyze the so-called anti-modern origins of what happened or, in a broader sense, peasant perceptions of change. In the present article, I intend to complement the abovementioned aspects and identify rural reactions to modernization[5] through a rereading of archival documents related to the 1883 protests.[6] With modernization, a greater emphasis is put on the state's presence in the rural context.[7] It is also an attempt to read peasant rumors as historical sources independently of their truthfulness at the factual level, concentrating rather on what they tell us about the peasants' fears and motivations and the strategies they used to cope with rapid changes in their lifeworld. As Irina Marin put it in relation to protesting Romanian peasants in 1907, "Many peasants may have misunderstood rumors/news, but that is not the point. The point is how they used this information to serve their own purposes." Peasant mythologies, Marin argues, facilitated coping and control and helped members of the peasantry

2 This term is used but not explained in the secondary literature in Hungarian about the 1883 events. See Sokcsevits, *Horvátország*, 392–94.

3 Pavličević, *Narodni pokret*.

4 Katus, "A mezőgazdaság," and Katus, *A Tisza-kormány*.

5 One cannot shirk the task of providing some sort of definition of the polysemous and overused term "modernization." As my research interest concerns the experiences and emotional responses of peasants to the new, however, I do not need precise conceptualizations. I argue, rather, as Shulamit Volkov did in her seminal *The Rise of Popular Antimodernism in Germany*. Volkov claims that "popular antimodernism emerged as a reaction to the process of modernization, not to one or another of its manifestations," and that it was a profound and "generalized hostility towards all forces that seemed to weaken the traditional economy and society and threaten old life styles and values." I will argue that the ideas of modernization, first and foremost the salutary nature of progress, had an analyzable reception among members of the peasantry. However, to narrow the scope of the investigation in order to ensure that it remained feasible, I concentrated on reactions to urban modernization (urban–rural controversies) and reactions to spectacular technical modernity. Volkov, *The Rise of Popular Antimodernism*, 10.

6 HR-HDA-78-6 Zemaljska vlada. Predsjedništvo. 1881–1883: Boxes 181–84. In the following: HR-HDA-Pr.Zv.

7 I borrow in this essay an idea found in a volume of the series *Rural History in Europe*, according to which the state's attitude towards the agrarian world can be described as "integration through subordination," given that subordination "to the values and production logic of manufacturing industry is a major consequence for the farming population and agriculture of the state's modernising efforts." Moser and Varley, "The state and agricultural modernisation," 26.

reclaim at least a sense of agency in a situation of extreme vulnerability.[8] Reports about allegedly irrational peasant behavior fueled by rumors, alcohol, and the psychosis of mass violence have long been considered unusable for historians, which gives us a chance to make a contribution about bottom-up perceptions of and fears related to modernity, as well as resistance to it.

The 1883 Anti-Hungarian and Anti-modernist Peasant Uprisings

The 1883 uprisings started in Zagreb following the violation of the language use terms of the Hungarian–Croatian Compromise of 1868[9] by Antal Dávid, head of the Zagreb Finance Directorate, who changed the coats of arms on the fronts of the buildings under his authority from an exclusively Croatian version to a bilingual Hungarian–Croatian one. He also organized quasi mandatory Hungarian language training courses for officers, and in the meantime, the Hungarian State Railways introduced Hungarian as an official language on its lines on Croatian soil, claiming that it was, although owned by the Hungarian State, a private company, and as such, it could decide freely about issues of language use.[10] The conflict around language brought to the surface various political grievances and social tensions. The protests soon spread to rural areas, where several suppressed tensions came to the fore. The rural population was also able to use the issue of the coats of arms as a pretext for expressing profound dissatisfaction and despair. The protests took months and eventually were put down by military forces.

In 1883, peasant violence was aimed mainly at big, modern national networks (railway, telegraph, and post and finance offices), symbols of urban lifestyle and culture (urban clothing, books, new measures and meter sticks, and members of the local intelligentsia, who were regarded as alien to the village), or other symbols of state control (coats of arms, flags, civil registers, and other official documents). In spite of the clear complexity of the phenomena, historians often saw these acts of aggression exclusively as signs of the national awakening

8 Marin, *Peasant Violence*, 42.

9 Like the Austro-Hungarian Settlement of 1867, the Hungarian–Croatian Compromise was also concluded to redefine the legal statuses of nations within the Empire. Although the document recognized Croatia–Slavonia as an autonomous political nation with its own territory, it granted limited home rule to Croatia mainly by the fact that the country's finances were controlled by Budapest. Internal affairs were autonomously managed, while foreign and military policy were integrated into the dualist system of post-Settlement Austria–Hungary.

10 Sokcsevits, *Horvátország*, 392–4.

among the peasantry,[11] and they assumed that the peasantry's former, spatially narrower but in its content broader set of identities was gradually replaced by a dominant attachment to the nation. This vision of the nationalization of the peasantry has since been nuanced and criticized in many ways,[12] though the Croatian and Hungarian secondary literature has yet to consider the relevance of historiography concerning doubts about popular nationalism in relation to peasant uprisings in Croatia. This consideration would have two major benefits: first, we could reintroduce aspects that have been excluded by the nationalist explanation, such as, in this case, the popular sensibilities to modernization, and second, we could use the vast range of methodological findings and ideas offered by the highly productive "history from below" approach.

If we cannot be sure about the level of the peasantry's allegedly rising national consciousness, it is safer to declare that by 1883 modern mass politics started to reach the villages. First, the so-called Party of Right *(Hrvatska stranka prava)*, the main opposition party in the Zagreb parliament by the 1880s, and twenty years later the Croatian Peasant Party *(Hrvatska seljačka stranka)* gradually engaged non-voting masses in political activities. In a future broadening of this research to subsequent events, the latter is of particular importance, since the Croatian Peasant Party's ideologues, Stjepan and Antun Radić, built up a worldview that was based on the sharp separation of urban and rural societies, and this vision deeply influenced Croatian public and political discourse in the first quarter of the twentieth century. According to Marc Biondich, Stjepan Radić's biographer, the most striking feature of late nineteenth-century Croatian society was the popular assumption that political or economic oppression was always a form of aggression by the city against rural communities, with the underlying belief that this happened because the city was alien to the people. This anti-urban agenda was of course intrinsically a part of a nationalist one, as the tax collector, the recruiter, the officer, or the railway official were seen as embodiments of both the cruel economic exploitation and the main obstacle to Croatian national unfolding: the Hungarians.[13] My intention, again, is to highlight the anti-urban traits of these intertwining factors, without questioning however the relevance of the national agenda.

Although the perception of the city as alien to the "authentic" national culture of rural communities was a common phenomenon in the multinational

11 As described in Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen.*

12 See most importantly: Van Ginderachter and Beyen, *Nationhood from Below.*

13 Biondich, *Stjepan Radić*, 21–25.

Habsburg Lands, one rarely finds discussion, in the secondary literature, of the fact that uneven urbanization among the nations of the empire meant uneven access to modern achievements, and this inequality led to the crystallization of the idea that modernization is not only a privilege but also an instrument of power. Because of this spectacular nature of modernization's political implications, we can assume that popular critics of the ideas of progress and the teleology of modernization were more frequently and clearly formulated in contrast to the general view that modernization is such a complex phenomenon that it could be grasped exclusively by high intellectuals, if ever. Our task is to distinguish between overlapping anti-urban, anti-Hungarian, and anti-modern feelings in order to become better acquainted with popular perceptions of modernity.

Although the real electoral success did not come for the Croatian Peasant Party until after World War I, this was due to the fact that, before the introduction of universal suffrage, it was simply not possible to see or gauge the extraordinary popularity of the party. The party program, however, was formulated in 1903, hence the two-pole vision of society was built on experiences of the Settlement period. Rural hostility to urban modernization is thus a factor that has a real significance in political and intellectual history, a significance comparable even to the significance of nationalism.

The available sources pose a common problem of rural history: the reports about the peasants' dissatisfaction do not offer the peasants' voices directly. Rather, these voices are mediated by government and military officials who were appointed to visit the rebellious villages and gather information about the details, actors, and motivations behind the events. The act of recording accounts (allegedly) given by peasants means filtering, reorganizing, and thus distorting the information. I would contend, however, that these sources still offer some insights into the prevailing mindset among the peasantry, even if with some inaccuracy and bias. In order to provide some balance and compensate for the fact that the reports were authored by representatives of power, I gave credit to statements allegedly made by peasants and described in the reports as irrational, and I attempted to draw clear distinctions between the information provided by the reporter on the one hand and speculation on the other. By focusing on pieces of information considered insignificant and irrational by the authors of these reports, I was able to distance the narrative somewhat from the interpretive schemes provided by the contemporary bureaucracy.

Also, some outstanding figures among the officials in charge seem to have made a palpable effort to understand villagers instead of simply judging or lecturing them, and they thus probably gained more trust in the community. (As will be detailed below, it was rare for villagers to show much trust in an urban and/or power figure, particularly after the protests were suppressed by the military.) One agent who managed to win some trust among the villagers was Ognjeslav Utješenović Ostrožinski (1875–1885), count of Varaždin county and government commissioner delegated to investigate the origins of the unrest. Due to his long conversations with peasants, in which he showed honest interest, Utješenović's reports which reconstruct these conversations are of a particular importance to this investigation. He was convinced that if the administration had turned "to the poor peasantry of Zagorje [region surrounding Zagreb] with an open heart and gentle soul," further violence could have been avoided.[14] He insisted on informing insecure villagers about delicate questions which were central to the conflicts, such as taxation, coats of arms, and laws and decrees, in order to dissipate unfounded concerns about them. According to a document in which he requested the reimbursement of his travel costs, Utješenović visited 21 villages and spent time among the inhabitants of each.[15]

Utješenović's sensitivity to the worries of the peasant world is also proven by the books he had previously consecrated to rural phenomena, such as the dissolution of the zadrugas[16] and the special status of the peasant soldiers living in the so-called Military Frontier (see footnote 1).[17] In her monograph on the beginnings of the processes of modernization in Croatia, Mirjana Gross describes Utješenović's favorable judgment[18] of zadrugas as a manifestation of a traditionalist mindset, and she is perplexed by the fact that this "great modernizer" could have held such a view. She explains this contradiction as a consequence

14 Report of Ognjeslav Utješenović to the government from the village of Zlatar. September 2, 1883. HR-HDA-Pr.Zv. 78. 6. Box 182. 3653/1883.

15 HR-HDA-Pr.Zv. 78. 6. Box 182. 4580/1883.

16 Utješenović, *Die Hauskommunionen.*

17 Utješenović, *Die Militärgränze.*

18 Utješenović considered the zadrugas beneficial, and he regarded the introduction of capitalist practices into the world of agriculture rather dangerous, given that—he argued—it had led to extreme polarization and pauperization in Western Europe. The lack of Croatian industrial sites alarmed him less than the way in which Western industrialization had taken place. All in all, private property in his eyes was not a guarantee of greater productivity. On the contrary, he believed that zadrugas could provide shelter against pauperization and thus lead to better economic performance. According to him, Western civilizers threatened traditional community bonds and morals and were toxic to South Slavs in general.

of inner dilemmas, and she describes these alleged dilemmas in a dramatic way, offering a portrait of Utješenović as an intellectual and practicing politician who was "crucified" between modernity and traditions. Gross's perspective, however, magnifies this contradiction, as she considers the belated spread of capitalism the main reason why Croatia was "backward," and the only salutary way out of this backwardness, in her assessment, would have been to adopt Western patterns of modernization. According to her model, land ownership in these communities was a striking example of the periphery's backwardness.[19] Utješenović, however, wasn't convinced that catching up to Western standards was a must, and thus he was free to choose which features of modernization were desirable and which were better avoided. This explains why he was tireless in his struggle for railway and highway connections for his county, on the one hand, but was against the unrestrained modernization of agricultural production on the other. Although his reports about peasant turmoil cannot reflect his vision of the changing world in the same depth as his books, it is interesting that he could be on the same platform with peasants when they resisted the efforts of the modernizing elites and wished to find their own ways between conserving the old and adopting the new. Utješenović, who seems to have had something of an idealistic view of the peasantry, can be seen as the opposite extreme from the mighty bureaucrats. His often biased and paternalistic comments still help balance the images offered in the other sources.

On the basis of the aforementioned sources and keeping in mind their different authorships, I defined three overlapping domains that give us the opportunity to reconsider the events from the perspectives outlined above. First, I consider rural uncertainties with regard to national symbols.[20] This disorientation in the use of symbols sheds light on the general (that is, independent of national bonds) despair against political power. In the two following sections, I investigate two sub-cases of this general animosity towards the prevailing power relations, namely anti-urban feelings based on the perception of the city as a space of dominance and fear generated by big national networks, which were increasingly intruding into the rural sphere.

19 Gross, *Počeci Moderne Hrvatske,* 216–19.

20 In this, an article by Stefano Petrungaro provided the model for me: Petrungaro, "Popular protest."

"The peasants shout themselves/their selves […] in the diatribes against Hungary."[21] *The Symbols and the Rhetoric of the 1883 Uprising*

At first glance, 1883 was the year when Croatian peasants started to use political and national symbols (mainly flags and coats of arms) as clear signs of their engagement with the national paradigm. This vision was reinforced by the fact that the spark that inflamed the smoldering tensions was the placement of bilingual coats of arms on the facades of public buildings. As a reaction to this (according to the secondary literature), first city dwellers and later the peasantry also attacked visual symbols of Hungarian rule, destroyed bilingual inscriptions, tore apart Hungarian flags, and shouted anti-Hungarian rhymes.

As Stefano Petrungaro stresses, archival documents give a very different picture about the visual coding and decoding of symbols among peasants.[22] The most striking feature of the reports is indeed the highly ambivalent behavior and perplexity of peasants when they should have found the right targets of their anger. In the vast majority of villages, not a single Hungarian coat of arms, inscription, or flag could be found, and when peasants invaded cities, they had difficulty identifying ideal or typical national symbols which would have represented a national "other." In the overwhelming majority of the cases, what protesters found was the so-called *common* coat of arms, a state symbol that contained both Hungarian and Croatian iconographical elements (most strikingly, the Croatian "chessboard" and the crown of Saint Stephen), but in several cases, the coat of arms that was destroyed was exclusively Croatian. Considering that the official Croatian coat of arms contained the crown of Saint Stephen and the Hungarian coat of arms contained Croatian–Slavonian heraldic elements, it wasn't all that easy to differentiate between the two. As far as flags are concerned, it seems clear that the Croatian national colors were not yet identifiable for many in 1883. Even a decade and a half later, in 1897, orthodox ecclesiastical flags were sometimes torn to shreds, even though these flags had the same colors as the Croatian tricolor. In 1883, we see no trace of the common practice of 1903, when peasants wore ribbons and cockades with the Croatian national colors and carried around red, white, and blue flags.[23] In

21 "Távirat Zágrábból" [Telegraph from Zagreb], *Nemzet,* September 3, 1883.

22 Petrungaro, "Popular protest."

23 Petrungaro, "Popular protest," 509–10. Contemporaries emphasized mainly the nationalistic hatreds, but the disorientation of peasants was also clear to them. See the below the citations from Frigyes Pesty. Pesty, *Száz politikai*, 33.

a rather confusing manner, peasants frequently vandalized flags that they had found in churches and sometimes (though less often) also icons and sculptures that they also identified as symbols of power and dominance.

In Hrastovica, the mob broke into the church because they assumed that the priest was hiding Hungarian flags inside, but when they didn't find any, they broke a statue of Saint Florian because they thought it was holding "some kind of coat of arms."[24] The report from Gornja Stubica suggests that the peasants tried to destroy any and all objects that had possible symbolic meanings. A group of approximately sixty peasants pulled down the common coat of arms from the municipality's facade with bars and then demanded that the official turn over the Hungarian blazon, which they claimed he had hidden. In other words, they were perfectly aware of the fact that the coat of arms they had destroyed was not the Hungarian one. They then tore the signboards down from two local shops and the tobacconist's store, smashed them, and claimed that they were also blazons ("grb," in Croatian). This vandalization of symbols of power was topped by the fact that the protesters confiscated not only the shopkeeper's money and cigarettes but also a portrait of Emperor Franz Joseph.[25] Common coats of arms were damaged in Dubrave, Gomirje, and several other villages. One of the reports written by Utješenović constitutes a particularly telling source about a peasant community that had reached the limits of its tolerance for change. Utješenović claims in his account to have calmed the dwellers of Sveti Križ who had gathered around him on the church square only by assuring them that there would be nothing *new* regarding the blazon-issue and that "no one intends to place any other coat of arms than those that have already existed here."[26]

In Marija Bistrica on August 26, 1883, peasants from the region tore down the official Croatian-language signs and the blazon after the Sunday mass because they were, the peasants insisted, "practically the same as the Hungarian coat of arms."[27] This reflection suggests that the attack was more than some irrational act of the illiterate masses and that the logic behind it was not strictly or exclusively of a "national" nature. The remark indicates, rather, that peasants identified every state symbol as Hungarian, and by "Hungarian," they meant

24 A press report is cited in Pavličević, *Narodni pokret*, 265.

25 Report of the Stubica prefecture to the sub-county of Zlatar. August 29, 1883. HR-HDA-Pr.Zv. 78. 6. Box 182. 3454/1883.

26 Report of Ognjeslav Utješenović from Zlatar relating to the events of several villages. September 2, 1883. HR-HDA-Pr.Zv. 78. 6. Box 182. 3653/1883.

27 Pavličević, *Narodni pokret*, 265.

a distant, hostile center of power, drawing upon a significant distortion and broadening of the original term to express a wide range of phenomena that were troubling to them.

The high number of attacks against local Croatian officials and members of the rural intelligentsia also indicates that any member of the state bureaucracy could be targeted, regardless of the person's nationality. This is all the more striking when hostility was aimed at people who in no way could have been linked to Budapest, such as local teachers, priests, and popes. In the case of these members of the rural communities, it is not always easy to understand the logic according to which they were on occasion called Magyar or *magyarón* (a pejorative term referring to politicians and people who were seen as being friendly to Hungarians or Hungarian interest) or how it would have been possible for Hungarians to bribe or corrupt them.

In this context, the term "Magyar" or "Hungarian" became so widely used that it almost lost any real meaning. It becomes impossible to say if it actually referred to a specific national affiliation—in which case its use to denominate local Croatian elites or the Croatian coat of arms would have been absurd—or was simply a general label applied to comparatively unfamiliar people who exercised some authority over the peasantry. For the latter, an extra term was available, the expression "magyarón," which a priori made it possible to use it for people of any kind of nationality. As the two terms were used in very different contexts, we can also assume that state symbols, such as coats of arms, were not always simply misinterpreted by accident, but rather were deliberately labeled Hungarian to place a clear emphasis on the perceived widening gap between the rural world and the ruling circles.

The term "Magyar" was turned upside down in the most ironic way in Senj, a little town on the Croatian littoral. The town had no Hungarian inhabitants and was renowned for its struggle to remain an economic equal of Fiume (Rijeka, Croatia), the only seaport that belonged directly to Hungary in the era. For this reason, Senj was a notorious hub of political opposition.[28] According to a report by Major Izidor Vuich, an adherent of the Party of Right, Josip Gržanić "inflamed people against every bureaucrat, and he did so by revealing the addresses of all those who respected or agreed with the laws of the great government, and said that *they are all Hungarians*, and he denigrated with this

28 Eszik, "A Small Town's Quest."

name every peace-loving and honest citizen who did not desire any turmoil."[29] The insinuation that people who had a history of fighting Hungarian rule were somehow "Hungarian" themselves shows once again that the term was malleable. The report then declares that the main motivation for the uprising was "hatred of the laws." In other words, there seems to have been a general hostility towards the governing circles.

This widening and distortion of a term is not a unique phenomenon. According to the research of Irina Marin, early twentieth-century peasants in North Romania called themselves "students" due to a similar distortion of the expression. The participants in the 1907 jacquerie, many of whom were illiterate, defined students as urban rebel elements and identified themselves with them in turn, which led them to recite chants like "we are the students."[30] Similarly, workers on strike in Lower Austria in 1905 called the workers transported from today's Hungary and Slovakia to break the strike "Krowoten" (that is, Croats). In the given context, Krowoten was definitely a derogatory term to designate transitional dwellers in the city who spoke a Slavic language.[31] This latter example clearly shows the nationalist logic of the scapegoating process, but it also reveals how unelaborated these terms were at that stage. The same can be said about the peasants protesting in Croatia–Slavonia: nationalism's vocabulary came to them via the press or agitation led by the Party of Right, but they also used this new vocabulary to narrate social collisions.

To the extent that one can venture conjectures concerning peasant experiences, while the state was increasingly becoming visible (and threatening) in rural life through tax collection and cadastral surveys, the government's Magyarizing policies (which started becoming stronger in 1879) couldn't really be perceived in rural areas. Local representatives of the state were not Hungarians, in large part because tax collection was made a municipal duty, and the financial authorities also employed locals. Therefore, when people identified state power with Hungarians, there was a missing link in the chain, replaced sometimes with the use of the term "magyarón," but more often, the equation was completed with the help of rumor and insinuation.

There were plenty of rumors that spread wildly throughout the weeks of the protests. These rumors were in general a specific mixture of pieces of accurate

29 Izidor Vuich's report about the conditions in Senj. August 29, 1883. HR-HDA-Pr.Zv. 78. 6. Box 182. 3442/1883. My emphasis.

30 Marin, *Peasant Violence*, 39.

31 Morelon, "Social Conflict," 661.

information, elements of popular imaginary, wishful thinking, and, in contrast, the greatest fears of the peasantry. Independently of their content, we can see these rumors as collective interpretive frameworks which gave a rationalizing opportunity in a situation of uncertainty and crisis. As sources, they reveal how peasants interpreted their reality, and thus their level of "truthfulness" matters little. Given that one of the functions of rumors was to inflame peasants and legitimize violence, it is not surprising that many of the rumors concerned the new, unbearable taxes.[32]

In 1883, the most common rumor besides concerns over taxes[33] was that local bureaucrats and intelligentsia would *sell* the village to Hungarians and *sell* the church, the belltower, the lands, or even the villagers. This fear is such a recurrent element in reports that Stefano Petrungaro called it the silver thread of the movements.[34] This rumor created a direct—however imaginary—link between local representatives of the power structure and the distant center in the Hungarian Kingdom, and it made it possible for the peasantry to organize its hostile feelings towards symbols and persons in a logical arrangement. According to the rumor, the sign that an alleged sale was going to take place would be a flag hung out during the night on a public building, from which Hungarians would recognize that they were free to seize the village. Destroying flags thus seemed a preventive act of self-defense.

This rumor not only thematizes the dependent status of the Croatian (and Serbian) nation, it also links betrayal to cash flow and reduces it to an act of sale, ignoring the various real ways in which Magyarization could have been taking place around them.[35] The agrarian society, which was being forced to adopt capitalist practices, experienced a rise in its costs since they were counted in cash. This rise in costs had various reasons, including excessive taxation, economic crisis since 1873, and a lack of financial infrastructure, which thus

32 On the role of rumors in peasant movements see Marin, *Peasant Violence*, 39–41.

33 Sometimes even fears concerning taxes fears also suggest anxieties concerning the state's intrusion into the countryside. Especially after 1897, when the news about the law of civil marriage spread in the villages, rumors about taxing marriage, birth, and other family events circulated in great numbers. Clearly, the fear was about the state invading the private sphere. Petrungaro, *Kamenje i puške*, 46–50; 68.

34 Petrungaro, "Popular protest," 506.

35 We can assume that if the real reason for fear had been Magyarization, the subject would have been education and language use. I have not found a single sign of this kind of fear in the archival documents. Admittedly, this may be a consequence, at least in part, of widespread illiteracy. Around 1880 in Croatia–Slavonia, ca. three quarters of the population was illiterate. Under such circumstances, everything unknown coming from urban centers or any kind of (state) power could be understood as some form of Magyarization. Župan, "Kulturni i intelektualni razvoj u Hrvatskoj," 273.

made the peasantry vulnerable to usury. A specific factor among these causes was the introduction of a new system of measurement and new scales. The peasantry saw the literate upper class, to which it most frequently referred as Hungarian (and sometimes Jew—see the discussion below), as responsible for these changes.

In conclusion, the attitude of the peasants towards symbols either turned against every kind of power symbol regardless of its link to a given nation or was simply anti-Hungarian, if with a very broad understanding of "Hungarian" as a term that applied to every kind of power perceived as hostile. Nationalist motivations were still a relevant factor, but they were less relevant than the secondary literature has tended to claim.

Finally, the wave of protests gave the peasants an opportunity to express their frustrations with specific acute problems. In these cases, the act of pulling down the coats of arms served as a well-known choreography to express dissatisfaction. In Nova Gradiška for instance, the turmoil was stirred by a fire that destroyed the beech forest which had been set side to be cut down for the benefit of the villagers. In his report, the municipal officer shared his view that the otherwise peaceful people, who were loyal to the dynasty, became agitated by the news arriving from Zagreb and then were further distressed by the disastrous fire. Thus, when they pulled down blazons and flags, they imitated the events in Zagreb, about which they had read in newspapers, but the true reason for their despair was the very real financial consequences for them of the fire.[36]

Adding a layer of nuance to the canonical explanations of peasant unrest, which have tended to see this unrest as a symptom and proof of national awakening, is not my ultimate end in this inquiry. In the discussion below, I examine how political measures regarded as novelties and political actors regarded as alien to the village gave an anti-modernist and anti-urban tinge to the protests.

Anti-urban Peasant Violence

In the summer of 1883, several people were insulted or even attacked because of their clothing. The prefect in a village of the former Military Frontier named Gora was said to have embezzled money collected as taxes and used it to

36 Report of the municipal officer from Nova Gradiška. HR-HDA-Pr.Zv. 78. 6. Box 182. 3072/1883.

purchase boots.[37] Boots were considered a privilege enjoyed by urban people, and the reports frequently mention that wearing boots might well make one a potential target of violence. In the neighboring village, Maja, a person was killed because he was wearing a specific urban coat, the so-called *kaput*. *Kaputaš*, the term derived from the name of the coat, became a derogatory term with which to refer to city dwellers, and the *kaputaši* were often simply identified as tax collectors. According to one report about the new tax burdens, "All of this feeds upon the wretched peasant, and he, therefore, sees every civilized person as his enemy and torturing demon. That is why one heard the slogan during the disorders that all *kaputaši* should be killed."[38]

The opposition of the "wretched peasant" and the "civilized person" shows that the traditional divide between the rural and the urban population took on a new meaning with the acceleration of urban modernization and the increasing social value of cultural habits associated with "civilization" towards the end of the nineteenth century. This divide was defined not only by the stark difference between urban and rural lifestyles and values, the differences between a close community in rural settings and a looser urban society, or the disparities in the occupational sector, but increasingly by uneven access to innovation and by the resulting economic inequalities and differences in mentality. For this reason, in this section, I consider attacks against members of the village intelligentsia as expressions of anti-urban resentment. Partly because they had been educated in urban environments, all educated people were treated as alien to the village community, and they were also seen as personifying the city's dominance over rural communities because they were able, thanks to the new social capital and technical skills they had acquired in the city, to assert a significant measure of control over villagers. Furthermore, they represented the intention or need to change the traditional lifeworld of the peasantry, or in other words, they were seen as embodiments and tools of a process of modernization, threatening to many members of the rural communities.

In addition to violent acts committed against people dressed in urban attire, the reports also mention urban figures who allegedly appeared in villages as instigators and occasions when peasant masses intruded into the city. In each case, these figures—the urban gentleman on the one hand and the enraged peasant on the other—serve to shift responsibility. When peasants claimed to

37 Report from the villages of Gora, Kraberčan, Klasnić, Maligradac, and Maja. September 9, 1883. HR-HDA-Pr.Zv. 78. 6. Box 183. 3821/1883.

38 The report is cited in Biondich, *Stjepan Radić*, 25.

have seen "gentlemen" who manipulated them, their allegations also served to assert their innocence and legitimize acts of violence, much as allegations by the burghers of the city concerning angry peasant mobs served essentially the same functions.[39] What is important here is not whether there was any truth in these allegations so much as the logic behind them: the actors found the other party deserving of blame according to the rural-urban opposition.

Peasants who went to fairs in cities around August 20 broke things in urban space and sometimes used violence to intimidate or rob citizens. According to one report, "The disturbance, which at first was against the coats of arms, has begun to have a dangerous communist-like character. Instigators, who are said to be from Hungary, agitate people to commit crimes against property."[40] In such cases, the urban-rural opposition was also aggravated by the cooperation of the burghers with the authorities, for instance in Krapina, where "a couple hundred peasants wished to pillage, […] but the citizens [of the city] stood up against them, supporting the gendarmerie. One of the gendarmerie patrols clashed with the mob, and the rebels ran away as a result."[41] The gunfire of the gendarmerie killed a peasant, and the city dwellers feared vengeance as the news spread that "the rest of them escaped to the mountains, as it is said, to gather and attack Krapina when there are several thousands of them."[42] The story illustrates that rumors had a role in urban contexts as well. An essential element of any rumor is an exaggeration, such as the vision of thousands of angry peasants, as well as unfoundedness: the peasants did not return to Krapina. The atmosphere of mutual fear between the rural and the urban population, however, is palpable.

