

LE SENTIMENT « HUNGARUS » ET LA BIBLIOTHECA CORVINIANA

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Dans la deuxième moitié du 15^e siècle, la cour royale de Hongrie devint un foyer culturel qui permettait le fonctionnement non seulement d'institutions appelées à accueillir des courants intellectuels venant de l'extérieur, mais aussi d'ateliers de création. Ces ateliers étaient bien connus en Europe. Sous le règne (1458–1490) du roi Mátyás Hunyadi (Mathias Corvinus), la *Bibliotheca Corviniana*, fondée dans la cour royale de Buda, est devenue une des plus grandes bibliothèques européennes de l'époque. Cette bibliothèque est devenue plus tard le symbole le plus souvent cité de la civilisation de Hongrie et, à partir du 19^e siècle, un élément solide de l'identité hongroise. Nous avouons, bien volontiers, qu'en façonnant le nouveau visage de la bibliothèque nationale, nous tenons à faire ressortir les liens spirituels qui unissent la *Bibliotheca Corviniana* à la *Bibliotheca Regnicolaris* fondée par le comte Ferenc Széchényi (1802).

Mots-clefs : histoire, Hongrie, Transylvanie, histoire des bibliothèques, Bibliothèque nationale de Hongrie, mouvements intellectuels en Hongrie, histoire de l'art, historiographie, histoire des Églises

La civilisation hongroise est essentiellement réceptive. Aussi les recherches sur l'histoire de la réception portent-elles aussi, dans la plupart des cas sur l'histoire des rapports intellectuels. Jusqu'à la fin du 16^e siècle, les mouvements spirituels du christianisme occidental avaient atteint, quasi instantanément, le bassin des Carpathes. Dans la suite, le décalage entre la date de parution des livres en Europe occidentale et leur arrivée en Hongrie ne cessait de croître. Néanmoins, dans la deuxième moitié du 15^e siècle, la cour royale de Hongrie devint un foyer culturel qui permettait le fonctionnement non seulement d'institutions appelées à accueillir des courants intellectuels venant de l'extérieur, mais aussi d'ateliers de création. Ces ateliers étaient bien connus en Europe. Aux yeux des contemporains¹ et de la postérité,² ils égalaient les ateliers de l'Italie du Nord, de Vienne et des villes du bord du Danube. Sous le règne (1458–1490) du légendaire roi Mátyás Hunyadi (Mathias Corvinus),³ l'université de Buda, fondée par l'empereur Sigismond, fut réouverte, des ateliers se mirent à copier des livres et, en 1473,

parut le premier livre imprimé (avant même les débuts de l'imprimerie en Angleterre). Dans la cour royale, comme dans l'entourage des barons du royaume et des prélats, de nombreux savants et artistes humanistes, originaires d'Italie, de Vienne, des pays allemands, de Bohême et de Croatie, rivalisèrent dans la création⁴ et se disputèrent le droit de participer à un symposium (banquet) et d'accéder à l'une des plus grandes bibliothèques européennes de l'époque, la *Bibliotheca Corviniana* fondée dans la cour royale de Buda.

Cette bibliothèque est devenue plus tard le symbole le plus souvent cité de la civilisation de Hongrie et, à partir du 19^e siècle, un élément solide de l'identité hongroise.⁵ Nous avouons, bien volontiers, qu'en façonnant le nouveau visage de la bibliothèque nationale, nous tenons à faire ressortir les liens spirituels qui unissent la *Bibliotheca Corviniana* à la *Bibliotheca Regnicolaris* fondée par le comte Ferenc Széchényi.

Nous ne connaissons pas avec précision ce que contenait la *Bibliotheca Corviniana*. Nous avons cependant beaucoup d'informations utiles la concernant.⁶ Les volumes qui subsistent et les données sur ceux perdus donnent l'impression que la bibliothèque de Buda était vraiment conforme à l'esprit du temps. À côté d'œuvres standard du Moyen Âge (encyclopédies, écrits scolastiques, etc.), on y trouvait, en premier lieu, des textes des pères de l'Église de la fin de l'Antiquité, ensuite ceux d'auteurs antiques, dont des Grecs nouvellement découverts et traduits – ils y étaient présents même en grec –, et la littérature humaniste contemporaine.⁷ Les œuvres de Ficino et de son cercle étaient présentes à Buda en grand nombre, souvent avec un dédicace au roi. L'*Aithiopica* de Héliodóros⁸ et l'œuvre de Kónstantinos Porphyrogennétos intitulé *De caerimoniis*⁹ sont devenues connues à partir de l'exemplaire de la bibliothèque royale de Buda.

Parallèlement au stock réel, nous connaissons également une description contemporaine de la bibliothèque, le poème de louanges, intitulé « *De laudibus Augustae Bibliothecae* », ¹⁰ écrit par le florentin Naldo Naldi sur l'initiative du bibliothécaire Taddeo Ugoletto. Cette panégyrique qui énumère des livres ou, plus précisément des auteurs importants, reflète davantage les exigences humanistes que la réalité. Il est cependant très instructif car il présente la conception humaniste de ce qu'est une bibliothèque. L'aménagement de la bibliothèque a été réalisé par des maîtres florentins et le texte suggère qu'il s'agissait d'un studiolo princier où on trouvait, à côté des livres et des images, des curiosités d'histoire naturelle. La bibliothèque était la plus belle partie du palais de Buda pour montrer, selon Naldi, la supériorité du savoir.¹¹

Les descriptions ultérieures, moins marquées par la vision humaniste, ne sont probablement pas tout à fait fiables. Le dépôt comprenait vraisemblablement deux salles et non une (du moins, Miklós Oláh en cite deux) ; les murs et le plafond étaient ornés de fresques, les images étaient pourvues de légendes.¹² La bibliothèque se situait en prolongement des salles consacrées aux fonctions les plus im-

portantes du palais : la salle du trône et la chapelle. Actuellement, nous n'avons pas d'information précise sur la fonction représentative de la bibliothèque à l'époque du roi Mathias, mais elle devait être importante puisque les périodes ultérieures – y compris le temps des Turcs – l'ont classée parmi les curiosités du palais.

Après la mort de Mathias, dès le début du 16^e siècle, le sort de la bibliothèque fut scellé. Il n'y avait plus de raison de la conserver dans la cour de Buda qui n'ambitionnait plus d'être la plus haute instance organisatrice de la culture de Hongrie. Les humanistes avides de livres, en particulier ceux de Vienne,¹³ mais aussi les membres de la chancellerie tchèque à Buda en ont pris beaucoup.¹⁴ Après la bataille de Mohács, le palais de Buda fut mis à sac et Soliman II emporta, très probablement, une grande partie de la bibliothèque à Istanbul. Dès lors les manuscrits corviniens ont acquis une nouvelle signification : ils sont devenus les reliques du règne de Mathias dont le culte allait en s'épanouissant. Tous les successeurs de Mathias, les souverains Habsbourg comme les princes de Transylvanie, ont aspiré à posséder la « *Biblioteca Augusta* ».

L'histoire de la bibliothèque, sa constitution et son destin nous avertissent que, s'agissant d'un élément représentatif important du pouvoir, pour le comprendre entièrement, il faut avoir recours à tout un faisceau de disciplines. Il faut procéder à l'examen conjoint d'un ensemble de problèmes ressortissant à la philologie, à l'histoire de l'art et de la littérature, voire à l'historiographie, pour entrevoir le rôle qu'avait rempli jadis la bibliothèque dans la cour royale de Buda.

Cependant, dans le présent exposé, nous souhaitons parler en premier lieu de la survie de la bibliothèque au début de l'époque moderne. La plus importante question est comment la dispersion de cette bibliothèque a pu devenir un symbole de la division de la Hongrie en trois parties. Dans le titre de l'exposé nous évoquons à dessein le sentiment « hungarus » au lieu de parler de conscience hongroise.¹⁵ L'historiographie hongroise distingue la conscience collective des gens appartenant à plusieurs nationalités qui peuplaient le Royaume Hongrois au Moyen Âge et au début de l'époque moderne de l'identité culturelle nationale naissant au tournant des 18^e–19^e siècles. C'est à cette dernière époque que s'est formée, dans le bassin carpatique, la conscience de l'identité culturelle des Slovaques, des Roumains, des Croates, des Serbes, des Allemands et des Hongrois et que chacune de ces nations s'est dotée de structures appelées à soutenir cette identité.¹⁶

La recherche ne s'est jamais vraiment attaquée aux textes quasi contemporains relatifs à la bibliothèque du roi Mathias. Les données mises à jour par plusieurs générations de savants ont été rassemblées par Klára Zolnai dans un volume bibliographique, à l'issue de la célébration du 450^e anniversaire de la mort du roi Mathias.¹⁷ Ce livre marque une étape dans l'histoire des recherches sur la *Bibliotheca Corviniana*, car il est à l'origine d'une nouvelle méthode d'analyse. La plupart des corvinas ont été étudiées par Csaba Csapodi et sa femme, Klára Gárdonyi

qui, au moyen de véritables autopsies, ont donné des réponses claires à de nombreuses interrogations philologiques, en suivant l'histoire de tous les manuscrits et incunables mentionnés en rapport avec la bibliothèque de Mathias.¹⁸ Ils ont également traité de la survie de la bibliothèque aux 16^e–17^e siècles, dans plusieurs publications,¹⁹ résumées dans l'ouvrage²⁰ sur les manuscrits retrouvés par les troupes chrétiennes lors de la reprise de Buda aux Turcs.

Tous les chercheurs qui se sont occupés, depuis cinquante ans, de la survie de la Bibliothèque au cours des deux siècles suivant la mort de Mathias – dont Csapodi – ont utilisé comme sources les brèves annotations relevées par Klára Zolnai dans son livre cité. Ces annotations sont bonnes, mais ne remplacent pas les textes originaux. Et surtout, elles ne les remplacent pas lorsqu'il s'agit de reconstituer, en partant des mentions que contiennent journaux intimes, préfaces et lettres, les conditions de leur genèse et, plus précisément, comment ils en sont venus à évoquer la bibliothèque détruite. Si nous voulons examiner plus en détail l'histoire d'un volume corvina, il faut remonter aux textes liminaires des éditions de textes du 16^e siècle et aux livres publiés à l'époque. La profession d'historien du livre de Hongrie pourrait s'assigner l'objectif de réaliser une édition critique des textes dont proviennent les annotations, autrement dit, de faire un nouveau volume Klára Zolnai, dont on pourrait même garder la structure.²¹ La présente communication se propose, tout simplement, d'illustrer la méthode évoquée ci-dessus, en analysant deux documents datant du 16^e siècle relatifs à l'histoire de la Corvina, et aussi d'esquisser de nouvelles approches pour l'étude de l'histoire de la bibliothèque au début de l'époque moderne. Autre approche possible, on pourrait reconstituer, à partir des documents examinés, l'idée que se faisaient les contemporains de cette collection de haute valeur symbolique et de sa destruction. L'article d'Árpád Mikó publié dans le catalogue de l'exposition organisée, lors du bicentenaire de la Bibliothèque nationale, traite des « Histoires de la bibliothèque Corvina ». ²² L'auteur s'est volontairement abstenu de se pencher sur les 16^e–17^e siècles. Peut-être, parce que les recherches de base font défaut, peut-être aussi parce que les intentions et les affinités politiques des auteurs s'intéressant à l'histoire Corvina n'étaient pas aussi évidentes à cette époque que par la suite.

Nous ne pouvons pas évoquer, à ce propos, ce que nous attendons de l'entreprise « Europa humanistica » de l'Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique. Théoriquement, le programme international prend en compte toutes les personnes nées avant 1600 qui ont publié, traduit, ou, dans un sens plus large, transmis des textes antérieurs à 1500.²³ Dans la série qui porte le même titre que le programme, les préfaces des publications sont publiées *in-extenso*, ce qui laisse espérer que grâce à de nouvelles données mises à jour, nous connaissons mieux l'histoire de la *Bibliotheca Corviniana* au 16^e siècle.²⁴

Revenant à l'histoire de la Bibliothèque, nous pouvons observer que Zolnai, ainsi que Csapodi, divisent les 16^e-17^e siècles en quatre périodes : la période du démantèlement après l'occupation de Buda par les Turcs, celle des notes parues dans le dernier tiers du 16^e siècle faisant état de la présence à Buda de nombreux livres, celle des tentatives de « récupération » dans la première moitié du 17^e siècle, et enfin la période de la confrontation avec les livres survivants inspectés après la reconquête.

Beaucoup de sources narratives subsistent de la première période (Ursinus Velinus, Miklós Oláh, Martin Brenner, Johannes Alexander Brasiccanus, etc.). Elles décrivent, avec force tournures de la rhétorique humaniste, la dégradation de la bibliothèque.²⁵ Dans la deuxième période, à la fin du 16^e siècle, des sources de plus en plus nombreuses font allusion à l'existence à Buda, sinon de la bibliothèque, du moins d'un grand nombre de manuscrits (David Ungnad, Stefan Gerlach, Salomon Schweiger, Reinold Libenau, etc.).²⁶ La note d'István Szamosközy, que Csapodi ne pouvait connaître, appartient à ce groupe de documents. Nous estimons importante la présentation détaillée de cette source, ne serait-ce qu'au point de vue de la méthodologie de la recherche.

Lors de la découverte d'une œuvre inédite de Szamosközy sur la philosophie de l'histoire,²⁷ nous l'avons présentée dans une publication succincte sur les sources transylvaines relatives à la Bibliotheca Corviniana.²⁸ Dans cette œuvre qui appartient au genre de l'*ars historica*, l'auteur compare, au point de vue de la méthode, les œuvres d'Antonio Bonfini et de Giovanni Michaele Bruto sur l'histoire de Hongrie.²⁹ Szamosközy écrit ce livre pour convaincre le prince Zsigmond Báthory qu'il fallait imprimer l'œuvre historique de Bruto, sinon elle allait périr et la postérité serait privée de la possibilité de s'en instruire.³⁰

Cette *ars historica* écrite par István Szamosközy, dont la littérature sur l'histoire de la Corvina n'a pu tenir compte jusqu'ici, argumente de la façon suivante en faveur la publication de l'œuvre de Brutus :

*« Multa inopinata accidere possunt, quae imbecillo librorum generi cladem ab omni aevo intulerunt, et nunc inferre possunt incendia, vastitates, blattae, incuria, rapinae, ac in summa punctum temporum quodlibet, quo vel maximarum rerum momenta vertuntur. Sic perierunt clarissimi librorum thesauri Philadelphi et Pergamenorum Regum: sic interiit nobilis illa et memoratissima Matthiae Regis bibliotheca Budae, multis millibus voluminum referta, ex cuius clade Heliodorus Aethiopicae historiae author, Stephanus Geographus, Polybius, Diodorus Siculus, Titus Alexander Cortesius de laubibus Matthiae Regis, Bonfinius de pudicitia coniugali, Crastonius Gorippus qui libros Joannidos scripsit, et quidam alii, velut ex mortuis redivivi fortuna quapiam conservati nuperrime in lucem prodierunt. »*³¹

Il ressort clairement de la dernière expression de la citation, « paru naguère » (*nuperrime in lucem prodierunt*) que Szamosközy a effectivement vu des impres-

sions préparées sur la base de corvinas. Ce passage de Szamosközy corrobore les résultats de nos recherches bibliographiques sur les textes contenus dans les manuscrits provenant de la *Bibliotheca Corviniana*.

Les manuscrits actuellement existants : Vincentius Obsopaeus a publié l'œuvre de Heliódoros Aithiopikés intitulée *Historias biblia X* sur la base de l'exemplaire de la Corvina (Bâle, 1534). D'après les notes de possesseurs, le manuscrit a passé, en 1577, de Joachim Camerarius au duc de Bavière, Albrecht V.³² Le même volume contient l'*Historia* de Polybios en grec, quant à la traduction latine de Nicolaus Perottus, elle se trouvait également dans le bibliothèque de Mathias. Elle a été offerte par un certain Ibrahim Machar au sultan en 1558/59 et elle n'est rentrée en Hongrie qu'en 1869.³³ Le texte de base de la première publication du Polybios grec a été également une corvina (Haguenau, 1530).³⁴ L'œuvre intitulée *Bibliothèque de Diodorus Siculus* a été publiée, elle aussi, pour la première fois en langue originale, par Obsopaeus, sur la base d'une corvina (Bâle, 1539)³⁵ et c'est lui qui a publié une seconde fois l'œuvre citée de Cortesius (sans en connaître la première publication : Haguenau, 1531), sur la base du manuscrit de la *Bibliotheca Corviniana* qui lui est parvenu en passant des mains János Corvin à celles de sa veuve puis au deuxième mari de cette dernière (Georges de Brandebourg).³⁶ L'œuvre d'Antonio Bonfini sur la chasteté et sur la pureté du mariage a dû être emmenée par la reine Béatrice de Buda à Naples, où elle a été achetée par Johannes Sambucus ; l'*editio princeps* (Bâle, 1572) a été faite, par ce dernier, à partir de l'exemplaire de sa bibliothèque, donc d'une corvina.³⁷

Aucun des manuscrits existants ne contient les œuvres des deux auteurs suivants (Corippus et Stephanus Geographus) mentionnés par Szamosközy. En se rappelant que l'humaniste de Transylvanie s'intéressait à la codicologie aussi³⁸ (il observait les différences entre les publications de textes antiques et humanistes et les manuscrits éventuellement retrouvés,³⁹ il faisait attention aux formes de nom, etc.), il n'est pas impossible qu'il ait gardé en mémoire des références aux pièces de la collection du grand roi et qu'il pouvait les citer à l'occasion sans prendre les volumes en main.⁴⁰

L'étude de ces deux auteurs – « *Crastonius Gorippus (sic !) qui libros Joannidos scripsit* » et Stephanus Geographus – est plus compliquée, mais promet des résultats plus intéressants. Il ne suffit pas de noter, à propos de ces deux cas, que la collection célèbre s'est enrichie grâce à Szamosközy, car d'autres problèmes se posent auxquels il faut faire face.

Le problème Corippus : Flavius Cresconius Corippus est un poète du 6^e siècle dont l'archiviste de Gyulafehérvár a cité l'œuvre intitulée *Iohannis, seu de bellis Lybicis*. Nous connaissons une autre œuvre de cet auteur : *De laudibus Iustini Augusti Minoris heroico carmine libri III*. Il n'est pas exclu que Szamosközy ait connu ce texte, publié par Michael Ruiz à Anvers en 1581.⁴¹ C'est peu probable cependant, car dans ce cas il n'aurait pas utilisé une forme erronée du nom. Avant

d'en présenter la source vraisemblable, il faut dire que la question Corippus (s'agit-il d'une corvina ou non ?, où se trouve-t-elle aujourd'hui ?) a déjà produit une bibliographie considérable. Csapodi, qui en a résumé une partie,⁴² a constaté que le manuscrit de la Trivulziana de Milan, tenu par beaucoup pour une corvina, n'appartenait pas à la bibliothèque de Mathias. Cet avis correspond à la position des éditeurs des textes de Iohannis,⁴³ qui ont tous eu connaissance de l'existence de la variante de Buda grâce au récit de Johannes Cuspinianus. Szamosközy connaissait aussi ce récit. Nous pouvons même dire plus : Nicolaus Gerbelius⁴⁴ a inclus dans son édition, outre la biographie de Cuspinianus, un catalogue des noms cités par celui-ci. Dans cette édition, nous trouvons mot à mot ce que Szamosközy dit : « *Crastonius Gorippus(!), qui libros Iohannidos scripsit, qui habentur in bibliotheca Budensi.* ».