In the villages, elegantly dressed, literate, educated people were seen as hostile strangers who because of their professions had contacts with the city, such as the teacher,[43] the priest, the pope, the bureaucrat, and the merchant.

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39 Two examples from Nova Gradiška and from Zlatar: The prefect's report from Nova Gradiška. HR-HDA-Pr.Zv. 78. 6. Box 182. 3072/1883; Ognjeslav Utješenović's report from Zlatar. September 2, 1883. HR-HDA-Pr.Zv. 78. 6. Box 182. 3653/1883.

40 One should not miss the irony of the fact that, according to the author of the report, anti-Hungarian riots were provoked by Hungarian instigators. "Zágrábból jelentik" [Reported from Zagreb], *Nemzet,* September 2, 1883. A

41 Ibid.

42 Ibid.

43 The foreignness of teachers in rural communities is illustrated by a Croatian text in which only the word "teacher" is written in German: "*Da sam ja vlada, ja bi objesio i* Lehrera *i popa i sve činovnike* […]!" That is: "If it were up to me, I would hang the teacher, and the pope, and all the bureaucrats […]!" The source cites a peasant from the small village of Brđani, a certain Filip Pavlović. The district prefect's report to Ramberg, Petrinja. September 22, 1883. HR-HDA-Pr.Zv. 78. 6. Box 183. 3983/1883.

These people were accused of being traitors who shared sympathies with the Hungarians, they were searched through when protesters were searching for objects that were symbolic representations of power. The latter included the aforementioned coats of arms and flags, any kind of written documents (often decrees and orders), maps, and the newly introduced scales and tools used to measure things (new weights and measuring sticks).

The destruction of the new measuring instruments seemed the most barbarian and irrational act in the eyes of the elites, who believed unconditionally in progress. One senses the tone of indignant incomprehension in the words of Frigyes Pesty, a contemporary historian, politician, and public intellectual. His comments are worth citing because they reflect the force of the dominant discourse about modernization and progress:

> It is truly great naivety to presume that the Croatian people's spirit was disturbed by the sight of the Hungarian state coat of arms and Hungarian inscriptions. These people pulled down Croatian coats of arms, and those without any inscription. […]—this is a sign of the fact that the capability of reading has not yet spread enough among these people, and also a sign that they have long been manipulated by instigators. These people even revolted against the metric system and want to return to the old measures. I'm wondering if these people even know what they want.[44]

The opinion detailed by Pesty was far from unique. In a travelogue, one finds a similar jujudgmentbout Bosnians who were not impressed by the civilizing Austro-Hungarian administration: "They don't need culture forced onto them, they are averse to the inventive efforts of progress."[45] The belittling of the peasants as people who were allegedly unable to recognize their own interests in progress and thus unable to show self-determination is a gesture that can be linked to the modernizing elites in general.[46]

Hatred of the metric system posed a problem for historians as well.[47] Even those who approached the subject with empathy assumed that ignorance played a role in the rejection of the new system of measurement. This kind of

44 Pesty, *Száz politikai*, 33.

45 Solymossy, "Úti rajzok," 309.

46 This attitude is also present in the multitude of sources in which instigators (students from Zagreb, activists of the Party of Right, foreigner socialists, etc.) have the leading part. The underlying idea of these texts is that the peasantry was not able to make its own decisions. See also Marin, *Peasant Violence*, 50.

47 An outstanding exception—although in a very different, West European context—is Alder, *The Measure of All Things*.

interpretation developed by Rudolf Bićanić in 1937 was reiterated in Dragutin Pavličević's aforementioned monograph. According to the explanations offered by Bićanić and Pavličević, the rejection of the metric system was motivated mainly by fears of an economic nature, as peasants were convinced that taxes would further rise with the introduction of the new system of measurement. As the "Hungarian" system of measurement was introduced at a time when taxes were already going up, the erroneous conclusion was that the new system was itself the cause of this financial burden. Also, the agrarian crisis resulted decreasing crop prices, which were also mistaken for a consequence of the use of a new system.[48] The illiterate peasants, furthermore, couldn't doublecheck or monitor the process of conversion, and as they lacked trust in the authorities, they assumed that they were being constantly duped.

However, in the overwhelming majority of cases, the act of breaking of measuring sticks and scales wasn't isolated from other acts, including the destruction of maps and documents of the cadastral surveys and attacks on surveyors and engineers if they happened to be present in the village. The stakes of destroying measures were higher than the mere tension release, as indicates a telegraph from Zlatar that urged reinforcements. The document reveals that when protesters clashed with the police, four peasants were killed, but the peasant mass stayed together and remained determined to search for and destroy every measuring stick in Zlatar and its surroundings.[49]

As a matter of fact, measuring things was a peasant experience way more complex than the impression of being deluded by the conversion or damaged by the change. The ongoing cadastral surveys resulted, mainly in the territories where these surveys were completed by 1883, in a new kind of tax and ever greater financial burdens. The basis of tax assessment was defined by surveyors who frequently abused of their influence over vital issues (namely, they could be bribed to rank lands into lower categories of tax assessment).[50] In the process of dissolving zadrugas and administering land titles, these officials had the same role and the same opportunities to use corrupt methods in order to fill their own pockets. According to Antun Radić, who would have preferred to conserve common property, peasants couldn't benefit from the dissolution of zadrugas,

48 Pavličević, *Narodni pokret*, 14.

49 Telegraph from Zlatar to ask for reinforcements. August 26, 1883. HR-HDA-Pr.Zv. 78. 6. Box 181. 3306/1883.

50 Pavličević, *Narodni pokret*, 60.

only "the engineers, the merchants, the creditors, and the bureaucrats."[51] Obviously, engineers are on this list not as technical professionals, but as potential exploiters.

The peasantry thus saw for themselves that cadastral surveys were not merely technical or scientific processes. On the contrary, they were tools with which the centralizing state extended its control over rural areas. Given the lack of suitable sources, it is not easy to study the history of emotions related to measuring things in general and cadastral surveys in particular. However, the vehemence of reactions to land surveys suggests that the very process of measuring land was seen as an infringement on an intimate attachment to this land. A report from Ogulin written by an especially emphatic official begins with more emotion than usual official records. "I came among them, and I have to say that I was deeply moved by the sorrow of these people, how they admit their mistakes and beg for pardon." The author of the report then gives an account of the burdens, unbearable difficulties, and fears of the peasants. The fears primarily concerned the new taxes, and the report emphasizes one such concern in particular: the peasants claimed that a new kind of tax would be introduced. "Taxes will come," they claimed, "that no one has ever heard of before, they will measure our dead, and we will have to pay according to the weight of the body."[52] The anxiety expressed through this rumor is not only of a financial nature. It is a symptom of the pervasive fear that the state, through its rationalizing and measuring practices, was going to intrude violently into the private sphere of families, including the intimate process of grieving. This rumor clearly indicates that, even if exaggeration is an inherent characteristic of rumors, the ever expanding state's modernizing campaigns provoked fearful and hostile reactions.

The peasant reception of the idea that the engineer is an iconic figure of modernization also has to be taken into account.[53] Given that mass media frequently made progress a theme, it is ironic to assume that propaganda succeeded in making peasants realize their identities as members of a nation while somehow failing to affect their knowledge of technical and scientific developments and ideas of modernization. As it so happens, this was the era in which technical drawings and engravings were often published in popular newspapers as visual

51 Cited in Pavličević, *Narodni pokret*, 38.

52 Report of the district authority from Ogulin. August 30, 1883. HR-HDA-Pr.Zv. 78. 6. Box 181. 3457/1883.

53 According to François Jarrige, the engineer, the scientist, and the industrial entrepreneur were the "heroes of progress." Fureix and Jarrige, *La modernité désenchantée*, 57.

markers of engineering performance. These drawings were accessible to the illiterate public. Technical innovation was spectacularly managed by a group of intellectuals of a new type, as much in rural areas as in cities. The tools they used, which were frequently seen as diabolical wands, became targets of violence in various localities in Europe.[54] At the turn of the century, a newspaper titled *Dom* ("Fatherland"), which was expressly published for a peasant public, lamented the alleged overuse of the term "progress." According to an article authored by Antun Radić and published in *Dom*, this word was used over and over again in every book and paper, and people educated and illiterate, intelligent and ignorant alike were speaking about it, and everything that wasn't seen as progressive was instantly judged as wild and backward. Radić described modern man as a figure "with a telegraphy on his one ear and a telephone on the other," but that didn't mean that he was good in spirit. While Radić considered the ubiquity of ideas of progress evident in peasant circles, with regard to modern achievements, he concludes that "we, peasants, readers of *Dom*, can remain humans without them."[55] *Sloboda* (Liberty), a newspaper made partly responsible for the spread of the ideas of the Party of Right, wrote at length about "soulless engineers" *(bezdušni inžiniri)*. Unfortunately, the editorial was heavily censored.[56]

Thus, when Pavličević affirmed several times that the metric system was rejected because everything that came from the Hungarian Kingdom was rejected *regardless of the progressiveness of the phenomenon*,[57] he overlooked something important. Namely, the peasants were not at all indifferent to the question of whether something was or wasn't modern or progressive. On the contrary, the peasantry was at times particularly sensitive to anything new on the one hand, while it used the symbols of modernity (e.g. new measuring implements or engineers) for its own purposes on the other. The agrarian society at the end of the nineteenth century clearly realized that the new things that were being introduced (whether something as concrete as a new kind of scale or something abstract, like a new system of measurement) radically transformed its lifeworld, and the peasantry experienced modernizing intervention as a form of coercion. The assumption that villagers misunderstood the significance of the metric system is no more convincing than the assumption that they simply reinterpreted this system and its uses with respect to their own interests. The

54 As has happened a century earlier in France: Alder, *The Measure of All Things*.

55 Radić, "Što je 'napredak'?," *Dom,* December 27, 1901, 424–25.

56 *Sloboda*, September 19, 1883, 1.

57 Pavličević, *Narodni pokret*, 67, 94.

reception of the symbols of modernity, like the reception of the symbols of "national" belonging, was also a negotiation over the benefits and utility of this "modernity" in rural areas. The destruction of measuring instruments allowed peasants to express their distrust for the new, which, as Peter Burke suggests, was not at all irrational or extremely conservative. Rather, it was a strategy based on the bitter experience that the price of change is often paid by common people.[58]

While historians have had little access to peasant emotions of the nineteenth century towards surveys and measurements (acts of aggression against engineers, for instance, were not considered as expressions of critical attitudes towards modernity, but rather merely as a sub-case of irrational hostility against the intelligentsia), contemporary officials and authors of fiction[59] may have been more sensitive to feelings of loss related to modernizing campaigns. The district official in Nova Gradiška, for instance, openly warned the newly arriving financial officer to respect local traditions and "not to introduce any innovations, because there had been already enough of them, and I know well that people have not been able to get used to the previous ones."[60] Clearly, the tolerance of change of communities in rural areas had its limits.

A specific sub-case of aggression against a local intelligentsia is the great number of assaults against Jews. Antisemitic aspects of the 1883 uprising were often regarded as marginal, and they were explained by the impact of a significant antisemitic wave in the Hungarian Kingdom,[61] namely the notorious Tiszaeszlár lawsuit, a blood libel which ended with the acquittal of the (Jewish) defendant but nevertheless fueled hostility towards Jews all over the country and maybe even beyond. Amongst the archival documents, I have found three pamphlets that refer to the Tiszaeszlár lawsuit, one of which was printed, so it could have been spread in large numbers.[62] However, it seems unlikely that flowing against anti-Hungarian (and anti-modernization) sentiments, there was any widespread

58 Burke, *Popular Culture*, 209.

59 Although I cannot, in this essay, offer anything resembling a thorough discussion of the questions that arise here as they are treated in works of fiction, it is worth noting how measuring things is a recurrent subject of writings dealing with conflicts over civilizational processes. In the Austro–Hungarian context, the best known example is the Nobel-prize winning novel by Ivo Andrić, *The Bridge*. I would also mention Daniel Kehlmann's *Measuring the World* and Brian Friel's *Translations*.

60 Ladislav Mihanović district prefect reports from Nova Gradiška. October 8, 1883. HR-HDA-Pr.Zv. 78. 6. Box 183. 4320/1883.

61 Pavličević, *Narodni pokret*, 80.

62 Handwritten pamphlets: HR-HDA-Pr.Zv. 78. 6. Box 182. 3072/1883. The printed one is the attachment of a county report, which dwells on the fears of Jews in the region, and in addition to the pamphlet, it contains a local Croatian-language paper that reports the Hungarian legal case. The count proposes the

sympathy for Hungarians as victims of the supposed crimes committed by Jews. This implausible interpretation would rest on an overestimation of the information flow between Hungarian and Croatian rural communities, which were separated by a serious language barrier, as well as an overestimation of the solidarity between these two populations. It seems far more likely that the antisemitic acts of violence, which were not exactly sporadic, were manifestations of anti-capitalist, economic arguments used to blame and vilify the Jewry.

In addition, as Christhard Hoffmann stated in his study "'The New' as a (Jewish) Threat: Anti-modernism and Antisemitism in Germany," this was the very historical moment when the Jew became the symbol of modernity and the urban type.[63] Stereotypes about the Jewry had long been dominated by notions of backwardness and poverty, but the second half of the nineteenth century brought change. The threats posed by modernity came to be seen as threats posed (at least in part) by the Jewry. As Hoffman shows, of the elements of modernity, three in particular were identified as Jewish in the antimodernist and antisemitic intellectual discourse in Germany. The Jew became the personification of the capitalist, the urban archetype, and the intellectual.[64] The medieval figure of the usurer was complemented by the latter not only in intellectual narratives but also among those who were the losers in the processes of industrialization (artisans, craftsmen, peasants, retailers) in general.[65]

Many antisemitic atrocities committed in 1883 were claimed to be acts against usury, but they also seem to have been fueled by the anger of those who felt excluded from the benefits of literacy, as writing was in their eyes an instrument used by the powerful to dominate the powerless and pervert the truth.[66] As Utješenović detailed, the vulnerability of the debtor was further reinforced by the fact that documents concerning loans were written and certified by the money lender, often a Jewish person, while the people borrowing

confiscation of the latter. Also attached was an antisemitic comic which arrived from Hungary in a great number of copies but was confiscated by the authorities. HR-HDA-Pr.Zv. 78. 6. Box 184. 4580/1883.

63 Hoffmann, "'The New'," 105.

64 Hoffmann, "'The New'," 101.

65 Jews, of course, could be made scapegoats for practically anything. One finds a telling example in the village of Slunj, where peasants claimed that the attack on the local post office was the idea of a certain David Rendeli. Rendeli himself lived in the same building and also kept a shop and a bar in it, but by a distorted logic, he was said to have invented the attack so that he would be able to call for military help, and the soldiers arriving to restore order would eat and drink and spend their money in his shops. Report of the district authority of Slunj to Ramberg. September 21, 1883. HR-HDA-Pr.Zv. 78. 6. Box 183. 3981/1883.

66 Fónagy, "Kollektív erőszak," 1179.

money (namely, members of the peasantry) had no control over the process. In disputed cases, the mere word of a peasant was countered with written and signed documents, so the peasant could never win.[67]

It is telling that in a world turned upside down, where peasants could assert control over the intelligentsia of the village, these peasants seized the power of the written word in symbolic ways and thus created new power relations related to literacy. These symbolic acts frequently consisted of imitations of everyday acts of writing, but under the control of the peasantry. In Stubica, for instance, angered villagers made the instructor Vjekoslav Satler write and sign a document in which he declared himself Croatian and promised to serve only Croatian interests.[68] Priest Andro Čižmek was also made to sign the same paper, as were the officials of the municipal office and the tax collector, who happened to be there that day. The peasants then went to the bar, where they forced the barman to give them drinks and sign the document.[69] A similar effort was made to reach all the literate inhabitants in the community of Zlatar, and according to the same choreography. In the morning, villagers made the notary, the village doctor, and the prefect sign a document confirming that they were Croatian, and then the villagers scattered. Peasants gathered again that afternoon and dragged the teacher from the schoolhouse to make him sign the declaration, and later, two other clerks from the municipality had to do the same.[70]

Forms of behavior discussed in this section reveal that modernity's distinguished space (the city), distinguished figures (engineers, educated people, bureaucrats), and distinguished symbols (maps, written documents, measuring tools) had complex interpretations among the peasantry that offer a perspective from which we can arrive at a "from below" understanding of shifting attitudes towards the processes of modernization in the late nineteenth-century rural sphere in Central Europe.

67 Utiešenović, count of Varaždin reports to the government, Krapina. September 18, 1883. HR-HDA-Pr.Zv. 78. 6. Box 182. 3866/1883. In the same report a suggested solution is cited: "The village of Ivanca humbly asks for the creation of saving banks in villages, where it would be possible to obtain a loan with moderate interest."

68 It is worth treating the ethnonym "Croatian" with caution. As in the case of "Hungarian," it could mean many different things. One plausible solution is that it meant simple people as opposed to members of the middle or upper classes.

69 The municipality of Stubica reports to the sub-county of Zlatar. August 29, 1883. HR-HDA-Pr.Zv. 78. 6. Box 182. 3454/1883.

70 Telegraph from Zlatar. August 29, 1883. HR-HDA-Pr.Zv. 78. 6. Box 181. 3313/1883.

Enmeshing the Countryside: The State's Intrusion into the Rural World

Finally, the state appeared in rural spaces not only through its human agents but also through its new networks, which were increasingly enmeshing the whole country. While treated as a different case in this study, as symbols of state power, networks were in reality part of the context outlined above. A telegraph officer could have easily been an educated person from the city, was certainly a man of letters, and wore clothes with strong symbolic meanings (a uniform), and the railway was obviously also a newly (and rapidly) emerging way of creating and maintaining direct ties to political and economic centers, i.e., cities. One finds evidence of anger against state networks in the sources, mixed together with a number of other sensibilities, resentments, and hostilities. In Ivanca, for instance, where peasants vandalized the telegraph wire, they also planned to expel Jews from the village on December 24 and attack anyone who was wearing black boots.[71] Ivanca peasants committed or planned to commit acts of physical aggression against networks, urban people, Jews, and clerks at the same time. In this section, I shed light on the irritation felt, in rural communities, at big state networks. As attacks against the extensive state networks were a far more significant part of the 1903 uprising, this section confine itself to evoke the possible roots of the acts of violence committed in 1903.

Three features of the growing state networks seem to have been significant in relation to the malcontent among the peasantry: the often uniform elements of these networks were seen as instruments of the homogenizing nation-state; in networks, the mutual dependence of network nodes reduces autonomy;[72] finally, in regions where agrarian mechanization did not even start to unfold,[73] the networks were often the only visible technical innovation. These three features were, of course, preceded by the practical benefits of damaging networks: breaking the flow of information to the political centers and also the impeding troop movement facilitated the maintenance of a state of emergency.

The railway and the telegraph were often targeted even in 1883, as were post offices. These three networks had a role in the question of language use as well (Magyarizing tendencies affected these institutions first). Moreover, the railway

71 Report to the Royal Telegraph Directorate. August 29, 1883. HR-HDA-Pr.Zv. 78. 6. Box 184. 5582/1883.

72 The sociologist Alain Gras describes these increased dependencies in relation, for instance, to the electrical grid: Gras, *Grandeur et dépendance*.

73 Katus, "A mezőgazdaság."

policy became a neuralgic point in Hungarian–Croatian relations. Railway lines built according to the interests of Hungarian foreign trade and the consistent disregard of Croatian traffic and trade needs made the railway a real emblem of exploitation. Damaging railway lines thus had practical, economical, and national motivations, added to which the railway network was a spectacular modern achievement, and a strong visual marker of the homogenizing state.

Railway buildings were constructed according to a type design, and they thus became the first public buildings that created uniformity in the countryside throughout Transleithania. They represented state presence and were not adjusted to local architectural or spatial arrangement traditions. On the contrary, they exhibited the superiority of the (modernizing, homogenizing) center. The contrast was often spectacular between local conditions and the railway buildings, as expressed by Rezső Havass, president of the Hungarian Association of Geographers and main theorist of Hungarian imperial ambitions towards the Balkans. When traveling to Fiume by train, Havass found the countryside uninteresting: "Dugaresa is […] an insignificant little place. Houses are built of wood and covered by reed. The next station is Generalszki Sztol. Also an insignificant place. […] Third station, Touin. Small place. Next station Ogulin, a town with 2,000 inhabitants." The unique things that caught his eye were railway buildings, which, in contrast were all "built with charm, taste, and show cleanliness and practical arrangement,"[74] that is, they reflect the achievements of the modern state in the fields of culture, hygiene, and engineering. This contrast was obviously perceived by locals as well, but they presumably had emotional attachments to the wooden houses (their homes) and certainly some resentment for the railway stations.

Infrastructural networks not only represented the state in rural areas, they also re-hierarchized rural space. Distance to smaller or larger centers became a determining factor in the prosperity of different localities. This dependence on infrastructure became spectacular with the rearrangement of transport routes and the decline of certain towns as a result. By damaging railway lines, villagers could find temporary relief from this increased dependency. The direct link to the center, however, sometimes gave hope. The aforementioned inhabitants of fire-damaged Nova Gradiška, for instance, expressed several times their hope that the emperor Franz Joseph would indemnify them "once the train arrives."[75]

74 Havass, "A károlyváros-fiumei vasútvonal," 156–58.

75 Report of the municipal officer from Nova Gradiška. HR-HDA-Pr.Zv. 78. 6. Box 182. 3072/1883.

Whether it was threatening or promising, infrastructure that created direct links to centers made it obvious that innovation was also an instrument of power, and this may explain, at least in part, why elements of this infrastructure often became targets of discontent.

When networks recreated relations of dependency and hierarchies, they required mental adaptation and flexibility. This was just as true on the national level, as it was related to interurban public transport, which, as András Sipos notes in his introduction to an almanac of Hungarian urban history, was "not only a technical and institutional innovation but also a social one. Infrastructure meant greater comfort, saving time and labor, but it also required manifold learning processes and adaptation. An attitude had to be formed, […] which was accepted as natural that everyday life depends on centralized supply systems, and this went hand in hand with unprecedented bureaucratic regulation and control of individual life."[76] This control of individual life by increasingly influential urban centers found concrete manifestation in networks and the roles these networks played in the regulation and homogenization of everyday life were often rejected in rural areas. In the microcosm where bureaucrats had already been seen as personifications of a hostile power, new networks with their employees in uniforms became easily identifiable with the same concepts of the enemy.

In conclusion, networks became irritating factors due to their symbolic role in making the state present in rural areas, due to their symbolic importance as embodiments of modernity, and also because they increased ways in which a given locality was dependent on other communities and, in particular, urban centers. The spread of these networks did not simply mean the growing presence of technical innovations in the rural sphere, but also "decisions made between alternatives in the specific fields of influence,"[77] or in other words, the new hierarchies. In 1883, construction of these new networks had only just begun, so the reactions of people in rural areas to their presence were rather vague. Further research is required to follow the future development of these feelings and responses.

76 Sipos, "Bevezetés," 11. On urban spaces and networks in late nineteenth-century Vienna see Meißl, "Hálózatok és a városi tér."

77 Sipos, "Bevezetés," 11.

Conclusion

The 1883 peasant uprising in Croatia has been described in the secondary literature by two main attributes: anti-Hungarian and anti-modernist. In this essay, I add a layer of nuance to the former and complexity to the latter. Stresses affecting the peasantry were partly caused by modernizing campaigns, and the struggle to cope with modernization was a social process with a significance comparable to the significance of processes of national awakening and the transition in rural communities to capitalist practices. The archival documents suggest that these three processes were deeply intertwined. This intertwining was reinforced by the ways in which modernizing elites were regarded as representatives of a national other, and the separation of the anti-Hungarian and the anti-modernist features of the uprising served exclusively analytical purposes. Anti-modern gestures were indeed often dressed up in romantic anti-capitalist or, more frequently, nationalist costumes, partly because the vocabulary and the symbolism of nationalism was accessible and made it easier to grasp complex phenomena of other nature as well.

The archival documents concerning the peasant uprising in Croatia in 1883, which offer first and foremost insights into the state's perspective on the events, can also be read for the glimpses they provide into prevailing perceptions among the peasantry concerning modernization. Rumors and behaviors mentioned or described in these documents and characterized, both in the documents and in the secondary literature, as irrational can be interpreted as reasonable responses to the very real threats of modernization for rural communities. Specifically, the ways in which the peasantry responded with hostility and violence to spaces and figures associated with modernization and various symbols also associated with this process make it very clear that modernization was seen by the peasantry as a potential danger. Thus, we should abandon the assumption that elite imaginations of modernity and modernization simply trickled down to the peasantry or that peasants accepted the teleology of modernization without criticism or anxiety.

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Time in Villages: Timekeeping and Modernization in Rural Communities in the Long Nineteenth Century in Hungary

Gábor Koloh
Research Centre for the Humanities
Koloh.gabor@abtk.hu

The study explores the changing perception of time through the records of a multi-generational peasant family. By comparing several rural manuscripts from different times and places, the study traces the refinement of the way time is thought, its new meanings, and its emergence in farming and family life. The appearance of the clock plays an important role in the analysis. The clock, first as a prestige object in the household, gradually becomes a tool for the modern use of time. The replacement of calendars by newspapers in the first decades of the 20th century is also a decisive factor in the perception of time. The world expands and information about more and more distant lands is brought into peasant households. The study places important emphasis on the idea that rural households are the last base for the spread of globalization phenomena. What is already occurring at this level within each country is where the spread of the phenomenon has come to an end.

Keywords: rural history, globalization, family history, use of time, peasant traditions

Background and Proposition

Concepts and understandings of time are a research problem on which spans generations of historians have touched. This is hardly surprising, since the passage of time itself sets the coordinates, to use a metaphor, of a historian's propositions. As a straining dual system of cognition, the narrowness or vastness of space and time determine our everyday lives, just as they did for those living in times past. This is one of the reasons why the endeavor to arrive at a grasp of time has become a fundamental human undertaking. Of the relevant examples, it is worth highlighting the abstraction already indicated in the subtitle: the arrangement of time in a framework defined by centuries. A century is not in itself an abstract period of time developed organically from the use of calendars.[1] It is, rather, a solution that stems from the need of the human mind to organize and

1 Osterhammel and Camiller, Transformation, 45–49.

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structure. It is a clue which has provided a more precise demarcation and nuance to an earlier approach, which was based on massive blocks of epochs in the professionalization of historiography.[2] And this is precisely why its use should not be regarded merely as a factor of "convenience,"[3] but rather as a logical necessity, much like historians' narrative constructions and deconstructions over the past half century or so are also logical necessities. The difficulty lies in further abstracting the century as a clue, since the adaptation of the century (for instance, stretching it to cover a set of allegedly epoch-making events and thus reducing the time and, by implication, significance of other centuries) is a practice that partly forms the coherence of an epoch, and it generates problems.[4] The use of Koselleck's *Sattelzeit* or the *fin de siècle* is scale-specific and thus is at best a point of reference for the time concept of a micro-level study rather than a framework for interpretation. The concept of the "prolonged turn of the century," as proposed by German historians and dated to the period between 1880 and 1930, may be a wiser choice. For Central and Eastern Europe, however, this is true only because this was also a major period of demographic change, which is interpreted as an important indicator of economic and cultural changes. Indeed, the last third of the nineteenth century and the first third of the twentieth were times of demographic transition, even if it is clear that the people living at these times were not aware of this. Attempts to grasp traditional life-worlds and document the transition have given rise to several methodological approaches, of which microhistory, born out of disillusionment in the wake of the quantitative revolution, serves only as an illustration of the one extreme. However, even with its exceptionally normal objective, microhistory has led to a kind of loss of hope, to which first postmodern historiography and then, more recently, globalization history have been trying to provide an adequate answer. The increasingly greater availability of sources as historians find themselves closer in time to the periods they are studying increases the number of problem-oriented questions. So the continuous return to the individual and her everyday life and experience provides inexhaustible opportunities. Pushing the peasant into the spotlight thus also implies the masses (or the statistical majority), and we

2 Gyáni, Az elveszíthető múlt; Gyáni, "A történés ideje," 10.

3 Roberts, Twentieth Century, 3.

4 Osterhammel and Camiller, Transformation, 45–49; Nolte, Einheit; Hobsbawm, Europäische Revolutionen; Hobsbawm, Blütezeit; Hobsbawm, Zeitalter.

can boldly hope to grasp this peasant as an individual while also getting a broader picture of the general population and the world in which this population lives.[5]

The foregoing justifies an attempt to outline the conceptual journey of the peasant approaching the regime of time from the perspective of everyday life, using a multi-generational chronicle, or the so-called Gyüker Chronicle. For this chronicle provides a tangible point in the source material where the variability of individual and social perceptions of time are clearly expressed in contrast to the constancy of physical or natural time.[6] According to the entry made by József Gyüker (1862–1932),

> they started in [19]28 to fly over the sea from Europe to America or from one country to another, and travel under water and powered cars and powered ploughs that had no horses in front of them were not new by then, and bicycle riders were also abundant; and the wireless telegraphs, they talked from one country to another as if they were sitting in front of each other.[7]

In my view, this is the point where the chronicler becomes aware that his own time is no longer the same time as his father, grandfather, and earlier ancestors had lived it (presentism), so this is where he begins to reflect consciously on the fact that his life is different from the lives of his predecessors.[8] The quote, taken out of context, is the result of a longer process of inquiry, a continuous opening to the events of the world. It also implies thinking in a global perspective. It is a summary in which production conditions, weather, and trade also play important roles textually, but the mentions of world events become increasingly frequent and detailed. The significance of the passage lies in its concentration on emblematic events.[9] The documentation of change seems relevant from multiple angles. As a basis for the comparison, in order to formulate the question, it seems appropriate to include another quote, this time from the grandfather, József Gyüker the Elder (1799–1874): "István Kovács the Elder was the first to buy a clock. He did so in Bőcs around 1840. Nobody had had one before. I bought mine around 1850." By 1860, after a year of a bountiful harvest, he continued, it had become common to own a clock in the village. In Gyüker's writing, the clock first appeared as an object of prestige.