Il faut cependant observer que Szamosközy n'a pas été le seul à se laisser abuser par le nom erroné. La même forme figure dans la *Bibliotheca universalis* bien connue de Conrad Gesner et la forme n'a pas changé dans les éditions de Gesner réalisées par Josias Simmler et Johann Jacob Frisius.⁴⁵ L'historiographe de Transylvanie aurait donc pu emprunter la forme erronée du nom à l'une ou l'autre des éditions citées, mais, comme nous l'avons déjà mentionné, il connaissait certainement la liste des noms de Gerbelius.

Stephanus Geographus : Szamosközy cite le nom de cet auteur sous cette forme car lui, ainsi que ses contemporains, savaient parfaitement de quel « Stephanus » s'agissait-il. Nous pensons qu'il s'agit de Stephanus Byzantinus qui a écrit au 5^e siècle une encyclopédie géographique intitulée *Ethnika* (le titre latin est : *De urbibus et populis*). Les humanistes y puisaient abondamment (comme le font les chercheurs de nos jours) pour découvrir la géographie ancienne de leur pays et des épisodes de son histoire.⁴⁶ Pourtant, la bibliographie spécialisée fort riche ne connaît aucune donnée prouvant que la collection de Buda ait possédé cette œuvre célèbre et nous ne savons pas non plus de quelle source Szamosközy en connaissait l'existence. Il est vrai qu'on en connaît trois éditions du 16^e siècle,⁴⁷ mais aucune n'indique que la base en serait une corvina. Les préfaces des éditions ultérieures⁴⁸ n'en parlent pas non plus, ni l'édition considérée la meilleure jusqu'à nos jours.⁴⁹

Szamosközy a-t-il vu le manuscrit même ? Théoriquement, nous ne pouvons pas l'exclure, compte tenu du grand nombre d'exemplaires conservés en Italie dont celui de la Bibliotheca Trivulziana.⁵⁰

Nous pensons qu'il convient de mentionner que l'Österreichische Nationalbibliothek possède une copie achetée à Sebastian Tegnagel,⁵¹ et que le répertoire de Csapodi fait également état de volumes de la même provenance : il est vrai que les deux sont des « corvinas douteuses ».⁵²

Dans cette situation, nous sommes obligés d'avancer des hypothèses. La supposition la plus logique est que, malgré le silence des sources consultées, Szamosközy aurait trouvé l'information dans un imprimé ou dans l'article *Stephanus Byzantinus* d'une encyclopédie contemporaine qui aurait mentionné que l'œuvre en question était disponible dans la Corvina.

Nous ne pouvons exclure, non plus, la possibilité que c'est une autre source qui a révélé à notre historiographe l'existence de l'encyclopédie géographique dans la Corvina. Bien qu'aucune des éditions du 16^e siècle (ni d'ailleurs celles ultérieures) n'ait été basée sur le manuscrit de la bibliothèque de Mathias, on peut quand-même imaginer que Szamosközy ait établi un lien entre leur parution et sa connaissance de l'existence du manuscrit. On est donc en droit de supposer, sans pouvoir l'affirmer, que l'auteur de l'*ars historica* a effectivement vu le manuscrit même.

Nous avons passé en revue sept manuscrits et dans un seul des cas n'avons-nous pas pu identifier la source de Szamosközy. Ce résultat montre qu'en lisant méthodiquement les préfaces des éditions de tous les textes antiques qui ont été associés à la Corvina, nous pouvons cerner de manière plus précise l'idée que se faisaient de la bibliothèque perdue, au 16^e siècle, les générations successives des humanistes européens. Ces informations étaient tout aussi accessibles à ceux qui ont voulu faire renaître, pour une raison ou pour une autre, la bibliothèque de Mathias. Or, nous savons que plusieurs tentatives ont été faites en ce sens au 17^e siècle.

Dans la présente communication, nous voudrions attirer l'attention sur les documents relatifs au projet de l'ordre des jésuites d'acquérir les livres.

Le comte Michael Rudolf Altham (1574–1638), général autrichien, était ambassadeur de l'empereur Mathias II auprès de la Porte et, en Transylvanie, auprès du prince Gábor Bethlen.⁵⁴ Le 8 avril 1618, le comte écrivit au pape pour lui demander d'échanger les livres turcs se trouvant dans la bibliothèque du grand-duc de Toscane contre les livres de Buda.⁵⁵ D'autres lettres, récemment trouvées prouvent que, de son côté, l'ordre des jésuites entreprit également des démarches pour seconder les efforts du pape. Le Général de l'ordre, Muzio Vitelleschi envoya une lettre (8 juin 1618) au recteur du collège jésuite de Vienne, Florianus Avancinus, dans laquelle il faisait état de ses doutes quant à l'issue de l'action. Il ne pensait guère possible d'acquérir la bibliothèque de Buda en échange des livres turcs qui se trouvaient dans la possession du grand-duc de Toscane (Cosimo II. Medici 1590–1621). Si le pape n'écrit pas, lui, Vitelleschi veut bien écrire au grand-duc concernant cette affaire.⁵⁶

La lettre suivante écrite, elle aussi par Vitelleschi, fut adressée à Caspar Gratiani, ambassadeur du sultan à Vienne (19 juin 1618).⁵⁷ Il informe l'ambassadeur qu'il était intervenu auprès du pape, mais celui-ci n'entendait pas se mêler de cette affaire. Il connaît la passion du grand-duc pour les antiquités. Or, un refus opposé

à la demande du Saint-Père les mettrait, tous deux, dans une position inconfortable. Cependant, dans une lettre datée du 29 septembre 1618, il se plaît à informer l'ambassadeur que le pape a changé d'avis et qu'il essaie de faire progresser l'affaire des livres turcs.⁵⁸

La bibliographie hongroise fait état des efforts de Gábor Bethlen, puis de György Rákóczi I, pour acquérir la collection se trouvant à Buda.⁵⁹ Or, Csaba Csapodi, qui a étudié à fond l'histoire de la bibliothèque de Mathias, a traité, dans plusieurs publications, de la question s'il pouvait y avoir encore des corvinas à Buda après 1526, quelle fraction de la bibliothèque pouvaient représenter les livres que n'avaient pris ni les humanistes bibliophiles, ni les mercenaires pillards, ni les agents du Trésor du Grand-Seigneur.⁶⁰ Ses recherches lui permettent de conclure que le peu de livres qui pouvaient encore se trouver au palais royal ne devaient guère présenter d'intérêt.⁶¹ Malgré l'argumentation nourrie de Csapodi, les correspondances citées ci-dessus nous incitent à ne pas exclure l'hypothèse contraire. Il est, en effet, difficile d'imaginer que les jésuites hongrois ou les princes de Transylvanie ne se seraient pas informés de ce qu'ils voulaient acquérir avant d'en essayer l'acquisition. Nous la retenons donc, bien que Luigi Ferdinando Marsigli n'ait trouvé, après la libération du château de l'occupation turque, que des manuscrits en papier non ornements.⁶²

Au début de cette étude, nous avons observé que l'histoire de la Corvina aux 16^e–17^e siècles permet de dégager des enseignements pointant au-delà des simples résultats philologiques. Ainsi, la politique culturelle de chacun des régimes des 19^e et 20^e siècles a défini sa position par rapport à cette bibliothèque. Aux 16^e et 17^e siècles, la dispersion de la collection a été perçue comme le symbole de la décomposition du pays. Les luttes pour la succession entre les Habsbourg et le parti hongrois (Ferdinand I^{er} et János Szapolyai), le détachement de la Transylvanie du Royaume en tant qu'État vassal de l'Empire ottoman et l'occupation turque de la Hongrie centrale, indiquent, avec précision, les directions de la dispersion de la Corvina. Le dessein humaniste de sauvegarder les manuscrits et de découvrir des variantes des textes d'auteurs antiques et médiévaux peut s'interpréter, dans cette analogie, comme correspondant au projet d'une union chrétienne (*unio christiana*) visant à refouler l'Empire ottoman musulman, qui sous-tendait la pensée politique de l'époque. Enfin, troisième parallèle, tout comme la pensée politique se focalisait, en Hongrie et en Transylvanie (des partisans des Habsbourg, de ceux de la protection ottomane et de ceux d'une Hongrie souveraine), sur la réunification du pays, le projet de sauvetage et de reconstitution de la *Bibliotheca Corviniana* est devenu le symbole de l'existence autonome la culture de Hongrie.⁶²

Les sources analysées dans cette étude illustrent trois visions distinctes. Les lettres et les préfaces des humanistes occidentaux, évoquant l'historique de tel ou tel volume de la Corvina, pleurent la perte de textes antiques. István Szamosközy,

l'historiographe humaniste hongrois de Transylvanie partage tout naturellement leurs sentiments. Mais il ne s'agit pas seulement de cela. À partir du moment où, de voïvodat, la Transylvanie est devenue une principauté indépendante (1541), ses princes s'efforçaient de promouvoir la culture de Hongrie (et non seulement celle de Transylvanie) dans l'esprit des valeurs du christianisme occidental. Comme organisateur de la culture, la cour princière de Gyulafehérvár est la digne héritière de la cour de Buda, même si les ressources financières des deux cours ne sont pas comparables. La fondation de collections centrales de la principauté (bibliothèques, archives), d'écoles (si possible, d'enseignement supérieur) et d'imprimeries, faisait partie des préoccupations de chacun des princes.⁶³ Il en était ainsi de Zsigmond Báthory, qui employait István Szamosközy comme archiviste. La traduction de Sallustius par János Baranyai Decsi parut sous son règne.⁶⁴ La préface en expose un programme de traduction conçu dans l'esprit de l'humanisme tardif. Baranyai Decsi énumère ici les auteurs dont il serait utile de traduire les œuvres en hongrois. Ce programme sera ensuite réalisé par les princes Gábor Bethlen (1613–1629) et György Rákóczi I^{er} (1631–1648). La Corvina, comme instrument représentatif du pouvoir, a été étudiée, de façon approfondie, par Árpád Mikó,⁶⁵ et la bibliographie hongroise traite abondamment du culte de Matthias resurgi à l'époque de Gábor Bethlen et de György Rákóczi I^{er}.⁶⁶ On peut donc considérer presque naturel que ces princes, qui avaient de très bonnes relations avec les dignitaires turcs, pensaient sérieusement à acquérir les manuscrits laissés à Buda ainsi que ceux qui avaient été emportés à Constantinople.

Cependant, les efforts des jésuites pour obtenir, par échange, les restes de la bibliothèque célèbre, exigent une explication plus poussée. À notre avis, ils sont motivés par deux idées non explicitées. Les deux servent le même objectif : mettre en avant le rôle de l'Ordre dans la reconstruction du système institutionnel de la culture hongroise (c'est-à-dire la culture du Royaume de Hongrie). L'acquisition de la Corvina en eût été l'acte symbolique le plus spectaculaire. Les efforts de recatholicisation déployés avec énergie, au début du 17^e siècle, ciblaient en premier lieu les familles aristocrates, non sans succès. L'acquisition des livres de Buda eût été fort utile pour la propagande : les jésuites qui dispensent les soins spirituels aux habitants des territoires occupés par le Turcs, « libèrent », en même temps, de leur prison les livres du grand roi, participent au redressement culturel du pays, etc. En poursuivant cette réflexion, nous prenons le risque d'avancer l'hypothèse selon laquelle il s'agissait de quelque chose de plus.

Le moteur de la recatholicisation de Hongrie, Péter Pázmány, archevêque d'Esztergom, était lui-même jésuite. Ses rapports avec les princes calvinistes de Transylvanie montrent qu'il n'était pas un partisan inconditionnel des Habsbourg. Aussi, poursuivait-t-il des débats sérieux, à ce sujet, avec Miklós Esterházy, palatin de Hongrie. Pázmány n'approuvait pas l'idée, en principe réalisable, d'une réunification du pays qui aurait commencé par la suppression de la principauté

vassale de Transylvanie, pour tourner ensuite contre les Turcs. Il estimait que cette option était irréaliste aux plans politique et militaire et, de plus, elle mettait en danger l'autonomie de la Hongrie et de la culture hongroise. Une option qui aurait tourné nombre de familles aristocratiques hongroise contre la dynastie. L'histoire lui a donné raison. La conclusion de la paix après la campagne victorieuse contre les Turcs (1664) fut suivie d'une conjuration de magnats hongrois contre l'empereur (1671) et la fin du 17^e et le début du 18^e siècles furent marqués par des guerres d'indépendance (Thököly, Rákóczi).

Les efforts de Péter Pázmány et des jésuites hongrois visaient à présenter la Hongrie au monde comme un pays à culture chrétienne autonome et à la relever dans cet esprit. Pour la rendre catholique, bien sûr. Le jésuite Melchior Inchofer (1585–1648) a même écrit l'histoire de l'Église de Hongrie,⁶⁷ mais les jésuites autrichiens (la politique autrichienne) en ont empêché la publication pendant longtemps. Selon la conception de cette œuvre, le christianisme hongrois n'est pas la « *filia* » de celui d'Autriche, mais une foi et une culture répandues avec succès par une église autonome depuis le règne de Saint Etienne.⁶⁸ Les jésuites continuaient à propager cette idée et à œuvrer pour fonder une *Provincia Hungarica* indépendante de la *Provincia Austriaca* (leurs efforts en cette matière n'ont pas abouti).⁶⁹ Ajoutons à cela que les aristocrates hongrois qui ne croyaient pas au succès d'une confrontation armée avec le pouvoir habsbourgeois, allaient tenter, au 18^e siècle, en suivant la même logique, de mettre en place un système de mécénat, appelé, d'une part, à soutenir les institutions culturelles et, d'autre part, à répandre un culte, certes catholique, mais hongrois, parmi les couches moins évoluées culturellement.

Nous pensons donc que les tentatives d'acquérir la *Bibliotheca Corviniana* participaient et de la politique apostolique et de la politique culturelle de la Compagnie. Vu sous cet angle, il importe peu de savoir s'il y avait à Buda, à l'époque des Turcs, des corvinas (manuscrits enluminés de la bibliothèque de Mathias) ou seulement des pièces de la chapelle royale (imprimés et manuscrits théologiques non ornementés en papier).

Dès avant le milieu du 18^e siècle, une documentation variée et riche s'est accumulée au sujet de la Bibliothèque Corvina.⁷⁰ La première monographie à ambition scientifique sur l'histoire de la bibliothèque, qui exploite, évalue et classe une partie des sources citées ci-dessus, est due à Schier Xistus (1728-1772), historien, membre de l'ordre de saint Augustin. L'auteur, doué d'un excellent sens rédactionnel, n'était pas seulement historien, mais aussi le bibliothécaire de la maison de l'ordre à Vienne. Il publia, en 1766, son étude sur *La naissance, le déclin, la destruction et les restes de la bibliothèque royale de Mathias Corvin à Buda*.⁷¹ Une deuxième édition, sortie après la mort de Schier, en 1799, prouve le succès de cette œuvre de 65 feuilles seulement. Elle est restée le livre de référence, régulièrement citée, au 19^e siècle. À la fin de la plaquette, Schier console ceux qui pleu-

rent la perte de la bibliothèque en disant que tandis qu'aucun volume ne subsiste de la bibliothèque d'Alexandrie des Ptolémées ou de celle de l'empereur de Byzance, de nombreux manuscrits merveilleusement décorés et magnifiquement reliés attestent le bien-fondé de la réputation de la *Bibliotheca Corviniana*. Il ajoute encore qu'il ne faut pas se lamenter qu'aucune bibliothèque de la Hongrie de son temps n'égale la splendeur de la bibliothèque royale de jadis, car les bibliothèques hongroises s'enrichissent, jour après jour, non seulement d'œuvres acquises à l'étranger, mais aussi d'œuvres nées dans le pays et dignes à la Corvina.

Nous connaissons nombreux projets de la deuxième moitié du 18^e siècle, qui proposaient de couronner le système d'institutions scientifiques de Hongrie par la fondation d'une société savante, c'est-à-dire d'une académie. L'époque de Mathias et la bibliothèque sont souvent citées dans ces projets selon lesquelles, la « réorganisation » de la bibliothèque, pourrait faire de Buda un des centres culturels importants de l'Europe. Le cas d'une sculpture en marbre rouge montre à quel point l'opinion publique était attachée au souvenir de la bibliothèque de Mathias. Ce chapiteau se trouve toujours à l'exposition permanente du Musée National de Hongrie. On peut lire sur cette œuvre emblématique, entre des volutes d'acanthe sur un ruban serpentin : « *Mathias princeps invictus ingenii voluptati opus hoc condidit generosum* ». ⁷² La sculpture reparut à la fin du 18^e siècle, retrouvée à côté de l'ancien hôtel de ville de Buda, près de l'église Notre-Dame. György Alajos Belnay, professeur de droit à Pozsony (Bratislava) l'a mentionnée le premier, dans son histoire de la littérature hongroise parue en 1799, et l'a, d'emblée, liée à la bibliothèque perdue du roi Mathias, sans autre argument que le texte gravé dans la pierre. ⁷³ Par la suite, rien n'a pu arrêter le mouvement : l'épigraphe s'est émancipée, a « quitté » le marbre, et la bibliographie en a fait l'inscription sur la porte, sur la façade de la bibliothèque. ⁷⁴ Qu'aucune source ne parle d'une colonne qui aurait soutenu la voûte de la salle de bibliothèque et qu'aucun voyageur ayant copié les inscriptions ne l'ait remarqué, ne gênait personne. La sculpture, une fois retrouvée et identifiée, cette belle fiction a été immédiatement intégrée dans l'histoire de l'art, pourtant discipline rigoureuse entre toutes. Aujourd'hui, nous savons que toutes les pierres de la Renaissance, trouvées dispersées dans le quartier du château de Buda, ne proviennent pas du palais royal. ⁷⁵ En ce qui concerne la pièce en question, nous devons avouer que nous n'en connaissons pas l'origine. Elle n'est intéressante que grâce à la tradition deux fois séculaire qui s'y attache.

Dès la fin du 18^e siècle et au début du 19^e, certaines pièces de la bibliothèque célèbre furent présentées aux enchères. Il faudra pourtant attendre quelque temps pour les premières tentatives en vue de les acquérir (selon certaines rédactions de l'époque : « ré-acquérir ») pour la Hongrie. Cependant lorsque l'idée de créer une bibliothèque nationale prend forme, plusieurs observent que si on avait un roi national, on pourrait avoir une bibliothèque nationale aussi. La formulation la plus nette de cette idée sortit de la plume de György Aranka (1791) : « On a l'habitude

de dire : le roi Mathias est mort et avec lui a disparu notre espoir d'une science hongroise ou nationale. Ce souverain rare, d'une intelligence supérieure à sa naissance, a commencé l'établissement d'une bibliothèque royale en la Grande Hongrie. Devenue la proie du pillage, ce qui en reste n'est plus une collection digne d'être appelée nationale. Il serait temps de commencer à mettre en lumière, pour le bien de notre pays, les nombreuses pièces précieuses, couvertes de poussière et de mites, qui sont autant de trésors enfouis du pays et de les rassembler pour en former une bibliothèque pour le public hongrois et étranger.»⁷⁶

Notes

- ¹ Naldo Naldi, *De laudibus Augustae Bibliothecae*, In: *Irodalomtörténeti emlékek* (Documentation de l'histoire littéraire), Éd. par Ábel Jenő, Budapest, 1890, 267.
- ² Le fait qui prouve le mieux que Hunyadi Mátyás a été classé parmi les seigneurs cultivés par la postérité est que le pape Paul V. (1605-1621) a fait peindre dans le palais du Vatican les bibliothèques les plus célèbres du monde et la fondation de la bibliothèque du roi Mathias y figure aussi. Cf. Jolán Balogh, *Mátyás király arcképei* (Portraits du roi Mathias), In: *Mátyás király emlékkönyv* (Album commémoratif du roi Mathias), Réd. par Imre Lukinich, Budapest, 1940, vol. I, 525.
- ³ Cf. Jörg K. Hoensch, *Mathias Corvinus, Diplomat, Feldherr und Mäzen*, Graz–Wien–Köln 1998; András Kubinyi, *Mátyás király* (Le roi Mathias), Budapest, 2001 ; Péter Kovács, *Mathias Corvinus*, Cosenza, 2001.
- ⁴ Jan Białostocki, *The Art of the Renaissance in Eastern Europe, Hungary, Bohemia, Poland*, Oxford, 1976; Rózsa Feuer-Tóth, *Art and Humanism in Hungary in the Age of Mathias Corvinus*, (Studia humanitatis, 8) Budapest, 1990; *Mathias Corvinus and Humanism in Central Europe*, Ed. by Tibor Klaniczay–József Jankovics (Studia humanitatis, 10), Budapest, 1994 ; Ernő Marosi, *Die Corvinische Renaissance in Ungarn und ihre Ausstrahlung in Ostmitteleuropa*, In: *Humanismus und Renaissance in Ostmitteleuropa vor der Reformation*, Hrsg. Winfried Eberhard–Alfred A. Strnad, Köln–Weimar–Wien, 1996, 173–187.
- ⁵ Árpád Mikó, *La nascita della biblioteca di Mattia Corvino e il suo ruolo nella rappresentazione del sovrano* ; Edit Madas, *La storia della Bibliotheca Corviniana nell'Ungheria dell'età moderna*, In : *Nel segno del Corvo. Libri e miniature della biblioteca di Mattia Corvino re d'Ungheria (1443–1490)*, Cura di Ernesto Milano, Modena, 2002, 23–32, 233–240.
- ⁶ Csaba Csapodi, *The Corvinian Library. History and Stock*, (Studia humanitatis, 1), Budapest 1973, (abrévié : CL) ; Cf. Árpád Mikó, *Stories of the Corvinian Library*, In: *Uralkodók és corvinák / Potentates and Corvinas*, Az Országos Széchényi Könyvtár jubileumi kiállítása alapításának 200. évfordulóján / Anniversary Exhibition of the National Széchényi Library, Ed. by Karsay Orsolya, Budapest, 2002, 139–155.
- ⁷ Orsolya Karsay, *A „fenséges könyvtár dicsérete”* (Louange de la bibliothèque majestueuse), *Magyar Könyvszemle* (Revue pour l'histoire du livre et de la presse), 1991, 316–324, en particulier 319–320.
- ⁸ CL (*op. cit.* voir supra la note 6.) Nr. 539.
- ⁹ CL (*op. cit.* voir supra la note 6.) Nr. 377.
- ¹⁰ CL (*op. cit.* voir supra la note 6.) Nr. 435.
- ¹¹ Potentates ... *op. cit.* (voir supra la note 6.) 37–53.

- ¹² Jolán Balogh, *A művészet Mátyás király udvarában* (L'art dans la cour du roi Mathias) vol. I–II, Budapest 1966, I, 62–65. ; Árpád Mikó *op. cit.* (voir supra la note 5.)
- ¹³ Ferenc Földesi, From Buda to Vienna, In: *Potentates ... op. cit.* (voir supra la note 6.) 97–102.
- ¹⁴ Árpád Mikó, *Az olomouci Alberti-corvina – Augustinus Olomucensis könyve* (La corvina-Alberti à Olomouc – Livre d'Augustinus Olomucensis), *Művészettörténeti Értesítő* (Bulletin de l'histoire de l'art) 1985, 65–72.
- ¹⁵ Tibor Klaniczay, Die Benennungen “Hungaria” und “Pannonia” als Mittel der Identitätssuche der Ungarn, In: *Antike Rezeption und nationale Identität in der Renaissance insbesondere in Deutschland und in Ungarn*, Hrsg. von Klaniczay, Tibor–Németh, S. Katalin–Schmidt, Paul-Gerhardt (Studia Humanitatis, 9), Budapest, 1993, 83–100. ; Jenő Szűcs, *Nemzetiség a feudalizmus korában* (Nation in Feudalism), Budapest, 1972.
- ¹⁶ István Monok, *Cara Patria ac publica utilitas – Széchényi Ferenc könyvtáralapítása* (La fondation de la Bibliothèque nationale par Ferenc Széchényi), *Századok* (Les siècles), 2004. 362–378.
- ¹⁷ *Bibliographia Bibliothecae regis Mathiae Corvini, Mátyás Király könyvtárának irodalma*, Fitz József közreműködésével összeállította Zolnai Klára (Établie par Klára Zolnai en coopération de József Fitz), Budapest, 1942.
- ¹⁸ Les plus importants récapitulatifs : Csaba Csapodi, CL (voir supra la note 6.) ; Csaba Csapodi–Klára Gárdonyi, *Bibliotheca Corviniana*, 3^e édition complétée, Budapest, 1981.
- ¹⁹ Csaba Csapodi, *Mikor pusztult el Mátyás király könyvtára?* (Quand la bibliothèque du roi Mathias a été perdue?), *Magyar Könyvszemle* (Revue pour l'histoire du livre et de la presse), 1961, 394–421. ; (dans un cahier à part, le même : Budapest, 1961, A Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Könyvtárának közleményei 24. (Bulletins de la Bibliothèque de l'Académie Hongroise des Sciences. 24.) ; Csaba Csapodi, *Wann wurde die Bibliothek des Königs Mathias Corvinus vernichtet?* Gutenberg Jahrbuch, 1971, 384–390.
- ²⁰ Csaba Csapodi, *A budai királyi palotában 1686-ban talált kódexek és nyomtatott könyvek* (Livres et manuscrits retrouvés en 1686 dans le palais royale de Buda), Budapest, 1984, A Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Könyvtárának Közleményei (Bulletins de la Bibliothèque de l'Académie Hongroise des Sciences) 15(90) Nouvelle série.
- ²¹ Zolnai, *op. cit.* (voir supra la note 17.) Évidemment complété par le compte rendu bibliographique, dans un chapitre autonome, des approches iconographiques et de point de vue d'histoire de l'art. Voir la note 1. Les chapitres sont les suivants : A Corvina Mátyás idején (La Corvina au temps de Mathias) – A Corvina Mátyás utódai alatt (La Corvina sous le règne des successeurs de Mathias) – A Corvina török kézen (La Corvina en possession turque) – A maradványok felkutatása (Recherche des restes) – Történeti analízis (Analyse historique) – Történeti szintézis (Synthèse historique) – A fennmaradt kötetek (Les volumes subsistants) – Kétes és elveszett Korvinák (Corvinas douteux et perdus).
- ²² In: *Potentates ... op. cit.* (voir supra la note 6.)
- ²³ Le directeur du programme est Jean-Francois Maillard, en premier, un répertoire a paru sur les personnes et sur les éditions de texte à examiner: *L'Europe des humanistes (XIV^e–XVII^e siècles)*, Répertoire par Jean-Francois Maillard, Judith Kecskeméti, Monique Portalier, Paris–Turnhout, 1998, CNRS, Brepols.
- ²⁴ Les deux premiers volumes sont parus : *La France des humanistes, Hellénistes I*, par Jean François Maillard, Judith Kecskeméti, Catherine Magnien, Monique Portalier, Paris–Turnhout, 2001, CNRS, Brepols ; *La France des humanistes. Henri II Estienne éditeur et écrivain*, par Judith Kecskeméti, Bénédicte Boudou, Hélène Cazes, sous la dir. de Jean Céard, Paris–Turnhout, 2003, CNRS, Brepols
- ²⁵ Csaba Csapodi a récapitulé ces opinions dans sa monographie anglaise aussi. Cf. CL *op. cit.* (voir supra la note 6.) pag. 72–90.

- ²⁶ Ibidem, cf. Csapodi 1961, *op. cit.* (voir supra la note 19.) 47–48.
- ²⁷ Mihály Balázs–István Monok, *Szamosközy István és a Corvina* (István Szamosközy et la Corvina), *Magyar Könyvszemle* (Revue pour l’histoire du livre et de la presse), 1986, 215–219.
- ²⁸ Son nom latin est Stephanus Samosius (1565–1612?), l’archiviste du prince de Transylvanie à Gyulafehérvár (Alba Iulia en Roumanie), historiographe.
- ²⁹ Mihály Balázs–István Monok–Ibolya Tar (trad.), *Az első magyar ars historica: Szamosközy István Giovanni Michaele Bruto történetírói módszeréről (1594–1598)* (Le premier ars historica hongrois : István Szamosközy sur la méthode de Giovanni Michaele Bruto (1594–1598), *Lymbus*, Vol. 4, Szeged, 1992, 49–86.
- ³⁰ Du point de vue de la Corvina il est négligeable que cette proposition a aussi été faite pour mettre en une situation désagréable l’historiographe Bruto qui a quitté la famille Báthory pour passer du côté des Habsbourg. Bruto a écrit son œuvre historique en tant que partisan des Báthory. L’œuvre n’a paru que dans la deuxième moitié du 19^e siècle. Cf : Mihály Balázs–István Monok, *Történetírók Báthory Zsigmond udvarában, Szamosközy István és Baranyai Decsi János kiadatlan műveiről*, (Historiographes dans la cour de Zsigmond Báthory, Sur les œuvres inédites de István Szamosközy et de János Baranyai Decsi) in: *Magyar reneszánsz udvari kultúra* (Culture de la cour dans la renaissance hongroise), Réd. par Ágnes R. Várkonyi, Budapest, 1987, 249–262.
- ³¹ *Ars historica op. cit.* (voir supra la note 29.) pag. 56.
- ³² *CL op. cit.* (voir supra la note 6.) Nr. 315, Nr. 539.
- ³³ *CL op. cit.* (voir supra la note 6.) Nr. 540.
- ³⁴ *CL op. cit.* (voir supra la note 6.) Nr. 539. ; Csapodi se réfère aussi à l’œuvre de Mattheus Sebastianus, *Oratio de rege Pannoniae Mathia recitata*, Wittenberg, 1551, qui cite la première édition de Polybios – Szamosközy en a aussi pu s’informer.
- ³⁵ *CL op. cit.* (voir supra la note 6.) Nr. 225.
- ³⁶ *CL op. cit.* (voir supra la note 6.) Nr. 206., Nr. 207.
- ³⁷ *CL op. cit.* (voir supra la note 6.) Nr. 131., et Antonio Bonfini, *Symposion de virginitate et pudicitia coniugali*, Ed. Stephanus Apró (Bibliotheca Scriptorum Meii Recentisque Aevorum) Budapest, 1943, 16–19.
- ³⁸ La corvina de Szamosközy : Depuis l’édition Szamosközy de Sándor Szilágyi en 1877, nous savons (*Szamosközy István történeti maradványai* [Les fragments historiques de István Szamosközy] Éd. par Sándor Szilágyi, [Monumenta Hungariae Historia. Scriptores, 18] Budapest, 1877, 105–106.) que par le hasard, l’œuvre de Marcus Iunianus Iustinus enregistrée sous le titre *Epitomen historiarum Philippicarum Trogi Pompei* a passé à l’historiographe (« casu quopiam ad me delatam » sc. manuscriptam), laquelle œuvre est reconnue aussi par Csaba Csapodi comme une corvina authentique perdue (CL Nr. 374). En rapport de ce manuscrit, Zsigmond Jakó se réfère à l’intérêt codicologique de l’archiviste du prince, lequel intérêt est aussi rendu évident sur la base de la description de Szamosközy, prêtée à Antonio Marietti, sur le manuscrit perdu au moment du ravage de la bibliothèque jésuite de Kolozsvár en 1603 : « Hunc librum paucis ante mensibus, quam haec clades patriae incumberet, Antonio Marietto erudito Jesuitae, malo codicis genio et meo fato utendum accomodaveram, quod ideo libentius in hac publicae privataeque cladis memoria refero, quod praeclarus auctor praenomine et nomine temporum iniuria amisso atque etiam libri titulo, quem adscripsi, intercepto solo cognomine residuo ex omnibus opinor, typographii Achephalos hactenus prodiit » (Szamosközy 1877. 106–107.). Dans la suite, Jakó suppose que la corvina a dû passer de la bibliothèque ravagée du prince Zsigmond Báthory (1598) à son archiviste (Zsigmond Jakó, *Erdély és a Corvina* (La Transylvanie et la Corvina), in: Zsigmond Jakó, *Írás, könyv, értelmiség* (Écriture, livre, intellectuelles), Bukarest, 1974, 176.

- ³⁹ Son recueil d'épigraphes a paru de son vivant (Padou, 1593), mais il a aussi continué de recueillir après la parution. Voir l'édition de son travail subsistant en manuscrit et l'édition fac-similé de la publication de l'époque : István Szamosközy, *Analecta lapidum (1593) – Inscriptiones Romanae Albae Juliae et circa locorum (1598)*, Classé pour la publication par Mihály Balázs, István Monok. Szeged, 1992.
- ⁴⁰ Il n'a pas pu voir les manuscrits mêmes car, dans son époque, ils étaient déjà à Vienne ou sur des territoires germaniques. Il est improbable qu'il en ait rencontré un seul lors de son voyage en Italie.
- ⁴¹ *Corippi ... de laudibus Iustini Augusti Minoris heroico carmine libri III ...* per Michaellem Ruzium, Antuerpiae, 1581, Plantin.
- ⁴² CL *op. cit.* (voir supra la note 6.) Nr. 205; Voir encore P. A. Budik, *Entstehung und Verfall der berühmten von König Mathias Corvinus gestifteten Bibliotheken zu Ofen*, Jahrbücher der Literatur, 1839, Wien, Anzeige-Blatt, 37–56. ; Vilmos Fraknói, *Két hét olaszországi könyv- és levéltárakban* (Deux semaines dans les bibliothèques et aux archives) Magyar Könyvszemle (Revue pour l'histoire du livre et de la presse), 1878, 125–128. ; János Csontos, *Külföldi mozgalmak a Corvina-irodalom terén* (Mouvements étrangers dans le domaine de la bibliographie Corvina), Magyar Könyvszemle (Revue pour l'histoire du livre et de la presse), 1878, 214–215. ; idem, *Latin Corvin-codexek bibliographiai jegyzéke*, (Liste bibliographiques des manuscrits Corvin latins), Magyar Könyvszemle (Revue pour l'histoire du livre et de la presse), 1881, 165–166. ; Gustav Loewe, *Rheinisches Museum*, 1883, 315–316. ; Jenő Ábel, *Corippus Joannisáról* (Sur Joannis de Corippus) *Egyetemes Philologiai Közlöny* (Bulletin de la philologie universelle), 1883, 948–950. ; János Csontos, *Hazai vonatkozású kéziratok a Gróf Trivulzio-család milánói könyvtárában*, (Manuscrits relatifs à la Hongrie dans la bibliothèque de la famille Trivulzio à Milan), Magyar Könyvszemle (Revue pour l'histoire du livre et de la presse), 1891, 145–146. ; Gyula Schönherr, *A milanoi korvin-kódexekről* (Sur les manuscrits Corvin de Milan), Magyar Könyvszemle (Revue pour l'histoire du livre et de la presse), 1896, 161–168.; Max Manitius, *Geschichte der lateinischen Literatur*, Bd. I, München, 1911, 168–170.
- ⁴³ A *De laudibus Iustini ...* suite à la première édition en 1581, contrairement aux 3 éditions du 17^e, 6 du 18^e, 4 du 19^e et 3 du 20^e siècle (voir les énumérations : Corippe, *Éloge de l'Empereur Justin, II*, Texte établi et traduit par Serge Antés, Paris, 1981, CVII–CXI.) l'édition princeps de *Johannis : Mediolani*, 1820 (ed. Pietro Mazzuchelli) ; les 29 volumes de la série *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae* d'Immanuel Bekker contient aussi son édition : Bonnae, 1936; cela a été suivi par l'édition la plus souvent utilisée jusqu'à nos jours, Joseph Partsch, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Auctores Antiquissimi III/2*. Berolini, 1879 ; ensuit par l'édition de Michael Petschenig (Berolini, 1886) ; la seule traduction a paru ensuite (sur microfilm) G. W. Shea, *The Iohannis of Flavius Cresconius Corippus Prolegomena and Translation*, Diss. Columbia Univ. New York, 1966 ; Adalberto Hamman a repris l'édition de Petschenig, *Patrologiae cursus completus, Supplementum*, Vol. IV. Paris, 1968, 998–1127., et enfin l'édition critique : J. Diggle–F. R. Goodyear, Cambridge Univ. Press, 1970.
- ⁴⁴ *Joannis Cuspiniani ... De Caesaribus atque Imperatoribus Romanis ... Vita Ioannis Cuspiniani et de utilitate huius historiae*, per Nicolaum Gerbelium, Strassburg, 1540. 216.
- ⁴⁵ Basileae, 1545. 1574 et 1583.
- ⁴⁶ En regardant les volumes de l'*Année philologique*, nous nous sommes surtout rencontrés d'études ayant ce point de vue.
- ⁴⁷ *Peri poleón*. Aldus Manutius l'a publié en grec sous le titre *De urbibus*, Venice, 1602. (editio princeps) ; Héritiers de Philippo Junta, Florence, 1521; Guilielmus Xylander, Bâle, 1568.
- ⁴⁸ Theodor Pinedo–Jacobus Gronovius, Amsterdam, 1678, (idem : 1725); Abraham Berkeleius–Jacobus Gronovius, Leide, 1688, (idem 1694); Lucas Holstenius–Theodor Ryck, Leide,