5 See Hareven, "Family Time."

6 Gelléríné, "Előszó," 7–14.

7 "Gyüker család feljegyzései," 110.

8 Koselleck, Elmúlt jövő.

9 Osterhammel and Camiller, Transformation, 45–49.

By comparing the entries written by the grandfather with those written by the grandson and also with other entries written by other villages, one can examine the impact of modernization across generations. But how can we grasp the changes in the prevailing understanding of time in a peasant family? How does acceleration appear? To what extent did technological progress and in particular the spread of the clock as a device play a role in the transformation of the understanding and structuring of time in a peasant world? In the chain of influence, the strong natural determination of the agricultural world, marked by the seasons, and the important feast days of Christian culture are present at the same time. Alignment with these appears regularly from generation to generation in the chronicle, dating back to the end of the eighteenth century and lasting until the min-twentieth century. In addition, however, to the cyclical nature of seasons, feasts, agricultural tasks, and rites, as well as life events,[10] new points of time were slowly appearing too. József Gyüker the Younger records three different times when recording the birth of his daughter: "Zsófi Gyüker was born on the third day of August 1890, at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, under the sign of the Pisces."[11] When specifying the time of birth, Gyüker makes no mention of Christian feast days. Rather, he refers very specifically to the moment of time as specified by the calendar and the clock. In 1887, Gyüker the Younger also recorded a moment in time with reference to a clock when there was a fire in the village. References to the signs of the zodiac also became recurrent elements in the chronicle as a means of indicating the date of a birth. Taking these references to new methods of specifying and structuring time as my point of departure, I seek an answer to the following questions: what role did different aspects of the understanding of time have, and how did this vary across generations? And on the basis of this, what can we say about prevailing perceptions of time among peasants in light of the Gyüker Chronicle?

Source, Data, Method

To begin venturing answers to the questions raised above, it is worth considering the understanding of time and methods of managing time from a bottom-up perspective. Historical time is considered personal time when the individual interprets the age in which he lives in light of her own circumstances. Changing

10 Fónagy, "Ember és idő," 78.

11 "Gyüker család feljegyzései," 43–44.

concepts of time in peasant communities are the last stage in the spread of modernity.[12] Given the scarcity of intermediary channels, it is in these communities that we can hope to find the endpoint. This approach is more exciting when analysis is possible across generations. From the viewpoint of the availability of sources, however, we must consider ourselves lucky to have even a single source on which to rely. So far, only one such source is known in Hungary.[13] A peasant chronicle, written by multiple generations, has survived from the village of Bőcs, more specifically a part of this village called Külsőbőcs, near Miskolc in northern Hungary. József Gyüker is thought to have begun recording his memories and what he had been told of the decade or so preceding his birth in 1863. In the late 1880s, his grandson, also named József Gyüker, wrote his notes in chronological order as a convenient means of linear narration.[14] His son and grandson later wrote a few entries of their own. In the absence of a comparable source spanning multiple generations and a century and a half, I find it worthwhile to compare this chronicle with records that cover the same period and the roughly same territory of the country and relate to rural, specifically village communities. The selection was based on two data banks. In addition to the database of more than 600 items compiled by György Kövér, Zsuzsanna Kiss, and Anikó Lukács, I browsed the nearly 250 annotated first-person accounts written by peasants and published by the *Lendület* Ten Generations Research Group at the Research Centre for the Humanities.[15] In the selection process, territorial representativeness and the connection to the periods were important criteria. The main parameters of the selected sources are summarized in Table 1.

Reliable records produced by members of the peasantry and suitable for deeper analysis began to be kept in greater quantities in the mid-twentieth century. The stratum-specific nature of literacy means that there are relatively few sources available from earlier periods. In any case, the diversity of village life justifies the need to focus not only on serfs and peasants, but also on the local intellectuals, clergymen, and schoolmasters, who were also an integral part of this life.

12 Mitterauer and Sieder, Vom Patriarchat, 72–99.

13 Forrai, "Tájékoztató," 5; Romsics, "Gazdagparasztság," 128; Küllős, "Parasztkrónika," 186; Kovács, Kalendáriumtörténet, 333; Varga, "Öreg Gyüker," 453–54; Gyenis, "Emlékirat," 157–58.

14 Danto, Analytical.

15 Kövér, Biográfia, 100–1; Tíz nemzedék és ami utána következik... Vidéki társadalom az úrbérrendezéstől a vidék elnéptelenedéséig, 1767–2017. Paraszti egodokumentumok. https://10generacio.hu/hu/eredmenyek/paraszti-egodokumentumok

Title	Author	Occupation	Date of origin	Covered period	Location
Vajszló Chronicle	Dániel Kis Tóth	peasant	1830	1700–1830	Vajszló (Baranya County)
Gábor Kátai's chronicle	Gábor Kátai	peasant	1838	1700–1838	Karcag (Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok County)
The records of the Gyüker family	József Gyüker the Elder; József Gyüker the Younger	peasant; peasant	1863–1866; 1889–1933; 1940–1944	1787–1944	Bőcs (Borsod-Ababúj-Zemplén County)
János Helle's memoirs	János Helle	pastor	1821–1870	1821–1870	Alsónyék (Tolna County)
Lajos Arató's memoirs	Lajos Arató	schoolmaster	1928–1934	1863–1934	Szeghalom (Békés County)

Table 1. The source material providing the basis for the analysis

Source: Mándoki, *Ormánság népéletéből*; S. Püski, "Kátai"; "Gyüker család feljegyzései"; MMgMK IV. 456. Helle János feljegyzései; Szeghalmi Könyvtár és Közérdekű Muzeális Gyűjtemény T.86.84.1. id. Arató Lajos visszaemlékezése.

In terms of geography, the sources are from the northern region of Hungary, the Great Plain, and the southern parts of Transdanubia. In terms of farming opportunities, arable farming and animal husbandry predominate, especially as, in addition to Karcag and Szeghalom, which belong to the Great Hungarian Plain, Alsónyék and Vajszló, although Transdanubian villages, belong to the same lowland landscape structure (the former as part of the microregion known as Sárköz, the latter as part of the microregion known as Ormánság). Their economic profiles included trade, which is emphasized in all the sources except Arató's recollections, and also trade to distant commercial posts, such as market towns in Hungary and abroad. A further direction for research could include discussion of sources from northern Transdanubia.

Findings

The multi-generational Gyüker Chronicle of the peasant family that forms the backbone of the analysis here starts with an entry which is relevant to the life in the village and the local church and which and which touches on events which predated the birth of the author by more than a decade and thus were clearly descriptions offered by him based on second-hand information, presumably

accounts given by his older family or community members.[16] Among the comparable nineteenth-century chronicles, the Vajszló Chronicle by Dániel Kis Tóth, which was written in 1830, and the chronicle by Gábor Kátai of Karcag, which was written in 1860, precisely define 1700 as the starting point of the narratives they offer. For these narratives, this year is presumably a reference point, namely a year which, in the perception of the authors, had been a very specific watershed moment for their own age. If interpreted in a flexible way, 1700 in Hungary means the post-Turkish period, which meant the reorganization of economic and social life. In the areas depopulated during the period of Turkish occupation, such as Karcag in the Great Plain, this was also a difficult period of resettlement. Kátai starts with this:

> In the year 1700, Karcag was captured by the Tatars; those who escaped went to Rakamaz and lived there for nine years, and the town was burned and destroyed by the Tatars; in the year 1710, those who were in Rakamaz came home […]. And the Church was finished in 1797, it was consecrated on All Saints' Day in the same year.[17]

For Dániel Kis Tóth, who lived in Vajszló in southern Transdanubia, where the Turkish occupation affected the lives of the locals but did force the continuity to flee, this year was notable in other ways: "I begin to count the origin and history of this clan from 1700; it was then when our forefather István Kis Tóth was born; his two sons were György and János." The Tatar armies devastated Karcag a few years earlier, in 1697,[18] while the exact date of the birth of Dániel Kis Tóth's forefather cannot be determined due to the lack of birth records, although it can be assumed that it dates back somewhat earlier.[19] Their concept of time is thus strongly based on the memories (if second-hand in some cases) of the life and history of the settlement or the family, but the fact that the local residence was also decisive for Dániel Kis Tóth is indicated by his remark about the place of his ancestor's birth. He notes that István Kis Tóth was born in Haraszti, which was already part of Vajszló when he was writing his narrative in 1830. An important difference between the two is that Dániel Kis Tóth wrote

16 Gyüker József the Elder's diary. 1787–1866. Original manuscript. This peasant chronicle from Bőcs was donated by József Gyüker, a peasant from Külsőbőcs, to Dr. Géza Hegyaljai Kiss, who gave it to the College of Sárospatak. Sárospataki Református Kollégium Tudományos Gyűjteményei, Kt. 3635. The source is a diary in name only. It is in fact a memoir.

17 S. Püski, "Kátai," 541.

18 Ibid.

19 No age was given at the time of death on March 1, 1753, but the fact that he was listed as an independent taxpayer in 1715 suggests that he was slightly older than 15.

a family chronicle, the basic organizational principle of which is the succession of generations, while Kátai followed a chronological order in his chronicle. The generational narrative is only present in Kis Tóth's writing. Reflections on the lives of ancestors is at most a minor element in the other narratives. József Gyüker the Elder, like Kátai, starts his chronicle with an event relevant to the settlement:

> The writing of Stories Worthy of Memory; the order of priests and schoolmasters was established in 1787 by the venerable Ecclesiastical See; in 1788, the reign of Emperor Francis I of Austria began, the first French war started with his reign, lasting four and a half years […], 1793 was the great lean year, which some of the old may remember, it is said, that 1794 was also such a year, until the harvest came.

The events mentioned by Gyüker can be interpreted in several ways. The determination of the order of priests and schoolteachers meant the determination of salaries, presumably due to the lack of extra-parish minutes, especially the presbyter's minutes. The income of Calvinist priests and schoolteachers depended to a considerable extent on the number and financial situation of the members of the church community. However, this was before his birth, so his source must build either on the accounts of members of the community in which he lived or the local historical sources already mentioned. The latter seems more likely. Gyüker relies, presumably, on inherited oral accounts to date the "Great Tribulation," a difficult period that left a deep imprint on the memories of older people. However, the definition of the pastoral and teaching order would not have been a similarly traumatic event and thus was unlikely to have survived as part of the recollections of members of the older generations. Gyüker was presumably drawing on information found in a written source, which may have been a late eighteenth-century record. As the village's magistrate as of 1836 and therefore a lay magistrate, he would have had the opportunity to consult this kind of source, since he had access to the village's official records. Either then or later, but knowing the source, he learned of the event which had taken place in 1787. We can assume that his source may have been a contemporary record since, in the case of a village history or similar compilation, medieval or early modern references would presumably not have been missed. In connection with Bőcs, there are no surviving accounts of tragic events resembling the accounts of events that had taken place in Karcag. There are no indications that the inhabitants were driven away or that those who remained at home were deported at the end of the seventeenth century. In Kátai's writing, this is a traumatic point,

which was of great importance and also stood out in the chronological narrative, since the account of the period of resettlement is followed by a mention of 1772 as the year in which the three-field system was established, followed by the consecration of the church in 1797. From this point of view, there is no significant interval in the historical time as seen by Kátai and Gyüker the Elder, which undoubtedly focused on important events in the life of the settlement and reflected the division of time into periods in the accounts handed down from one generation to another in oral narratives.[20]

In Gyüker's entry, however, the monarch is also named. In this respect, of course, his memory is not flawless. In 1788, Joseph II was still on the throne, but even Leopold II, who reigned for two years, was no longer remembered. Although Francis was the first emperor of Austria, he began his reign as Holy Roman Emperor, numbered Francis II. And the French War which Gyüker called the first, began not in 1788 but in 1792. But for Gyüker, who was 64 years old in 1863, the beginning of his personal time was marked by Emperor Francis (emphatically not named as king of Hungary) and the war with the French, which meant that Gyüker placed himself in both local and, in his conception, global history. The latter, that is, a concept of time that goes beyond the local as global, should not be mistaken for a sign of the global impact of the French War, even if one can argue from the perspective of later events that this war did have a significant impact, but rather is better understood as an indication of the size of the world conceivable by Gyüker. The period during which Emperor Francis sat on the throne, who was also King of Hungary between 1792 and 1835, may have been an early time for him because of the length of Francis' reign. The memory of Francis as a ruler was also deeply imprinted in public consciousness visually because of his portrait on coins, where for much of this time the following inscription was running around his head: FRANCISCUS I D G AUST IMPERATOR. In Gyüker's entry, therefore, only the "by the grace of God" part was omitted with regard to the monarch. In Helle's case, the beginning is *in medias res*:

> In 1821, towards the end of August, the water, which had already prevailed, flooded so much that, as travelers from Pest said, the whole Pest market, the part towards Pest, Óbuda, the lower part of Buda, the "water city" was completely submerged; consequently, it also took the embankment of Nyék, and entered Déllő and the courtyard of the school house. The cattle have also been displaced from the inner

20 Tóth, "Harangkongás," 51.

> pasture, from the forest. According to residents, the last time the water was this high was eight years ago.[21]

Helle's opening does not create a historical context. He was the village pastor, and he had come to this village from far away (his birthplace, Nagyharsány, is half a day's walk from Alsónyék). He may have made these notes not only because the events described seemed worth remembering to him but also perhaps as a way of identifying a possible explanation for any shortfall in the benefits he was given by the congregation. Compared to the first passages of Helle's notes, Arató's recollections tell of experiences. He was associated with several municipalities, and these associations indicate the places where he served in addition to his place of birth. For him, too, regional and personal time takes on a different reading, as in Helle's case.[22] Arató spent most of his time in Szeghalom, but his municipal history cannot be compared to that of Gyüker or Kátai. He presented the years and events in which he personally played a part or had a particularly formative role (such as the improvement of the May Day celebrations or the unveiling of the statue of Kossuth). The temporal structure of his narrative is therefore peculiar compared to the temporal structures of the previous ones, because he focuses on turning points, on the "outliers" of memory. Kis Tóth saw his life as a parallel to that of the biblical Job:

> It is true (says Solomon the Wise) that the light is sweet, and it is delightful for the eyes to see the Sun; but I can write for myself what Job the patriarch says in Job 3:11. Why did I not perish at birth, and die as I came from the womb; you will find in this Book all the great details of my life, my condition, my sufferings, and my complaints; each epistle is numbered and can be found on the index table; (though it is too late for the remnant, that if God hath pleased me to be).

Arató's stories, however, seem more to follow the Solomonic approach, as the motto introducing the manuscript makes clear: "Joyful years and happy days. Oh, when I think of you! You have drifted away like the waves of spring!" In contrast, the two Gyükers (especially the elder) and Kátai do not discuss the events of each year from an emotional perspective. Rather, they focus on the circumstances that provide the framework for peasant and everyday life.

21 MMgM IV. 456.

22 Osterhammel and Camiller, Transformation, 45–49.

In the entries composed by Gyüker the Elder, the interplay of family, local, national, and sometimes European events are sometimes captured, even when these events all took place in a single year:

> In 1809, my elder sister married András Bényei, who was with us until Saint Michael's Day, when he was drafted as a soldier and served for a year and a half. As a child, I was so shy, and we managed to make do with the help of others. In the same year, in anticipation of the fourth French war, the emperor ordered military mobilization for the nobles, which they did, and they assembled in camp near Komárom; France broke through the greater part of Hungary at Győr, and here the armies and nobles engaged them, but fortune favored the French; and then having made peace, the German emperor suffered a great loss; the nobility dispersed in the same year, each to his own place.

The close temporal connection also suggests causal links, which may well have been one of the principal aims of the author. András Bényei, who had recently married into the family, demonstrates the labor organization in extended families, and the war primarily represented damage and loss (as was later the case for his grandson with the outbreak of World War I), as was evident in the corruption of the family labor organization. In addition to the indirect mention of Napoleon as a historical figure of global significance, the reference to the Battle of Győr also reveals the violation of the foundations of the feudal order and a gradual awareness of this. After half a century, the disgraceful flight of the nobility at Győr, who were doing military service instead of paying taxes, remained an integral part of memory even after the dismantling of the legal framework of the feudal order. Of course, the comparatively small town of Bőcs found itself on the stage of global history not only because of the French wars but also because of the arrival of the potato, which originated in South America. This was also a significant event that transformed the culture of consumption.

Festivals and saints' feast days are regularly mentioned by the authors of the sources under study. In fact, mentions of these occasions can be seen as indications of moments of normality, whereas everything else that happened was a representation of the extraordinary. It is not my aim to describe the festivals and the rites associated with them, which have been thoroughly studied by scholars of ethnography,[23] but only to give a brief overview of the significant days that the authors whose recollections I am using as sources chose

23 See Tátrai, "Jeles napok," 102–264.

as recurring points. The chronological order is not linked to the start and end dates of the agricultural year (traditionally the feast days of Saint George in April and Saint Michael in September), which is why the year-start entries in the Gyüker Chronicle were linked less frequently to the Epiphany or to the feast days of Saint Vincent and Saint Paul (if not to a specific day). The two feast days are mentioned only in Gyüker the Younger's entries, while the Epiphany or Russian Christmas was used by his grandfather. Saint Vincent's Day (January 22) is recorded as being consistently foggy, while Saint Paul's Day (January 25) was sunny. The saints' feast days at the end of January were followed by the feast of Candlemas (February 2) and the feast of Saint Gregory (March 12), which marked the beginning of plowing for both the older and the younger generation. On Saint Joseph's Day (March 19), still in keeping with tradition, sowing began so that it would be finished by Saint George's Day.[24] In the records composed by János Helle, Saint Joseph's Day is mentioned as a recurring event because of the fairs in Pest. The Easter holidays were mentioned less frequently, not appearing at all in the case of Gyüker the Elder, but mentions of Saint George's Day (April 24) were all the more prominent, for the reasons indicated and not merely because of its role in the agricultural order. According to the recollections of József Gyüker the Elder, in 1814, his brother was taken away as a soldier under orders. The importance of the feast day is underlined by the fact that it still had its gravitational force from the Middle Ages:[25] the events before and after it were related to this day. For example, in 1863, "[a]fter good weather in March, April came with cold winds, which didn't grow but rather spoiled everything, the vines were worked in the weeks before Saint George's Day, in cold winds." Saint John's Day (June 24) was also, if not to the same extent, an important part of the task-oriented annual rhythm.[26] In 1831, it was the spread of cholera that made this feast day memorable for the Gyüker the Elder:

> On Saint John's Day, we started to hoe on Batka, but already then cholera had appeared in many places; it started in Lucs sooner than in Bőcs, it was impossible to go straight to the fields, there were guards, but one had to go a roundabout way to the wild waters; it appeared in our village too after a short time, and in two months, 65 people died, not children, but men and women; one was not allowed to go from one village to another, there were guards everywhere.

24 Paládi-Kovács, A vetés idejének, 359.

25 Tóth, "Harangkongás," 57.

26 See Thompson, "Az idő, a munkafegyelem," 60–116.

The prominence of the feast day as a marker of the passage of time is evident in several entries, not only in the case of Gyüker the Elder but also in the case of Gyüker the Younger, for instance in one entry writes, "starting on the day of Saint John, it was very hot for three days." The fact that József Gyüker the Elder's records may have been based on almanacs or other earlier records is, however, suggested by the passages in which the days before or after the feast day are not necessarily mentioned in the context of the feast but as independent days.[27] Saint Martin's Day, in contrast to Saint Michael's Day (which brought the agricultural year to a close), seems to be more significant for the chronicle and was observed by both generations in their lives. After Saint Martin's Day, only Christmas appears, with Saint Andrew's Day (November 30) going essentially unmentioned (except in 1928). The special days of the agricultural year were major events in the lives of members of both the older and the younger generations, or at least these days are frequently mentioned in the source. Particular feast days remained points of reference even for the grandson, even though by the time he was writing the use of the month and the day was a more widespread method of indicating a date. A noticeable change, however, took place in the naming of the feasts. References to Saint Martin's feast in the entries composed by Gyükér the Elder always included the word "saint," while this word is found in this context in entries by his grandson only until 1889, and from 1910 to 1927 he simply called it Martin's Day (in 1927, he again referred to it as Saint Martin's Day). Saint Andrew's Day, only mentioned in 1903, is also given without the word "saint." Mentions of Saint George's Day and Saint John's Day consistently include the word "saint," while Saint Paul's Day is called by various names, but again only by Gyüker the Younger. Obviously, this might suggest a slight degree of laicization, but given the frequent expressions of gratitude to "God Almighty" and assurance of trust in God, this seems unlikely.

The accounts of individuals' lives included mention of major events, namely marriage, birth, and death. Women and girls were mostly mentioned in these contexts and less often in connection with a vacancy in the family labor organization. There is a marked difference in the recording of births between Gyüker the Elder and Gyüker the Younger. József Gyüker the Elder considered it important to record his and his wife's birth dates (although he never referred to his wife, Erzsébet Makláry, by name), and so did his grandson (but he referred to his wife, Julianna Almási, by name). Gyüker the Elder did not record the

27 Kovács, Kalendáriumtörténet, 11–25; Tóth, "Harangkongás," 59.

dates of the births of any of his children, while Gyüker the Younger wrote them down one by one: József in 1885, Julcsa in 1888, Zsófi in 1890, and Julianna in 1894. Death in the family played a more important role for Gyüker the Elder. He noted that his father died in 1802, his paternal uncle, the bell founder János Gyüker, in 1831, his brother, István, in 1849, and his son, Samu, in 1850. Apparently, József Gyüker the Elder's attention was essentially directed towards the older members of the family, and his son was an exception only due to his tragically premature death. In the case of his grandson, József Gyüker the Younger, the deaths of his parents, his wife, and his younger brother are listed, as well as the deaths of his daughters Julcsa in 1889 and Zsófi in 1893. In his case, even the children were given more attention. Their births and deaths were milestones in his understanding of personal time. This tendency to devote greater attention to the fates of his offspring may be reflected in the practice (also only observed by József Gyüker the Younger) of indicating the astrological sign of his children at birth. When it came to this, however, his references were inaccurate. He thought that his son József, who was born on November 8, was a Sagittarius, his daughter Julcsa (born on February 8) a Capricorn, Zsófi (born on August 3) a Pisces, and Julianna (born on December 29) an Aquarius. Not only was he consistently wrong, his blunders were sometimes quite notable (for instance, the notion that someone born in August is a Pisces), so it is different to imagine that he drew on the almanacs. Regardless of this, however, his interest in the signs of the Zodiac as a means of structuring time offers some indication of his interest in the eventual fates of his offspring, since he presumably hoped to learn something of his children's futures from these signs, for instance, whether they were born under a so-called lucky star.[28]

Although astrology emerged as a new marker in the concept of time among peasants, the spread of the clock brought about a more significant change. According to an entry by József Gyüker the Elder, the clock first appeared in Bőcs around 1840, he himself bought one around 1850, and then, "in 1860, as there was a very abundant harvest, everyone could afford anything, so others bought them too, as the price was not much. One could be bought for five or six silver coins, whatever kind the poor farmer needed; thus began the clock in Bőcs." What could he have meant by the phrase "whatever kind the poor farmer needed?" In his 1864 entries, he repeatedly describes events to the nearest hour. For instance, he notes that on March 13, at 4 p.m., there was a strong, cold

28 Hoppál, "Horoszkóp," 579.

wind and sleet, and on June 11, around 5 or 6 o'clock, there was a strong wind with little rain. On October 24, 1866, at 11 p.m., there was an earthquake. It is unlikely that it was some need to record these kinds of events that made the clock important to the farmers. Beyond the fact that it was obviously a prestige object, the clock may have had a more practical use as well. Gyüker the Elder began his account of the events of 1859 with the construction of the railway, which played an important role in the life of the village in the development of both trade and employment. And keeping up with the train now required the precise measurement of time to the minute.[29] In the case of József Gyüker the Younger, documentation up to the hour is, understandably, much more frequent. In addition to the weather events, he also recorded family events mostly to the hour. For example, his daughter Zsófi is known to have been born on August 3, 1890, at 2 p.m. and to have died on March 19, 1893, at 10 p.m., and his mother, Zsuzsanna Nagy, died at 10 p.m. on June 7, 1913. Consequently, the emergence of the clock had not only an economic role, either as a prestige object or as a means of keeping up with the train schedule. It was also a means of experiencing certain events, especially family events, in a deeper way. In 1830, the clock is mentioned in the Vajszló Chronicle more as a hoarded prestige object,[30] while in the case of Arató's narrative, the exact or approximate time of certain important events was kept rather as part of the flashbulb memory. In Helle's records, an indication of the time of an event that was precise to the hour was exceptional, but in these cases, one can assume that Helle used the time signals of the church. Gábor Kátai gives the first exact time when recording the earthquake of July 1, 1829 (8 p.m.). He writes, "at the town hall the bell rang and the sheep bells on the nail rang." It can be assumed that here, as in the case of the fire at noon on May 23, 1831, the tolling of the bells drew attention to the clock tower, if there was one (further research is needed to determine this).[31] The clock was also a sign of modernity in contemporary society. The clock represented both the figurative and the concrete sense of the passage of time in the home. More abstract units of time than the hour itself, such as the minute and the second, become part of life in rural homes. They were given form and sound by their

29 On the role of modern society in the education for time, see: Fónagy, "Ember és idő," 87–88.; Frisnyák, "Időzavarban," 123–32.

30 "Now where is my Father, he was even a juror for two or three months, he had two pocket watches, but the wall clock is now broken, [now] the estate is in decay, his passing glory is about to be lost."

31 On the spread of clock towers in Hungary, see Takács, "Toronyórák," 352–56; Csukovits, "Órahasználat," 21–50; Tóth, "Harangkongás," 68.

structural carrier, or in other words, modernity itself became a tangible, rapidly running, ticking experience for rural society.