- 1684 (idem 1692 et Utrecht, 1691); Publié avec les notes de Pinedo, Holstenius et Berkelius par Quilhelmus Dindorf, Leipzig, 1825 ; Antonius Westermann, Leipzig, 1839 (Teubner).
- 49 Stephani Byzantini *Ethnicorum quae supersunt ex recensione Augusti Meinekii* Berolini, 1849; réimpression inchangée : Graz, 1958.
- 50 Paul Oskar Kristeller, *Iter Italicum*, Vol. I, London–Leiden, 1965, 360. Nr. 737; les autres en copie, même lieu, Vol. II, London–Leiden, 1967., 335., 442–444., 531. D’autres corvinas dans la Trivultiana : CL *op. cit.* (voir supra la note 6.) Nr. 541 et Nr. 577.
- 51 Petri Lambecii ... *Commentariorum de Augustissima Bibliotheca Caesarea Vindobonensi Liber primus* ... Ed. altera, Opera et studio Adami Francisci Kollarii ... Vindobonae, 1766, 127. CL *op. cit.* (voir supra la note 6.) Nr. 320, Nr. 459.
- 52 *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* I. 366.
- 53 Vilmos Frank, *A budai Corvin-könyvtár történetéhez* (À l’histoire de le Bibliothèque Corvin de Buda), Archeológiai Értesítő (Bulletin de l’archéologie), 1874, 297–299.
- 54 Erdélyi és hódoltsági jezsuita missziók, I/1–2, (Les missions jésuites en Transylvanie et en Hongrie occupée par les Turcs) 1609–1625, Sajtó alá rend. (éd. par) Balázs Mihály, Fricsy Ádám, Lukács László, Monok István, Szeged, 1990, 322.: « Alias quoque literas easque paulo recentiores a Reverentia Vestra accepi, quibus studium Illustrissimi Comitis ab Altham, quo ille rem christianam in Hungaria, Transylvania, Wallachia vicinisque regionibus promovere satagit, explicabat; quod ego a me suggeri possit, quo a Magno duce Hetruariae capsula illa librorum Turcicorum in compensationem Bibliothecae Budensis impetrari possit; quod tamen admodum difficile impetratu fore video. Quod attinet ad literas a Sua Sanctitate ad ipsum Comitem, eae difficulter impetrabuntur. Quod si sine illis meae literae ipsi gratae futurae putentur, libenter eas ad ipsum prima occasione transmittam. »
- 55 Erdélyi ... *op. cit.* (voir supra la note 55.) 322–323.
- 56 Erdélyi ... *op. cit.* (voir supra la note 55.) 330.
- 57 Voir la récapitulation des données parues à plusieurs endroits : István Harsányi, *A sárospataki Rákóczi-könyvtár és katalógusa* (La bibliothèque Rákóczi à Sárospatak), Budapest, 1917. 6. ; Csapodi 1961 *op. cit.* (voir supra la note 19.) ; Csapodi 1971 *op. cit.* (voir supra la note 19.) ; Csapodi 1961 *op. cit.* (voir supra la note 19.) ; Csapodi 1971 *op. cit.* (voir supra la note 19.) ; CL *op. cit.* (voir supra la note 6.) Nr. 72–92.; Csapodi 1984 *op. cit.* (voir supra la note 20.) ; Csapodi 1984 *op. cit.* (voir supra la note 20.) 43–51. és 81–82.
- 60 Une liste a été faite des livres, dont aujourd’hui nous connaissons trois copies manuscrites. Elle a été publiée deux fois à l’époque : Julius Pflugk, *Epistola ad Vitum a Seckendorf praeter fata Bibliothecae Budensis, librorum quoque ultima expugnatione repertorum catalogum exhibens*, Jenae, 1688. ; *De bibliothecis atque archivis virorum clarissimorum libelli et commentationes antediluvianis*, Antehac edidit Joachimus Joannes Maderus, Secundam editionem curavit Ioannes Andreas Schmidt, Helmstadi, 1702, 335–352. (la liste des livres de Buda ne figurait pas dans la première édition de la collection); Interprétation moderne de la liste : Csapodi 1984 *op. cit.* (voir supra la note 20.)
- 61 Il est importante d’accentuer qu’il ne s’agit pas d’une culture hongroise car dans cette époque, le point de vue national n’existait pas encore en la même forme qu’au milieu du 18^e siècle. Il s’agissait de l’unité du Royaume Hongrois en face de l’Empire Turc et celle des Habsbourg et ce Royaume hongrois avait des habitants de beaucoup de nationalités. Il existait en même temps une conscience « Hungarus » unie. Voir Tibor Klaniczay, Die Benennungen „Hungaria” und „Pannonia” als Mittel der Identitätssuche der Ungarn, In: *Antike Rezeption und nationale Identität in der Renaissance insbesondere in Deutschland und in Ungarn*, Hrsg. von Tibor Klaniczay – Katalin S. Németh – Paul-Gerhardt Schmidt, Budapest, 1993. 83–100.
- 62 Cf. Tibor Klaniczay, Die Soziale und institutionelle Infrastruktur der ungarischen Renaissance, In: *Die Renaissance im Blick der Nationen Europas*, Hrsg. von Georg Kaufmann, Wies-

- baden, 1991, (Wolfenbütteler Abhandlungen zur Renaissanceforschung, Bd. 9) 319–338. ; Tibor Klaniczay, Les intellectuels dans un pays sans universités (Hongrie: 16^e siècle), In: *Intellectuels français, intellectuels hongrois*, Éd. par Béla Köpeczi, Budapest–Paris, 1985, 99–109.
- 64 *Az Caius Crispus Sallustiusnak ket historiaia ...* (Les deux histoires de Caius Crispus) Szebenben, 1596 (RMNy 786) editio facsimile par Ágnes Kurcz et Béla Varjas, Budapest, 1979.
- 65 Árpád Mikó, Mathias Corvinus–Mathias Augustus, L’arte all’antica nel servizio del potere, In: *Cultura e potere nel rinascimento*, A cura di Luisa Secchi Tarugi, Firenze, 1999, 209–220.
- 66 Présentation récapitulative, en langue non hongroise : *Millénaire de l’histoire de Hongrie*, Sous la dir. de Péter Hanák, Budapest, 1986. (László Makkai, 51–63. : La scission du pays en trois parties ; Kálmán Benda, 64–88. : La réunification de la Hongrie dans l’Empire des Habsbourg) ; *Histoire de la Transylvanie*, Sous la dir. de Béla Köpeczi, Budapest, 1992 (Gábor Barta, 239–292. : La première période de la Principauté de Transylvanie 1526–1606 ; Katalin Péter, 293–345. : L’âge d’or de la Principauté de Transylvanie 1606–1660) ; István Nemeskürty, *Nous, les Hongrois, Histoire de Hongrie*, Budapest, 1994, 130–207. ; Béla Köpeczi, *Histoire de l’histoire de la culture hongroise*, Budapest, 1994.
- 67 *Annales ecclesiastici Regni Hungariae*, Romae, 1644.
- 68 Dezső Dümmerth, *Inchofer Menyhért küzdelmei és tragédiája Rómában* (Les luttes et la tragédie de Melchior Inchofer à Rome) 1641–1648, In: idem : *Írástudók küzdelmei, Magyar művelődéstörténeti tanulmányok* (Luttes des intellectuels, Études sur l’histoire de la civilisation hongroise), Budapest, 1987, 155–204.
- 69 Cf. László Lukács, *A független magyar jezsuita rendtartomány kérdése és az osztrák abszolutizmus* (La question d’une indépendante province jésuite hongroise et l’absolutisme autrichien), 1649–1773, Szeged, 1989.
- 70 cf. Edit Madas, *op. cit.* (voir supra la note 5.)
- 71 *Dissertatio de regiae Budensis Bibliothecae Mathiae ortu, lapsu, interitu et reliquiis*, Vindobonae, 1766.
- 72 Jolán Balogh *op. cit.* (voir supra la note 12.) I, 110; II, 73 ; cf. Árpád Mikó, *op. cit.* (voir supra la note 5.).
- 73 Georgius Belnay, *Historia literarum bonarumque artium*, Posonii, 1799, 50.
- 74 József Fögel, *A könyvtár története az 1471-i összeesküvés után Mátyás király haláláig* (L’histoire de la bibliothèque après la conspiration de 1471 jusqu’à la mort du roi Mathias) In: *Bibliotheca Corvina*, Réd. par Albert Berzeviczy–Ferenc Kollányi–Tibor Gerevich, Budapest, 1927, 222–245.
- 75 Voir par exemple les résultats récents des fouilles sur la place Szent György où on a trouvé, parmi les débris d’une maison originaire de la fin du Moyen Âge, beaucoup de sculptures tombées all’antica de l’époque Jagellon, in situ. Une d’entre elles s’attache à un fragment de frise retrouvé à la fin du 19^e siècle, qui a été lié jusqu’ici au palais du roi Mathias, évidemment par défaut (trouvaille d’András Végh) ; cf. Árpád Mikó, *op. cit.* (voir supra la note 5.).
- 76 György Aranka, *Egy magyar Nyelvmívelő Társaságnak szükségessége*, (Écho de la fondation de la bibliothèque nationale de Hongrie), cite Kókay György, *Nemzeti könyvtárunk megalapításának visszhangja a korabeli sajtóban*, (La nécessité d’une Société hongroise pour la défense de la langue nationale). In idem : György Kókay, *Könyv, sajtó és irodalom a felvilágosodás korában* (Livre, presse et littérature à l’époque des Lumières), Budapest, 1983, 191.

THE PRICE OF SURVIVAL: TRANSFORMATIONS IN ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS AND SUBSISTENCE SYSTEMS IN HUNGARY IN THE AGE OF OTTOMAN OCCUPATION

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In the modern era the population of the Carpathian Basin, for political and environmental reasons, was bound to the fundamental alterations of the prevailing subsistence system. Over the course of the 16th and the 17th centuries the country became a borderland between the Habsburg and Ottoman Empires. The regional effects of the Little Ice Age were aggravated by the ravages of the warring armies. Moreover, the climate turned cooler and wetter, and in consequence marshlands and swamps grew significantly. The population of Hungary adapted to the nearly two centuries of warfare, the environmental effects, and the European economic environment by cultivating cattle breeding and exports. Cattle exports reached 250,000 at the end of the 16th century, and the country's economic unity survived intact in spite of the fact that Hungary itself had disintegrated politically. Following the close of the Turkish wars, Hungary became a part of the Central European Habsburg Empire.

Keywords: environmental history, Hungary, Ottoman occupation, subsistence systems, cattle trade, climate change, Little Ice Age

The period of Ottoman occupation (1541–1699) represents one of the most important turning points in Hungarian history. Before the Turkish invasion, the medieval Hungarian Kingdom had been a regional middle-power in Europe, and the artists of the Renaissance mentioned the city of Buda alongside Venice and Florence in the age of Matthias Corvinus (1458–1490). But with the incursion of the Ottoman armies, Hungary became a borderland, a frontline and bastion of Christianity for the 16th and 17th centuries. These two-hundred years represented an era of hardships for the population of Hungary, which was compelled to adapt, sometimes radically, to the changed circumstances. In this short study I review some of the transformations and adaptations of the subsistence systems of the Carpathian Basin during the Turkish wars.

The Area under Analysis

The geographical and political units of the following environmental history analysis overlap to a large extent. The medieval Hungarian Kingdom occupied the whole Carpathian Basin, so I will use these two terms as synonyms. The Carpathian Basin spans some 325,000 square kilometers in the heart of Europe and forms the largest part of the Central European basin-area south and west of the Bohemian and the Viennese basin. The main geomorphologic feature of the area is its character as a basin. Two-thirds of the basin is below 500 meters above sea level, and half of it is below 200 meters, so it is a perfect plain. The climate of the Carpathian Basin is temperate. The yearly temperature average is around 10 degrees Celsius and precipitation is approximately 600 mm in the inner parts of the basin. There are four distinct historical geographical macro-regions in the Carpathian Basin: Transdanubia, the Highlands (present-day Slovakia), the Great Hungarian Plain, and Transylvania (part of Romania since 1918).

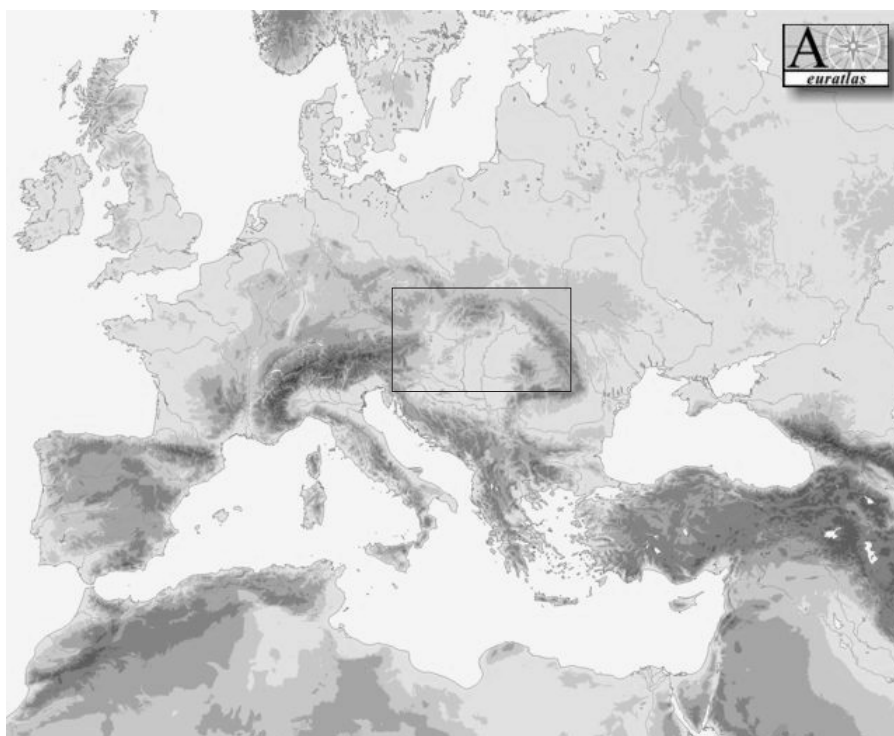


Figure 1. The Carpathian Basin in Europe

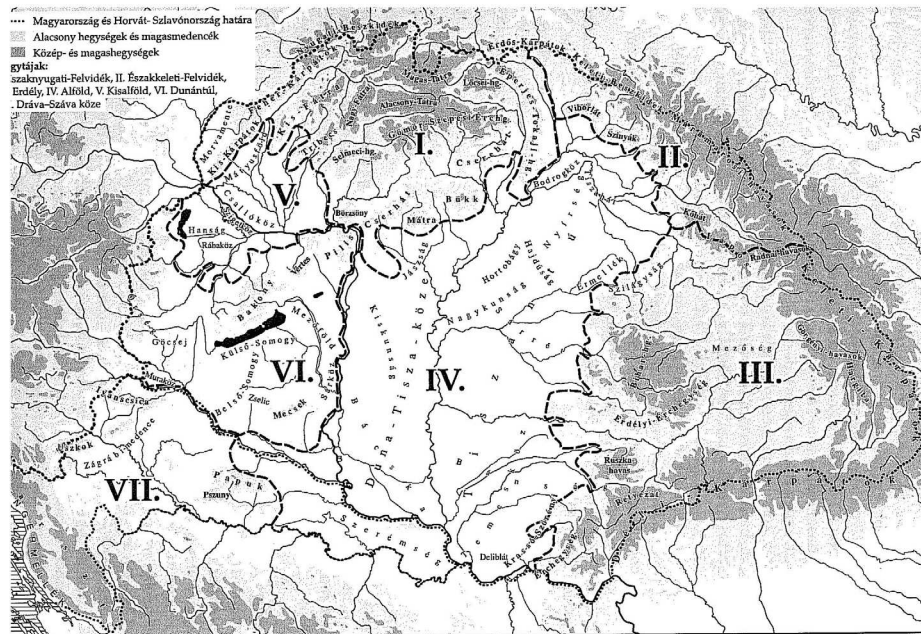


Figure 2. Historical regions of the Carpathian Basin

I. The Northern Highlands (today part of Slovakia), II. The Northeastern Highlands (today part of Slovakia and the Ukraine), III. Transylvania (today part of Romania), IV. The Great Hungarian Plain (the southern part of which is in present-day Serbia), V. The Small Hungarian Plain (the northern part of which is in present-day Slovakia), VI. Transdanubia, VII. Croatia.

Political and Military Blows: The Turkish Invasion

The Ottoman Empire arrived in the region of the medieval Hungarian Kingdom after the defeat of the Balkan coalition on the battlefield of Kosovo in 1389. The 15th century was an age of struggle between equal forces along the southern line of defense in Hungary. But during the first half of the 16th century the Turks delivered three decisive defeats to the Hungarian armies. On August 29th, 1521, following a long siege, the young Suleiman the Magnificent (1520–1566) captured the fort of Belgrade, which was the key fortress of the southern line of defense, leaving the Hungarian Kingdom indefensible. On August 29th, 1526 the royal Hungarian army suffered defeat at the hands of Suleiman in the battle of Mohács. The most tragic event of the battle took place in the last phase of the struggle, when the young Hungarian king, Louis II Jagiellon (1516–1526), died (the circumstances of his death were never clarified and became the source of numerous legends). In the wake of his fall, two candidates appeared for the crown: Ferdinand Habsburg (1526–1564) of Austria, the younger brother of Emperor

Charles V, and János Zápolya (1526–1540), governor of Transylvania, whose forces never arrived at the battlefield of Mohács, thereby leaving him with the largest standing army in Hungary. Moreover, in all probability he was grandson of János Hunyadi (1407–1456), the former governor of Hungary. The Turkish army left the country in 1526, though soldiers remained in the key forts of the southern part of the country. During the fifteen year struggle over succession (1526–1541) the foreign policy of the Ottoman Empire was to support the weaker candidate, János Zápolya, and postpone the resolution of the feud, which dissipated the forces of the country. Finally, on August 29th, 1541 the janissary troops captured the fortress of Buda. The capital of the medieval Hungarian Kingdom became a Turkish border fort and the southern and central parts of the country were integrated into the Ottoman Empire for the next 150 years. Western Transdanubia, Croatia and the Highlands remained under Habsburg rule as Royal Hungary. The Transylvanian Principality became a satellite state of the Ottoman Empire, enjoying very limited and sometimes strictly controlled independence. Until the end of the wars fought between the Habsburgs and the Ottoman Empire over control of the former kingdom (1683–1699) the entire territory of Hungary was temporarily or continuously a battleground, which left the country in ruins.

Environmental Blows: The Little Ice Age

According to the consensus among climate historians the Little Ice Age began in the second third of the 14th century, after the close of the medieval warm epoch (9th–14th centuries), and came to an end in the last decade of 19th century (followed now by the recently acknowledged trend in global warming). During the Little Ice Age the global climate became cooler, but there were four specific periods of change in the process of climate decline: the middle of the 14th century, the last decades of the 16th century, the turn of the 17th and 18th centuries, and the first half of the 19th century.

There is no virtual documentary data concerning the climate history of the Carpathian Basin of the late Middle Ages. We can begin to reconstruct the climate history of Hungary beginning with the end of the 16th century, and the reliability of the model begins to increase considerably following the middle of the 17th century.

The climate of the Carpathian Basin followed the main trends of the European climate changes of the Little Ice Age, but we can identify two important regional features. First, precipitation was a more important indicator of climate changes in Hungary than temperature. When the European (and global) climate became cooler the quantity of precipitation increased in the Carpathian Basin while during the age of warming (as has happened recently), the climate became drier. Sec-

only, during the periods of climate change the structure of the natural seasons in Hungary shifted. Natural seasons never coincide exactly with the seasons of the calendar, but these shifts were continuous and significant. During the specific periods of climate change of the Little Ice Age (the turn of the 17th and 18th centuries and the second third of the 19th century) winters became much longer. The month of March became a winter month and often the Danube remained under ice cover until the end of the first official spring month. The shift in the seasons gave rise to short, late summers limited to the months of July and August, resembling summers in Scandinavia. During the (recent) period of global warming the structure of natural seasons has simplified and the climate has become one marked by only two seasons, the winter, lasting roughly half of the year, and the summer, lasting the other half.