Conclusions

József Gyüker the Younger learned of the events described in the proposition, such as the possibility of flying in 1928, the spread of the bicycle and the powered plough, and many other pieces of information from the newspaper rather than from the almanacs.[32] He had access to more information and apparently thought it important to write down more things than his grandfather had. Price statistics appear in his entries more and more frequently, which must have become increasingly important for him because of purchasing and especially selling. The question is whether this greater amount of information, which took more time to absorb and process, was worth the time spent. I believe that Gyüker the Younger's aim by following price movements was to make more money by selling and to get a higher return on the time invested. This was probably facilitated by local rail transport, but it required keeping up with rail transport. Exposure to the natural environment continued to play a significant role in the perception of time for members of Gyüker the Younger's generation, but more efficient management also required more efficient time management. The spread of the clock and the way it became an integral part of the main areas of life definitely furthered this. Regardless of this, however, the regular use of references to exact years, months, and days and the occasional use of the clock as ways of marking the time of an event indicates a modern concept of time in the case of József Gyüker the Elder. Not only is this practice refined in his case of his grandson, who notably indicated the very hour of an important event, but there are also more frequent moments, in his narrative, of retrospection. While József Gyüker the Elder looks back on the events of the past by writing the chronicle itself, his grandson repeatedly reflects on earlier events even within the very text. Indeed, this becomes quite common in entries written after World War I. We do not know why József Gyüker (1836–1897) (the son of Gyüker Elder and the father of Gyüker the Younger) did not continue his father's chronicle, but we do have information about why the youngest József Gyüker (1909–?) abandoned it: "he has no time to write." In other words, for Gyüker the Elder, the time he spent writing was understood as leisure time, not work time, while

32 In 1929, for example, he wrote, "The paper reported 45 degrees below zero in Poland."

for his grandson, Gyüker the Younger, this time was work time, as it facilitated work and productivity. From this point of view, this time lost its purely leisure-time character. Instead, the importance of time as a means of keeping accounts became more and more important. In time, Gyüker the Younger devoted even this time spent on writing to work, which is one more indication of the disappearance of traditional peasant life.[33]

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Stjepan Radić and Nikola Pašić as Heralds of Liberal Democracy in Croatia and Serbia: Historiographical Myths and Reality

Alexander Silkin
Russian Academy of Sciences
alexander.silkin.as@gmail.com

Historians from the former Yugoslav republics traditionally participate in ongoing political discussions about the ways in which their homelands should progress. Referring to their knowledge of the past, scholars indicate certain historic phenomena and time periods that should serve as ideal models that should be "reproduced" by modern societies in the near future. With regard to the Serbian historiography, the late Belgrade professor Miroslav Jovanović detected several "restoration ideas," the implementation of which, according to their adherents, would allow modern society to "revise the mistakes of history." In today's Serbia and Croatia, certain historical figures, with real and imaginary virtues, are presented as role models and heralds of everything progressive in the field of politics and state building. In particular, in the works of many authors, Nikola Pašić, the head of the Serbian People's Radical Party (PRP), and Stjepan Radić, the chairman of the Croatian (Republican) Peasant Party (C(R)PP), appear as the "founding fathers" of liberal democratic traditions in the late nineteenth century and the first three decades of the twentieth. The "golden era of Serbian parliamentarism" (1903–1914), which was characterized by the dominance of the PRP and the virtual "Croatian Neutral Peasant Republic," a program that allowed the C(R)PP to consolidate the Croatian people in the 1920s, are worthy candidates of "restoration." In this article, I consider whether there is any substantial historical truth to these images. I conclude that neither the PRP nor the C(R)PP (and neither Pašić nor Radić) espoused liberalist tendencies, which would have favored individualist ethics and respect for the rights of minorities. Both leaders and their parties adhered to the principle of majority dominance and were intolerant of anyone who did not belong to this majority, whether for ethnic, social, or other reasons. The PRP and C(R)PP could be described as the patterns of the same socio-political phenomenon, separated by several decades. They shared and made use of common ideological roots, social bases, organizational structures, self-perceptions among the leadership, slogans, and other strategies and tools of mass manipulation. These factors and also the influence of the nineteenth-century Russian narodnik movement on both parties during their formative periods make them typologically more related to the Russian Bolsheviks than they ever were to Western liberal trends.

Keywords: Serbia, Croatia, Yugoslavia, republic, parliamentarism, liberal democracy, Nikola Pašić, Stjepan Radić, politics of memory, historical myths

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"Restoration Ideas": Present-day Serbian/Croatian Historiography and Myth-construction

Twelve years ago, Miroslav Jovanović, a university professor in Belgrade, wrote in his book *Kriza istorije* (Crisis of History) about the "transformation of the historical consciousness"[1] of the Serbs resulting from the upheavals of the 1990s and the early 2000s. What happened at the time prompted historians to think about the changes in the social roles they had to play in the countries that emerged from the ruins of Yugoslavia. Both the book cited above and the works by Dubravka Stojanović published at about the same time can be considered attempts at such rethinking. In their reasoning, both researchers relied on the postulate of Lucien Febvre, who insisted that the sciences are not created in ivory towers. Therefore, the task of overcoming "the gap between science and society that feels the need both for history and for understanding historical subjects"[2] was considered relevant by Jovanović. Agreeing with Jovanović, Stojanović argued that the mission of a scholar was "to look in the past for answers to the questions asked by the present, help society arrive at rational interpretations of contemporary events, and provide knowledge about the causes of phenomena and their origins."[3]

However, involvement in the vicissitudes of public life inevitably brings Clio's servants into collision with "epic and mythological as well as ideological abuse of history, which, as a rule, is carried out in order to legitimize some political idea."[4] This compels the historian to confront the following dilemma: should she "agree with the actualization of the past events that are imposed by non-scientific centers of power or fight for the emancipation of knowledge, rational understanding, and interpretation of this past." What choice did Serbian historiography tend to make in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century? Not the one that Jovanović considered right, judging by the title of his book, which offers several examples of how, "instead of performing its main function—the formation of rational historical consciousness—historical science spoon-feeds public memory, which is already traumatized and drugged by myths, with mythological constructions."

1 Jovanović and Radić, *Kriza*, 139.
2 Jovanović and Radić, *Kriza*, 9.
3 Stojanović, *Ulje*, 25
4 Jovanović and Radić, *Kriza*, 141, 9, 106

The search for conditionally positive episodes of history that could serve as "support" for the Serbian people who had gone astray was one of the trends of such retrospective "constructing." It was supposed to "draw readymade solutions from the 'past,' to find in it preferred models of social behavior and value systems that would make it possible to lay the foundations for the present-day collective self-identification of the Serbs."[5] In other words, looking back, it was necessary to determine "the point to which the modern Serbian society could 'return' in order to 'correct the mistakes' of history." Jovanović points out several "restoration ideas" of this kind, from "Saint Sava" (svetosavska), which suggests "a direct connection to and continuity with 'glorious' medieval Serbian history and the self-perception of modern Serbs," to "četnik," "Ravna Gora" (ravnagorska), which implies breaking with the socialist past and returning to bourgeois monarchist values.

Those who are convinced that Serbia's belonging to the European political and cultural tradition needs "historical" confirmation profess the "Pašić–Karadjordjević" restoration. It is based on the myth of the "golden era of Serbian democracy (1903–1914)," according to which "from the moment of its inception, the Serbian state was open to Western concepts of liberalism, parliamentarism, and democracy, and the political elite, educated at western universities, fully accepted the Western model of development and modernization."[6] According to this interpretation, after gaining independence in 1878, the Principality of Serbia was transformed into a "modern European state" in two decades despite the absence of the social prerequisites for such a transformation. In a few years, the environment in the country became favorable to the formation of political parties and the introduction of parliamentarism, and by the beginning of the century "the British two-party model of democracy had almost been put into place."[7] The process of Europeanization allegedly reached its climax during the reign of King Petar Karadjordjević (1903–1914), when Serbia could be considered "an advanced democracy, one of the most developed in Europe."

Stojanović, Andrei Shemjakin, and Olga Popović-Obradović[8] devoted several works to a demonstration of the inconsistency between this speculative representation and the real state of affairs in Serbia in 1878–1914. However, the complimentary view of the political development of Serbia is not limited to the

5 Jovanović and Radić, *Kriza*, 160.

6 Stojanović, *Ulje*, 26.

7 Shemjakin, "Osobennosti," 172.

8 Popović-Obradović, *Parlamentarizam*.

specified chronological framework. When it comes to the interwar period (1918–1941), some historians tend to interpret the aggravation of interethnic relations in the Kingdom of SCS / Yugoslavia as a consequence of the confrontation between the advanced Serbian intellectual/political elite and the inert and retrograde representatives of the Yugoslavs from the former Austria–Hungary. According to Ljubodrag Dimić, "the Serbian dynasty of Karadjordjević adopted Western European liberal civil ideology," and "the political forces of the former Kingdom of Serbia advocated liberal civil solutions in the new state."[9] It was seen as a "parliamentary democracy based on European standards and Serbian experience."[10] His colleague Djordje Stanković was of the same opinion. Stanković attributed such a "vision" to Nikola Pašić, head of the PRP, who allegedly "envisaged the Yugoslav state as built on the liberal principles of the civil state."[11]

The espousal by the majority of Serbian politicians to their "modern political integrating Yugoslav idea" was a manifestation of their progressive views. As Dimić continues, "cherishing the Yugoslavs' awareness of ethnic proximity, common language and territory of residence, its followers sought to overcome the fragmentation and barriers that had been left behind by the previous centuries."[12]

The failure of the implementation of the "modern idea" is explained by the fact that it "was counteracted by the particularistic consciousness of agrarian society, which had deep-rooted national ideologies and was clerical, conservative, and authoritarian by nature."[13] Catholic Yugoslavs, whose centrifugal aspirations became the main cause of the crisis of the first Yugoslavia, are proclaimed the bearers of those ideologies. As Stanković wrote, "The energy directed at the 'political exhaustion of the opponent' led to a waste of the time and creativity that were necessary for the modernization of society. Even more regrettable is the fact that it was organized according to modern European liberal principles."[14]

How does contemporary Croatian historiography assess the 1920s? There is a dominant view which is the opposite of the one cited above but is no less "convincing." In particular, it was expressed in the edited volume *Hrvatska*

9 Dimić, Žutić, *Rimokatolički*, 15.
10 Dimić, *Istorija*, 50.
11 Stanković, *Sto govora*, 314.
12 Dimić, *Srbi*, 108.
13 Dimić, "Srbija," 68.
14 Stanković, *Istorijski*, 63.

politika u XX stoljeću (Croatian Politics in the Twentieth Century, Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 2006), which crowned the project "Twentieth Century" of Matica Hrvatska. Ljubomir Antić, the editor of the publication, also interprets the events that happened in the first Yugoslavia as a confrontation between backwardness and progress. He explains the defeat of the latter by the fact that "the hopes of the Croatian and Slovenian 'Yugoslavs' that Croatia and Slovenia, with their developed societies, economies, and cultures, would Europeanize the remaining part of the new state did not come true. On the contrary, [the remaining] part Balkanized them."[15]

The assertion of forced "Balkanization" is one of the elements of the "mythological construction" that has been present in socio-political discourse for more than a century. According to this notion, Croatia was originally destined for the role of "the last detachment of the European front against the Balkans." In 1918, the "front" was forced to retreat, and "the vanguard" became "the rearguard":

> For Croatia, the interwar time passed under the sign of breaking the age-old alliance with Austria and Hungary and the subsequent entry into the first Yugoslav state. Although geographically Croatia remained in the same place, it turned from a Central European outpost in relation to the Balkans into the last frontier separating the Balkans from Central Europe. The consequences of this change were fatal.[16]

Nikša Stančić agrees with this assessment. However, he does not write about the "Balkanization" of Croatia. He contends, rather, that as a result of the dissolution of Austria–Hungary, Croatia had to vegetate on the "periphery of European modernization." To denote the inappropriate geographic object within which Croatia ended up, the euphemism "Yugoslav state with its center in Southeastern Europe" is used instead of the term "Balkans," which has so many negative connotations.[17] To show the extent to which being part of this Yugoslav state was "fatal," Stančić mentions that Croatia joined "Southeastern Europe" for the first time in the sixteenth century as a result of the Ottoman conquest.

Only "five centuries later, Croatia again joined the development of the part of Europe that we refer to as the European West, of which it was left out in the

15 Antić, "Nacionalna ideologija," 53.

16 Ibid.

17 Stančić, "Hrvatska nacionalna integracija," 13.

modern era."[18] Namely, it joined the European Union in 2013, having preliminarily carried out "advanced democratization" in order to become "acceptable" to the European Union. Naturally, democratism in Croatia today did not appear out of nowhere. Its roots go back to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, which, according to Stančić, were marked by "the formation of Croatian civil society and national integration."

Stjepan Radić as the Founder of Today's Liberalism in Croatia: Between Myth and Historical Accuracy

To whom does Croatia owe these achievements? Many historians and publicists credit Radić first and foremost. The prevailing attitude towards Radić fully fits Jovanović's formula of "restoration ideas." In the modern socio-political arena, Radić's apologists occupy a place between two extreme camps: nostalgia for the communist Yugoslav past on the one hand and the legacy of the Nazi-like Ustaša on the other. An article by journalist Zvonimir Despot (whose name bears an unfortunate but purely coincidental resemblance to the English word "despot") offers an example of the conventional democratic "restoration" of Radić's type:

> Today, Radić should have been one of the main role models in the process of building a democratic society. Instead, being divided into those who are for Tito and those who are for Pavelić, the Croats have been engaged in daily internecine slaughter for many years. Radić's legacy is above routine politics and any political orientation. What he said a century ago matters to this day.[19]

Hrvoje Petrić is in full agreement with Despot: "Stjepan Radić and his brother Antun outlined what Croatia should be like and the values on which it should be based."[20] Branka Boban sums up her text in Antić's aforementioned collection in the following words: "He made a substantial contribution to the development of modern Croatian national consciousness, which is inextricably linked with democratic principles."[21]

In order to fill in the gaps in the political education of his compatriots, Marijan Lipovac started a page on Facebook under the title "Daily Dose of

18 Ibid., 11, 31.

19 Despot, "Ono što je Radić govorio."

20 Petrić, "O braći Radić," 542.

21 Boban, B., "Stjepan Radić," 158.

Stjepan Radić."[22] Lipovac gives the leader of the Croatian People's Peasant Party (C(R)PP) the flattering title of "the greatest Croatian politician and educator of the first half of the twentieth century," as he was "the first to raise the topic of human rights, the first to talk about women's rights… the first among Croatian politicians to advocate European integration, the first to touch on environmental issues."[23]

According to Despot, today, the main obstacle to the realization of the "ideals" is the adherence of many Croats to far-left and far-right views. Explaining what counted as such in the 1920s, the authors bring us back to the myth of "Balkanism" that Radić faced in Serbian politicians: "intoxicated with victory in the war, they [the Serbian politicians] were not even ready to talk about his demands." Boban laments that, as leader of the C(R)PP, Radić "had to defend his democratic and liberal principles in a state that had nothing in common with either a rule-of-law state or a democratic state."[24] Antić, coauthor of the collection, echoes these views. According to Antić, the atmosphere in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes "was poisoned by political primitivism, alien to the part of the state that was located in Austria–Hungary. We are talking about violence, vulgarity, manipulations during elections, nepotism, corruption."[25] As an expert on the nineteenth century, Stančić does not go into such gloomy details and simply states that the Serbian political elite "lacked established democratic traditions."[26]

Since "democratism" is presented as the main attribute of Radić's theory and practice, it is reasonable to ask what kind of "democracy" is meant. I repeat the question posed by Stojanović with respect to the so-called "golden era of Serbian democracy": "What exactly is the meaning of this concept, which is accepted all over the world, to which everyone swears allegiance, and which, after everything that happened in the twentieth century, has so many mutually contradictory meanings that one can speak of the victory of the word over its meaning?"[27] However, before trying to arrive at an answer to this question, let us evaluate the reliability of some of the assessments quoted above of the context in which the C(R)PP had to operate.

22 https://www.facebook.com/StjepanRadicDnevnaDoza/

23 Petrić, "O braći Radić," 540□ 41.

24 Boban, B., "Stjepan Radić," 152, 158.

25 Antić, "Nacionalna ideologija," 53.

26 Stančić, "Hrvatska nacionalna integracija," 28.

27 Stojanović, *Srbija*, 19.

As for the lack of democratic traditions among the Serbs, it is possible to talk about this alleged lack only if we are guided by the Western European standard. By Balkan standards and in comparison with what the Yugoslav subjects of the Habsburgs had been able to venture, pre-war Serbia experienced a triumph of democracy in 1903–1914. The country had a constitution, the parliament, upon which the throne could not impose its will, was formed on the basis of universal suffrage (for men), and rival parties succeeded each other at the head of the government.

One can hardly object to Antič's enumeration of the unattractive aspects of Serbian "Balkanism." But was Croatia itself free of nepotism and corruption, vulgarity and "primitivism"? Not quite, as follows from the pre-war texts written by Radić himself. Addressing the Sabor in May 1910, he names social ailments which his party promised to address with its "peasant policy": "We want to free our people from the horror of the bureaucrats, the horror of the priests, and the horror of the Jews.[28] We resolutely oppose bureaucratic arbitrariness, priestly brainwashing, and Jewish exploitation."[29] The atmosphere was even more poisoned by the fact that the Jews allegedly did not limit themselves to economic exploitation only. "Their slyness merged with boldness and meanness into a single property of their soul,"[30] which enabled the "foreigners" to bend ministers of the Church and some local politicians to their will, in particular Ante Starčević, the founder of Croatian nationalism, who purportedly "obeyed a Jew," [31] namely, Josip Frank. As far as the clergy was concerned, "it has succumbed to the Jews today, and together they go to dinner with those in power in order to get themselves red cardinal belts."[32]

Obviously, Radić's anti-Semitism is not something his panegyrists would like to bring to light. For example, Lipovac and Petrić, in order to confirm that, for Radić, democratism was above nationalism, cite the following phrase: "If the peasant continues to be beaten in free Croatia […] this is not the Croatia we want."[33] In the article by Boban, we find what the authors hid behind the ellipsis: "If the peasant continues to be beaten up in free Croatia, *if counts and priests with*

28 Radić uses the word *čifut*, which has an insulting connotation. The word *žid* is translated from Croatioan as "Jew."

29 Radić, *Hrvatska seljačka politika*, 10.

30 Radić, *Frankova politička smrt*.

31 Radić, *Hrvatska seljačka politika*, 9.

32 Ibid., 30.

33 Petrić, "O braći Radić," 541.

Jews continue to play the master [italics added, A.S.], this is not the Croatia we want."[34] While acknowledging that Radić hated Jews, Boban nevertheless insists that he was "an outspoken supporter of a tolerant attitude towards other nations." She does not explain how the one could be combined with the other, but we should read the following between the lines: even the sun has the occasional dark spot, and the peasant tribune always denounced the aristocracy and the clergy together with the "Jews," which allegedly indicates Radić's commitment to social equality and democracy.

Returning to the question of the nature of the latter, national tolerance is not the only virtue that can be found under the guise of xenophobia if desired. Radić is described as a politician with a "European outlook,"[35] a man "of European format, our first educated modern political scientist."[36] As a graduate of the École Libre des Sciences Politiques in Paris, he was "especially inspired by democracy in Britain."[37] "Having organized a modern political party" (with a program that was "modern in every respect"),[38] according to Boban, Radić "believed that all goals should be fought for by democratic means within the framework of the system of parliamentarism."[39]

According to Boban, the "cornerstone liberal democratic principles" were embodied in the Constitution of the Neutral Peasant Republic of Croatia (1921), which provided for "the highest (even for today) standards for the observance of rights and freedoms."[40] Hodimir Sirotković concurs. According to Sirotković, the constitution contained "solely liberal positions." Ivo Goldstein writes about the "liberal-democratic positions" of the C(R)PP's program documents and cites "social justice, broad public education, the rule of law, and control of the executive and legislative power through referenda" as examples of these alleged positions.[41]

Is the above interpretation of the constitution credible, and did Radić really take a stance resembling the intransigence and commitment of Martin Luther when he purportedly said, "Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise"? It is possible to answer in the affirmative only if we ignore the general context of the activities

34 Boban, B., "Stjepan Radić," 147.
35 Petrić, "O braći Radić," 586.
36 Sirotković, "Radićev ustav," 306–7.
37 Leček, "Priča," 30.
38 Ibid.
39 Boban, B., "Stjepan Radić," 148.
40 Ibid., 158, 152.
41 Goldstein, *Hrvatska*, 74, 45, 46.

and propaganda of the C(R)PP before and after the adoption of the document. However, before considering the image of the state and power that emerged from Radić's speeches and texts from various years, let us pay attention to a circumstance that in itself demonstrates the implausibility of the position cited above. In the 1920s and 1930s, the "heyday of peasant policy," the C(R)PP did not display interest in the work of the parliament, nor did it seek to exert much influence on its decisions, as one would have expected from a "modern party" with a "modern" program.

Members of Radić's party appeared in the Belgrade Skupština only in the spring of 1924, i.e. five years after the foundation of the state and a year before they recognized the monarchy and abandoned republicanism. The party returned to the policy of boycotting the parliament after the assassination attempt on Radić, which took place in the parliament on June 20, 1928. As a result of the establishment of the regime of King Alexander Karadjordjević on January 6, 1929, the C(R)PP was banned, like all other "tribal" Yugoslav parties. After the death of Karadjordjević in 1934, the party took part in the elections twice (in 1935 and 1938) but abstained from going to Belgrade. Following the signing of the Cvetković–Maček Agreement in August 1939 and the formation of Banovina Hrvatska, the new government, with the participation of the C(R)PP, dissolved the parliament without calling new elections. The Croatian Sabor was not convened either, although the agreement specifically provided for this.[42]

Radić's party ignored the Skupština for years while still participating in six elections (in 1920, 1923, 1925, 1927, 1935, and 1938). This can hardly be interpreted as convincing evidence of a commitment to liberal democracy, a fact which prompts some of his apologists to resort to sophistical argumentation. For example, S. Leček justifies the tactics of the C(R)PP by the fact that the Yugoslav parliamentarism of the 1920s ("imaginary" or "pseudo-parliamentarism") and of the second half of the 1930s ("tolerated parliamentarism") was far from the original Western model. Therefore, Radić's choice in favor of "extra-institutional ways" and "alternative methods" is presented as justified.[43] At the same time,

42 Ljubo Boban, an influential Croatian historian, argued that the Serbian parties (both governmental and oppositional) that were unsure of their electoral prospects opposed the elections to the Skupština. As a hegemon in the Croatian political arena, the C(R)PP, in contrast, insisted on holding the elections (Boban, *Kontroverze*, 240–45). As for the elections to the Sabor, according to Marijan Maticka, Radić's successor Vladko Maček "did not consider them a priority." (Maticka, "Hrvatska," 182).

43 Leček, "Priča," 30. In his work (Leček, "Priča," 29), Leček erroneously points out that the "boycott" of the parliament by the C(R)PP lasted from 1920 to 1925. In 1925, Radić recognized Yugoslav unification and the monarchical system, after which the C(R)PP made a government coalition with the PRP. However,

the fact that these "ways" and "methods" largely determined both the shape of the representative bodies and the state structure of the Kingdom of SCS / Yugoslavia as a whole goes unmentioned. In particular, Radić's party's failure to participate in the work of the Constituent Assembly in 1921 facilitated the adoption of the Vidovdan Constitution, which infringed upon the interests of the Yugoslavs of the former Austria–Hungary.[44]

In 1923, the C(R)PP made a secret deal with the Serbian Radical Party (the so-called Markov Protocol), according to which Radić's followers promised to continue the boycott of the parliament so as not to prevent the radicals from forming the government majority. In return, the radicals promised to suspend administrative centralization in Croatia. In 1928, a year before the establishment of the dictatorship, Radić was the first Yugoslav politician to propose that the king appoint an "extra-parliamentary person" at the head of the government, namely, a general who would be "against large Serbian parties that had placed themselves outside the parliament, the state, and the will of the people."[45] Finally, in 1939, Radić's successors neglected their obligations to the Serbian opposition, with which they were united by the demands for democratization, a return to genuine parliamentarism, etc., and concluded a separate deal with the "bearer of military force," that is, with the authoritarian regency regime.

To return to Radić's constitution, it is worth noting that indeed, *démocratie libérale* cannot be built without many of the things it stipulated. At the same time, some of its provisions poorly correlate with liberalism and any "modern" vision of the legal structure of the state in general. Therefore, the text in question could equally reflect Radić's eclectic but progressive views and the

as early as March 1924, the C(R)PP decided to participate in the work of the Skupština and sent it the demand to "verify" the mandates received in the elections. On May 27, 1924, the Skupština unanimously confirmed the powers of the C(R)PP's deputies who took the oath. After that, the parliamentary session was adjourned. In addition, Leček incorrectly (1925–1926) indicates the chronological framework for the existence of the government coalition of the Radić's party and the Serbian PRP (Leček, "Priča," 30). In fact, in April 1926, Radić ceased to be a minister, but members of his party participated in the formation of cabinets until February 1927.

44 If the deputies of the C(R)PP had been present at the Constituent Assembly, the government parties—radicals and democrats—would not have been able to win approval for their draft rules of the Skupština in December 1920–January 1921. According to this draft, to adopt the constitution, a simple majority of the votes cast by the total number of deputies (419) would suffice, not the 2/3 majority desired by Croats and Slovenes. Finally, 223 deputies voted for the Vidovdan Charter (Gligorijević, *Parliament*, 91). I dare say that by the time the final vote was cast in June 1921, the government would not have been able to secure even this much support for its draft constitution if the opposition had been stronger by 50 votes cast by Radić's followers.

45 Gligorijević, *Parlament*, 251.

desire to meet the expectations of the widest possible target audience at home and abroad. It is indicative that the description of the national flag of Croatia is immediately followed by a list of the "world factors that made small nations subjects of international law." Gratitude is expressed "first of all to the great republican Union of North America, […] equally to the Russian Revolution, which overthrew Russian militarism forever," and then to "the two largest Western European constitutional democracies."[46] The leadership of the C(R)PP did not abandon all hope for some form of external intervention in internal Yugoslav affairs until 1925, when it dropped the letter "R" from its name and recognized the monarchy and the existing constitution. Before that, Radić went to Moscow and joined the Peasant International (1924). Earlier (1919–1924), the C(R)PP counted mainly on the help of the West, and therefore the articles on the separation of powers, the rule of law, etc. could not but be included in the constitution.

Furthermore, earlier texts and speeches show that Radić did not consider himself a liberal:

> It is known that the first democracy arose in France, its economic name was liberalism or […] free competition. Jews were very fond of it. The second democracy is workers' or socialist democracy. Its economic name is confiscation […] And the Jews supported it, hoping that confiscation would not be from them but from someone else. The third democratism is peasant democratism, which is called production or economy. While we are on this soil, we do not need liberalism and competition. How can you compete when you have nothing?[47]

As a summary of this lecture on political economy, which Radić delivered to his fellow deputies in 1910, let us quote what he had written five years earlier under the pseudonym Baćuška: "Liberalism does not recognize the soul of the people and at the forefront it puts itself rather than 'body of the people.' Therefore, it is far from Slavic democracy and from the Croatian People's Peasant Party."[48]

According to Mark Biondich, behind such claims there was a view that

> the most salient characteristic of liberal ideology was the state's dissociation from society. According to Radić, "the state had no obligation to help its citizens, and Jewish liberals also teach that it is not

46 Radić, *Politički spisi,* 367–68.

47 Radić, *Hrvatska seljačka politika*, 2.

48 Petrić, "O braći Radić," 581.

> in the state's interest to help the poor people, the peasant or pauper, but that everyone must be left to his fate."[49]

Biondich contends that the C(R)PP's program "differed from liberalism in its emphasis on the whole peasant community as opposed to the individual and in its opposition to the economic principle of *laissez-faire*."

Choosing between the rights and freedoms of an individual on the one hand and the collective interests of the "agricultural estate" on the other, Radić was guided by the idea of "five-fold superiority" of peasants over other social groups:

> 1. Superiority in numbers, because the peasantry constitutes the overwhelming majority of the people (more than 80 percent); 2. In labor and acquired property, since the peasant works from dawn to dusk, and the peasantry owns a large part of the total national property; 3. In honesty and morality; 4. In political stability and ability to sacrifice, loyalty to the national language and folk customs, that is, to everything that constitutes the Croatian nationality and the Croatian fatherland; 5. In humanity.[50]

It is not surprising that Radić considered the peasantry the only "political factor" capable of "putting in order our *domovina*—the state that we all want."[51] The latter appears as an enlarged model of a peasant home (homestead) and at the same time as the totality of such homesteads: "Our first task is to protect and develop these homes, and the second task is to turn the large *domovina* consisting of small homes, maybe, not into Belgium or Switzerland, but into Denmark."

The high mission of the villagers was dissonant with their political position, in which they suffered discrimination. It was the responsibility of the educated urban strata to correct this. Radić appealed to the deputies in the Sabor: "Knowing what the people are, what their physical and moral strength is, we are obliged to embody it properly. Because if the people do not have that strength, the intelligentsia will remain without a cause."[52] The explanation of what this "cause" consisted of demonstrates that *La science politique* is not the only root of Radić's ideology: "This is most clearly written in Russian literature, which,

49 Biondich, *Stjepan Radić*, 76.

50 Radić, "Seljački socijalni pokret," ix–x.

51 Radić, *Hrvatska seljačka politika*, 17–18.

52 Ibid., 32.

in fact, is peasant literature. Russian writers profess that they are in debt to the people, but not the people to them."[53]

"The value of Russian literature lies not only in its artistic merits," wrote Antun Radić (1868–1919), Stjepan's brother and cofounder of the party. "For us," Antun insisted,

> it is even more important because it offers a solution to two problems […] folk culture and the attitude of the intelligentsia towards the people. Having rapidly adopted Western European education and alien customs, the intelligentsia became a stranger to its people. Thus, a chasm started to yawn between the educated people and the common folk. The best Russian people struggled to overcome it, and Russian fiction acted as an assistant in that.[54]

This explains why, according to historian Stipe Kljaić, the profile of the political and ideological world of the Radić brothers was shaped by the Russian narodniks and Russian literary realism. "Following the example of the Russian narodniks," Kljaić writes,

> the Radić brothers were going to liberate the intelligentsia that was "alienated from the people" from servility to the West and offered the cult of the people, the village, and the peasantry instead […]. Copying the contemporary Russian experience, the Radić brothers also embraced the anti-Western Slavic myth. Western culture is presented as the destroyer of the autochthonous Croatian peasant culture […] Rejecting western civil *modus vivendi*, the Radić brothers chose peasant existence as the source of their ideology.[55]

Bridging the "chasm" in Radić's way meant the implementation of the "concept of peasant right,"[56] which was supposed to protect against "atheism and clericalism, revolution and bureaucracy, as well as today's socialism and capitalism—the apostle of state omnipotence and the tyranny of money over labor."[57] Industrialization posed a particular threat to peasant homesteads, for "large-scale industry turns broad strata of the people into real slaves, and the agricultural system makes the man a giant."[58] Taking this as a point of departure,

53 Ibid.

54 Kljaić, *Nikada*, 85.

55 Ibid.

56 Biondich, *Stjepan Radić*, 67.

57 Petrić, "O braći Radić," 580.

58 Radić, *Hrvatska seljačka politika*, 28, 24, 19,

the C(R)PP insisted on "expanding the electoral legislation," guarantees of "protections for the peasant's plot of land," the organization of self-governing economic and administrative communities, etc.