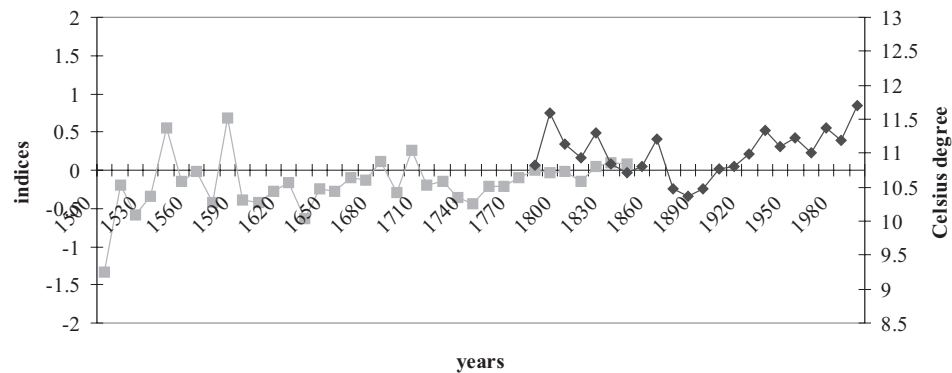


Figure 3. Temperature changes in the Carpathian Basin from the 16th century to the end of the 20th century, 10 year averages

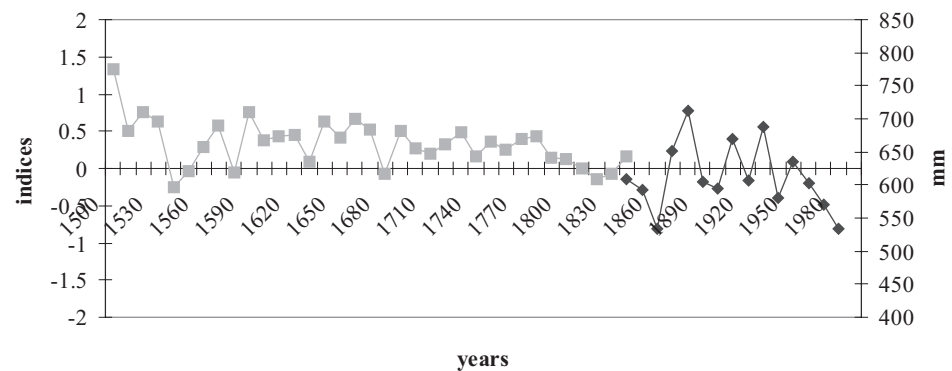


Figure 4. Temperature changes in the Carpathian Basin from the 16th century to the end of the 20th century, 10 year averages

To summarize, the primary distinctive regional climate features of the Little Ice Age in the Carpathian Basin were the increasing level of precipitation and at the same time the increasingly long winter and ever shorter summer, though there were, within this dominant trend, colder and warmer and drier and wetter periods as well.

Consequences of the Political and Environmental Blows

Reduction of Forest Area

In the age of the Turkish wars the extent of forested land decreased considerably. This was due, above all, to the military use of timber. Building and reconstruction of forts, construction of ships for Hungarian and Turkish fleets, mining and metallurgy, canon founding and gunpowder preparation required a great quantity of wood. After the collapse of the southern line of defense of the Hungarian Kingdom the frontline of the war shifted to the central belt of the Carpathian Basin, where there was a shortage of stone. The armies therefore had to adopt a new approach to the construction of fortresses, called “plank-forts”. “Plank-forts”



Figure 5. A plank fort: The fort of Törökszentmiklós (in the Great Hungarian Plain) in the era of the Turkish wars

weren't an archaic or primitive form of fortress, but rather were in use anywhere where there was a shortage of stone. The same type of forts was built in the Netherlands during the Eighty Year War (1568–1648). Over the course of the 150 years of Turkish rule in Hungary only one stone fort was constructed, in Érsekújvár (Nové Zámky); all others were “plank-forts”. Sometimes medieval castles and forts were rebuilt and completed with planks. The length of the frontline was between 400 and 500 kilometers, along which two lines of forts (Hungarian and Turkish) were constructed, primarily of oak, and with each passing decade the walls and roofs of the forts had to be rebuilt.

Quantitative data are available concerning the war industry's demand for timber. The gunpowder mill of Buda used between 600 and 1,600 tons of timber to prepare somewhere between 55 and 160 tons of gunpowder a year, but in addition to this mill six or seven others worked with a similar production capacity. The consumption of firewood in the forts was remarkable. According to the notes of the Hungarian Chamber, in the winter of 1674 the Hungarian forts of the Highlands alone burnt 24,542 coaches of firewood. On the basis of this statistic, one can conclude that the Hungarian and Turkish forts used some 100,000 coaches of firewood each winter. But one should note that in some areas of Hungary depopulation and the devastation of the village network extended the area of bush and woodland.

The Extent of the Territories Covered by Water

Before any climate changes took place, some 24,000 to 25,000 square kilometers of the Carpathian Basin were temporarily or continuously covered by water. These wet areas surely grew in early modern times for reasons of climatic change and as consequences of military actions. One of the most important regional features of the Little Ice Age was the longer autumn and the increase in precipitation. The rise in the water levels of Lake Balaton represents a clear indication of a significant precipitation surplus. Researchers are split in their assessments of the extent of changing water levels in early modern times, but the majority of the estimates suggest a rise of somewhere between three and five meters. At the end of the 17th century the Peninsula of Tihany was surely an island.

Interestingly, the increase of marshland was part of a general strategy of defense in the age of the wars with the Ottoman Empire. It was adopted primarily in the Great Hungarian Plain, where marshlands were used to improve the defensibility of forts. Marshlands were extended to provide an additional line of defense for the forts of Győr in the Small Hungarian Plain, Szolnok, Gyula, Temesvár, Szigetvár and Ecsed. In the case of Ecsed, for example, archaeological

reconstruction has identified the sites of nine medieval villages in the marshland areas which were not swampland before the 16th century.

The depopulation of the central belt of the Carpathian Basin contributed to the extension of swampland. Inhabitants of medieval villages controlled the dense network of watercourses of the central belt of the Carpathian Basin with the help of a carefully controlled water regulation system of canals, flood-gates and reservoirs. Because of the devastation of the village network, the system of water regulation also collapsed, and without human intervention the marshes grew.

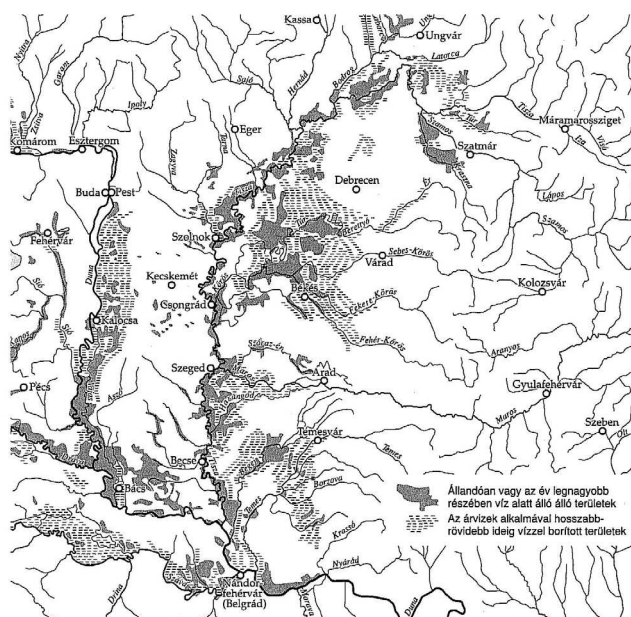


Figure 6. Areas of the Carpathian Basin continuously or temporarily covered by water

Demographic Losses and Changes in Population Density in Hungary

The Turkish invasion and expansion transformed the population density of settlements in Hungary during the late Middle Ages and early modern era. Until the last third of the 15th century the southern part of the Great Hungarian Plain was the population center of the medieval Hungarian Kingdom, in part because of the fertile soil and in part because of the high productivity of the vineyards of the area (known as Szerémség). Because of the continuous Turkish threat the population of the southern borderland of Hungary decreased. After the capture of Buda and the conquering of the southern and central parts of Hungary the Ottoman Empire

integrated these regions into its administrative system. The settlement network and the settled population survived the first decades of Turkish occupation with minimal losses. Historical demographers estimate the population of the Hungarian Kingdom at 3.5 million at the beginning of 16th century. By 1580 the population had grown to an estimated 3.7 million, despite the military campaigns. Thus the population of the Carpathian Basin increased slightly, in spite of the devastation of the wars.

The first phase of the collapse of the settlement network took place in the period of the Fifteen Year War (1591–1606), when the high command of the Habsburg Empire attempted for the first time to expel the Turkish troops from Hungary, a venture in which they were unsuccessful. The human price of continuous warfare was the devastation of 20% of the population and the destruction of the village network in the Great Hungarian Plain and the eastern part of Transdanubia. Towards the end of the wars (1683–1699) the Hungarian Plain had lost 80–90% of its settlements and population. The loss was slightly lower in the Transdanubian borderlands.

At the turn of the 17th and 18th centuries the population of the Carpathian Basin reached 4,000,000, but the distribution and the density of the population changed a great deal during the age of the wars with the Ottoman Empire. The western and northern margins of the Carpathian Basin had the highest population density, with numbers comparable to other Central European countries. The mountainous Transylvanian Principality had the second highest population density, followed by the Great Hungarian Plain, which was a real demographic vacuum, with a population density between 1 and 5 persons per square kilometer.

Forms of Adaptation

The double effects of the continuous threats of military campaigns and environmental deterioration constituted a serious challenge for the peoples of the time throughout the Carpathian Basin, but the chance of survival was lowest in the area of the Great Hungarian Plain, where only some two dozen market towns managed to survive.

Market Towns in the Great Hungarian Plain

The Great Hungarian Plain (which should be distinguished from the Small Hungarian Plain in the northwest part of Hungary) is the largest macro-region of the Carpathian Basin, spanning some 100,000 square kilometers. During the Middle Ages a dense village network developed similar to the networks in other re-

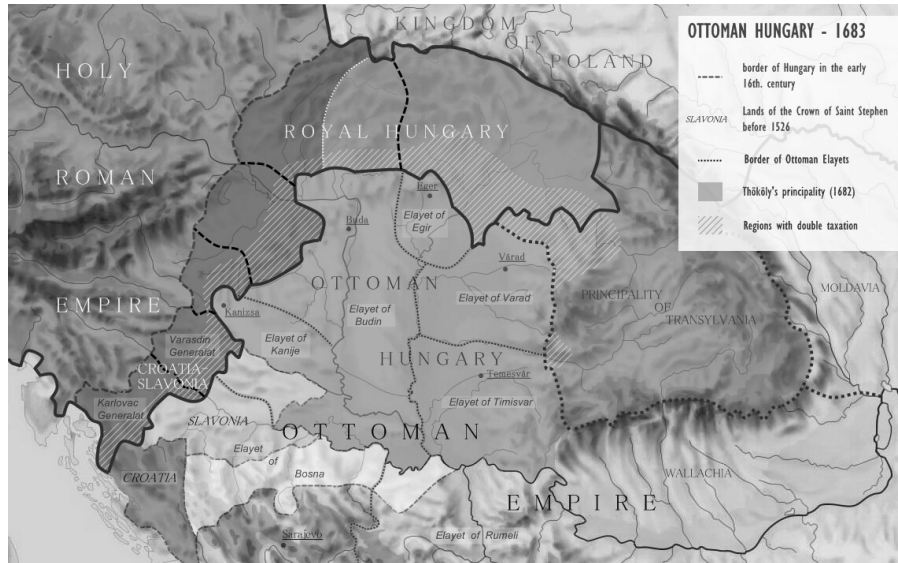


Figure 7. A country broken into three parts

gions of Hungary, but significantly, and unlike in the other regions of Hungary, in the Great Hungarian Plain the process of urbanization produced only one royal city (civitas), Szeged. Other urban settlements only gained status of market towns (oppidum). The explanation for this lies in the special structure of the medieval



Figure 8. Market towns and their market districts in the age of the Turkish wars

Hungarian economy, which was dominated by mining of precious metals and foreign trade of ores and other raw materials. The majority of royal cities (*civitas*) were therefore situated in mountainous areas and near the borderlands. Since the 14th century the market towns of the Great Hungarian Plain had specialized, in addition to the organization of local trade, in the interregional and international cattle trade. The main international markets of the Hungarian cattle trade were the northern Italian cities (Venice), cities of the Vienna Basin, Moravia and Bohemia, and cities of southern Germany (Augsburg and Nurnberg). During the late Middle Ages the tendency of settlement desertification reached the village network of the Great Hungarian Plain. The density of the village network decreased, partly because of waves of emigration to peripheral zones of the Carpathian Basin (which promised tax free settler status) and partly because of immigration to the market towns, which offered jobs for newcomers in connection with the cattle trade.

Borderline Effects

Following the Turkish occupation the frontline moved to the northern boundaries of the Great Hungarian Plain, and this macro-region officially became the a part of the Ottoman Empire, though the Hungarian landlords regularly appeared under the protection of soldiers of Hungarian forts and collected their seigneurial taxes from their (former) serfs. The occupied counties therefore became an area of double taxation.

The Turkish administration introduced two forms of ownership and exploitation to the conquered lands. The market-towns became the property of the Sultan and their taxes and tributes were paid directly to the central treasury. The direct connection to the central administration assured special status and for the most part saved the market towns from the ravages of Turkish troops. Villages also became the property of the Sultan, because all property of the Empire was the property of the Emperor, and each man was the slave of the Sultan, but the Sultan distributed these estates among Turkish landlords, called Spahis (light cavalry in the Turkish army). The Spahis had only temporary use of these estates, so they sought to squeeze wealth from the land as quickly as possible. Both exploitation by Turkish landlords and double taxation contributed to the destruction of the village networks and prompted people to resettle in the market towns. The village, as a form of settlement, disappeared from the Great Hungarian Plain, except in some peripheral areas where the physical environment (primarily marshland) allowed them to survive.

Shelter for Refugees

Market towns had been destinations for large groups of people migrating from villages since the 14th century, but immigration increased in the 16th century, partly because of the wars with the Turks and partly because of the great boom in the cattle trade with the highly urbanized centers of Northern Italy and Central Europe. Generally immigration was an individual decision, but because of the aggravations of warfare sometimes whole village communities moved to the market towns under the direction of magistrates and offered their territories to the towns as tenements. As a result of the periodic waves of refugees, the population of the market-towns of the Great Hungarian Plain increased quickly. In the middle of the 17th century Debrecen became the largest urban settlement of the Carpathian Basin with, 15,000 inhabitants. The population of the second line of market towns (Kecskemét, Cegléd, Nagykőrös) exceeded 5,000 and was equal to that of the cities of Royal Hungary. But the increase in population (and the great benefit of cattle trade) was not accompanied by reconstruction of the infrastructure. Contemporary pictures and archaeological reconstructions indicate that the villages “flowed” into the towns, and the market towns tended to resemble giant villages. Debrecen, the largest urban settlement of Hungary, had less than ten buildings made of stone at the beginning of 18th century. At the time István Dobozi, the mayor of Debrecen, lived in a simple clay-walled peasant house (a kitchen and two rooms) with his wife and three sons. This was not a sign of poverty, neither for the town nor for the family of the mayor, but during the period of continuous warfare, in which the threat of plundering troops always lingered, forms of investment had had to be chosen carefully. Debrecen was undoubtedly one of the main market centers of the Great Hungarian Plain and the whole Carpathian Basin not to have representative buildings, and the mayor’s family had more than 1,000 cattle grazing on the fields of Hortobágy. The early Modern Era was an age of spectacular reconstruction for the towns of Central Europe. In Moravia, Bohemia and Austria, given the relative security and steady pace of public life, it was worth investing in the construction of buildings, mansions and palaces. But until the end of the Turkish wars the people of Hungary invested rather in animal husbandry and precious metals, which could be easily hidden from plundering soldiers.

The Cattle Trade: Connections with (Central) Europe

The origin of the cattle trade between Hungary and the urbanized centers of Central Europe can be traced back to the beginning of the 14th century. Medieval demographic growth led to a high demand for the staple foods of European peripheries, and a large food export zone came into being stretching from Poland to

Hungary. Given the high costs of ground transport, the continental countries were able to export only beef overland. The main staple of Hungarian animal export was the mysterious Hungarian grey cattle. There is no reliable data concerning the origin of this species, because the earliest archaeological evidence dates only to the 16th century. Two theories offer explanations of the origins of the grey cattle. According to the first, the species derives from a crossing with the wild bullock. According to the second, it arrived in the Carpathian Basin in the 13th century with Cuman tribes from the steppes of Eastern Europe. But there is neither documentary nor archaeological evidence to support either of these theories. One nonetheless can suppose that the grey cattle were the main staple of the Hungarian cattle trade since the late Middle Ages. The grey cattle were ideal for long distance trade. The species can endure long periods of roving and can subsist on pasturelands for more than a year without stabling, and its meat is delicious.



Figure 9. The staple of the cattle trade: The Hungarian grey cattle

As a consequence of the subsistence crises of the 14th century the demand for the foodstuffs of the eastern territories dropped, but the temporary decline in trade never brought an end to the commercial connections. Therefore, when at the beginning of the 16th century the European population reached the levels of the period before the age of the Black Death, demand for the foodstuff surpluses of Eastern Central Europe again increased and revitalized the former connections. The 16th century was a golden age of the Hungarian cattle trade. In the second half of the 16th century 200,000 cattle were exported every year, and in some years a little bit more. The organization of the cattle trade with large areas of production, the

maintenance of the dense network of driving routes and rented grazing lands, and the negotiation of agreements with leaders of different administrations in the areas plagued by warfare were complex but profitable undertakings. One should consider three aspects of the Hungarian cattle trade: production areas, organizers of and laborers in the cattle trade, and the uses to which profits were put.

Cattle Breeding Areas

The main cattle breeding area was the Great Hungarian Plain. The Plain was home to an old tradition of animal husbandry dating back to the high Middle Ages, but in the age of the Turkish wars the political and military conditions became ideal for cattle husbandry. As a consequence of the long period of warfare the village network collapsed, the large grain fields disappeared, and animal husbandry represented the single remaining possibility for economic use of the large, unpopulated areas. The market towns of the Great Hungarian Plain, which were centers and organizers of the cattle trade, developed a special settlement morphology and economy to maximize the efficiency of the town economy and animal husbandry. This innovation of market towns is referred to as the “pen garden system”, in which there were six separate zones of economic activity. The core area was the dwelling zone, which had a small courtyard, enough only for the building site and poultry. The second was the pen garden zone, where the young adult men lived, keeping the useful animals and beasts of burden in pens (milk-cows, drawing cows and horses, saddle-horses) and storing grain, straw, and hay. This second dwelling zone was extremely dangerous for young women, mainly after dark. The next three economic zones followed the same structure of the zones in other towns

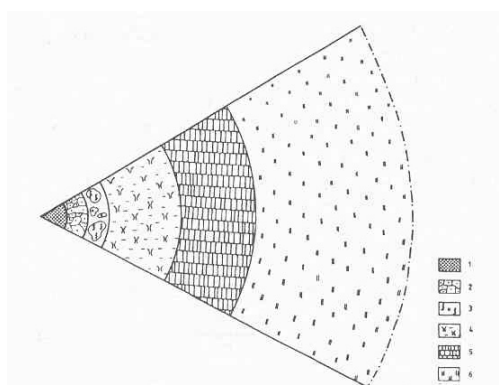


Figure 10. The model of pen garden farming: 1. dwelling zone, 2. pen garden, 3. garden zone, 4. inner grazing land, 5. arable land, 6. external grazing land

in Hungary: the garden zone (for growing fruits, vegetables, and grapes), grazing land (for milk cows and beasts of burden), and arable land. The most important innovation in the market towns of the Great Hungarian Plain was the high flexibility of external grazing lands. The external grazing lands were able to integrate territories of devastated villages with techniques of tenement or with simple occupation of lands in disuse.