The post-war period raised new harsh demands formulated in the constitution. The "government of the peasant majority" was to become an obligatory attribute of the "republic," and the "peasant homestead" was to be its lower administrative unit.[59] Apparently, the abolition of universal conscription and the regular army, the abolition of customs duties, and the "establishment of cooperatives instead of capitalist banks"[60] were provided for in the interests of the "majority." In addition, it was supposed that the university and gymnasiums with lyceums and non-classical secondary schools should be closed down. Large land holdings should be expropriated.[61] In general, the document described the state as if to make it seem as little burdensome as possible for its citizens.

Such an evolution of views was caused by the radicalization of the sentiments of the Croatian peasant, who, according to Radić, "during the four war years […] was not only a real slave of the state but was also exploited by all masters in a manner worse than any draft animals were."[62] That is why after the war this Croatian peasant "demands the same freedom and rights for which his peasant brothers are fighting in Russia."[63]

In 1924, Vitomir Korać, the leader of the Yugoslav Social Democrats, shared the following recollection of the pre-revolutionary situation in the Croatian lands in 1918–1920:

> The psychological condition of the masses was dangerous. Exhausted by the difficult war, they hoped for immediate changes for the better as soon as the war ended. But the hardships of the war continued. Captive soldiers of the former Austro-Hungarian armada were returning from Russia and preaching 'the dawn from the East.' Psychosis spread through the masses. And then 'saviors' of all kinds appeared; they promised deliverance in 24 hours. Thus, demagoguery of any kind fell on fertile soil."[64]

59 Sirotković, "Radićev ustav," 301, 304.

60 It is written in the official interpretation of the constitution by one of the C(R)PP Rudolf Herceg (Herceg, *Seljački pokret*, 36).

61 Radić, *Politički spisi*, 370.

62 Banac, *Nacionalno pitanje*, 194.

63 Radić, *Gospodska politika*, 27.

64 AJ. 305. Fasc. 40.

However, of all the "saviors," the peasant masses chose Radić, which Korać explained as a consequence of his "virtuosity in demagogy," i.e. his ability to articulate the entire wide range of ethnic, social, and political phobias of a potential voter:

> If there are supporters of Charles I of Austria nearby, he appears to be a real Caesarist; if someone supports the *pravaši*, he is for the Croatian state right; if someone hates the Serbs, he starts to disparage them […] if someone doesn't like priests, neither does he; if someone is a republican, so is he; if someone is against the war, he is a pacifist […] if someone is against military service, he is against the army; if someone does not want to pay taxes, here he is. In short, he did not disdain any propaganda slogans and managed to catch every bluster of discontent in his sails. No one could compete with him in demagoguery—neither the communists, nor the Catholic clerics, nor Frank's followers.

Dragoljub Jovanović, a Serbian left-wing politician expressed a similar opinion:

> Stipica knew that the peasant soul is not a monochord, that it has more than one string. And it would not be enticed by agricultural communes *(zadruga)*, politics, Croatian identity, or the republic taken separately. […] There were always several strings on his harp, and many arrows in his quiver. With them, he captured the hearts of his supporters and hit his opponents.[65]

Radić himself confirmed the validity of those characterizations in 1925:

> The masses were seized by the spirit of the losers. On the one hand, the supporters of the Habsburgs. On the other hand, the Bolsheviks. We had to act quickly, and it took a strong "schlager." We seized on the republic because of Wilson, America, Germany, Austria, and Hungary. If it hadn't worked, we would have to look for something else. However, now we can be satisfied. We finished off the Habsburgs and stopped the spread of Bolshevism. Another cause is the danger of clericalism.[66]

To achieve such results, it was necessary not only to present oneself to the public in a favorable light but also to discredit competitors. The party's awareness of the masses' hostility to their newfound "brothers," the Serbs, was

65 Jovanović, *Političke uspomene*, 47.

66 AJ. 335. Fasc. 6; Krizman, "Dva pisma," 136.

an *a priori* advantage over many of its competitors. As Ante Trumbić recalled in 1932, "Radić comprehended the soul of the Croatian peasant, who returned home after four years of suffering […] and was filled with rage, having found the country under Serbian occupation."[67]

In the early 1920s, anti-Serbian rhetoric allowed Radić's followers to outrun the communists (who preached ideas of international solidarity that were strange to the average peasant) in the struggle for the sympathies of the villagers. As for the urban parties that were represented in the Croatian Sabor and later in the People's Assembly of SCS, they became an even easier target for defamation. For the most part, they recognized Yugoslavia and the theory of national unity among the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes underlying it, which made it possible to accuse them of betraying Croatian national interests. Of significance in this respect is Rudolf Herceg's description of the electoral victory of the C(R)PP in the election to the Constitutional Assembly in Croatia in November 1920: "It was being decided whether the Croatian people wanted to vest rights in Radić or in those of their gentlemen who […] had decided to hand power over Croatia to Belgrade."[68]

Against those who could not be accused of loyalty to the "occupiers," the thesis of the exploitation of the Croatian peasant by all sorts of *kaputaši*[69] and *cilindraši* was effective, regardless of their political orientation and the position they held during and after the war. Therefore, as Radić said in the autumn of 1918, "having become a full-fledged person as a result of the war," in the upcoming elections to the Sabor or the Constituent Assembly, the peasant "will no longer vote for gentlemen who have broken all their promises, […] but will vote only for people from the plow and hoe."[70] In order to "finish off" those who were nostalgic for the Habsburgs or were associated in the public mind with the nobility, the higher clergy, and the Austro–Hungarian bureaucracy in one way or another, the C(R)PP ideologists explained that the "rulers and their first assistants—bishops and noblemen" are to blame for all troubles and misfortunes.

Eliminating "the danger of clericalism," the C(R)PP took advantage of the popular perception of the priesthood as an accomplice of the violent state on the

67 Boban Lj., *Kontroverze*, 29.

68 Herceg, *Seljački pokret*, 33.

69 From Serbo-Croatian *kaput*, a coat. *Kaputaš* was a derogatory nickname used by the rural population of Yugoslav countries to denote a city dweller. It can be translated perhaps most simply as "a man wearing a coat."

70 Radić, *Gospodska politika*, 26, 29, 19.

one hand and the stable patriarchal piety of the villagers on the other. Appealing to this, Radić emphasized that "for us, the peasantry is not a class, but […] the people of martyrs."[71] Party propaganda promised them brilliant prospects: "The peasant procession goes forward and, without turning off the path, to the paradise of the peasant republic."[72] The procession was headed by the C(R)PP, "the bearer of the peasant movement, which is outgrowing the narrow class frame and transforming not just into a popular (Croatian) movement but also into a universal one."[73]

What were these ideals of universal significance? We find the answer in Herceg's work cited above: "And among the Croatian people there appeared a revived Christian religion, faith in rights and truth, goodness and the man—the person who is righteous, courageous and wise." This did not mean abstract Homo sapiens, but a concrete man of flesh and blood: "This person is not a thief, not a coward, not overly smart, like those who believe that they are smarter than all the people and are therefore insane. In 1918, all the leaders could be reproached for this, but not Radić."[74] Who this "righteous man" considered himself to be can be seen from his letter to Tomasz Dąbal, an activist of the Peasant International, sent in May 1924: "Agitation in the ordinary sense of the word does not exist in our country. We do not have any agents at all. Everything is done in the most ideal way—by means of apostolate, that is preaching the liberation of the peasant people."[75]

The way in which Radić's associates conducted themselves after his death in 1928 offered clear proof of the quasi-religious nature of the C(R)PP ideology. The heart and the brain of the deceased "high priest" were removed from his body by his orphaned "apostles." They were supposed to be put on display in a special mausoleum, where they would offer exaltation of "Radić's epistle to the people and maintain his cult."[76] Stipica Grgić contended that this plan (which remained unfulfilled) bore the strongest affinities with "the concept of Lenin's mausoleum, where the mortal remains of the leader were kept."

Of course, even during his lifetime, fellow party members and supporters did not treat Stjepan Radić as

71 RGASPI 535 Krestjanskij Internacional
72 Herceg, *Seljački pokret*, 47.
73 Ibid., 34, 35.
74 Ibid., 31, 32.
75 RGASPI 535 Krestjanskij Internacional
76 Grgić, "Radić," 737, 746.

> the chief of some Western European party. He is the leader whose decisions are carried out unquestioningly […] even when he expels someone from the party, from the ranks of the Croatian people. Like a patriarch, he exercises his power, which was vested in him by the people by plebiscite. He instructs, threatens, punishes, praises, but at the same time he always remains a good father at heart.[77]

This passage from the party's press organ not only confirms Radić's high status but also makes one wonder who deserves "expulsion from the people." Apparently, the answer to this question was anyone who did not support the C(R)PP or, as Radić wrote, "that gentleman or worker who is outside the peasant circle, and therefore outside and against the [Croatian – *A.S.*] people."[78]

Thus, Radić's adherence to the principle of the majority dictatorship and his intolerance of those who didn't fit into this majority for ethnic, social, or other reasons (in the spirit of "whoever is not with us is against us") give reason to assume that he was very far from liberalism, which inherently has an ethics of individualism, pluralism, and reverence for the rights of the minority. However, those who consider the patriarchal traditionalist elements of the theory and practice of the C(R)PP to be a manifestation of their "modern" essence would hardly agree with this statement. For instance, reproducing Radić's thesis about "the identity of the republican system with the organization of the traditional Croatian zadruga," Ivo Banac argued that the "republican model proposed by him had much in common with western parliamentary systems."[79] Sirotković, whose reasoning went along the same lines, believed that the definition of the republic as "the association of the homes and the people" was an "exclusively liberal provision" of the constitution.[80]

Nikola Pašić as the Historical Predecessor of Stjepan Radić: Similar Ideas, Similar Policies, and Contemporary Perceptions

As noted at the beginning of this article, Radić is not the only figure in the modern and contemporary history of the southern Slavs who tends to be portrayed as a forerunner of modern "European modernization," as Stančić put it. The results that historiography has produced in connection with historical

77 Horvat, *Politička povijest,* 249.

78 Radić, "Čim je hrvatsko seljačtvo," 49

79 Banac, *Nacionalno pitanje*, 194.

80 Sirotković, "Radićev ustav," 306.

problems similar to Radić's controversy are important for our polemic. This involves the contradictory assessments of Nikola Pašić and the Radical Party headed by him. According to Holm Sundhaussen, "its demands were similar to those stated in the Radić brothers' program."[81] Similarities between the programs were due to the identical base of Radić's and the radicals' supporters. In the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth, peasants of approximately equal income comprised nearly 90 percent of the population of Serbia, and the lion's share of them followed the PRP shortly after its formation in 1881.

The social homogeneity of the Serbian people is seen by some researchers as a factor in the formation of a "politically progressive system."[82] Almost echoing Radić, Banac felt that the zadruga and Western parliamentarism shared common features. Slobodan Antonić, a Belgrade political scientist, refers to the illiterate peasant majority as "the middle class" in the collective monograph *Srbi 1903–1914. Istorija ideja* (Serbs, 1903–1914: The History of Ideas, Belgrade: Clio, 2015). Therefore, a society in which it dominates "is ideal for the introduction of democracy in terms of classical concepts." Apparently, he was thinking of liberal democracy, judging by the fact that Miloš Ković, coauthor and editor-in-chief of the publication, titled his chapter "The Time of King Petar: The Victory of Liberal Democracy."[83]

During the reign of Petar Karadjordjević and earlier, under the last rulers of the Obrenović dynasty, the Radical Party played first fiddle on the Serbian political stage. In Academician Milorad Ekmečić's view, it was established "on the model of modern European parties,"[84] and according to Milan Protić, it "had a decisive influence on the transformation of Serbia into a democratic European state."[85] As the late Dušan Bataković wrote, the radicals "advocated democratic ideals and strictly parliamentary procedure in political struggle," "defended the principles of modern parliamentarism, universal suffrage, and individual freedom." The authors cited above retrace the ideological roots of the party exclusively in the western direction, or in other words, they find these roots in British parliamentary theory and French radicalism, which had a decisive influence on "the political program and organization of the movement."[86]

81 Zundhausen, *Istorija*, 276.
82 Antonić, "Demokratija," 69, 75.
83 Ković, "Liberalizam," 185.
84 Ekmečić, *Dugo*, 323.
85 Shemjakin, "Partija," 322.
86 Ibid., 322, 328.

It is difficult to agree with this point of view. Pašić's growing popularity in the 1880s reflected the refusal by the masses to accept the very intentions that the above-cited authors attribute to him. Namely, these are the attempts "to make a European people […] out of the Serbian people, and to turn Serbia into a European state."[87] According to Stojan Novaković, the Serbian Progressive Party (Srpska napredna stranka), which formed the government in the 1880–1887s at the behest of Prince/King Milan Obrenović, was faced with this task. To address it, the ruling circles had to adopt the basic principle of European liberalism: the state exists for the man but not for itself. According to Milan Pirićanac, another prominent *naprednjak*, the man "is free and has the right to use and improve all his abilities with which he is endowed by nature."[88] However, there is no rose without a thorn, so "the man," i.e., the Serbian peasant, was required to learn "the state's discipline." This meant, as Shemjakin wrote, transforming himself "from a former insurrectionist against the Turks into a disenfranchised subject of his state, from a guerrilla rebel into a regular soldier, from a self-sufficient producer into a taxpayer with an ever-growing tax burden."[89]

Such a "metamorphosis" imposed from above could provoke only one response from the closed agrarian society. This response was described by an astute contemporary: "The instincts of the masses increasingly rebelled against the modernization of the state." The opposition radicals managed to "catch, articulate, and transform them into the form of a powerful people's movement."[90] Pašić opposed Europeanization of the naprednjak type with reference to the importance of protecting Serbian identity:

> The main aspiration was to preserve good institutions, consistent with the Serbian spirit and hinder the introduction of new Western institutions that could bring confusion to the people's development. The Serbian people have so many good and healthy institutions and customs that the only thing to do would be to protect them and supplement them with the wonderful establishments that the Russian and other Slavic tribes have.[91]

87 Shemjakin, *Politicheskie*, 202.

88 Shemjakin, *Ideologija,* 151.

89 Ibid., 23–24.

90 Shemjkin, "Osobennosti," 2014, 563.

91 Shemjakin, *Ideologija,* 291.

In the parliament and outside of it, the party sabotaged government-proposed reforms by rejecting the laws concerning the railroads, banks, and the regular army, by opposing the attraction of foreign capital into the country, etc.

What the radicals termed "native Serbian institutions" were the zadruga and the community consisting of several zadrugas.[92] For Pašić, the latter was "the soul of the Slavic world. It is its origin, and modern social science considers it the crowning achievement in the development of the existing Western European social order."[93] Therefore, the community served both as a micro-model and as the primary self-governing unit of the virtual entity that Pašić proposed as an alternative to the naprednjak project of a "European" Serbia. It was called the "people's state" or the "people's homestead," the inhabitants of which were not divided into those who govern (bureaucracy) and those who were governed. "It is built and developed on the basis of a fraternal agreement," and the master in it is the people, who "have created […] everything that we now have" and therefore have the right to "dispose of everything as of their own property."[94]

Shemjakin describes the ideological background of the conflict between the radicals and the naprednjaks as follows: "Favoring of the individual and the apology of the community came to grips: personal freedom was opposed to the sovereignty of the people; the whole society was opposed to the individual; individualistic values were opposed to collectivism and solidarism."[95] Being embodied in the "people's state," those principles provided protection against capitalism, with its militant individualism and stratification of society into hostile classes, against industrialization, against alien non-Serbian "culture," and, in general, against the "infection" coming from the West. According to Pašić, the West "had exalted money above everything else on earth," above peasant "virtues and dignity-honor, labor, and morality."[96] Spreaders of the "infection" in Serbia are listed in a song sung by the radical crowd:[97]

92 The Serbian zadruga corresponded to the Russian community and the Serbian community corresponded to the Russian rural volost (Shemjakin, *Ideologija,* 309).

93 Shemjakin, *Ideologija*, 358.

94 Ibid., 206.

95 Ibid., 155.

96 Ibid., 283.

97 Pavlović, *Vojislav*, 56.

Против бога и владара,	*Against god and rulers*
Против попа и олтара,	*Against the priest and the altars,*
Против круне и скиптара,	*Against crown and scepter,*
...	*…*
За радника, за ратара	*For the worker, for the plowman,*
Боримо се ми!	*We fight!*
Устај сељо, устај роде,	*Rise, peasant, rise, people,*
Да се спасеш од господе...	*To escape from the masters...*
Чиновнике, бирократе,	*Officials, bureaucrats,*
Ђифтарију, зеленаше,	*Merchants, moneylenders,*
Цилиндраше и сабљаше,	*Cilindraši and sabljaši,*
Који газе право наше,	*trampling on our rights,*
Гонићемо сви.	*Let's drive them out together.*

Those listed above who managed to seize power and pursue state policy in their own interests instead of the interests of the peasant majority dwelt in Belgrade and other cities. According to the memoirs of the radical mouthpiece *Samouprava* (1941), in the 1880s, the cities were "swept over by foreignism," which resulted in the "alienation of urban residents from the peasants, from the people."[98] Who expresses the people's will? The People's Party, of course. It appears as both an instrument of struggle for the "people's state" and its supporting pillar. At the same time, the PRP was viewed by its members as a "movement." As Miloš Trifunović, a member of the PRP's Central Committee wrote many years later, its essence "is not expressed in the party structure and charter because it [the movement – *A.S.*] lives in the soul of many people. It is more than just a party, more than a doctrine or an idea. The movement exists as a deep feeling which has acquired the power of a religion, a deep political faith."[99]

The radicals owed the acquisition of this faith to the same "prophets" as the Radić followers did twenty years later. As Pera Todorović recalled, "the living example of Russian nihilists has influenced us most of all. Faith is contagious, and when we saw how our Russian comrades unreservedly believe in socialism, we also believed in it."[100] Shemjakin continues:

> In their project of the 'people's state,' they did not go beyond the system of narodnik socialism. Among their main guidelines, which return to the ideological stock of this system, were the denial of capitalism and

98 Shemjakin, *Ideologija,* 38.

99 AJ. 80. Fasc. 31–151.

100 Shemjakin, *Ideologija,* 339–40.

> bourgeois civilization, the perception of the people as a single and integral organism, the construction of a cult around the properties of the communal (collectivist) mentality, the concept of a 'people's party', etc.[101]

The "faith" certainly had a universal character, which is why the radicals viewed their fight against Milan and the naprednjaki as a struggle to protect the entire Slavic tribe, "Slavic culture," and the coming "Slavic era" against the Western *Drang nach Osten*. The adepts were tied by bonds that were stronger than those of ordinary political associates. According to the memoirs of a younger contemporary of the PRP's founders, its structure "very much resembled the army and the church at the same time." Shemjakin agrees: "It is exactly so, in fact, the party was a symbiosis of this kind. Hierarchy and discipline lent it the features of a military unit; ideology and its exalted perception added the character of a religious order."[102] Naturally, Pašić was its *grand maître* and commander in chief. He had no less authority among party members and sympathizers than Radić did thirty years later. Shemjakin offers an example of reliable testimony given by a European observer: "Pašić created an aura of legend around himself, having become a personification of some terrible force among the people. If something is wrong, you can hear from everywhere, 'Ah! If only Pašić were here. When will he be here? Fortunately, Pašić remains!'"[103]

The PRP's interpretation of its own role as a sacred mission resulted in its claim for political hegemony, a claim and aspiration which it continued to cherish for decades. Its validity was confirmed by the fact that, for the radicals, the meaning of democracy was reduced to the right of the majority to monopolistic power. "Considering themselves the exclusive spokesmen for the interests of the whole people," they viewed parliamentarism not as a mechanism for alleviating social contradictions but as "the institutionalization of such a right." Accordingly, those who thought differently "were perceived not as political opponents but as irreconcilable adversaries and therefore enemies of the people."[104] As they were averse to pluralism, the radicals rejected "the very essence of the liberal ideology and hence the doctrine of parliamentarism that 'was growing' directly from it."[105]

101 Ibid., 36.
102 Shemjakin, *Ideologija,* 342.
103 Shemjakin, "Partija," 325.
104 Ibid., 331, 328.
105 Shemjakin, *Ideologija,* 329.

Indeed, not much in the appearance of the radicals corresponded to the "model of modern European parties." In what capacity did the PRP achieve total superiority over its opponents and mobilize the majority of Serbia's population? Popović-Obradović offers an answer to this question. According to her, "in parallel with the first steps towards modernization, a mass populist socialist party was founded in Serbia with the type of organization that would come into practice only with the emergence of totalitarian ideologies of the twentieth century."[106] Shemjakin gives more details concerning the type of organization that was meant: "Principles of organization, strict hierarchy, an outright cult of the leader, a political culture based on the rejection of political pluralism and on the principle 'whoever is not with us is against us!,' obvious messianism and one-dimensional thinking—all these 'generic' features make them related to 'the party of a new type'—the Russian Bolsheviks. And this similarity does not appear accidental at all if we bear in mind the common narodnik basis on which (obviously, at different times and under different conditions) both parties grew."[107]

Conclusion

Are the above findings of any importance for an assessment of the C(R)PP? Before we answer this question, it is worth reminding ourselves of the tasks this article tackles. The evident commitment of Serbian and Croatian historiographies to similar mythological constructions which reduce the course of interwar history to the struggle of "our" liberalism/progress against "their" tyranny/regression prompted us to compare and verify the authenticity of the politically colored historiographic images of two key Serbian and Croatian figures (and the parties they formed) and to establish the nature of their ideological similarity. We have shown that, despite the 23-year age difference, both parties shared common ideological roots, a common social base, similar organizational structures, similar self-perceptions among the leadership, common slogans, and other means of mass manipulation.

There is no reason to believe that Radić and his followers succeeded by imitating the radicals or deliberately copying their experience. Much as had happened in Serbia, which gained independence after two wars with the Turks

106 Popović-Obradović, *Kakva*, 331.

107 Shemjakin, "Partija," 332–33.

(1876, 1877–1878), small rural proprietors and producers constituted the lion's share of the electorate in Croatia in 1918–1920. As the members of the population who were least inclined to bear the burden of state building, they were prepared to accept populist recipes to get rid of it. In this situation, the PRP and the C(R)PP, armed with the arsenal of narodnik socialist propaganda, were "doomed" to succeed. Branko Bešlin, a historian from Novi Sad, describes the formula of this success as follows: "The illiterate and backward peasantry could only be led by a firmly organized party, whose members devoted themselves to political work entirely and were ready for any sacrifice."[108]

The PRP and the C(R)PP were arguably examples of the same socio-political phenomenon, separated by two and a half decades. The study of the former furthers an accurate, more subtle "diagnosis" of the latter. Even a cursory glance at Radić's activities reveals that he was not a forerunner of liberal democracy. However, it is easier to substantiate this by relying on the precedent that is already known to history. Thus, the overwhelming evidence of anti-liberalism and anti-Westernism among the radicals and their typological kinship with the Bolsheviks "works" in relation to the Radić-followers. And we have the right to address the contemporary apologists for the latter with a critical remark that Shemjakin made in his polemical exchange of ideas with the adherents of the "Pašić–Karadjordjević restoration": "The radicals' ideas of 'freedom,' 'democracy,' etc. could not be identical to the modern meaning of these concepts (in a liberal spirit), which is used by some Serbian historians writing about Pašić and the radicals. Thus, they [Pašić and the radicals] are far more 'Europeanized' than they deserve."[109]

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Milk and Laboratories in Urban-Rural and State-Society Relations: The Case of Hungary from the Beginning of Wartime Shortages until the Great Depression

Róbert Balogh
University of Public Service, Institute of Central European Studies
balogh.robert@uni-nke.hu

The paper analyses the roles of milk production and milk supply in the changes of the state-society relations and knowledge production in 20th early century Hungary. It places laboratories and the perception of milk as material in the centre of analysis prompting a narrative that takes account of the hybrid nature of milk. Building on arguments that Bruno Latour and Timothy Mitchell formulated, this study reveals key aspects of government, economy and modernity by using the notion that there are no clear boundaries between culture and nature. Hybridity also refers to the impossibility of controlling for all aspects of 'nature'. The first part of the paper takes laboratories as junctures of legislation and urban-rural relations. The second part highlights the urban conditions as well as the local political contexts of milk consumption and milk shortage in the World War I and post-World War I period. Overall, the paper is a case for why food history is one of the ways to take research beyond methodological nationalism without having to ignore the realm of politics.

Keywords: Food shortage, urban-rural relations, milk history, history of science, history of cooperatives, interwar Hungary

Introduction: The Political Implications of Milk as a Hybrid in Modernity

This paper is about the ways in which the social meanings of urban milk consumption and the testing of milk in laboratories influenced relations between urban and rural areas, and also between the central state and local society in Hungary during World War I and in the interwar period. Hungary in this period offers a particularly good case for linking political history to the developments of the milk economy, which was a global history.

Largely due to the fall in grain prices in the second half of the nineteenth century, when World War I broke out, the milk economy had already been expanding rapidly for more than half a century in Europe.[1] From being a niche

1 See Kaposi, "Nagybirtok és agrárszegénység"; Orland, "Turbo-Cows."

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market in the early nineteenth century, it grew into one of the major economic activities and markets. It is indicative of the timing of the surge in Hungary that, in 1905, the eminent educationalist László Mócsy (1871–1955) published an educational parable titled "The Good Cow," in which he offered farmers advice on how to select cows that would have plenty of milk.[2] Mócsy mentioned the presence of official advisors in rural areas the importance of knowledge about proper stable conditions, and he also noted that there was a state-run breeding campaign.

The history of milk brings together the history of science, agriculture, and agrarian policy. There would be no processed milk without human intervention, and there would be no milk to pasteurize, homogenize, and consume without the animals in the background. Research concerning animal nutrition, the genetic qualities of various breeds, and milk quality were all important aspects of this encounter among the sciences, livestock practices, and state policy over the course of the twentieth century.[3] Building on arguments put forward by Timothy Mitchell and Bruno Latour on the historical implications of such hybridity, I show how incessant efforts to draw boundaries between culture and nature and the repeated failures of these ultimately hopeless efforts shaped the perceptions of urban consumers, rural suppliers, the physical constellations of marketplaces, and state presence in the marketplace between the second half of World War I and the onset of the Great Depression ten years later. Summarizing the historical research in biotechnologies, Helen Curry posits that the backbone of experimental biology was the belief in technological control throughout the twentieth century.[4] Mitchell points out that the idea that control was possible was a grave error. He offers the following somewhat cautionary remark:

> *Instead of invoking the force and logic of reason, self-interest, science, or capital and attributing what happens in the world to the working of these enchanted powers and processes, we can open up the question […] of what kinds of hybrid agencies, connections, interactions, and forms of violence are able to portray their actions as history, as human expertise overcoming nature, as the progress of reason and modernity, or as the expansion and development of capitalism.*[5]

Focusing on Louis Pasteur's experiments and discoveries, Latour came to a similar conclusion, and he demonstrated that the encounter of germs, scientific

2 Mócsy, *A jó tehén*.

3 Orland, "Turbo-Cows."

4 Curry, *Evolution Made to Order*, 6.

5 Mitchell, *Rule of Experts,* 53.

experiments and demonstrations, scientists' ambitions, specific agricultural practices, and the culture of public spaces ended up changing many aspects of rural and urban life in France and, then, worldwide.[6] In the period discussed here, milk traveled through society impacting and triggering responses in many different milieus and power relations. Monographic studies by Peter Atkins and Deborah Valenze on the economy, politics, and knowledge production behind the rise of milk economy and its globalization in the late nineteenth century show that the history of the interaction between the human on the one hand and the material on the other is one of the ways to take research beyond methodological nationalism without having to ignore the realm of politics in a specific state.[7] As Atkins puts it,

> *As a commodity, [milk] became a site of politics as different groups vied to have their interests protected or their solutions implemented […] Milk was never the same materially, socially, culturally, economically, or politically after its entry into the networks that provisioned cities. These were not just systems of delivery but vast engines of transformation. They nourished bodies; they spread disease; they encouraged the make-over of agro-ecosystems and landscapes in the distant countryside; they enabled a re-imagining of cities as spaces without farming; they transformed food economies; and they encouraged a new form of food politics.*[8]

Indeed, there are at least four specific contexts in which the realm of high politics and milk met in the period under study. First, there is the impact of wartime food shortages and rationing imposed by the state on citizens, which often pitted urban and rural communities against each other.[9] Second, the sate attempted to bring milk cooperatives within the supply chain that was under its control. Third, one has to consider the regional specificities of the place of milk-cooperatives outside the most developed core of Europe. Fourth, one also needs to take into account the municipal level of politics.

Regarding the first two points, Tiago Saraiva's work on the importance of agriculture in establishing interwar regimes in Europe is immediately relevant theses.[10] Saraiva shows that there was a close relationship between authoritarian control and agriculture. In Hungary, the central state was not able to alter the shortage economy in the immediate post-World War I period, but by the mid-

6 Latour, *The Pasteurization of France*, 140–45.

7 Atkins, *Liquid Materialities*; Valenze, *Milk*.

8 Atkins, *Liquid Materialities*, XIX and XX.

9 Richardson, *The Hunger War*; Bódy, "A World Lifted off Its Hinges."

10 Saraiva, *Fascist Pigs*.

1930s, it gradually overtook and established control over the network of milk cooperatives.

While there is a rich secondary literature on milk cooperatives in Europe, there is hardly any work discussing Central Europe. Most of the existing studies foreground the political aspects of the realm of cooperatives in general and of milk-cooperatives in particular. Csekő Ernő offers a skeptical view and casts doubt on the notion that the milk market was beneficial for inhabitants of rural communities.[11] With regards to Estonia and Greece, which, like Hungary, were also semi-peripheral countries, Johan Eellend, Dimitris Angelis-Dimakis, and Catherine Bregianni emphasize that access to credit was the main factor when it came to the potential success of the milk cooperative movements, and that comparatively easy access to capital gave leverage to states and prevented an autonomous cooperative realm from emerging. Eellend suggests that this influence of states was in tension with another defining feature of cooperatives. As he observes,

> *By demanding participation and responsibility from the members and demanding that the farmers put a great portion of their production in the hands of the cooperatives, the cooperatives had a comprehensive impact on the farmer's life and the local community. This created an alternative rural public, which ideals were based in economic efficiency and cooperation within the community.*[12]

In his discussion of various cooperative networks in Hungary, Attila Hunyadi places the cooperative movements of the late nineteenth century in the context of nationalism, and he characterizes them as venues for learning and developing political culture in terms of attitudes towards the state and the act of voting. Attila Vári frames the cooperative movement in Hungary quite differently, situating it within Agrarian politics and the struggle for primacy within or control over the National Hungarian Economic Association (Országos Magyar Gazdasági Egyesület, OMGE) and influence over its membership. Agrarians in Hungary promoted the modernization of machinery and tools as well as the cooperative movement. At the same time, they were hostile to trade unions and other nations in the region. Many Agrarians held various anti-Semitic views, seeing land-owning Jews and the alleged mass immigration of Jews as one of the elements that went against the formation of a wealthy Hungarian class of

11 Csekő, "A tejszövetkezetek kedvezőtlen hatása."

12 Eellend, "Community Resting on Butter," 85.

landowners. OMGE and the Alliance of Farmers formed within it in 1896 were the major force behind the cooperative movement in Hungary.

At least one contemporary popular didactic short story made it clear that the relationship between anti-Semitism and OMGE's support for the spread of cooperatives was strong at the local level already in the early 1900s. László Salgó told a fable about how activists from Budapest used the influence of the local Church personnel to trick local wealthy farmers into forming a cooperative shop in order to get rid of the local grocery shop, which was fun by a Jewish couple.[13] Salgó's story ended with a scene of farmers going bankrupt due the cooperative's irresponsible business practices. The ending even suggested that the activists from Budapest and big time Jewish traders eventually benefited and perhaps even planned the whole trap together. This association between cooperatives and anti-Semitic thought is potentially relevant to the milk economy. For example, based on contemporary municipal business directories of Debrecen published in the interwar period, most milk sellers in the city were likely to be persons who had Jewish backgrounds (Sándor Lefkovics, Klára Schenk, Manó Gottlieb, Mózes Steinmetz, József Glück, Mrs. József Popper, and Erzsébet Werner).[14] Krisztián Ungváry suggests that anti-Semitism is a key to any nuanced understanding of economic policy in interwar Hungary, while other overviews of the period see the character of these policies differently.[15] No one has yet offered substantial support for the hypothesis according to which there were anti-Semitic motives behind the formation of milk cooperatives or behind state intervention in this area. An analysis of the withdrawal of permits for milk trade in 1938 and thereafter would likely indicate political motives behind this form of state intervention in the field in the post-Depression period. The data about the issuance and withdrawal of permits to sell milk would also tell a great deal about the roles of women in the milk economy.

In any discussion of the milk economy, one needs to include the municipal level, too. Laura Umbrai's research on the milk market of Budapest shows the importance of municipal institutions and decisions in establishing a balance

13 Salgó, *Egy fogyasztási szövetkezet története*. Interestingly, statistics published about the social composition of officials in Hangya consumer cooperatives in 1920 and 1921 confirm that Church representatives played a key role. See *A "Hangya" Termelő-, Értékesítő- és Fogyasztási Szövetkezet*.

14 See Diczig, *Debrecen címtára*, 289 and 441.

15 Ungváry, *A Horthy-rendszer mérlege*. See different views emphasizing aspects of modernization in Zsombor Bódy, "Társadalomtörténeti észrevételek" and Béla Tomka, "A Horthy-korszak társadalom- és gazdaságtörténetének kutatása." See also Szuhay, *Az állami beavatkozás és a magyar mezőgazdaság az 1930-as években*, 262–65.

between the demand for milk on the one hand and the public health risks of permitting milk to be sold on the market on the other.[16] This will come up in more detail in a later section of this paper. Miklós Szuhay was the first agrarian historian to explore the background to the attempt of the central government to reorganize the supply chain of milk in the Budapest market in the early 1930s. Since the goal of governmental decrees was to eliminate small producers and make price depend on agreement reached between large stakeholders who would negotiate within a board chaired by the Ministry of Agriculture, the episode points out the growing ambition for direct state control over the economy as well towards corporatism.[17]

In order to address the implications of the various contemporary understandings of the milk trade for urban-rural and state-society relations, I have broken up my discussion into four section. The first section introduces state authorized quality testing of milk in laboratories in Hungary. It outlines how the laboratory environments interacted with various practices of rural and urban communities. It shows how, furthermore, as a result of these intersections, laboratory testing was the meeting point of top-down and bottom-up understandings of a modern economy. The second and third sections turn to a selected region in western Hungary. By focusing on tensions and discourses caused by the shortage of milk in an urban context (that of the city of Szombathely) and on the history of the milk cooperatives that were to supply this city, I show how the shift from low to high food prices and the history of food control are essential factors if one wishes to arrive at an adequately nuanced understanding of the relationship between rural and urban areas as well as between state and society. The choice of a border area as a case study (specifically, Vas County in western Hungary) means putting some emphasis on the role of smuggling in the post-World War I economy. This does not mean, however, that this case is so particular that it is not relevant to the broader discussion. Rather, this case shows that the presence of a regulatory state should not be taken for granted, and it also integrates geographical concerns into the picture. Milk cooperatives in the region enter the framework as scapegoats for shortages, but their story is also about the emerging agenda of the expanding state in the interwar period in Hungary.

16 Umbrai," A fővárosi tejmizéria."

17 Szuhay, *Az állami beavatkozás és a magyar mezőgazdaság az 1930-as években,* 129–36. For the political importance of municipal food policy, see also Tarnai, "'Lesz mivel berántani a levest, egy kis tésztát is ehetnek már.'"

Milk Testing in Laboratories as the Meeting Point of Top-down and Bottom-up Understandings of Modernity

As the secondary literature has shown, milk was a prime target of control and was something beyond control at the same time. Contemporaries attempted to commodify a hybrid: milk was a natural-cultural phenomena with which both people with medical and engineering expertise and administrative bodies struggled. This section examines the ways in which laboratories can be seen as sites which yield insights into the ways in which local rural society responded to the rise of milk consumption and new institutions it brought with it.

Research on the history of the emergence of scientific institutions in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Hungary makes it clear that the idea that the state needed to control food quality and develop food items for the international market was a large part of the motivation for the establishment of laboratories and the justification for providing them with funding.[18] However, laboratories are not neutral sites of scientific inquiry and experiment: they transform the materials with which they work and, in turn, influence the outer world. Milk products had several social meanings, each of which was influenced by the state, scientists, and local communities. First, as urban poverty and the vision of a demographic crisis arising from the (alleged) waning capacity of women to be good mothers caused moral panic, milk became a key commodity of urban economy and urban governance.[19] In an article published in *Orvosi Hetilap* (Medical Weekly) in 1890, Ede Egán, the inspector general of the milk industry, who had British origins and a well-functioning estate in Vas County, emphasized the importance of milk as a commodity in increasing demand.[20] He claimed that ensuring safe milk at affordable prices had motivated him to set up a milk cooperative structure (Budapesti Központi Tejcsarnok Szövetkezet or Budapest Central Dairy Cooperative) in Budapest.[21] Outstanding contemporary researchers, such as Ernő Deutsch (1875–1944) and Salamon Székely (1860–1936), focused their efforts on making cow milk safe for consumption by newborns.[22] According to Székely, the main challenge was to reduce the

18 Fehér, *A mezőgazdasági kísérletügyi állomások,* 28-40, and 90–95.

19 On moral panic over urban conditions, see Bender, *American Abyss*. On the issue of breastfeeding around the turn of the century, see Smith-Howard, *Pure and modern milk*, 12–35.

20 Egán, *A tej a fővárosban*. For Ede Egán's views, see also, Vörös, "A tejgazdaságok kialakulása a Dunántúlon 1880–1895."

21 Egán, *A tejgazdaság terén,* 1887.

22 Székely, *A gyermektej*, 1903.

proportion of casein, and he believed that carbonic acid was the key to this. Infant mortality due to the inability of young babies to digest milk substitutes indicated that cow milk could save or kill children. In the interwar period, as eugenics continued to gain sway among some circles of scientists and in the public mind, the political meaning of children gained a new significance: national revival. Accordingly, several national-level organizations (such as Magyar Asszonyok és Nők Nemzeti Szövetsége, or the National League of Hungarian Wives and Women, Országos Stefánia Szövetség, or Stefánia League, which was named after Rudolf Habsburg's widow, and the Zöldkereszt Mozgalom, or Green Cross Movement) disseminated knowledge about the importance of breastfeeding and the feeding of small children.[23]

As historian Peter Atkins and veterinarian Ottó Fettick (1875–1954) amply demonstrated, milk was both a potential carrier of deadly diseases and a key to feeding urban populations. In 1931, Fettick and another leading researcher, Lajos Szélyes (1885–1963), wrote a paper about the possible causal relations between anthrax in cattle and human illness. Referring to a case from 1928, the paper contained a passage about the potential economic impact of the decisions of scientists concerning the existence of links between disease in humans and milk produced by sick cows*:* "This question was not fully clarified, thus, the expert is puzzled when having to give an opinion as to whether milk produced during an anthrax infestation in stables should be offered to the public. With regards to such questions, interests of public health confront economic interests."[24]

The social implications of the quality of milk also shifted in part because, by the 1910s, scientists had rediscovered cow milk as a nearly perfect food that contained enough calories and minerals to sustain a human being even if nothing else were available. It seemed especially advisable for children and sick adults to consume milk. As medical researchers and chiefly American biochemist Elmer V. McCollum began to discover the role of vitamins as an important part of a healthy diet, cow milk looked even more essential.[25] This knowledge became common in the Western World and began to spread to areas known as colonies. In Hungary, the most spectacular example of the campaign to spread this new understanding of milk as an essential part of a nutritious diet was the poster emblazoned with the words "Milk is Life, Power, and Health" (A tej élet, erő, egészség), which was designed by Greek-born Hungarian athlete

23 Kelbert, "Társadalmi anyaság."

24 Fettick-Szélyes, "Anthrax epidemics."

25 Valenze, *Milk*, 235–50.

and artist Miltiades Manno in 1927.[26] The poster was part of the efforts of the government to increase demand for milk, which was such an important policy objective that a specialized committee, the Milk Propaganda Committee (Tejpropaganda Bizottság), was set up in 1927 to achieve it. [27]

Finally, dairy products, especially butter, emerged as an important item of international trade. The international congresses of various experts taking part in the milk economy were important sites of standardization of procedures, quality, and required stable conditions. These meetings had been taking place since 1903 under the umbrella of the International Dairy Federation. The aforementioned Fettick published a detailed report about one such congress in 1907.[28] The key point in this transnational commodification of milk and dairy products came in 1925, when the standards for butter were accepted and *márkázott vaj* (branded butter) appeared in Hungary. Indeed, as Fettick's report demonstrates, scientific research on the health effects of permissible and non-permissible technologies of milk processing fed into the ongoing process of international standardization. Prospectively, becoming part of the international supply chain of butter was one of the ways to achieve prosperity in rural settings. Archival sources indicate the importance of the British market for Hungary in the post-Depression period.[29] How such prospective markets influenced rural milk producers in the 1920s or in the prewar period remains to be answered.

Laboratories and stable inspections were junctures for revealing and altering the social meanings of milk, and they also provided insights into the daily workings of the milk economy in rural and urban contexts. The Permanent Supervisory Council (Állandó Felülbíráló Tanács), which was one of the key institutional bodies of the milk economy of the first half of the twentieth century, relied on the results provided by local laboratories. The council was one of the agents of continuity between the interwar and postwar periods. This committee had the right to overrule decisions of first-level authorities about the quality of food items and refer decisions to the minister of agriculture. The surviving resolutions of the committee are held at the archives of the University of Veterinary Medicine, Budapest.[30] The documents show the criteria used, the testing procedures, and the uncertainties surrounding these procedures, and they contain some indications

26 See the poster "Élet, erő, egészség," National Széchényi Library: PKG.1927/123.

27 Papers of the Milk Propaganda Committee (Tejpropaganda Bizottság), MNL OL K 208.

28 Fettick, "A III. Nemzetközi Tejgazdasági Kongresszus."

29 MNL OL Z 41.10730

30 HU-ÁOTKLM III.075.a box no. 2.

about the provenance of samples, despite general anonymity. Most reports date from the years between 1911 and 1914, thus they took the 1896 regulatory provisions as their basis. The cases that came to the attention of the council due to appeals mainly concerned small-scale sellers who brought the milk from a single cow to the market and other retailers who sold the milk from three or four cows. In each cases, the suspicion was that the milk which had been brought to the market by these vendors was mixed with water and/or at least partially skimmed. The appeals show that the local authorities who did the testing often claimed to have found proof that these suspicions were founded even when several uncertainties remained unresolved. The most common problem with their testing method was that they did not control the stables or did not test milk milked in the morning and milked in the evening separately for fat content. In one of its decisions, the council also remarked that there was no single decree regulating the method to be used during stable inspections, though there were in fact several circulars regarding the issue. Moreover, the variance of chemical qualities of the samples that were compared to standards was sometimes so small that it might have been due to local specificities and not any process of dilution, as the first level authorities assumed. Overall, the number of cases in which the council felt it was not possible to make a statement about whether the milk had been diluted is remarkable and shows that the precise definition of milk as material and hybrid often defied scientific expertise. Unfortunately, only three milk related appeals are documented for the period after 1920. The first of these appeals was lodged in 1921. This appeal may offer a good introduction, for us, to a typical profession related to the production and sale of milk in the early twentieth century. It concerned a young woman bringing a family milk that had been diluted with water. The young woman who brought the milk and her mother had only one cow. The council ruled that the decision concerning the milk, according to which it had indeed been diluted with water, was not valid, since the cow's milk had not been tested on two separate occasions that day and the environment in which it had been produced had not been inspected. The description in the appeal of the circumstances make it clear that the women were so-called "milimári." This word is no longer in everyday use in Hungarian. In the first half of the twentieth century, it referred to milkmaids who brought milk to Budapest in small quantities, often directly supplying certain families or selling milk on Budapest markets.[31]

31 Bednárik, "A budakeszi milimárik."

The University of Veterinary Medicine in Budapest was home to the Milk Hygiene Laboratory, which was one of the major laboratories for milk testing in the early twentieth century. The registry of the laboratory shows that the institution was a center from which knowledge and technologies were disseminated across the country.[32] Despite the diversity of themes on which the various surviving documents touch, the bulk of entries in the registry of the laboratory concerning testing milk produced in or transported to Budapest. According to the registry, most of the samples came from a very limited number of places. The private company called Central Milk Market-Hall Co. (Központi Tejcsarnok Rt., hereafter KT) frequently asked the lab to test whether its products were sterile. The results show that the company often experienced quality issues during milk processing in the years from which records related to the interwar period survived, that is, 1921–1929 and 1935–1937. Another milk-processing firm that often turned to the laboratory was Count Imre Károlyi's private company, which was located in the northeastern fringes of the city. In addition to these companies, the National Child Shelter was the most frequent client. In their case, there were hardly any occasions when the milk that was tested proved problematic. These records suggest that most milk processing enterprises outside the capital were not interested in having the quality of their milk monitored by the laboratory at the university. The firms that sprung up during the 1920s, such as the ones in the towns of Eger and Nyíregyháza, were monitored by another institution, the Royal Milk Product Testing Station, which was set up in 1928.[33] This institution was the only one authorized to allow firms to use state authorized stamps on their products. Due to the international standardization of butter in the mid-1920s, without such certification, export was no longer possible.[34]

The Milk Hygiene Laboratory frequently provided advice on issues concerning the handling of milk, suggested reasons why milk went bad, and offered guidance concerning how to stop contagious disease in stables. In doing so, it came into contact with local veterinary doctors and inspectors of agricultural establishments and also with managers. Thus, the laboratory was a key agent in identifying sites infected with forms of animal tuberculosis. Moreover, through

32 HU HU-ÁOTKLM III.075a. vol. no.1.

33 See Balatoni, *A magyar élelemiszeripar története.*

34 See Löcherer, "A tejtermékek m. kir Ellenőrző Állomása létesítése és működési jelentése 1929–1930," and Géza Pazár's summary of the International Milk Congress in Rome, Italy, 1934. MNL OL K 184-16-15050.

quality testing, it indirectly defined who had done their job well locally. In fact, at times, science became a direct part of labor relations. When the management of one estate suspected that one of the maids had been pouring water into the milk on a regular basis, for example, it asked the laboratory to test a sample. The result of the test, however, was negative,[35] the maid presumably kept her job. The documents offer no further details, but it was presumably the maid who asked for the test to be carried out. It is remarkable that the manager of the estate did not make a decision without certification from the laboratory at a time when labor was no longer a scarcity.

Indeed, the milk industry was a field in which women could have careers. The career of Lídia Nagy is a case in point. She managed one of the small Transdanubian centers of Count Pál Eszterházy's Milk Firm.[36] When she was about to be promoted, she recommended, as a potential replacement, another woman who had completed the same specialized school as she had, probably the one in Sárvár (a town in Vas County). Besides keeping track of the amount and provenance of milk that reached the skimming station in Középbogárd (a village in Fejér County), Nagy was in charge of taking measurements with thermometers and butyroemeters, and she also monitored and adjusted butter production to meet demand and to address complaints about quality. She submitted reports in writing on a weekly basis and sometimes more frequently. Although her manager scolded her at times for not keeping proper count of the milk cans used for transportation, she had considerable responsibilities. The manager entrusted her with assessing possibilities for the expansion of the range of the station and attracting vendors from the nearby milk cooperative.

The laboratory was an agent of changing tastes. In 1932, at one of the meetings of the National Milk Economy Committee, Lajos Gerlei, general manager of the Budapest General Central Dairy Hall (Budapesti Általános Központi Tejcsarnok Rt.), which at the time was the major producer of milk products alongside the large state-run network known as the National Hungarian Center of Milk Cooperatives (Országos Magyar Tejszövetkezeti Központ, OMTK), remarked that Hungarians were not willing to eat real yoghurt because they could not digest it.[37] Letters exchanged between the laboratory and other institutions disprove this point. The Milk Hygiene Laboratory provided cultures necessary for yoghurt production to various parts of the country and even

35 HU-ÁOTKLM III.075a box 1, 1929.

36 MNL OL Z 1307. item no. 6. vol. no. 2.

37 MNL OL K 551 vol. 2. 30 May 1930.

beyond the borders. This was the case, for instance, with the so-called milk bar at the Central Hotel in Kolozsvár (today Cluj, Romania. Before 1919 it was located within Hungary. In the later 1920s, it still had a significant Hungarian population), which was run by nuns.[38] The milk hygiene laboratory played a role in influencing customs among the Jewish community of Szerencs, a town in northeastern Hungary. In February 1934, the local milk producer was eager to convince the Orthodox rabbi about the compatibility of the organic culture required for producing Kosher butter. In his reply, the head of the laboratory indicated that the Orthodox rabbi of Budapest had already accepted the recipe.[39]

Milk testing laboratories were not simply state agents entrusted with the task of ferreting out illicit economic activities or pointing out failures and impurities. Rather, the daily activities of laboratories were interwoven with the ways in which the different types of milk producers responded to the emerging milk market, including work relations, new ventures, social care, and tastes.

Milk Shortages and the Dysfunctions of Modern Institutions: Szombathely in Vas County

The milk shortages in post-World War I Szombathely, the seat of Vas County in western Hungary (close to the interwar border with Austria), offer a telling case of how urban-rural exchanges intertwined with state-society relations and the role that laboratories played in these relations. The case also offers insights into local, urban perceptions of the essence of a modern economy and a modern state.

Just before World War I, Vas County and its seat were in a state of transition. The northern areas of the county were among the developed regions of Hungary, so much so that Szombathely was seen as the model of the emerging modern city. At the same time, the southern areas were closer to neighboring Zala County in their outlook, and they were among the markedly underdeveloped zones of the country. The developed parts of Vas County along with the areas neighboring it to the north were the first centers of the milk economy in Hungary. This had to do with the closeness of Vienna as a large market, but this factor would not have been sufficient for the first milk cooperatives to emerge. As agrarian historian Antal Vörös has pointed out, Vas County was among the first areas

38 HU-ÁOTKLM III.075a box 1, 1929.

39 HU-ÁOTKLM III.075a box 1, 1934.

where a rural economy based on the practice of keeping livestock in stables and fodder production replaced the previous system of three-year agriculture. One of the main conditions of this shift was an adequate output of cereals so that there would be land available for fodder to grow. In this regard, it is important that in Vas County fertilizers came into the picture as early as the 1880s.[40] While before the 1920s the impact of fertilizers in Hungary was overall not comparable to what was seen, for instance, in the Alps, in this particular region, manuring coupled with fertilizers brought about significant changes.[41]

After World War I, western Hungary and Vas County within it remained an area with distinct characteristics in terms of its economy. Smuggling became one of the key activities at a time when food shortage was a major political factor. The geographical proximity of Vienna was yet again a decisive factor. Several recent studies have pointed to the importance of food in interwar international politics between Austria and Hungary as well as between Austria and the Western Powers.[42] Having studied nearly a thousand cases of smuggling, Adrienn Nagy concluded that, in a few years, smuggling became a part of everyday livelihood locally and regionally. Moreover, these kinds of activities were not stigmatized by local communities and at times received forms of support from the authorities, including the police.[43] Nagy did not mention dairy products among the prevalent items in terms of volume, but in times of shortages, even small amounts of butter were of high value.

To assess the position of Szombathely and its inhabitants within the context described above I relied on news reports in dailies. This type of source is biased in terms of the voice to which it gives space. It reflects the point of view of mainstream urban society and of the authorities. News reports dwelt on vendors in the market and milk producers, but they did not report the points of view of these actors in a direct form, if at all. Documents about actual cases of alleged infringements might counterbalance this bias, but I have not yet managed to locate the reports on infringements in any of the archives I have consulted.

As the fluctuations in the numbers of news reports published in any given year indicate, the social and political importance of milk was at its height during moments of shortage. In 1916, dailies operating in Szombathely published 19

40 Vörös, "A tejgazdaságok kialakulása."

41 See Gingrich, S. et al, "Changes in Energy and Livestock Systems Largely Explain the Forest Transition in Austria (1830–1910)."

42 Murber, "Az osztrák–magyar határvita gazdasági aspektusai az első világháború után."

43 Nagy, "A feketézés évtizede (1916–1926)."

news items related to milk, compared to 28 in 1917, 13 in 1918, 18 in 1921, 37 in 1922, and 31 in 1923. These figures then dropped drastically. Between 1916 and 1924, most of the news reports concerning milk focused on the question of dilution, processes used to monitor the quality of milk, the punishments meted out for infringements. They also touched on instabilities in the supply chain of milk and dairy products.

In Szombathely, milk shortages reached a critical level almost three years into the war, in April 1917. From that date, it was prohibited to serve milk in the restaurants and cafes that were still open. A few days before the ban, the deputy head of the county administration *(alispán)* made an exception for businesses serving coffee, which were able to offer 100 liters of milk for public consumption daily, but even these enterprises failed to manage to set aside this relatively meager quantity, and this clearly reflected the extent of the shortage. Rationing of milk at the municipal level only began in early 1918 and lasted until September 1919. By the spring of 1920, news reports concerning milk lamented the outflow of dairy products to Vienna and Budapest, where significantly higher prices were offered. It was at this time that the state secretary for public supply, Rezső József Temple, toured the region. The accompanying public events reflected the gravity of the situation. Temple announced a large-scale plan to resolve the milk question, but the situation became even worse in the winter. In January 1921, *Vasvármegye* (Vas County), the leading daily, published a lengthy report on how butter was allegedly being smuggled across the Austrian border, which according to the article was the main cause of milk shortage. The proposals that appeared in the news centered around regulating the price and establishing a well-controlled milk market hall under municipal supervision. Indeed, the idea of such a market hall was first raised in the summer of 1916, but in May 1920, it began to reappear more and more frequently in the news. Yet, in July 1922 it suddenly seemed as of the plan, which had almost been accomplished, was going to fall apart. The article published in *Vasvármegye* on July 13, 1922 offers insights into perceptions of the working of the economy:

> The value of the *korona* [the legal currency in Hungary until 1926] is falling, and prices are rising. Let's just take one item from the horrible complex: milk. It is the food of the sick and children. It is indispensable. Today, it costs twenty to twenty-two *korona*s per liter. Some months ago, when the price of milk was just half what it is today, we were shocked, and we hoped that eventually they would create the municipal milk market hall that has been on the table for so long… [but] given the

> current monetary situation, all hopes are in vain… It is so difficult to buy milk, we actually need to know someone who has some influence to get some… If authorities began controlling the market today, even the most reliable milk traders would leave Szombathely for good.

Contemporaries believed that, in addition to the depreciation of the *korona*, the cause of the milk shortage was that milk suppliers would not be willing to submit themselves to quality control. Let us look at the latter part of the equation and focus on the reasons for the behavior of suppliers and the processes used to try to control the market.

According to news published in the dailies, the main actors on the milk market in Vas County were the Milk Cooperative of Sopron (Soproni Tejszövetkezet) and the Milk Business Co. of Sopron County (Sopronmegyei Tejgazdasági Rt.). Since the demand for dairy products in Vienna was virtually unlimited given the production capacity of western Hungary, these entities were primarily interested in exporting dairy products to Austria. Thus, they offered a higher price to cattle owners in villages of Vas County than the price cap used on the markets in Hungary. In the spring of 1923, one of the actual responses of the farmers of Vas County was to form their own county-level cooperative business, and they allowed the cooperative in Sopron County to buy a large share. However, this did not alter the export-oriented strategy of the existing companies, and prices soon began to rise. Eventually, a solution was reached thanks to a merger of a milk processing firm with a large enough consumer base (that of the public servants) and another local milk processing business in Szombathely, so-called Dömötör's. As a result, milk became accessible at four different market points of the city, and by 1924, the issue of milk shortages had disappeared from the news.