The outskirts of market towns can grow dramatically. The outskirts of Debrecen, for example, were a little bit larger than 170,000 hectares and the territories of Kecskemét and Nagykőrös changed by about 250,000 to 300,000 hectares. But from the second line of market towns, Jászberény managed its animal husbandry on some 60,000 hectares. The majority of these large territories were outside grazing land, in areas where cattle were raised.

The Great Hungarian Plain was the primary but not exclusive area of cattle breeding. Cattle breeding areas of Transylvania, Moldova, Walachia and the northern provinces of the Balkan Peninsula were integrated into the cattle industry of the Plain. So the Carpathian Basin (the geographical framework of the medieval Hungarian Kingdom) became a divided political space for expansion of the Ottoman Empire, but through the early modern recovery of the cattle trade the Carpathian Basin saved its economic unity. Moreover, it integrated substantial surrounding areas into the (Central) European market.



Figure 11. Cattle drover roads in the Carpathian Basin in the 16th century

Organizers, Agents and Labourers of the Cattle Trade

Organizing the route of a calf from the grazing lands of Hortobágy to the cities of Nurnberg, Venice or Vienna was not a simple logistic problem during times of peace, but during times of war risks and expenses increased. Experts in this profession emerged from the social class of traders and shepherds

Cattle traders came to form a special group of the Hungarian bourgeoisie. The majority hailed from market towns, and as far as their social status was concerned they were serfs like other dwellers of market towns. But despite their low position in the social hierarchy they were one of the richest strata of Hungarian society, and they frequently used their wealth to buy noble titles, thereby ascending into the ranks of the lower nobility. Imre Thököly, a descendant of a cattle trader dynasty, became ruler of Hungary in the final troubled decades of the wars with the Ottoman Turks (1683–99). His father, Sebestyén Thököly, had been a lowborn horse and cattle drover, yet he had received a baronial title in exchange for loans provided to the Habsburg court.

The market towns were centers for protestant churches, and the majority of the cattle traders were protestant. The Turkish administration saved the population of the occupied provinces from the efforts of the Counter Reformation. The reformed churches, primarily Calvinist, were therefore able to organize local administration and elementary and secondary schools. Pastors of the reformed church studied at universities in southern Germany, of which Wittenberg and Heidelberg were the most popular, and in the Netherlands at the University of Leiden. Protestant theologians often travelled to the Holy Land, which at the time was part of the Ottoman Empire, to study religious texts. The opinions of contemporaries, who as early as the 17th century referred to the market town of Debrecen as “Calvinist Rome,” testify to the strength of the protestant church in Hungary.

The most important competitors of the serf or bourgeois cattle traders were the prominent families of the Hungarian nobility, the Perényi, Nádasdy and Zrínyi families. The profits to be made in the cattle trade prompted them to lay aside their prejudices against the profession. For noble traders cattle trade offered numerous advantages in commerce, including immunity from direct taxation and some from duties, a steady position in the civil and military administration of Royal Hungary, and last but not least armed escort. It was not coincidental that in the territory of Royal Hungary these noblemen crowded the serf and bourgeois competitors from the cattle trade, but the occupied provinces were beyond their sphere of direct influence. The Catholic faith of noble traders lent a special religious flavor to this commercial and social competition.

Without the collaboration of Turkish officers it was not possible to organize the cattle trade across the areas of combat and the frontlines. Turkish constables



Figure 12. Miklós Zrínyi (1620–64, Nikola Zrinski), strategist, politician and businessman

and officers received a portion of the profits and in exchange supported the droving paths and boundary crossing stations with their military forces. Turkish officers very frequently collaborated with Hungarian constables to coordinate the cattle trade and organize fairs of the regional trade to augment their incomes. Moreover, the majority of Turkish officers were not Turks, but renegades from Balkan countries who knew the regional connections of the Carpathian Basin well.

Droving cattle herds from the grazing lands of the Great Hungarian Plain to the far markets of Central Europe and Northern Italy was a hard and dangerous job. A special group of experts formed known as the Heyducks. The majority of Heyducks rose from peasant society, leaving their village communities and escaping their status as serfs. Given their rootless social status and lifestyle, they were similar to the Cossacks in Russian society. Like the Cossacks, the Heyducks were members of a semi-military social group who sold their services in the military market as mercenaries as well. There were a lot of legends about the cruelty of Heyducks, and according to general opinion they were crueller than Turkish soldiers. In the case of Nurnberg, the authorities constructed pubs for Heyducks outside of the city walls at the expense of the magistrate to avoid conflicts with locals. They also prohibited the Heyducks from entering the city.

The Price of Survival

The 16th century saw a recovery of agrarian prices in Europe, which assured high profits for producers. But the profits of the cattle trade swallowed the expenses of long and unremitting warfare.

The noblemen officers of the Habsburg army financed the salaries of soldiers and the expenses of the reconstruction of forts partly from their commercial incomes. This was due neither exclusively to altruism nor to patriotism, but rather to the fact that these forts frequently safeguarded the estates of constables. The landlords who had escaped from occupied territories often found themselves impoverished and deprived of their privileged social status. The princes and counts of Hungary spent the rest of the profits from the cattle trade on luxury articles (spices, jewels, expensive clothes, and arms) and the construction of fortified residences, in accordance with the general practice of early modern European nobility.

The cattle traders of the market towns spent money on luxury goods, but they showed greater restraint and moderation, perhaps in part because of their protestant faith. Two of the primary benefits of the trade were reinvestment in livestock and the creation of some wealth removed from commercial cycles as personal fortune. But these fortunes were tapped by tax officers and landlords of the two empires and filched by plundering soldiers of the regular and irregular armies, and the cattle traders had to calculate with a hostile natural environment which took its toll from time to time.

At the beginning of 17th century there was a radical drop in the demand for the (Central) European foodstuffs. By the middle of 17th century the export of Hungarian livestock had fallen from somewhere between 200,000 and 250,000 at its peak to somewhere between 50,000 and 60,000, and the struggle over the shrinking market became increasingly intense. Towards the end of 17th century the era of Ottoman occupation came to a close, and with it the golden and even silver ages of the cattle trade as well. Hungary integrated into the framework of the Central European Habsburg Empire, and the country was compelled to find its place in a larger political and economic configuration. New answers and new forms of subsistence systems had to be formulated to address the new challenges. The age of the market towns of the Great Hungarian Plain, the “pen garden system,” and mass cattle trade came to an end, but with the help of this subsistence system the inhabitants of the Carpathian Basin proved able to pay the price of survival.

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L'ACCUEIL DE LA *TRAGÉDIE DE L'HOMME* D'IMRE MADÁCH PAR LES LECTEURS DE LANGUE ALLEMANDE (1862–1892)

KATALIN PODMANICZKY

France

Cette étude est consacrée aux médiateurs – traducteurs, philologues, éditeurs, écrivains – grâce auxquels s'est effectué le transfert de la *Tragédie de l'homme* d'Imre Madách dans la sphère culturelle germanophone de 1862 à 1892. Cette période fut particulièrement féconde à deux points de vue. D'une part, elle a vu naître sept traductions, ainsi qu'une dizaine de recensions et de critiques. Celles qui sont parues entre 1888 et 1892 avaient pour but la préparation du public à l'apparition prochaine de la *Tragédie* sur les scènes allemandes. D'autre part, de nombreuses personnalités en vue de l'intelligentsia germanophone ont fait des déclarations élogieuses sur le drame hongrois, alors que d'autres se sont même réapproprié ce chef-d'œuvre étranger en s'inspirant de lui.

Mots-clés : transfert, médiateurs, réception reproductive, réception productive, canonisation

La première étape du transfert de la *Tragédie* d'Imre Madách dans la sphère culturelle allemande, étape durant laquelle l'œuvre n'est accessible au public germanophone que par la lecture, s'étend de 1862 à 1892. C'est en effet en 1862, année même de sa publication, que la *Tragédie* est mentionnée pour la première fois dans l'espace germanophone et c'est en 1892 que la dernière étude précédant sa première représentation sur une scène de langue allemande voit le jour. Cette période comprend deux parties : jusqu'en 1885, le poème dramatique de Madách n'est connu que comme « drame dans le fauteuil », tandis qu'on constate, après cette date, la connaissance directe ou indirecte de l'adaptation théâtrale qui en a été faite à Budapest.

Les premières traductions et recensions (1862–1885)

Dans la période considérée paraissent six traductions complètes¹ et une traduction partielle. Dès le 26 janvier 1862, soit dix jours après la parution de l'œuvre,

une présentation de la *Tragédie de l'homme*, illustrée par la traduction de quelques scènes,² est publiée dans le *Pester Lloyd*.³ L'auteur en est le rédacteur littéraire et artistique de ce journal germanophone de Budapest, Adolf Dux (1822–1881), lequel s'était fait connaître en 1847 à Vienne par sa traduction de poèmes de Sándor Petőfi. Par la suite, il avait traduit des romans de József Eötvös, de Mór Jókai et des nouvelles de Pál Gyulai. A cette époque, Adolf Dux joue donc un rôle éminent dans le transfert de la littérature hongroise contemporaine vers les territoires de langue allemande. A en croire György Radó, l'un des grands spécialistes de Madách, sa traduction fragmentaire aurait été achevée plus tôt encore, en automne 1861. En effet, une lettre d'Eötvös à Madách, du 9 janvier 1862, fait état d'une traduction qui lui a été remise lors de son séjour en novembre-décembre à Kissingen.⁴ N'ayant pas eu le loisir de comparer celle-ci au texte original, Eötvös l'envoie à Madách, qui pourra, selon lui, effectuer ce travail lui-même, puisqu'il possède parfaitement l'allemand. Selon Radó, l'incertitude dans les dates s'explique par l'existence d'épreuves de la *Tragédie* auxquelles Adolf Dux pouvait avoir accès.⁵

Cette première traduction se limite à 335 vers du premier et du deuxième tableau, ainsi que de la scène de Londres. Pour ce qui est de sa qualité, nous partageons le point de vue de Radó qui lui reproche quelques écarts à la fidélité lexicale et une syntaxe parfois forcée, tout en reconnaissant que le texte allemand, dans son ensemble, est compréhensible et expressif.⁶ Pour des raisons qui restent inconnues, Dux ne l'a pas achevée. Probablement a-t-il éprouvé des difficultés, ce que semble confirmer son désir de soumettre sa traduction au jugement d'Eötvös.

En janvier 1863, deux numéros du journal allemand *Ungarische Nachrichten* annoncent qu'un certain Alexander Dietze travaille à la traduction de la *Tragédie* en Transylvanie et publient des morceaux choisis du tableau d'Égypte.⁷ En avril de la même année, un premier compte rendu critique du *Magazin für die Literatur des Auslandes* annonce à Leipzig la découverte de la *Tragédie* ;⁸ il est suivi peu après par une notice informant les lecteurs qu'une traduction, sous la plume d'Alexander Dietze, est en cours.⁹ Celle-ci n'est publiée qu'en 1865, un an après la mort de Madách.¹⁰ Il n'existe aucune trace de contacts personnels entre l'auteur et ce nouveau traducteur. Pourtant, il est probable qu'il y en ait eu, car dès le 10 mai 1863, János Arany, devenu ami intime de Madách, fait l'éloge de cette traduction et annonce sa publication prochaine dans six numéros du supplément de la revue *Pester Mode*.¹¹ En l'absence d'informations biographiques sur le traducteur, l'on pourrait supposer que le succès de la *Tragédie* s'était propagé jusqu'en Allemagne, car Dietze était un Allemand de souche, né à Magdeburg. Il n'en est rien. Au terme d'études de philologie, ce dernier était entré en 1859 comme précepteur dans la famille des barons hongrois Splényi. Fait rare et digne d'être remarqué, il avait appris le hongrois et s'était attelé dès 1862 à cette traduction difficile. On peut imaginer qu'il avait découvert la *Tragédie* par l'intermédiaire des

membres de la famille Splényi, lesquels pouvaient connaître János Arany, originaire comme eux de Transylvanie. Ainsi pourrait s'expliquer le fait que celui-ci avait lu, dès 1863, des extraits du travail en cours. Cette première traduction complète est entachée de maladroites lexicales et même de fautes d'orthographe et de grammaire. Citons en guise d'illustration un extrait du dialogue entre Lucifer et Dieu:¹²

Der Herr

So wisse, dass von Urzeit ich entwarf :
Was, jetzt verwirklicht, hat in mir gelebt.

Lucifer

Und fühltest im Ideenkreis nicht verwebt
die Leere, allen Daseins Hindernis,
Die Dich zum Schaffen nothgedrungen *riss*?
Nun dieses Hindernisses Namen heisst,
Sieh : Lucifer, der *Urverneinungsgeist*
Du siegest über mich, durch mein Verhängnis.
Dass ich in meinen Kämpfen ewig falle,
Doch wieder mich mit neuer Kraft erhebe.
Du zeugtest Stoff, ich habe Raum gewonnen,
Denn wo das Leben blüht, herrscht auch der Tod,
Wo selges Glück lacht, grämt Verstimmung sich,
Licht *wandelt* Schatten, Hoffnung, Zweifel *nach*.
Ich stehe dort, wo du bist, überall,
Soll, wer dich so erkennt, noch huldgen Dir?

Der Herr

Ha, Geist des Widerspruchs! Heb dich hinweg!¹³

Les imperfections s'expliquent, en partie, par la volonté du traducteur de rester fidèle au rythme. Si elles ont échappé à János Arany qui lisait l'allemand sans en avoir une connaissance approfondie, elles ont été fustigées en 1886 par le critique Julian Weiß et en 1895 par un traducteur, Károly Erdélyi (1859–1908). Le premier la qualifie de si peu réussie que personne n'aurait eu le courage de la lire en entier.¹⁴ Le second répertorie des fautes de compréhension, certes pardonnables après trois ans de pratique de cette langue difficile qu'est le hongrois.¹⁵

Compte tenu de la qualité médiocre de cette première traduction intégrale et de sa publication en Hongrie, l'on ne s'étonnera pas que malgré les deux éditions qu'elle connaît en 1865, elle n'ait pas atteint un large public. Néanmoins, elle a le mérite d'avoir donné une idée plus précise de l'œuvre aux lecteurs dont la curiosité avait déjà été éveillée par le premier compte rendu de l'œuvre de Madách.¹⁶ Cet article de trois pages, de la plume de Theodor Opitz, soulève du reste des interro-

gations. D'où l'auteur tient-il sa connaissance de l'œuvre, alors qu'il n'existe pas encore de traduction complète? Ses références fréquentes à János Arany permettent de supposer un contact épistolaire avec le poète hongrois. Cela éclairerait l'origine des informations d'Opitz relatives au contenu détaillé des quinze tableaux. D'autre part, les brèves citations, à une exception près, ne sont tirées d'aucune des deux traductions existantes.¹⁷ Par conséquent, l'on est en droit de supposer qu'Opitz les a traduites lui-même. Aucun dictionnaire biographique ne permet de vérifier si cet intellectuel allemand avait des origines hongroises ou des attaches familiales dans l'Empire des Habsbourg. Selon le *Sächsischer Schriftstellerlexikon*, Karl Theodor Opitz était né en 1828 et enseignait depuis 1862 dans un lycée de Leipzig. Nous avons découvert incidemment deux sources contemporaines révélant que ce critique avait une connaissance approfondie du hongrois. La première de ces sources, un article du 13 mai 1863, paru dans la même revue, évoque sa traduction de discours politiques de Deák et d'Eötvös. La seconde est un article du *Grenzboten* leipzigois d'où il ressort qu'il avait également publié des traductions de poèmes de Petőfi en 1864.¹⁸ Par ailleurs, une étude hongroise récente, consacrée à la réception allemande de Petőfi, montre qu'Opitz, originaire de Silésie, avait appris le hongrois avec des émigrés et, qu'à partir des années 1860, il joue un rôle actif dans la réception en question.¹⁹ Enfin, l'encyclopédie Meyer de 1891 l'inclut parmi les nouveaux traducteurs assurant le transfert de la littérature hongroise vers l'aire germanophone.²⁰

Le premier article se référant à la traduction de Dietze paraît en 1865 dans les *Blätter für literarische Unterhaltung* édités à Leipzig. Rudolf Gottschall, philologue et écrivain, attire l'attention sur ce travail et cite intégralement sa préface.²¹

La comparaison des trois premières recensions, celle de Dux, d'Opitz et de Gottschall, met en évidence une série de points communs. Les trois critiques

- 1) prennent position quant aux ressemblances entre la *Tragédie* et le *Faust*
- 2) évoquent des poètes et des philosophes dont Madách aurait subi l'influence
- 3) situent l'œuvre par rapport à l'ensemble de la littérature hongroise et universelle
- 4) formulent un jugement sur l'œuvre (sur sa structure, sur certaines scènes, sur le dénouement, sur sa signification globale).

Ce même schéma caractérisera, dans l'ensemble, les critiques ultérieures. Les accents mis à l'intérieur de ce schéma interprétatif ainsi que les nouveaux éléments par lesquels les critiques l'élargissent nous donneront des indications sur l'horizon d'attente littéraire, politique, voire social propre à l'époque concernée.

Selon Opitz, la similitude avec le *Faust* goethéen est indéniable, sans toutefois porter atteinte à l'originalité intellectuelle de l'écrivain hongrois.²² Sur ce point, il peut avoir suivi l'opinion de János Arany avec lequel il entretenait vraisemblable-

ment des rapports. Dux, pour sa part, insiste, sans entrer dans les détails, sur la différence de forme et de conception entre la *Tragédie* et le *Faust*.²³ Son collègue de la revue *Blätter für literarische Unterhaltung*, Rudolf Gottschall, semble dévaloriser le drame hongrois par rapport au chef d'œuvre de la littérature allemande.²⁴ C'est ainsi que Wolfgang Margendorff interprète en effet le titre que Gottschall donne à son article : « eine ungarische Faustiade ». ²⁵ Selon nous, ce néologisme à la mode²⁶ souligne, au contraire, la conviction de Gottschall qu'il existe un mythe de *Faust*, intimement lié aux aspirations du XIX^e siècle. La conscience que les œuvres littéraires se constituent à partir de matériaux empruntés à une tradition culturelle ne s'était pas encore imposée à cette époque. Ce philologue sait, grâce à sa vaste culture littéraire, que le thème de *Faust* a été traité dans la plupart des littératures nationales²⁷ et il cite deux exemples tirés de la littérature polonaise contemporaine, *La comédie non divine* et *Iridion à Rome*,²⁸ qu'il connaît grâce à ses origines silésiennes. Cette nouvelle optique, de nature comparatiste, le rend attentif aux différences entre la *Tragédie* et le *Faust* gothéen. En dépit de réminiscences évidentes, la conception des deux poètes est, selon Gottschall, diamétralement opposée. Alors que Goethe concentre l'idée faustienne sur la vie d'un individu, « Madách la transpose, par une migration des âmes visionnaire, dans l'histoire universelle ». ²⁹ La *Tragédie* serait même supérieure au *Faust* allemand, car elle reflète les progrès récents des sciences naturelles : « Les vieux prodiges 'faustiens' usés sont remplacés par les merveilles de l'univers et de la création ». ³⁰ Par ailleurs, la comparaison du premier tableau de Madách avec le prologue au ciel de Goethe met en lumière une particularité importante du portrait de Dieu le père. Dans le refus par ce dernier de toute critique émanant de son subordonné Lucifer, Gottschall voit l'attitude d'un autocrate moderne. ³¹ Cette remarque n'est pas innocente de sa part. Né en 1823 à Breslau, ³² cet écrivain et philologue³³ étudie à Königsberg où il participe activement au mouvement libéral, ce qui lui vaut l'exclusion de l'université locale, puis de celle de Leipzig. Quelques années plus tard, il est autorisé à poursuivre ses études, à Berlin d'abord, puis de nouveau à Königsberg où ses conceptions libérales l'empêchent toutefois d'accéder à un poste de professeur après la soutenance de sa thèse. Gottschall s'est donc heurté à des autocrates modernes et semble faire allusion à un ou plusieurs monarques contemporains. L'on peut supposer que Gottschall croyait reconnaître l'empereur François-Joseph sous les traits du Seigneur tyrannique. S'il n'a pas exprimé ouvertement cet avis, cela peut s'expliquer par l'évolution de ses rapports avec le système monarchique : en 1864 en effet, il reçoit du roi de Saxe le titre de Conseiller de la cour (*Hofrat*). Par ailleurs, ne connaissant pas *A civilizátor* [Le civilisateur], une satire de Madách de l'administration autrichienne des années 1850 qui n'a pas été traduit, il peut ne pas avoir soupçonné chez lui de telles intentions.