As Laura Umbrai has demonstrated in her discussion of the milk market in prewar Budapest, quality control and testing were essential and decisive preconditions for the creation of a viable milk market hall. Umbrai added, however, that testing mostly did not go beyond finding out how much water had been added to the milk.[44] This was also true of wartime and interwar Szombathely. Despite the legal channels that the Law on Food Adulteration created in 1895 and concerns about communicable diseases that can spread via milk and the diversity of chemicals that milk suppliers sometimes added to dairy products to make them look fresh, the testing determined only whether milk

44 Umbrai, "A fővárosi tejmizéria."

had been diluted with water. This is clear from the reports that were published in dailies following so-called milk raids. Milk that was regarded as suspicious had to be transported to the testing station in Mosonmagyaróvár (more than 100 kilometers to the north), as Szombathely did not have its own laboratory until 1930. Testing itself was carried out by a chemist from the laboratory station in Mosonmagyaróvár, which had gradually reached independence from the prestigious Academy of Agriculture operating in the same town. Based on the reports published in the dailies, there were at least 14 such raids in Szombathely between early 1916 and the end of 1923. The raids did not take place at equal intervals. Seven were held in the first year, between January 1916 and March 1917, but we know of only one more that was definitely held before the end of the war. There were four testing operations between April 1921 and October 1922 and two more in 1923. Generally, the reports noted that some 4,000 to 5,000 liters of milk were tested, which must have meant hundreds of barrels. In comparison, very little milk was found to have been diluted: between three and 15 barrels. This is surprising in light of newspaper accounts, according to which virtually all the milk on the market contained added water, sometimes (allegedly) as much as 50 percent.[45] The punishment for dilution was usually a fine, though it was legally possible to send perpetrators to prison for half a year. Thus, we can conclude that there was a large variation of milk quality on the market over time, and shortages were continuous for at least seven years. During this period, the business behavior of milk cooperatives remained in the spotlight.[46]

Milk-cooperatives between Autonomy and Centralization

Despite the fact that milk cooperatives had something of a dubious reputation in interwar Szombathely, around the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth century, many economic thinkers believed that these cooperatives could serve as adequate vehicles for improving welfare in rural areas in Europe and, more narrowly, Hungary.[47] Moreover, processes of testing, certification, and centralization of

45 *Vasvármegye*, April 28, 1923.

46 In terms of supply, there were relatively few independent retailers involved in the milk economy in the 1930s. Szombathely's directory published in 1937 lists nine of them, although the questionnaire mentioned above noted 16 license holders. Apart from retailers, István Csere had a small milk processing factory handling 200 liters per day, and OMTK had a major firm in Szombathely which processed about 14,000 liters of milk, most of it in the form of cream, daily. The report listed the estates that sent milk to Szombathely but did not list the cooperatives that supplied the city with milk.

47 See for example "A tejszövetkezetek 1900-ban," *Köztelek*, March 9, 1901.

the milk economy brought distant rural localities into the national economy. In Hungary, yet another factor should be added: the expansion of the role of state in the supply chain of milk.

Vas County was one of the first centers of the milk cooperative movement in Hungary. Szombathely (as noted above, the seat of the county) was the site of the very first milk cooperative in 1881. Two decades later, the county bore witness to a second wave of establishing cooperatives. According to the registry of businesses in the county, there were at least 80 cooperatives registered that operated for various lengths of time.[48] Reports in the local dailies also indicate that the number of cooperatives underwent a boom in the first years of the twentieth century, although the numbers reported differ from the registry.[49] After World War I, the Kingdom of Hungary had to cede more than 70 percent of its prewar territory to the newly established or considerably enlarged neighboring countries, including ten of its biggest cities and millions of inhabitants, not to mention human and natural resources. Due to the accompanying economic crisis, many of the milk cooperatives ceased to operate. There was a new wave of establishing such entities in the early 1930s.

According to an economic historian, in Hungary, in 1935, there were 429 cooperatives operating as members of the aforementioned OMTK, which had been established in 1922. In addition to the cooperatives in the OMTK network, there were around 100 independent ones in Hungary.[50] In the state-centered structure that emerged in the early 1930s, it seemed necessary to bring every local cooperative into a state-controlled network to ensure a well-functioning milk economy.[51] The idea of cooperatives gained a new meaning and new prominence. 1934 was something of a turning point in the history of milk cooperatives. In that year, OMTK provided a template for the rules and procedures for cooperatives that were to become members of the network. Many cooperatives reestablished or refashioned themselves accordingly. In 1935, Miksa Düsing, the director of OMTK, boasted about the rate at which the network of cooperatives was growing.[52] In 1934, the network produced and handled 82 million liters of milk, which constituted 20 percent of the national

48 MNL VaML VII-1/h.

49 See related articles in the dailies: *Vasvármegye*, June 21, 1900; *Vasvármegye*, July 5, 1900; *Va*s, April 7, 1901; *Szombathelyi Ujság*, February 9, 1902.

50 Hunyadi, "Az agrártermelés értékesítési láncai Magyarországon és Erdélyben 1945 előtt."

51 Balatoni and Szakály, "Tejipar," 304–5; Surányi, "A hazai korszerű tejgazdaság kialakulása," 36.

52 Düsing, *A tejszövetkezetek jelentősége és jövője*.

total. Moreover, by this time OMTK had become part of the administration of the milk market as one of the authorities responsible for issuing new licenses.[53] In his talk, Düsing spoke of the need for a comprehensive law on cooperation and specific regulations for the relationship between the center and members of the network of milk cooperatives. Although such a law was not passed until the end of World War II, the ministerial decree 131.380/1937 FM. about regulating voting rights in OMTK cooperatives issued in December 1937 made it clear that the course of policy was centralization and expansion. According to standardized statutes, as of 1934, OMTK had the right to preview and modify the decisions proposed by the management of local cooperatives to the general assembly. The trajectories of the development of milk cooperatives converged towards a uniform structure between 1934 and 1947 and especially after 1942.

Due to the number of entities, Vas County offers a revealing case study on how milk cooperatives figured in the autonomous economic life of rural communities and how these cooperatives impacted the relationships between the state, society, and the economy in the interwar period. I will focus on the cooperative in Acsád because it formed comparatively early, was reestablished in the early 1930s, and has left enough traces in the archival documents to allow for calculations related to its business ventures. However, before turning to the specific cases, I must offer a few notes concerning the nature and content of the available sources.

Despite the comparatively large number of available sources concerning milk cooperatives in Vas County, it is not easy to interrogate these archival traces. Without analysis of intra- and extra community networks and the statuses of the founding members of cooperatives, there is little to say about the social capital behind them.[54] The statutes that applied to the milk cooperatives simply stated that members came together to form a cooperative to collect and collectively sell milk produced in individual households. The most important condition was that a member could not sell milk to anyone privately, only to the cooperative. The doors for membership were open both to women and to men. The statutes required respectability and trustworthiness as conditions to join. A board was responsible for taking care of the capital of the cooperative and for negotiating contracts for the sale of milk at reasonable prices. The size of the board varied between three and six people. There were no specific laws regulating the business

53 See Decrees no. 6860/1935 M.E and no. 8200/1935 F.M.

54 Garrido, "Plenty of trust, not much cooperation"; Beltran-Tapia, "Commons, Social Capital and the Emergence of Agricultural Cooperatives in Early Twentieth Century Spain."

undertakings of the cooperatives, so the same economic regulations applied to them as to companies. Before standardized OMTK statutes became the order of the day in the 1930s, the scope of milk cooperatives varied significantly. Sometimes clauses about the cooperatives' rights to regulate the composition of fodder or stable conditions appeared in the draft statutes but were removed from the final versions. Most cooperatives had their own hall where basic processing could take place. Milk cooperatives were to submit quarterly reports and lists of members to the court, and they were compelled to hold general meetings each year to authorize the accounts. The call for this meeting had to appear in a newspaper to assure the authorities that it was well-advertised.

The papers of the cooperatives do not allow too much insight into possible conflicts or negotiations within the cooperative. Regarding the political culture within the entities, it is important that through having to fulfil requirements that regulation demanded, and courts enforced, members of the board regularly encountered the rule of law. Office bearers also became acquainted with the link between financial accountability and the rule of law. This experience differed from seeing power and prestige ruling social life that were characteristic features during the interwar period in Hungary. Experiencing the power of abstract notions about rights and obligations carried a democratic potential.

We learn a bit more about the economic aspects of cooperative life even if we need to start with a caveat even in this sense: official documents that cooperatives produced do not tell where they sold milk. However, a questionnaire in the archives of the Ministry of Agriculture informs that in 1935 the authorities of the municipality of Szombathely believed that milk is brought to the city from a range of 25 kilometers. We may add to this figure that the availability of railway transport was an important factor in determining the range.

In fact, part of the reason why the milk cooperative in Acsád was one of the few that existed both in the early years of the twentieth century and during the Great Depression was that it had railway station and that the stop was close to two other neighboring villages. Acsád is a village of around 600 inhabitants 16 kilometers to the northeast from Szombathely. The milk cooperative began to operate in March 1905. Its statutes did specify that all milk produced shall be offered to the cooperative but did not set any criteria for the quantity. This suggests that the board of the cooperative could estimate the quantity of produce and that it did not expect changes in the varieties that villagers kept.

In the first year of its operation, the cooperative sold 140,000 liters of milk to an unspecified butter making factory, probably the one in Sárvár. They received

11,500 *korona*s in return, meaning a price of eight *fillér*s per litere (one *korona* was 100 *fillér*s). This price is nearly equivalent with the conditions in contemporary Budapest, where producers received 40 percent of the retail price, which was 21 *fillér*s shortly after the turn of the century.[55] The members of the cooperative received slightly more than the price of the milk. This was possible because the cooperative also sold fodder on the market. In 1907, the price fell to 7.7 *fillér*s, but cooperative members continued to receive as much as they would have had the price remained at eight *fillér*s. In these two years, the butter factory paid an additional 589 and 629 *korona*s, respectively, for low-fat milk it sold consumers. Yearly profits were meager, and it clearly made sense to join the cooperative because it guaranteed a flow of income and not simply for the money received after shares at the end of the financial year. Regarding shares, we know that there were 166 shares for 79 members in 1906. In the first year, 104 members joined the cooperative and four left. In the second year, seven new members joined and five left. In the course of these changes of membership, every member had one or two shares. These figures also mean that one cow provided 860 liters of milk per year on average. If we take 270 as the figure for the number of days in a year when the cows were milked, this means hardly more than three liters per day per cow. Unfortunately, very few records were kept or have survived after these relatively detailed accounts.[56]

Although the cooperative in Acsád continued its activities for some time in the 1920s, it had to be reestablished in 1934. The total number of shareholders in the cooperative rose from 46 to 74 by the end of 1935. These members held 177 shares in total. The cooperative in Acsád was unusual because it had a respectable urban member who was also of Jewish origin. In 1934, the largest shareholder was Dr. Ernő Pető, a medical doctor known as the first director of the hospital in Szombathely and also for his experiments and efforts to rehabilitate disabled veterans of World War I.[57] Dr. Pető registered as a member of the cooperative in Acsád because he married Georgina, the daughter of the aristocrat Count Szegedy family, which had their base in Acsád. Georgina had 10 shares in the cooperative,[58] but a list prepared by the Cattle Breeders' Association of Vas County shows that the Mrs. Ernő Pető's herd was large: it

55 Umbrai, "A fővárosi tejmizéria."

56 Hungarian National Archives, Vas County Archives VII/1/h T-1037 Papers of the Milk Cooperative in Acsád.

57 Kelbert, *Dr. Pető Ernőné Szegedi Georgina*.

58 Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár Vas Megyei Levéltára VII/1/h T-1037.

was the eighth largest in the county, and she had 69 livestock in total.[59] In 1936, the cooperative sold 182,240 liters of milk and produced only 48 *pengő*s of profit. (On January 1, 1927, the *pengő* replaced the *korona* as the currency in Hungary. In 1936, 1 US dollar was worth 5.2 *pengő*s. The korona was exchanged at a rate of 1 *pengő* for 12,500 *korona*.) Although there is not enough data to calculate milk prices for the latter period, the basic formula does not seem to have changed: a relatively continuous flow of income and cash were the main advantages of being a member of the Acsád milk cooperative.

Overall, taking the example of the Acsád milk cooperative, these types of entities do not look as frightening as the inhabitants of Szombathely probably imagined them to be. Although we do not have data for the immediate interwar years, neither in the years around 1905 nor in the 1930s does the cooperative seem to have been tremendously profitable. As an institution, the cooperative simply added a new way of ensuring milk-producing households with a relatively steady flow of cash as well as some experience with the rule of law, cooperation, decision making, and the nature of markets.

Conclusions

In this essay, I have examined the political role of the sciences, commodities, and the idea of cooperatives in the local forms of the modern food economy and its supply chain in the interwar period in Hungary. I highlighted the importance of dense networks of both local and central institutions and rules in the milk market. In Vas County, a combination of these networks and the pressures of a shortage economy changed the social and political meanings of milk and dairy products in the immediate aftermath of World War I. Milk became a necessity for those perceived as the most vulnerable groups within the local society, such as mothers and children, and it also became a sign of dysfunctional rural-urban relations, individual behaviors, markets, and administration.

The news reports related to milk that were published in dailies reflect the ways in which a local urban community perceived the shortages and entertained ideas concerning their root causes and possible remedies. The persistence of shortages shows the inability of the post-World War I Hungarian state to intervene effectively and the impact of the behavior of businesses operating

59 Kelbert, *Dr. Pető Ernőné Szegedi Georgina.* See also MNL OL K 184 issue no. 16, bundle no. 4762, year 1937. Államsegély a szarvasmarhatartó egyesületek részére a törzskönyvezett állomány után.

in the region, as well as the relevance of popular expectations faced by the municipality to provide a solution locally. In this situation, concerns regarding the stability of the milk market in the interwar years exerted an influence on ideas related to the design of markets and the physical spaces in which milk was produced and sold and even on the international (transboundary) political situation. In these spaces, bottom-up responses proved more significant than the efforts of the state and municipal administrations in determining the local conditions surrounding the supply of milk.

While many news reports suggested that the aggressive business strategy of milk cooperatives were at the heart of milk shortages, in fact these cooperatives were rather humble entities with very limited scope for profit both before World War I and in the years when the state-owned cooperative network began its expansion at the cost of the autonomy of milk cooperatives. Nonetheless, milk cooperatives provided a way to engage rural communities in the emerging milk market, allowing them to experience aspects of modern production and democratic forms of decision making and collaboration.

By the time of the outbreak of World War I, laboratories were junctures which brought top-down and bottom-up notions of modern food production together. They contributed to the emergence of the national economy in the interwar period by bringing the idea of scientific measurement and quality testing to rural areas and by inducing firms to experiment with new tastes. The introduction of scientific knowledge and expertise had the potential to modify local hierarchies, such as the hierarchies in labor and gender relations. Moreover, quality testing was important in redrawing boundaries and channels between localities. However, as the sources concerning laboratory analyses revealed, despite decades of research and practice, there remained uncertainties concerning the quality of the testing processes used to prove dilution.

In terms of its contribution to the secondary literature, this paper offers a case study applying Peter Atkins' notion of milk as material and Timothy Mitchell's thesis concerning the relevance of hybridity. While milk defied engineering and scientific expertise, the attention given to the viruses that milk might carry dwindled, while sensitivity to the sale of diluted milk increased in the interwar period as a consequence of food shortages. Milk shortages were a cause and vehicle of public dissatisfaction. In line with Tiago Saraiva's point, starting from the early 1930s, the expansion of state control over the food economy was intertwined with the expansion of the supply chain of milk.

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BOOKREVIEWS

Markets and Staples in the Medieval Hungarian Kingdom. By Boglárka Weisz. Budapest: Research Centre for the Humanities, 2020. 258 pp.

Economic history is blooming again in Hungarian scholarship, and members of a new generation of historians are revisiting and reconsidering the fundamental principles and institutions of the medieval Hungarian kingdom. A research project coordinated by Boglárka Weisz under the "Lendület" (Momentum) program of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences has produced impressive scholarship in recent years. The monograph reviewed here is a revised version (published now in a beautifully typeset edition) of the Hungarian edition, which was published in 2012.

The book has three main chapters and a large appendix with a "data inventory," meaning an exhaustive alphabetical and chronological listing with the market days in the medieval kingdom of Hungary. The first chapter examines markets, including the histories of their emergence, the terminology used in connection with them in medieval charters, and details of their financial and social aspects. Weisz takes the most immediate meaning of the word "market" as regular (daily, weekly, and annually) gatherings of people for the exchange of goods and services. The right to hold a market had to be sanctioned by a royal grant, even when natural factors, as Weisz explains, created those markets, owing to a given site's favorable political or geographic location. The terminology for markets was as complex as the network of daily or weekly markets and the fairs held on saints' feast days. Weisz expertly guides her reader through the terminology, which changed over the course of the centuries. The term "forum liberum," for instance, lost its original meaning of providing free passage to merchants coming to the fair and in the fourteenth century became a generic term for "market" (p.20). As becomes evident from the first subchapters the overview and scope of the book are impressive. Weisz has compiled and analyzed a large amount of data which is nevertheless navigated with ease. In addition to the better-known concepts, she presents ancillary rights to market privileges, which are less familiar to most readerships, i.e. the ban-mile right, which from the examples presented was mostly granted to towns in the northwestern counties of the kingdom (pp.38–39). The social function of markets as sites for the dissemination of information, the discussion of official or private matters,

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of the negotiation of new regulations, routes, tolls, or changes in the official insignia (seals) is presented in subchapter seven, which is dedicated to market proclamations. This crucial role of enabling public communication eventually made the markets central places in towns, where the town halls began to be built starting in the late fourteenth century (p.49).

Chapters two and three investigate the historical evolution of the staple right as a complex of trading privileges in the medieval Hungarian kingdom. Weisz challenges the older views in Hungarian secondary literature and highlights the intricacies of the staple rights in medieval towns of the realm, which were diverse and shifted over time. Weisz further corrects the secondary literature and notes that the first staple right charter was granted by King Béla IV to Buda in 1244 for trade on the Danube. There are indications in royal charters that before the Mongol invasion the town of Esztergom benefitted from a privileged position in relation to the foreign merchants entering the kingdom, though the city never received a formal grant in this respect and eventually lost its position to the emerging town of Buda. Based on a meticulous examination of royal charters granting or withdrawing the staple right and of locally issued town regulations, Weisz discerns several categories of staple right covering a variety of obligations that foreign merchants had to meet. Each town sought to carve out certain rules that best served the interest of the local merchants. Weisz shows that only Buda and Kassa (today Košice, Slovakia) succeeded in acquiring the full staple right, though this was met with opposition from merchants, both Hungarian and foreign, who resorted to solutions to circumvent the towns with the staple right, such as using alternate roads or trying to obtain individual exemptions. In fact, as Weisz explains, the use of mandatory roads was connected to the staple right but not constitutive of it. This was true of other commercial privileges that put limits on foreign traders, such as prohibitions on retail sale, bans on transshipment, the obligation to use the local weights, and the ban on setting up merchant companies. Weisz does not dwell on these details, but we see that the bestowal of the staple right was not solely the result of royal urban policy (a concept which the author does not use). Rather, the towns themselves were actively interested in obtaining this right, and at least in the case of the Transylvanian towns, they had agents lobbying at the court who also made payments on their behalf.

The data inventory is a useful tool for historians interested in the medieval Hungarian kingdom, as it provides exhaustive data on all known market days of market. The information is organized alphabetically according to the names of the counties, and it includes the day of given market, whether weekly or annual,

the year when the franchise was granted, and the bibliographical reference. The bibliography is also impressive. Weisz has pursued research in an array of archives, unearthing new data, and she has combed through a large list of published source editions.

Boglárka Weisz's book sets the history of a crucial institution of medieval economies, the staple right, on a new path. Furthermore, her thorough examination of the chronological evolution of markets underscores how the Hungarian kingdom gradually grew into an economy based on trade and exchange, with markets also acquiring a social role over time.

Mária Pakucs-Willcocks
Nicolae Iorga Institute of History, Bucuresti
maria.pakucs@iini.ro

Sándor Kisfaludy. *Hazafiúi Szózat a' Magyar Nemességhez* (1809) [Patriotic appeal to the Hungarian nobility]. Source publication, edited by Ágoston Nagy. Budapest: Reciti, 2022. 416 pp.

The twelfth volume of the prestigious *ReTextum* series published by the Reciti Press of the Institute for Literary Studies at the Research Centre for Humanities consists of the first critical edition of Sándor Kisfaludy's *Hazafiúi Szózat a' Magyar Nemességhez* (Patriotic appeal to the Hungarian nobility, 1809), edited by Ágoston Nagy, research fellow at the József Eötvös Research Centre's Tamás Molnár Research Institute at the University of Public Service in Budapest. The publication of this volume commemorates the 250th anniversary of the birth of famous Hungarian poet and officer of the noble levy (meaning conscription and also referred to as "insurrectio") Sándor Kisfaludy, who wrote this work on behalf of Archduke Joseph of Habsburg-Lothringen, the Palatine of Hungary, as a semi-official propaganda text on the occasion of the 1809 Hungarian noble levy against Napoleon's invading forces.

Kisfaludy's pamphlet is regarded as the most notable example of anti-Napoleon war propaganda in Hungary, and it is an important historical source of contemporary noble discourse related to the concepts of patriotism and nationhood at a time when the modern concept of the nation was beginning to emerge in East Central Europe. The current source edition by Ágoston Nagy makes all existing textual versions of Kisfaludy's work available to a broader public for the first time, as it contains not only the Hungarian autograph draft and fair copy but also the German excerpt of the work, the latter two with the remarks and deletions of Archduke Joseph, who censored Kisfaludy's work himself, and a German-language translation by his contemporary, the famous scholar and professor of aesthetics Johann Ludwig von Schedius. The critical edition consists not only of a meticulous textological apparatus, but also ample factual notes, a lengthy and detailed introductory study (which takes up the entire first half of the book), and a short German-language overview.

According to Nagy, the broader context of Kisfaludy's semi-official propaganda work needs to be interpreted within the framework of the French revolutionary wars that began in 1792, with particular attention to the three previous Hungarian noble levies of 1797, 1800, and 1805, as well as the governmental reforms of the Habsburg Court, which were intended to ensure a successful military campaign against Napoleon. In the introductory part, Nagy

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examines the military, political, and juridical background of the mobilization of the military campaign by the noblemen for the war of 1809, with a special focus on the leadership roles of Archduke Palatine Joseph and his chief aide-de-camp, Count Joseph Beckers zu Wetterstetten.

After the catastrophic defeat in the War of the Third Coalition in 1805, the Austrian Empire showed "great resilience." as it began to mobilize a broader stratum of society, especially the middle classes "left previously exempt from military service" in the spirit of the new concept of a people's or national war (or "Volks-/Nationalkrieg") (p.13). This aim was served by an innovative, far-reaching, and complex field of institutionalized official and semi-official propaganda. The key figures in this propaganda campaign were Minister of Foreign Affairs Count Johann Philipp Stadion, and Archduke John, who played a crucial role in setting up a new military force for territorial defense *(Landwehr)* in the Austrian half of the Habsburg Empire. Archduke John maintained good relations with famous patriotic intellectuals, such as Friedrich von Gentz, Johannes von Müller, and Baron Josef von Hormayr, who played a key role in the propaganda activity, which was organized in order to appeal to a heterogeneous array of groups (pp.14–15).

As Nagy emphasizes, the Kingdom of Hungary presents a "unique case" within the Habsburg Empire, not only because of its "constitutional autonomy, the traditional military structure of its estates, and its strong constitutionalist political culture," but also from the perspective of the relationship between war and nation and the practices of mobilization and propaganda activity. During the Napoleonic Wars, the estates in Hungary exercised significant influence on the military affairs of their country at the diets convoked by the ruler (p.21). The nobility, which enjoyed a privileged legal status, made up a significant percentage of Hungarian society, and in terms of property and wealth, it was a very diverse group, ranging from wealthy aristocrats to petty noblemen who lived more or less like peasants. As a "body politic, it would have been impossible to mobilize the masses of this stratum to fulfill their constitutional duty of defense (the *insurrectio*), or to increase their free offer for military purposes (military aid) without the use of propaganda." Otherwise, within a political and social framework dominated by the self-confident, influential, and wealthy county-nobility (the "bene possessionati"), it would not have been possible to implement the necessary institutional reforms required by the concept of the whole empire's "national war" (p.22).

It would not have been an effective solution simply to translate or imitate the centralized imperial propaganda, either. As Nagy puts it, "Instead, regarding both the renewal of military institutions and the ideology of the official propaganda that supported it, we can speak of a 'productive reception' tailored to the specificities of the country as a specific cultural transfer process—led by Palatine Joseph, who knew the expectations of both the Court and the Hungarian estates very well and tried to balance between the two—and indirectly fitted into larger-scale French-Austrian, French-German cultural exchange processes" (p.22).

Archduke Joseph realized that it was necessary to adapt, given the changed nature of wars, and he elaborated a detailed military reform plan that was discussed at the diet of 1808, resulting in Articles 2 and 3 of the Laws of 1808, which regulated the legal framework of the noble levy (pp.23–24). The *insurrectio* of 1809, which was set up according to this legal framework, can be considered unique from many angles. According to Nagy, it can be viewed as a "socially exclusive, selectively compulsory institution of defense that can be characterized as a temporary national militia" that obliged apt male members of the noble Hungarian nation (*natio* or *gens Hungarica*) to perform personal military service for the cause of defense (pp.24–25).

The official and semi-official propaganda activity for the mass mobilization for this institution of estates managed to implement the concept of "national war" in "relation to communities of estates and their members with a certain constellation of rights and duties" (p.25). The Napoleonic Wars "opened up the world" for Hungarian society, which was to some extent on the periphery of Western European social development, and this was accompanied by a "boom in information" and a rapid increase of literary production, which resulted in a broad exchange of ideas among nobles of all counties of the kingdom (pp.25–26). A significant amount of propaganda consisted of unofficial encouraging texts of various genres. Most of these were originally written in Hungarian, but because of the multilingual nature of the country, the traditional official language of Latin was also used, as well as the German language of the imperial administration (pp.26–27).

The Hungarian system adopted the Austrian mechanism, which employed "professional" literates for the production of targeted propaganda for the population of operational areas of military units. "From the circles of the Palatine, two writers, Sándor Kisfaludy and Ferenc Verseghy, stand out" (p.27). Kisfaludy took part in the production of war propaganda first from the civilian

and then from the military side, and Verseghy, a former Pauline monk (who had suffered almost decade-long imprisonment for his involvement in the Hungarian Jacobin Movement led by Ignác Martinovics and then had served as the Hungarian language teacher of Archduke Joseph after his release), took part in the propaganda production from the civil side (p.27). "Referral newspapers were an important medium for the distribution of official propaganda materials" as well (p.31). The most prominent of these were the German-language *Preßburger Zeitung* and *Vereinigte Ofner und Pester Zeitung* and the Hungarian-language *Magyar Kurir* (Vienna) and *Hazai és Külföldi Tudósítások* (Pest). These journals usually reported news of war and foreign policy without comment, but they also published reports sent in by readers from various parts of the country. They constituted an important node in the flow of information on the course of the war and proved an important and effective tool of war propaganda through the publication of official, semi-official, and unofficial propaganda materials (pp.32–33).

The introductory part of the volume discusses Kisfaludy's other works related to the noble levy and the war of 1809. This overview by Nagy outlines a proposal for a series of source publications which ideally, by following the principle of the current edition of *Hazafiúi Szózat*, would see this entire group of texts published in a similar format, though without Kisfaludy's works of fiction inspired by the decisive experiences of the mobilization of the *insurrectio* (p.33). Kisfaludy was given the task of writing an answer to Napoleon's proclamation to the Hungarian nobility, but he did not finish this answer, since in the end it was not needed, as the county authorities managed to prevent the spread of French propaganda prints. Kisfaludy also composed a report for the ruler on the *insurrectio*. Beginning in October 1809, Kisfaludy wrote and translated other texts as well which "are not only important sources about the noble levy but also represent a distinctly noble-national narrative of the events, which reflects, in spite of its official character, the peculiarities of Kisfaludy's writing style and his approach to politics and history" (p.39).

The detailed introductory part continues with a "biographical sketch" of Kisfaludy's activities in the service of Zala County and Palatine Joseph, examining the circumstances of the request by Beckers and the composition of the *Patriotic Appeal*. According to Nagy, several factors played a role in the palatine's decision to choose Kisfaludy for the role of aid-de-camp entrusted with propaganda tasks. The most important among these were most likely his practical and theoretical military experience, his knowledge of French, his

high education, his good network of contacts, and his popularity as a writer of Hungarian poems (pp.66–68).