Par ailleurs, Gottschall atténue la ressemblance avec le *Faust* gothéen en mettant en évidence l'ascendant exercé par le *Cain* et le *Manfred* de Byron, deux œu-

vres qui, selon lui, ont influencé toutes les littératures slaves et la littérature magyare, ce qu'illustre le poème *Etoiles sombres* de Sándor Petőfi.³⁴ Adolf Dux, de son côté, attire l'attention sur la filiation entre la *Tragédie* et *Le Paradis perdu* de Milton.³⁵ Quant à Opitz, son article témoigne surtout d'une grande familiarité avec la littérature hongroise, familiarité qu'il semble d'ailleurs supposer chez ses lecteurs. En effet, il se réfère à János Arany sans rappeler son prénom et sans citer ses œuvres. Par ailleurs, il rapproche la *Tragédie* de la *Divine comédie* et admire l'audace et le caractère grandiose de la conception du drame hongrois.³⁶ Pour ce qui est de l'influence de penseurs, seul Gottschall souligne celle de Fourier et de Hegel. Selon lui, certains tableaux historiques semblent illustrer la *Phénoménologie* de ce dernier.³⁷

S'agissant de la place qui revient à la *Tragédie* dans une hiérarchie nationale et mondiale des œuvres littéraires, les jugements des trois critiques diffèrent. Selon Dux, l'absence de toute dimension patriotique fait de la *Tragédie de l'homme* une œuvre charnière de la littérature hongroise.³⁸ Opitz considère que Madách n'est pas un poète de premier ordre, car son imagination est insuffisante. « Sinon, poursuit-il, la *Tragédie de l'homme* devrait compter parmi les œuvres les plus importantes que possède la littérature universelle [...] ». ³⁹ Seul Gottschall regarde Madách comme un talent poétique exceptionnel, de la même envergure que Petőfi. A ses yeux, la *Tragédie* est « une production véritablement géniale dans laquelle la réflexion conserve partout une hauteur universelle ». ⁴⁰

Ces premiers critiques – soucieux de donner un résumé descriptif du contenu de la pièce – formulent peu de jugements sur des tableaux donnés. Dux émet des objections sur l'omission de certains événements historiques importants, comme la Réforme⁴¹ et Opitz commentent, l'un et l'autre, est celle du phalanstère. Opitz exprime sa satisfaction d'y voir démasquées les faiblesses du socialisme et ironise sur la société parfaite des socialistes.⁴² Gottschall s'abstient de remarques polémiques contre les socialistes contemporains. Selon lui, Madách se moque dans ce tableau, avec une ironie fine et spirituelle, de la doctrine du socialisme utopique visant à apporter le bonheur au monde entier.⁴³ Notons au passage que les remarques antisocialistes d'Opitz renvoient aux luttes idéologiques du moment. En effet, le premier parti socialiste allemand, l'*Allgemeiner Deutscher Arbeiterverein* de Ferdinand Lassalle, venait d'être fondé à Leipzig (1863). Son objectif était la mise en place d'un régime socialiste par des moyens pacifiques et démocratiques. Toutefois, sa seule existence suffisait à inquiéter les esprits conservateurs.

Le dénouement du drame est également la cible de la critique des premiers commentateurs. Gottschall, lui-même auteur dramatique,⁴⁴ reproche à Madách de faire déboucher son œuvre sur « la mer bleue d'un optimisme trop confiant ». ⁴⁵ Dux critique le caractère inattendu du dénouement optimiste.⁴⁶ Opitz, lui, ne porte pas de jugement et donne une interprétation nuancée de la fin du drame. A son sens, celle-ci signifie le point de départ de la véritable tragédie de l'humanité.⁴⁷

Seul l'un des trois critiques se prononce sur le sens de l'œuvre. Opitz, de confession protestante à en juger par ses origines saxonnes, partage probablement les critiques que Madách formule contre l'église catholique et considère que la quintessence du drame est la glorification de la religion.⁴⁸ Cette interprétation est d'autant plus surprenante que celle d'Adolf Dux lui est diamétralement opposée. S'adressant dans les colonnes de son journal pestois à des lecteurs majoritairement catholiques, il déplore le risque que la foi du lecteur ne soit ébranlée par la longue série de déceptions mises en scène par Madách.⁴⁹ Nous avons là une allusion au pessimisme qui se dégage de chaque tableau, sans toutefois que le mot soit prononcé.

L'étude de ces trois recensions nous enseigne que la proximité temporelle de la lutte pour l'indépendance hongroise, qui avait assuré une renommée européenne à Sándor Petöfi, découvert peu auparavant, et plus encore, la connaissance de la littérature d'Europe occidentale et centrale jouent un rôle catalyseur dans l'évaluation positive de la *Tragédie*. Par ailleurs, depuis l'issue sanglante du soulèvement hongrois de 1848 et la décennie de répression qui lui succéda, les sympathies pour la Hongrie et sa culture allaient en augmentant. L'ouverture de clubs hongrois dans l'Est et le Sud de l'Allemagne, à Iéna (1860),⁵⁰ à Halle (1868)⁵¹ et à Hohenheim, près de Stuttgart (1869), témoigne en outre de l'arrivée d'exilés hongrois appartenant à l'intelligentsia. Quant à la ville de Leipzig, lieu de parution des deux hebdomadaires, *Blätter für literarische Unterhaltung* et *Magazin für die Literatur des Auslandes*, elle ne pouvait être tout à fait étrangère à la culture hongroise du fait de la présence importante d'étudiants hongrois dans ses murs. Leipzig était, en effet, la ville universitaire privilégiée des Hongrois protestants. Enfin, pendant l'insurrection viennoise d'octobre 1848, Leipzig avait fait preuve d'une attitude pro-révolutionnaire.⁵²

Ces trois comptes rendus seraient les seuls documents des années 1860 parus sur Madách dans l'aire culturelle allemande si la mort prématurée de l'écrivain n'avait pas suscité la publication d'articles nouveaux. En 1864, plusieurs périodiques autrichiens et allemands publient des notices nécrologiques.

Il n'est pas surprenant que la presse autrichienne se fasse l'écho de la disparition de l'écrivain hongrois qui, depuis 1861, avait joué un rôle éminent sur la scène politique et littéraire. Trois quotidiens viennois de renom, le *Wiener Zeitung*, le *Neue Freie Presse*, le *Wiener Fremdenblatt* et un journal allemand de la capitale hongroise, le *Pester Lloyd*, publient de brefs articles quatre jours après son décès.⁵³ Toutefois, compte tenu de la célébrité que Madách avait acquise, le nombre des articles est peu élevé, et reflète le froid consécutif à l'échec du rapprochement entre Vienne et Budapest. Rappelons que l'espoir d'un renouveau de la vie constitutionnelle s'était soldé par la dissolution du parlement, suivie d'un vaste mouvement de boycottage de l'impôt. Par son insignifiance et par sa date tardive (12 octobre), la notice pestoise confirme l'existence de relations tendues.

Parmi les réactions allemandes, l'une est un article d'un quotidien de Breslau, capitale de la Silésie prussienne,⁵⁴ les deux autres des articles de la presse leipzigoise, d'une ampleur remarquable si on les compare aux notices viennoises. L'article du *Magazin für die Literatur des Auslandes*, signé d'Adolf Dux, est significatif à maints égards. Sa longueur, importante par rapport à la notice du même auteur publiée à Pest, révèle tout d'abord l'existence d'une censure défavorable à Madách. Le ton élogieux utilisé par Dux pour informer le public allemand du brillant discours parlementaire de Madách en 1861 montre qu'en territoire allemand il n'a pas les mains liées. Envoyé de Pest, cet article corrobore ensuite notre hypothèse selon laquelle Theodor Opitz, auteur de la première recension allemande de 1863, entretenait des contacts personnels avec des cercles littéraires hongrois. Au début de sa notice nécrologique, Adolf Dux rappelle en effet aux lecteurs l'article d'Opitz. En ce qui concerne le jugement porté sur l'œuvre principale de Madách, il est sensiblement le même que celui dont nous avons rendu compte précédemment. A la différence près que Dux se contente ici de mettre en valeur la qualité principale de la *Tragédie de l'homme*, à savoir son caractère universel. Tout en laissant transparaître des doutes sur « la valeur absolue de cette œuvre »,⁵⁵ il attire sur elle l'attention du public allemand, ainsi que sur un livre inachevé de l'auteur qui serait un pendant humoristique à la *Tragédie*. Par ailleurs, Dux affirme détenir d'un ami de l'écrivain des informations précises sur la vie et l'œuvre de jeunesse de Madách.⁵⁶

Le second article leipzigois, publié tardivement dans l'*Illustrierte Zeitung*, tire ses informations sur la biographie de Madách d'une autre source⁵⁷ et s'adresse manifestement à un public à la fois plus populaire et plus conservateur. Il accorde une large place aux ancêtres illustres du poète, affirme que Madách était étranger à la lutte anti-habsbourg et relate dans un style mélodramatique les événements de sa vie avec de nombreuses inexactitudes. L'auteur anonyme de cet article communique à ses lecteurs jusqu'aux moindres détails de la découverte de la *Tragédie* par János Arany, mettant en circulation des informations que l'on retrouvera pendant longtemps dans l'arsenal des détracteurs de Madách. Nous songeons en particulier à la précision selon laquelle János Arany crut d'abord avoir affaire à « une imitation faible et mal comprise du *Faust* goethéen ». ⁵⁸ Cet article mérite l'attention pour une seconde raison : son auteur affirme qu'une traduction de la *Tragédie* par Karl Maria Kertbeny⁵⁹ serait en cours d'impression. Même si celle-ci n'a jamais vu le jour, cette remarque révèle que ce traducteur célèbre à l'époque s'était intéressé au drame de Madách et pouvait, de ce fait, avoir attiré sur lui l'attention d'écrivains allemands.

Le dernier document consacré à Madách au cours de cette première période est un article d'un dictionnaire biographique autrichien, paru en 1867.⁶⁰ Consacré à la vie, ainsi qu'à l'activité politique et littéraire de l'auteur, ce texte est remarquable à plusieurs points de vue. D'abord par sa longueur de trois pages et demie, ensuite

par sa bibliographie rassemblant la liste complète des articles parus sur Imre Madách et son œuvre en langue allemande,⁶¹ enfin par la place qu'il accorde à l'attitude critique du parlementaire Madách face à la politique autrichienne. Le ton de cet article fait sentir le changement survenu dans les rapports de l'Autriche avec la Hongrie. Après la défaite devant l'armée autrichienne à Sadowa, ainsi que la perte de la Vénétie, François-Joseph tenta de relever l'Autriche par le compromis de 1867 qui divisait la Monarchie en deux Etats : la Cisleithanie et la Transleithanie, le premier à dominante allemande, le second sous domination magyare. L'heure était donc à l'autocritique rétrospective. Ainsi Wurzbach dénonce-t-il l'incarcération injuste de Madách et cite quelques-unes des expressions originales de son célèbre discours, publié en traduction allemande dans les annales du parlement hongrois, qui ridiculisent des hommes politiques autrichiens d'alors.⁶² S'adressant à un public conservateur, il insiste cependant sur l'indifférence de Madách face au soulèvement anti-habsbourg et passe sous silence son divorce. Quant à « l'œuvre qui a fondé sa renommée »,⁶³ Wurzbach évoque les circonstances précises de sa découverte par Arany et met en lumière le pessimisme ainsi que le caractère universel, non patriotique de la *Tragédie*.

En dépit de cette réévaluation de Madách dans la nouvelle Autriche-Hongrie, l'absence de documents pendant les dix-huit années suivantes pourrait nous amener à conclure à une éclipse d'intérêt pour la *Tragédie*. Il semble en fait qu'une partie de la littérature critique s'y rapportant ait disparu. « Une critique malveillante et incompréhensive rejette en bloc l'œuvre de Madách [...] »⁶⁴ Ecrite en 1885, cette remarque se réfère probablement à plusieurs publications du début des années 1880, voire antérieures. D'autres critiques font également allusion à des textes perdus. A notre avis, s'il s'était agi d'études longues, elles nous seraient cependant parvenues ou auraient fait l'objet de réactions dans l'un des camps, hongrois ou allemand.

Les signes avant-coureurs d'une carrière théâtrale en langue allemande (1886–1892)

Malgré ces indices attestant l'existence de publications sur la *Tragédie* entre 1867 et 1885, il demeure que c'est une impulsion venant du pays d'origine de Madách qui intensifie en 1883 la réception de langue allemande. Cette année-là a lieu la première adaptation scénique par Ede Paulay. Le succès de cette représentation donnée au Théâtre national de Budapest attire de nouveau l'attention du monde germanophone sur la *Tragédie*, même si l'article du *Pester Lloyd* qui lui est consacré déplore l'appauvrissement considérable que ce drame d'idées subit.⁶⁵ Une véritable vague de traductions prouve un regain d'intérêt. Celles-ci sont précédées ou suivies de critiques plus développées qu'antérieurement. En 1886 pa-

raissent deux traductions, l'une d'Alexander Fischer,⁶⁶ l'autre de Josef Siebenlist.⁶⁷ La première est partielle, dans la mesure où Fischer a transposé l'adaptation d'Ede Paulay.⁶⁸ Au caractère tronqué s'ajoutent, selon Radó, de nombreuses fautes de traduction et de syntaxe.⁶⁹ Un critique de l'époque constate qu'elle « laisse encore à désirer, mais elle est lisible et donne au moins une idée de la beauté de l'œuvre ». ⁷⁰ En dépit de ces faiblesses importantes, cette traduction – publiée d'abord à Budapest – est vite épuisée et deux fois rééditée à Leipzig au cours de la même année 1886. Descendant bilingue d'Allemands de Hongrie, Fischer (1853–1888), qui était employé de banque, avait manifestement le sens des affaires. Son second et dernier travail littéraire devait être une biographie de Sándor Petőfi,⁷¹ laquelle se vendit certainement bien, étant donné la popularité du poète depuis 1847 (date de la première traduction allemande de ses poèmes) et surtout après qu'il fut devenu le martyr le plus célèbre de la répression autrichienne.

Quant à Josef Siebenlist, l'envie de traduire la *Tragédie* lui avait été inspirée par une représentation hongroise de la *Tragédie* à Bratislava en 1884. Après des études de droit et de philosophie, Siebenlist (1847–1897) travaille comme rédacteur d'un journal allemand de Bratislava (*Der Westungarische Grenzboten*), puis d'un quotidien viennois (*Neuigkeits-Weltblatt*). Comme le titre de ce dernier le laisse entendre, Vienne vit alors – quoiqu'avec un certain retard par rapport à Paris et Londres – à l'heure de la culture de masse, tant exécrée par Flaubert et Zola. Les autres travaux littéraires de ce traducteur témoignent du même phénomène : il écrit des livrets d'opérettes qui sont, pour la plupart, des adaptations d'œuvres de la littérature espagnole. Quant à sa traduction de la *Tragédie*, peu remarquée par le public germanophone de la Double Monarchie, Siebenlist l'avait dédiée à l'archiduc François, sans trouver pour autant en lui le mécène qui lui aurait frayé le chemin vers une maison d'édition de renom. Tout en étant la plus fidèle des trois qui existent à ce jour,⁷² sa traduction est publiée à frais d'auteur à Bratislava et à Leipzig et ne connaîtra pas de réédition.

En 1887 et 1888 deux nouvelles traductions voient le jour, celles d'Andor von Sponer⁷³ et de Julius Lechner.⁷⁴ Issu d'une famille germanophone de Hongrie, Sponer (1843–1917) avait été notaire avant de siéger au parlement. Son œuvre de traducteur est importante : parmi les poètes hongrois il traduit Arany et Petőfi, parmi les auteurs étrangers Byron, Moore, Goethe, Heine, Uhland, Hugo et Béranger. Dès 1886, la parution prochaine de sa traduction est annoncée dans un quotidien berlinois.⁷⁵ Publié d'abord en Hongrie (à Késmárk) chez l'éditeur allemand Paul Sauter, elle connaît deux rééditions à Leipzig chez Otto Wigand, en 1891 et en 1899. Morvay et Reinhard répertorient plusieurs omissions de vers.⁷⁶ Dans son étude comparée des traductions, Radó fustige ce traducteur – marxisme oblige – pour les signes manifestes de son conservatisme, tels que l'emploi de sa particule de noblesse, la dédicace à une comtesse Csáky et enfin la mise en

exergue d'un poème du comte August von Platen-Hallermünde.⁷⁷ Radó reconnaît toutefois à Sponer le mérite d'avoir accompli un réel travail littéraire.⁷⁸

La traduction de Julius Lechner⁷⁹ réunit deux avantages : elle est publiée en Allemagne, chez le grand éditeur leipzigois Reclam, et sa préface est signée par Mór Jókai, romancier hongrois populaire en Autriche et en Allemagne. Selon une étude de Klára Ney, elle paraît à plusieurs milliers d'exemplaires, dont deux mille sont écoulés à Leipzig et à Vienne le premier jour de sa parution.⁸⁰ Un tel succès ne peut s'expliquer que par un battage publicitaire extraordinaire, rendu possible par la préface de Jókai, dont une centaine de romans se trouvait sur le marché du livre allemand et autrichien.⁸¹ Malgré ces atouts qui la prédestinaient à atteindre un large public, cette traduction ne connaît qu'une seule réédition tardive, en 1916. Cet insuccès s'explique-t-il par sa qualité médiocre ? A en croire Radó, cette traduction est, à quelques maladroites près, d'un niveau à peu près égal à celui du texte de Sponer.⁸² Selon un autre critique hongrois ayant comparé les cinq traductions entre elles, c'est celle de Lechner qui peut être considérée comme la plus réussie.⁸³ Étonnamment, il n'a été à aucun moment reproché à Lechner d'avoir employé le vocabulaire gothéen. Pourtant, parmi les sept traducteurs dont nous avons pu consulter le travail, il est le seul à avoir choisi pour l'auto-définition de Lucifer une expression quasi identique à la célèbre formule de Goethe « ich bin der Geist, der stets verneint » :

Lucifer

Empfandest du nicht die schauerliche Leere
Die alles Werden hat gehemmt so lang,
Und immer hemmend dich zu schaffen zwang?
War dieses Hindernis nicht Lucifer,

Der Geist, der stets verneint seit alters her?