After examining the contexts of the genesis of the *Patriotic Appeal*, Nagy gives a thorough reconstruction of its publication history (pp.68–73) and the intentions of the client and author, who presented the approaching war as an existential threat to the noble Hungarian nation and wanted to raise awareness of the alleged need of a "moral regeneration of his political community" through "the revival of heroic virtues and the setting up of an *insurrectio*" (p.77). Nagy also gives detailed information concerning the available manuscripts of Kisfaludy's pamphlet and its German extract. He outlines the characteristics of Palatine Joseph's censorship of the original fair copy of the pamphlet, gives a short overview of the draft of the corrections, and reviews the questions related to the German translation by Schedius, of which no manuscript version has survived (pp.77–96). The critical edition presents an extremely thorough historical, contextual, sociological, and textological interpretation of the textual corpus related to Kisfaludy's work. Nagy uses the interpretative framework of literary studies in the analysis of the para-, peri-, and intertextual dimensions of this historical text, and he gives a detailed overview of its structure and content (pp.96–111). This thorough and wide scholarly analysis is complemented with an examination of the sources and viewpoints of the historical parts of Kisfaludy's work (pp.111–33), the history of its original publication, its contemporary reception (pp.133–80), and an overview of the textological problems and principles of the textual edition (pp.181–91). The introductory part of the volume ends with a brief German-language summary (pp.192–97).

The second half of the book (pp.199–416) contains the aforementioned textual versions of Kisfaludy's *Patriotic Appeal* with a detailed but, given its complexity, not necessarily reader-friendly critical apparatus. It also contains a list of archival sources and a bibliography at the end.

In sum, the critical source edition of this important historical textual corpus is without doubt a remarkable interdisciplinary scholarly achievement. Ágoston Nagy has made a significant contribution to a deeper and more complex understanding of the history of ideas and political, cultural, and mental processes at work in early nineteenth-century Hungary and Central Europe.

Kálmán Tóth
University of Public Service
Toth.Kalman@uni-nke.hu

Minta és felzárkózás [Role model and catching up]. By László Fazakas, Szilárd Ferenczi, János Fodor, and Zsófia Gál. Kolozsvár–Marosvásárhely: Iskola Alapítvány Kiadó–Lector Kiadó, 2021. 300 pp.

Transylvania, a multinational part of today's Romania, has its own vernacular culture, including a characteristic type of urban architecture. It also has its own traditional Hungarian academic community, the members of which pursue research in their mother tongue, Hungarian. Because of the troubled history of this region, it is particularly interesting to see how this community interprets its own historical heritage. The book under review aims to reconstruct the history of two main cities, the informal metropolitan center of the region, Kolozsvár (Cluj-Napoca, Klausenburg), and another historically relevant city, Marosvásárhely (Târgu Mureş, Neumarkt), in the early twentieth century. To be more precise, its aim is to show "the history of the development of Kolozsvár and Marosvásárhely during the terms of mayors Géza Szvacsina and György Bernády" respectively. The authors are four young researchers (historians and art historians) who have already shown their lion's claws. Their decision to cooperate on a book about two of the most important cities of their region makes this an exceptional investigation. As it so happens, they embarked down this path without much institutional backing. True, they were all alumni of the same alma mater, the Department of History in Hungarian at the Babeş-Bolyai University in Cluj. Three of them are political and social historians, and one is an art historian. Yet only one of them has a position at the university. The others are less integrated into the academic community, and they apparently did not mind not having a formal research unit with an adequate budget. They realized that there was a striking lacuna in the secondary literature that needed to be addressed. Fazakas had published an article earlier in which he had observed that Kolozsvár had been largely neglected by historians when it came to the comparatively prosperous period in the city's history after the Austro-Hungarian Settlement (1867). They put together their individual research findings and created a grand, multi-layered narrative about this topic in this clearly structured and informative volume.

The volume, published by two publishing houses together, one in each of the two cities, offers a comparative narrative of the urban and architectural development of these urban centers under the two aforementioned mayors. The four authors combined their respective expertise, each contributing roughly 60

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pages to the final work. The structure and methodology offer the reader a wide historical panorama: political history is backed up with social history, and glimpses of urban planning come with the art historian's detailed introduction of the major public buildings of the age in these two cities. Only the detailed account by Fazekas of the long and painful process of the construction of the water and sewerage networks seems to be somewhat exhaustive and disconnected. Szilárd Ferenczi covers the chapter on Kolozsvár during the time in office of Géza Szvacsina (1849–1917), and János Fodor describes Marosvásárhely's efforts to catch up with the metropolitan center in the days of its powerful mayor, György Bernády (1864–1938). Zsófia Gál gives a careful architectural *ekphrasis* of the main buildings built or planned in this era in both cities.

The major issue of the book is connected to the well-known fact that this province of the Hungarian part of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy had to some extent lagged behind compared to the development of some of the other parts of the empire. Yet this period brought with it an unprecedented amount of governmental and local investments here, too. This effort resulted in the construction of several public buildings that were of both practical and symbolic importance, and it also led to the reconstruction of the central urban fabric of these cities. True, there was a difference between the plans hatched by the government in the capital, Budapest, and the ideas and ideals cherished by the local actors, but the locals achieved a great deal thanks to their refined techniques of negotiations and bargaining. The authors provide meticulous readings of the political debates in the local press, thus giving their reader a clear idea of what the local elites regarded as their priorities. We are also given a clear sense of the risks of being a leading local magistrate, as often infrastructural and architectural developments had to be carried out on credit. Nevertheless, these political leaders were clearly bold and ambitious, despite their faults, and the period could very reasonably be characterized as an unparalleled golden age in the history of these cities.

Yet the self-perception of the two cities was rather different. After the establishment of its university in 1872 (as originally proposed by the senior minister of culture, József Eötvös) and also after having become home to many regional institutions, Kolozsvár took on the role of the provincial center, following the steps taken by Budapest, the booming capital of the country (on which see John Lukacs's marvelous classic, *Budapest 1900*). Marosvásárhely, on the other hand, had a more modest role even within Transylvania. It was destined to serve as the cultural and economic center of the Székely Land. So, for Marosvásárhely,

Kolozsvár became the local role model and rival in a competition in which the latter was destined to lose. In fact, the book calls attention to the fact that for a long time, the Saxon towns of Brassó (Braşov, Kronstadt) and Nagyszeben (Sibiu, Hermannstadt) outperformed Marosvásárhely.

A further point of the book is to show not only the difference in the characters of the two mayors who played the leading parts in the story, but also that the political culture of the two cities differed strikingly. In Kolozsvár, Szvacsina was heir to the brave policies of his predecessors, and while holding his office (1898–1913), he was participant in a vibrant political life characterized by internal struggles among the local representatives of the major national parties. Against this backdrop of political intrigue and machination, his own contributions turn out to be less decisive than those of Bernády, the mayor of Marosvásárhely (1902–1912). Once again, the book is careful to point out that local historians might have exaggerated Bernády's own initiatives, such as the launch of large-scale construction in his city.

As for the methodological differences between the two reconstructions, Ferenczi's narrative of Kolozsvár tries to paint the major political scandals of the day with vivid colors, thus offering an overview of the shifting lines between allies and enemies within the city's bodies and institutions. Fodor, on the other hand, offers a more detailed view of the institutional and social layers of Marosvásárhely. He provides detailed statistics about the demographic trends in the city from national and denominational perspectives. In the case of Bernády, he summarizes his protagonist's work in a somewhat less scrupulous manner.

A real merit of the book is the long chapter on the architecture and built environment of the two cities. Zsófia Gál, the author of this chapter, is an art historian, and she provides a detailed, comparative account of the planning processes and an architectural description of the new buildings that were actually constructed. Her introduction to the history (from the moment of inception as an idea) of some of the most prominent and symbolically important public buildings in Transylvania is fascinating, and the narrative is complemented by an excellent array of illustrations.

To summarize, Fazakas, Ferenczi, Fodor, and Gál have taken a brave step with this book project, which constitutes an effort to fill in the gaps in the historical scholarship on the comparative urban history, politics, and cultures of these two major cities. They have done their job in an exemplary manner, making use of the existing secondary literature, including the findings of Romanian colleagues, but also consulting primary sources in the archives and reports in the

daily press of the time. They felt no need to impose an ideological interpretation on the material. Their detached, neutral tone is commendable in an age of culture wars. On the other hand, however, sometimes the reader misses the historian's evaluative guidance. Overall, this is a welcome piece of academic history, which will acquaint readers with this understudied period in the history of urbanization in Transylvania.

Ferenc Hörcher
University of Public Service
horcher.ferenc@uni-nke.hu

Hadifoglyok, dezertőrök – Magyar katonák az olasz hátországban (1915–1920) [Prisoners of war, deserters: Hungarian soldiers in the Italian hinterkand]. By Balázs Juhász. Budapest: Zrínyi Kiadó, 2022. 535. pp.

The recent book by Balázs Juhász deals with the living conditions of Hungarian soldiers who were captured by the Italian army during World War I. Juhász is an assistant professor at Eötvös Loránd University and has written numerous articles about the Italian front and its relationship with the Austro-Hungarian Empire. His recent monograph aims for a wide audience while also contributing to more focused academic discussion.

Although historians have written a fair amount concerning several aspects of POW life, Juhász's monograph is important in part simply because of his unique research methods. He goes beyond the existing secondary literature by drawing on a wider array of sources: in addition to the Hungarian scholarly literature, he has also used several documents from Italian archives. His book is highly relevant, given that no synthesis has been published on the history of Hungarian POWs since the 1930s.

The book has eleven chapters in addition to the preface and conclusion, and it can be divided thematically into three main parts. The first part presents the general conditions and management of the Italian POW camps. Juhász emphasizes that the first and second Hague Conventions (1899, 1907) were valid during World War I. Since the terms of these conventions applied to the Italian army, the Spanish embassy and the Pope supervised their observance. In addition, state organizations such as the Italian Red Cross Prisoner of War Committee and the Prisoner of War Committee (set up by the Ministry of Defense) also operated to maintain the structure of the POW camps. Although it became clear at the beginning of the war that Italy was not prepared for a large number of incoming prisoners, the capacity of the camps increased only slowly during the war. This had a huge impact on the events of November 1918, as the Italian army suddenly had to accommodate approximately 300,000 prisoners after the Armistice of Villa Giusti (also known as the Padua Armistice). From the perspective of the lives of the individual soldiers, the armistice seems to have been the most significant trauma for the Hungarian POWs. Juhász emphasizes that it is very difficult to determine the exact number of POWs in Italy, but as far as the sources permit us to venture an estimate, a maximum of 477,000 people were under the control of the Italian army. This number includes soldiers

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captured during combat operations as well as deserters (whose number on the Italian front was not significant). With regard to the conditions in the camp, Juhász offers details concerning accommodation, clothing, finances, catering, culture, and leisure. Although the Italians drew a significant distinction between officers and regular soldiers in most respects, the living conditions of the latter were relatively tolerable. At the same time, some Hungarian POWs lived under worse conditions, especially those who had been brought from the Serbian front (1914–1915) via Albania to the Italian island of Asinara. Despite the fact that the story of Asinara is generally known in Italian historiography, narratives of the events which took place at the POW camp on the island often differ strikingly. According to Juhász, the process of bringing the POWs from Serbia to Asinra could justifiably be referred to as a "death march," but the exact number of soldiers who died due to frost, typhus, and cholera remains unknown. The first group of POWs reached Asinara in December 1915, but the real nightmare had only just begun, due to the extreme inadequacy of the camp (lack of water, inadequate supplies, and no suitable medical care). Although these problems remained issues on the island in the long term, more and more POWs arrived in Asinara in 1916 and 1918. The story of "Donkey-island" ended only after the return home of those who survived in 1922.

In the second part of the book, Juhász presents the most important features of life in the camp, such as the opportunities that prisoners were given to contact their relatives, the compulsory work regimen, and the healthcare that was provided for them. Juhász emphasizes that the postal services provided the most significant connection with the outside world, not only for the POWs but also for the guards. Nevertheless, there were many cases of abuse. In addition to being able to open and read the letters, the censors could also decide which packages were urgent. Sometimes, they robbed the POWs: they kept food or other things that had been sent to the POWs from the hinterland. Although the exact number of letters and packages that were sent cannot be determined, those which have survived offer excellent sources for historians due to their unique content. Working conditions were also an important issue. Juhász examines the question of POW labor in the larger context of the Italian economy. While officers and commissioned officers were prohibited from working, regular soldiers were paid for their work. This is related to the fact that there was a labor shortage in Italian agriculture from 1916. However, POWs were employed not only in agriculture (afforestation, agronomy) but also in industry (the extraction of energy sources) and in infrastructure development (roadworks and the construction of dams and

railways). In Italy, they were used in a wide variety of geographical areas, such as Sardinia, Sicily, southern Italy, Lazio, Toscana, Piemont, Lombardia, and Venetia. Juhász reflects on the Italian healthcare system regarding the physical and mental condition of POWs. Although a four-week quarantine was mandatory for all incoming prisoners, various epidemics (cholera, typhus, malaria) often spread among them. As not all epidemics became known, infections often put the lives of civilians at risk. Healthcare conditions deteriorated significantly in 1918 due to the spread of the Spanish flu. In addition to physical illnesses, POWs also suffered mental illnesses. Juhász emphasizes that doctors could only treat those POWs who were sent to mental hospitals, as doctors did not visit the camps, so early and local treatment of depression was not possible.

The third part of the book deals with the various ways in which POWs could leave the camps. There were POW exchanges, for instance, which were used in particular for POWs who were deemed seriously ill. As they were unable to fight because of disease or injury, they became burdens for the guards. Though the first agreement concerning POW exchanges was reached in the spring of 1916, concrete results were only ratified in the second part of the year. There were also exchanges of soldiers above the age of 60, as well as civilians who had been interned, medical staff, priests, pastors, and theologians. The battle of Caporetto, which lasted from October 24 until November 19, 1917, only meant a short pause, as this form of "human exchange" was soon underway again. Another possibility to leave the camps was escaping. Naturally, the motivations that might prompt a prisoner to attempt an escape were different. They included the threat of suffering physical harm as well as problems related to accommodation, lack of heating, mistreatment or abuse, and personal motivations (the desire for freedom and a prisoner's concerns for the fate of his family).

Two factors support the fact that the escape of POWs appeared in the Italian camps. First, the POWs were not actually paid in Italian currency. Rather, they were paid in a currency ("camp-money") only valid in the camp itself. (Namely, POWs could spend Italian currency when they tried to get home.) Secondly, news related to POW escapes was censored in the press. Finally, the issue of nationality was also a factor. The Italian authorities divided the POWs into two main groups based on their nationality: Slavs and Romanians on the one hand and Austrians and Hungarians on the other. With this, the Italians sought to avoid conflicts between POWs and also wanted to give them a chance to switch to the other side. However, only soldiers who had nothing to lose switched to the Italian side, as this act could put the lives of their family members in

danger. Although five national minority legions consisting of former POWS were formed in Italy (Yugoslav, Albanian, Polish, Romanian, and Czechoslovak), the recruitment efforts among the soldiers of the Habsburg Monarchy were not a great success. Also, the real trauma came at the end of the war, as from November 1918, the Italians had to guard an enormous number of POWs. Nevertheless, in the first few months of 1919, the Italian government tried to keep POWs from going home. In doing so, the government sought to ensure that it would be impossible for authorities outside the country to monitor the general state of POWs and also that POWs would be unable to return to the new countries of Central Eastern Europe to serve as soldiers. As a result, POWs were also employed in 1919 for various purposes (filling trenches, preparing land for agricultural work, etc.). After the fall of the Hungarian Soviet Republic, the crisis was finally resolved by the interests of the great powers. In August 1919, POWs began to be allowed to return home in order to strengthen the relationship between Hungary and Italy.

One of the biggest advantages of Juhász's book is that it provides a unique insight into the rather underresearched history of POWs in Italy during World War I. Due to Juhász's unique approach, methodology, and sources, his book is relevant to an international audience. Especially notable is the fact that he gives a voice to low-ranking soldiers. The explanations, tables, list of names, list of geographical lists, and rich illustrations also make the book engaging and relevant. At the same time, I would venture a few critical remarks. It is regrettable, for instance, that the tables, which offer a useful complement to the narrative, are found at the end of the book. Also, in some cases, the explanations Juhász provides of problems related to the lives and fates of POWs are burdensomely detailed, for instance, his discussion of work done by POWs in different Italian geographical areas which, with a few exceptions, does not contain any new information.

Róbert Károly Szabó
Eötvös Loránd University
rszabo.elte@gmail.com

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Unmaking Détente: Yugoslavia, the United States, and the Global Cold War, 1968–1980. By Milorad Lazić. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2022. 304 pp.

Recent years have seen a blossoming of works on Yugoslav foreign policy and non-alignment. The field has been augmented by an array of studies dealing with topics such as Yugoslav political networks in the countries of the global South, economic and technical cooperation, cultural diplomacy, and transnational academic exchange, with high-quality research conducted not only by historians but also by sociologists, anthropologists, art historians, and political scientists. As a result, our current knowledge of Belgrade's international endeavors has become considerably richer than it was merely one or two decades ago, when Yugoslavia's bloody dissolution and its aftermath were still at the center of academic research.

In this context, it might be reasonable to say that there is less room for fresh and original works on Yugoslav foreign policy. Yet Milorad Lazić's recent book *Unmaking Détente*, which is based on a rich and expansive corpus of archival sources, not only constitutes an excellent work of diplomatic history but also makes very valuable contributions to the field by focusing on a relatively less charted historical period and by shedding light on fascinating dimensions of Yugoslav non-alignment.

Unmaking Détente offers a clear and extremely well documented account in three parts of Yugoslav foreign policy from 1968 to 1980. The first chapter deals with Yugoslavia's reaction to the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia and shows that the regime in Belgrade interpreted these events as a worrying sign that détente could pave the way for "a new Yalta," one in which the superpowers could effectively agree on spheres of influence and dispose of smaller nations at their will. The second chapter analyzes Yugoslav foreign and domestic policies in the first three years after the invasion, describing how Belgrade decided then to approach Washington, improve relations with Beijing, and reinvigorate the NAM. Chapters three and four examine Yugoslavia's efforts to destabilize détente in the 1970s from Cyprus to Ethiopia, efforts which were intended to redefine the global order through increased support for national liberation movements in the "Third World." In these chapters, Lazić also discusses the Yugoslav regime's reaction to the Croatian Spring, its short-lived rapprochement with the Soviet Union after 1973, and the reemergence of tensions sometime

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later due to Havana's and Moscow's intention to domesticate Yugoslavia and steer the NAM in a more radicalized direction. Chapters five and six cover Yugoslav diplomacy during the last three years of Tito's life, following his very active personal diplomacy, Yugoslavia's rapprochement with the United States and renewed distance from the Soviet Union, Yugoslav tensions with Cuba, and Yugoslavia's reactions to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

Lazić analyzes the many challenges that Belgrade had to face in its attempts to destabilize what it perceived as a threatening foreign and domestic environment. According to Lazić, these challenges arose due in part to the changing and unstable environment in the Eastern Mediterranean, the financial and political limitations of Yugoslavia's policies in the Third World (which were often eclipsed by Cuban radicalism and Soviet might), and last but not least, the country's internal insecurity as a result of conflicts around the Yugoslav national question and Tito's uncertain succession.

Unmaking Détente deals with Yugoslav policies in the countries of the global South, but it deals first and foremost with how these policies were shaped by and also affected Belgrade's relations with the superpowers. The book gives interesting hints concerning the development of Yugoslavia's relations with the Soviet Union, China, and the United States. It thoroughly examines the evolution of Yugoslav-Soviet relations during the period and underlines the constant distrust that affected interactions between the Soviet and the Yugoslav communist parties even three decades after their break in 1948 and despite the short-lived rapprochement in the mid-1970s. Moreover, Lazić succeeds in introducing the importance of Sino-Yugoslav relations, showing in particular how Belgrade's decision to normalize relations with Beijing was both an asset for Yugoslav power abroad and a cause of strife with Moscow. Perhaps more importantly, and especially due to his systematic use of US archival sources, Lazić offers valuable insights into the development of Yugoslav-American relations in times of détente, and he sheds light on the importance and consistence of Washington's support for socialist Yugoslavia throughout the period. The book gives considerable proof that, aside from the detrimental action of a handful of individuals and notwithstanding recurrent fluctuations in bilateral relations due to Yugoslavia's need to assert its revolutionary credentials in the global South, the United States highly valued Belgrade's neutral position in the Cold War and especially its tempering influence among the non-aligned, and thus it made significant efforts to secure Yugoslavia's independence even in the face of recurrent pressures from Moscow.

By following the development of Yugoslavia's relations with a wide pool of countries, including the global powers but also several nations of the global South, and also by revisiting Yugoslavia's role in many key international crises of the 1970s, Lazić has produced a study that is original and compelling and also very useful, as it gives a clear picture of the evolution of Yugoslav foreign policy throughout the period. This extensive character is one of the book's strengths, but it is also perhaps one of its few limitations, as Lazić touches on a very wide number of episodes, and he is therefore forced to give a rather short account of many of them. While the book covers the development of Yugoslav relations with Egypt after the death of Nasser and under Sadat in some detail, for instance, it also goes too hastily over episodes such as Yugoslavia's reaction to Pinochet's coup in Chile in 1973 or Yugoslav actions following the Cyprus crisis of 1974. Although Lazić underlines such episodes as important elements of Belgrade's independent foreign policy in the 1970s which were meant to secure a wider margin of action for Yugoslavia in the international scene, he gives them only limited space in his discussion.

The overall balance is nevertheless undeniably positive. *Unmaking Détente* is a valuable contribution to the existing secondary literature on the period, and it constitutes an enjoyable reading for any scholar of international history. Moreover, its chronological structure and clarity will make it a useful resource for courses and research seminars dealing with the history of non-alignment. Milorad Lazić has produced an excellent account of Yugoslav foreign policy in the 1970s, one which provides valuable insights and will be of great interest to scholars of the Cold War in Yugoslavia and beyond.

Agustín Cosovschi
École française d'Athènes
agustin.cosovschi@efa.gr

Luxury and the Ruling Elite in Socialist Hungary: Villas, Hunts, and Soccer Games. By György Majtényi. Translated by Thomas Cooper. Studies in Hungarian History Series. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2021. 366 pp.

György Majtényi begins *Luxury and the Ruling Elite in Socialist Hungary* with an account of a birthday gathering for an apparatchik on the Csákberény estate in 1946. Guests dined on caviar, wild boar, and stuffed goose, fine wine was poured from crystal pitchers, women wore the latest fashions, and an accordionist named Andy played Horthy-era revanchist hits such as "Prague is not far from the border" (pp.13–14). Clearly, the leaders of the party-state knew how to party, and as this and scores of other accounts in this idiosyncratic narrative reveal, they did so in a manner that resembled the noble and bourgeois lifestyles of the prewar past far more than the "socialist culture" espoused by József Révai and the other party ideologues.

Luxury and the Ruling Elite takes the reader on a dizzying tour of the lifestyles of the rich and famous in socialist Hungary. The ruling elite enjoyed villas in the Buda hills, access to automobiles, specialized health care, travel abroad (with the added benefit of providing opportunities for deals on the black market), and an array of other perks made possible by their preeminent position. Underpinning these luxuries is the common theme of continuity with the past and engagement with the West: "There was no abrupt rift between the lifestyles of the social classes and the elite under socialism on the one hand and the customs of the prewar period and consumer cultures of the West on the other" (p.299). To take just two examples, automobiles were status symbols that clearly delineated one's rank in the social hierarchy: initially, party functionaries had to make do with Škodas and Pobedas, but by the 1950s, higher-ranking members had access to BMWs and Chevrolets. By the 1970s, the Mercedes 280 was "all the rage" among the party elite, with Volvos second best (but still popular, as evinced by a wave of "Volvoism") (pp.66–71).

Tradition and hierarchy were also apparent in hunting circles, as the Concord Hunting Society admitted only top-ranking members of the ruling elite; second-rank cadres had to settle for membership in the Friendship Hunting Society. Members of the ruling elite hunted on the same grounds shot the same expensive guns, and in some cases employed the same personnel as their prewar counterparts, as "the old hunting experts could use their knowledge and

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know-how to blackmail the powerful figures of the era." The bonds formed by hunting—as a form of recreation, of creating and developing social relationships, and perpetuating hegemonic masculinity—bridged the gap between Horthy-era elites and their new rulers, as evinced by the continued popularity of "Comrade Count Zsigmond Széchenyi" and other former nobles (pp.116–24, 130). Even in death, the socialist elite laid claim to membership in the Hungarian tradition, as the Pantheon of the Workers' Movement in Kerepesi Cemetery was erected in 1959 amidst the mausoleums and monuments of historical figures ranging from Lajos Batthyány and Lajos Kossuth to interwar ministers such as Gyula Gömbös and Pál Teleki (pp.89–90). Amid all this excess and luxury, only János Kádár himself seems to have been immune to the siren song of conspicuous consumption, portraying himself as a simple man with simple tastes and habits and the "veritable trustee of consolidation," much as Miklós Horthy had before him (pp.296–97). Although Majtényi does not address the modern post-socialist elite at any length, its few appearances in this book—most notably again at Kerepesi, with the reburial of noteworthy figures appropriated from the past, such as poet Attila József, to join new heroes such as József Antall, even as unwanted leaders of the socialist period were interned in the more humble Farkasrét Cemetery (pp.93–94)—suggest that this elite will continue the tradition of borrowing and reinventing the elite lifestyles (and deathstyles) of its predecessors.

Majtényi's decade of experience as the Department Head of the Hungarian National Archive is apparent in his command and judicious use of archival sources, and he weaves them together with memoirs, interviews, publications in the popular press, and a diverse range of other sources in this book. Majtényi's expository style may strike some readers as odd, as he deliberately eschews a more conventional historiographical and narrative praxis for what he defines as a contextual historical essay rooted in satire and irony. *Pace* Hayden White, Majtényi argues that "History can be understood as a kind of delicate 'embroidery.' We can only unstitch the fabric if we are able to follow the underlying threads and the underlying design, and it is only worth unraveling if we examine how things are intertwined" (p.8). The best example of this unraveling of skeins of social status, political power, symbolism, and performativity is found at the beginning of Chapter 4, dedicated to football ("soccer" to Americans) culture in the 1950s. Majtényi argues that the ruling elite was able to generate legitimacy by coopting football culture: the victories of the new teams with class-conscious origins and especially the international success of the Golden Team of the mid-1950s reinforced the regime's claim to represent working-class mass culture. For their

part, skilled footballers were one of the few social groups with any hope of upward mobility: victories led to expensive gifts and privileges and, more importantly, enabled their participation in the black market with goods smuggled home from international events. (Ironically, the Stakhanovites—exemplary workers who overfulfilled quotas—were for the most part hung out to dry once their immediate propaganda value had run out (pp.190–98).) However, this symbolic linkage did not always operate in the regime's favor, as the defeat of the Golden Team on July 4, 1954, led to riots in the streets: "The party leadership had done everything to ensure the masses would attribute the successes of the team to the system, and now the protesters were looking for the people who could be held responsible for what they viewed as a humiliating fiasco" (pp.180). Majtényi goes on to intimate that these protests may have served as a dress rehearsal, or at least a dry run, for 1956, and it is here that his essayist approach arguably falls short. While the protesters in 1954 were doubtless motivated by anger over the Golden Team's loss, by that time they had many other issues with communist rule, and after the advent of the New Course and its reforms in 1953, the regime seemed both weaker and more responsive to workers' needs as consumers as well as subjects. Likewise, Majtényi also does not directly address the 1968 New Economic Mechanism that enabled the rise of "goulash communism" in Hungary. He notes that in the 1960s and 1970s "the dress habits of the elite actually became more staid and conservative," as they "turned back towards more traditional models," (p.255) but he identifies this as an elite response to changes in Western fashion rather than a reaction to the overall improvement in the amount and types of consumption (both Western and domestic) now more available to the masses. In these two cases, Majtényi's focus on the lives of elites occludes the broader historical trend towards consumerism. These are not major shortcomings, and they do not significantly detract from the book's eclectic appeal described above. While *Luxury and the Ruling Elite* was not written for a general audience, it belongs on the reading list of any serious scholar of culture and communism in Hungary and Europe more broadly.

Karl Brown
University of Wisconsin–Whitewater
brownk@uww.edu

Corresponding Authors

Balogh, Róbert
balogh.robert@uni-nke.hu
University of Public Service

Berecz, Ágoston
oguszt@gmail.com
Central European University

Brown, Karl
brownk@uww.edu
University of Wisconsin–Whitewater

Cosovschi, Agustín
agustin.cosovschi@efa.gr
École française d'Athènes

Eszik, Veronika
eszik.veronika@abtk.hu
Research Centre for the Humanities

Hörcher, Ferenc
horcher.ferenc@uni-nke.hu
University of Public Service

Koloh, Gábor
Koloh.gabor@abtk.hu
Research Centre for the Humanities

Pakucs-Willcocks, Mária
maria.pakucs@iini.ro
Nicolae Iorga Institute of History, Bucuresti

Silkin, Alexander
alexander.silkin.as@gmail.com
Russian Academy of Sciences

Szabó, Róbert Károly
rszabo.elte@gmail.com
Eötvös Loránd University

Tóth, Kálmán
Toth.Kalman@uni-nke.hu
University of Public Service

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