Une cause apparente de l'insuccès de Sponer et de Lechner pourrait avoir été la parution d'une nouvelle traduction de la plume d'un concurrent de taille, Ludwig Doczi (1845–1919).⁸⁴ Personnage à double appartenance, celui-ci est alors connu en Autriche et en Allemagne par ses comédies, ainsi que par ses transpositions de poèmes d'Arany et de Vörösmarty. A cette époque, Doczi occupe en outre, depuis 1879, la fonction de directeur de presse de la monarchie. Grâce à la célébrité de ce traducteur, son texte sera réédité à deux reprises en 1891 et servira longtemps pour les mises en scène. Mais il n'a pas pour autant porté chance à la *Tragédie*. Déjà la critique contemporaine souligne que Doczi a commis l'erreur d'être infidèle au rythme de la langue de Madách en utilisant la technique de versification du *Faust*,⁸⁵ qu'il avait traduit auparavant. En effet, il a transformé la moitié des vers iambiques sans rime en vers rimés. Toutefois, pour ce qui est de la fidélité séman-

tique, sa traduction est irréprochable et, tout au moins dans le passage que nous avons sélectionné, Doczi évite de toute évidence le vocabulaire de Goethe :

Lucifer

Doch war ein Riss in dem, was du gedacht,
Der gegen Sein und Werden stets sich spreizte,
Und grade so zum Schaffen zwang und reizte.
Dies *Hemmungselement* heisst Lucifer
Und sein *Beruf* ist ewig zu verneinen.⁸⁶

Toutefois, le souci de contourner la formule goethéenne amène ce traducteur à employer parfois un vocabulaire lourd et maladroit, en l'occurrence le mot composé et la tournure infinitive. Utilisant le substantif « Beruf » au sens luthérien de vocation (Berufung), il confère au texte une tonalité archaïsante. En outre, il substitue la tournure « sein Beruf ist ewig zu verneinen » à la proposition relative « der Geist, der stets verneint », sans pour autant renoncer au verbe « verneinen » qui fait écho à la formulation goethéenne. Ainsi confère-t-il à l'expression de Madách l'allure d'une mauvaise copie.

En 1891 paraît également la sixième traduction de ces années 1880–90, celle d'Eugen Planer à Halle.⁸⁷ Planer est le seul parmi les traducteurs rencontrés jusqu'ici sur lequel toute indication biographique fait défaut. Seul indice en notre possession : il a signé sa préface à Graz. Il descend donc probablement d'une famille bilingue de la Double Monarchie.⁸⁸ Sa traduction ne se caractérise, selon Radó, ni par des qualités, ni par des défauts extraordinaires.⁸⁹ Elle aura néanmoins l'honneur d'être retravaillée une trentaine d'années plus tard.

Avec le travail de Planer se clôt la série des traductions produites en l'espace de cinq ans.⁹⁰ Quant à l'origine des traducteurs, il s'agit, dans la majorité des cas, d'Autrichiens bilingues, le hongrois, langue minoritaire, n'étant pas enseigné à cette époque à l'étranger. Ces transpositions si rapprochées dans le temps sont les signes précurseurs d'une période d'intérêt aussi brève qu'intense.

Prises de positions d'écrivains et publicistes des années 1880–90

Les critiques que nous allons examiner ci-après sont : cinq articles de revue, une publication indépendante,⁹¹ l'introduction à la traduction d'Andor Sponer, enfin les annonces de la traduction de Doczi par la *Neue Freie Presse* de Vienne et par le *Pester Lloyd*. Dans ces critiques, dont l'étendue reflète l'importance accrue accordée au drame de Madách, l'on rencontre des considérations du même ordre que dans les premiers commentaires des années 1860. Toutefois, un grand nombre de caractéristiques viennent s'ajouter, attestant que leurs auteurs sont des témoins

d'une époque dont l'horizon d'attente littéraire et philosophique s'est modifié. Par ailleurs, tous les critiques ont connaissance de la représentation hongroise et veulent apporter leur contribution à une adaptation allemande.

Alexander Fischer,⁹² traducteur de l'adaptation de Paulay, prend les devants en ce qui concerne les avantages d'une mise en scène. Selon lui, elle rapprocherait cette œuvre du grand public, dans la mesure où elle la ferait connaître à de plus vastes couches de la population, encore récalcitrantes à la lecture, mais ouvertes aux plaisirs visuels du théâtre. Une représentation, aussi peu apte qu'elle soit à communiquer toute la profondeur de l'œuvre, est, à l'en croire, un moyen d'élargir le champ des lecteurs germanophones.⁹³ Témoin d'une adaptation ovationnée, Fischer n'est pas conscient du risque qu'une mise en scène manquée peut conduire à un rejet complet de l'œuvre.

Romulus Katscher comprend son article comme un ensemble d'informations sur Madách destinées à un futur public, une première mise en scène étant en effet en préparation au *Burgtheater* de Vienne.⁹⁴ Son article étant édité à Leipzig, dans la revue *Unsere Zeit*, l'on peut s'étonner que Katscher cherche à informer le public viennois. Cette contradiction pourrait s'expliquer par une éventuelle popularité de la revue leipzigoise dans l'empire austro-hongrois. Mais cette revue ne figure pas dans le catalogue de la bibliothèque universitaire de Vienne, édité en 1898.⁹⁵ Il y a tout lieu de croire par conséquent que l'article de Katscher fut écrit à l'origine pour une revue autrichienne, l'auteur étant citoyen bilingue de la Double Monarchie.⁹⁶

La plupart des critiques mentionnent l'existence de plusieurs traductions. August Siebenlist, frère du traducteur du même nom, considère même l'examen scientifique des traductions comme une question brûlante.⁹⁷ Cet appel sera entendu : dès 1892 paraît la première comparaison,⁹⁸ en 1895 la seconde.⁹⁹ Rédigés en hongrois, ces articles ne pouvaient atteindre que les lecteurs bilingues de l'Autriche-Hongrie. On pourrait donc regretter qu'aucun Allemand de Hongrie n'ait pris cette initiative, si l'expérience n'enseignait pas qu'un tel examen, aussi objectif et approfondi qu'il soit, aurait eu peu de chance d'être pris en compte. En effet, la réédition, tout comme le choix d'une traduction pour une mise en scène, semble être indépendante de ses qualités. Des facteurs extra-littéraires auxquels nous avons déjà fait allusion, comme par exemple les relations d'un traducteur avec les milieux de l'édition et/ou le monde du théâtre sont décisives.

Dans la perspective d'une représentation allemande, les commentateurs des années 1880/90 soulèvent la question de savoir si le drame hongrois relève réellement du genre dramatique. Julian Weiß affirme que la *Tragédie* n'a pas été écrite pour le théâtre, étant « un poème fantastique découpé en scènes ».¹⁰⁰ Selon Alexander Fischer, Madách aurait prouvé par le tableau de Paris qu'il était dramaturge.¹⁰¹ Il nie toutefois que l'ensemble de la pièce, tout comme le *Faust* de Goethe, mérite d'être qualifié de drame. « Pour cette raison, la tentative d'une re-

présentation scénique de la *Tragédie de l'homme* et du *Faust* complet demeure une tentative ». ¹⁰² Fischer parle ici en connaissance de cause, faisant partie avec Doczi des traducteurs-critiques qui avaient assisté à la mise en scène à Budapest aussi bien de la *Tragédie* que du *Faust I*. Nous avons déjà évoqué les motivations qui font néanmoins souhaiter à Fischer que l'œuvre soit jouée sur une scène de langue allemande. Plusieurs critiques s'accordent sur l'absence de caractère dramatique dénoncé par Fischer. Selon Münz, Adam n'est pas un héros dramatique, mais une idée philosophique, « de la théorie pure ». ¹⁰³ Siebenlist insiste sur le caractère trop philosophique du drame. Il cite même le reproche analogue que Schopenhauer avait adressé à Hebbel. ¹⁰⁴ Dans ce contexte, les commentateurs s'interrogent sur l'effet que la *Tragédie* peut exercer sur le spectateur en donnant des réponses diamétralement opposées. Selon Fischer, le destin d'Adam nous intéresse, certes, mais ne nous bouleverse pas. ¹⁰⁵ Münz, quant à lui, insiste sur l'effet cathartique et la vérité saisissante de la *Tragédie*. ¹⁰⁶ Des expressions récurrentes, telles que « bouleversant », « saisissant (le cœur) », « émouvoir », « avec une force irrésistible », indiquent que le public contemporain attendait d'une tragédie une catharsis.

Ces critiques abordent également un nouvel aspect thématique de l'œuvre, le rôle de la femme. Fischer félicite Madách de sa vision patriarcale : « l'écrivain a raison de ne faire sentir qu'à Adam la force des événements [...], la part que la femme prend à l'histoire est peu importante ». ¹⁰⁷ Münz et Siebenlist louent, tout au contraire, l'éclairage positif dans lequel Madách place la femme. Siebenlist, récusant à la même occasion le reproche de misogynie adressé à Schopenhauer, va jusqu'à suggérer comme sous-titre pour la *Tragédie* « Le cantique des cantiques de la femme ». ¹⁰⁸ Ces remarques antinomiques sont intéressantes à double titre. D'une part, elles confirment le caractère contradictoire de la pièce. D'autre part, des propos de Madách révèlent qu'il considérait avoir brossé un portrait du sexe féminin, certes relativement sombre, mais atténué par l'admiration que lui inspirait sa mère : « Eve est redevable à ma mère du fait que je ne l'ai pas peinte de couleurs plus criardes ». ¹⁰⁹ En outre, la sensibilité à l'image de la femme met en évidence que la controverse sur l'égalité des sexes était à l'ordre du jour. En 1880, l'encyclique de Léon XIII sur le mariage chrétien (*Arcanum divinae*), se prononçant pour la soumission de la femme à son époux, tout comme l'étude d'Eugen Dühring, parue un an plus tard, affirmant que le mouvement féministe était d'origine juive, avait déclenché des protestations véhémentes. Plusieurs associations stipulant l'égalité des deux sexes sont fondées à partir du milieu des années 1885. ¹¹⁰

Quelles réponses ces critiques donnent-ils aux questions déjà posées par leurs confrères dans les années soixante? Tous les commentateurs soulignent la ressemblance avec le *Faust*, sans ignorer toutefois les différences entre les deux œuvres. Deux d'entre eux, Fischer et Siebenlist, considèrent que la *Tragédie de l'homme*

n'existerait pas sans le *Faust*. Le premier rappelle certes que Goethe avait puisé dans le conte populaire,¹¹¹ sans mentionner cependant les emprunts faits au *Faust* de Marlow. Mais par ailleurs, Fischer met en évidence les différences entre le tableau de Londres et la promenade pascalle du *Faust I*, ayant servi de modèle. Selon lui, Goethe représente : « avec les bourgeois [...] et même avec le mendiant, la joie de vivre débordante, tandis que s'expriment chez Madách, par le truchement des mêmes personnages, les défauts de l'époque ».¹¹² Ce faisant, il est le premier à faire la distinction entre le cadre extérieur, emprunté à Goethe, et le contenu propre à Madách. Une analyse aussi nuancée de l'intertextualité restera exceptionnelle dans l'histoire du transfert de la *Tragédie*. Siebenlist, quant à lui, contrebalance son jugement dévalorisant par la mise en lumière des multiples liens qui unissent, selon lui, le drame hongrois à des œuvres littéraires du passé et du présent.¹¹³ Le motif du rêve évoque à ses yeux Pindare, Calderon et Grillparzer,¹¹⁴ celui de la bacchanale de Rome le *Satyricon* de Pétrone. Le personnage de Lucifer le fait penser au diable de la comédie *Les enfants inégaux d'Eve* de Hans Sachs, celui du patriarche au grand inquisiteur du *Don Carlos* de Schiller et au patriarche de Lessing dans *Nathan le sage*. Le tableau de Londres est, selon ce critique, « du Sudermann¹¹⁵ en miniature », ¹¹⁶ celui du phalanstère « un précurseur du roman connu de Bellamy¹¹⁷ [...] tout en le dépassant en originalité et en vivacité » ;¹¹⁸ quant à l'avant-dernier tableau, représentant la terre refroidie, il lui apparaît comme « une perspective d'avenir à la Falb ».¹¹⁹ Le drame dans son ensemble lui rappelle, plus que le *Faust* de Goethe, *l'Odyssée*, le *Parsifal* de Wagner¹²⁰ et le *Peer Gynt* d'Ibsen.¹²¹ Enfin, un aspect formel, la structure du drame, rapproche selon Siebenlist la *Tragédie* de la *Comédie divine* de Dante.

Andor Sponer place également l'œuvre de Goethe au-dessus de la *Tragédie*. Mais cette dernière lui semble être unique par son universalité et par son audace à vouloir embrasser le passé, le présent et l'avenir.¹²² Selon Münz, le *Manfred* de Byron aurait exercé sur Madách une impression aussi puissante que le *Faust* de Goethe.¹²³ Julian Weiß considère que l'importante culture littéraire de Madách nuit à la qualité de son œuvre, car elle l'incite à pasticher involontairement Goethe, Shakespeare et Byron.¹²⁴ Cette remarque négative montre que l'interaction entre des chefs d'œuvres et de nombreux modèles littéraires est manifestement un phénomène insolite aux yeux de ce critique. Ignorant la dépendance de Byron à l'égard de Goethe, il s'étonne aussi de l'audace du poète hongrois de s'exposer à la comparaison avec « le plus grand poète de tous les temps ».¹²⁵ Néanmoins, ce critique, tout comme ses confrères, admire la structure de la *Tragédie*¹²⁶ et affirme qu'elle mérite une place d'honneur au sein de la littérature universelle, inférieure certes à celle de Goethe et de Shakespeare.

Pour ce qui est de l'influence de philosophes, les points de vue se rejoignent également : ce n'est plus Hegel mais Schopenhauer qui est présenté comme l'ancêtre spirituel de Madách. Plusieurs indices extérieurs rendent manifeste la référé-

rence à ce philosophe. Fischer fait précéder son étude de l'épigraphe : « La vie est un rêve, une vague éphémère dans la mer infinie et sombre du rien ».¹²⁷ Plus loin, il précise : « Schopenhauer appelle l'histoire un long rêve horrible de l'humanité, Lucifer fait vivre ce rêve pénible à l'homme ».¹²⁸ Siebenlist croit avoir trouvé la clé de la *Tragédie* dans cette même citation de Schopenhauer.¹²⁹ L'annonce de la traduction de Doczi dans la *Neue Freie Presse* porte un titre qui ne laisse aucun doute sur le fait que son auteur connaissait Schopenhauer : « Le monde, un rêve ».¹³⁰ Katscher, lui, rapproche les deux ancêtres, Byron et Schopenhauer, et qualifie leur pensée de « poésie du doute ».¹³¹ Enfin le commentateur budapestois de la traduction de Doczi, Adolf Silberstein, voit dans la *Tragédie* « du Schopenhauer dramatisé, avec la négation du vouloir vivre de l'homme ».¹³²

La familiarité de tous les commentateurs des années 1880/90 avec ce philosophe renvoie à sa réception intensive. L'un des critiques évoque d'ailleurs sa popularité exceptionnelle.¹³³ En effet, si l'œuvre principale de Schopenhauer était restée inconnue pendant longtemps, son lectorat n'avait cessé de s'élargir depuis la publication de ses *Parerga et Paralipomena* (1851), et surtout depuis les *Briefe über Schopenhauers Philosophie* (1854) de Julius Frauenstädt. L'expérience de 1848 avait anéanti l'espoir de traduire dans les faits une idéologie : « A mesure que le confort et la sécurité bourgeoise s'installaient en même temps que les assurances-vie ; à mesure aussi que le christianisme allemand s'embourgeoisait et, sous les coups de David Friedrich Strauss, se vidait de son contenu [...] : alors la philosophie de Schopenhauer s'offrit comme un refuge, une consolation, satisfaisant le besoin 'métaphysique' qu'il avait si lumineusement décrit, enseignant le pessimisme héroïque qui permettait d'affronter le vide enfin reconnu ».¹³⁴ Plus tard, « les adorateurs de la 'Realpolitik' bismarckienne qui applaudissaient aux succès de la Prusse, se proclamaient eux aussi schopenhaueriens et reconnaissaient la vanité et la souffrance du vouloir-vivre ».¹³⁵

La connaissance de la pensée de Schopenhauer conduit tous les commentateurs à n'apercevoir dans la *Tragédie* que la vision du monde pessimiste de Madách, vision désapprouvée par certains. Weiß déplore l'impression décourageante produite par le drame.¹³⁶ L'étude de Fischer est truffée d'expressions comme « drame triste », « drapeau de deuil du pessimisme », révélant qu'il adhère à une vision du monde plus optimiste. Ainsi est-il satisfait de la réalité politique de son époque et, par conséquent, choqué par la critique acerbe du capitalisme : « Bizarrement, la scène que l'auteur a le moins bien réussie est celle où Adam vit à son époque, à celle de l'écrivain. Les hommes sont physiquement et intellectuellement estropiés, car ils ne respirent pas l'air frais, mais l'air méphistophélique du pessimisme ».¹³⁷ Par ailleurs, faisant référence aux circonstances de la vie de Madách, Fischer juge la situation après le compromis de 1867 dans les termes suivants : « sur les ruines de la réaction sombre naquit un empire différent et plus puissant parce qu'il ne s'appuie pas sur la violence, mais sur un esprit de conciliation ».¹³⁸

La préférence pour certaines scènes ou leur rejet dépend donc de la vision du monde de chaque observateur. Le tableau de Rome, par exemple, qui peint le triomphe et l'effet purificateur du christianisme, en séduit certains : Fischer exprime son admiration devant l'effet dramatique extraordinaire de cette scène. La scène de Constantinople, par contre, incite à la contradiction les commentateurs versés dans les dogmes catholiques. Ainsi lisons-nous chez Siebenlist, originaire d'Autriche : « Ici l'écrivain ne remarque pas que, selon que l'on rejette ou accepte le 'i',¹³⁹ on est en présence d'une différence dogmatique considérable ». ¹⁴⁰

Quant à la satire du capitalisme du tableau de Londres, les avis divergent également selon que le critique y voit le portrait de son époque ou une période historique future. Ainsi Siebenlist considère-t-il que cette scène est la plus intéressante : « le tout est pour ainsi dire un avant-goût du siècle à venir, plus insensé encore, qui cherchera l'éternelle vanité des succès de ce monde terrestre ». ¹⁴¹ Fischer en revanche, dont nous avons déjà évoqué la réaction, reconnut dans ce tableau la peinture de l'époque contemporaine et refusa d'admettre sa véracité. ¹⁴²

Le tableau du phalanstère plaît, comme vingt ans auparavant, en raison de son actualité. Silberstein l'admire et le compare, à l'instar de son compatriote viennois, au roman de Bellamy. Siebenlist interprète « ce portrait-charge d'un État idéal hautement ridicule » ¹⁴³ comme la volonté de l'écrivain de clouer au pilori la futilité des socialistes. Les deux critiques étant des citoyens de l'Autriche-Hongrie, nous rappellerons que le parti socialiste autrichien (*Die Sozialdemokratische Arbeiterpartei, SDAP*) venait d'être fondé en 1888/89, au moment où son modèle allemand revenait sur la scène politique, après douze années d'interdiction. Malgré les objectifs modérés de ce nouveau parti, ¹⁴⁴ les esprits conservateurs le redoutaient.

Grâce à leur lecture attentive du drame et à leur vaste culture littéraire, cette seconde génération de critiques valorise la *Tragédie* et réussit à en saisir l'unicité. Leur culture philosophique se focalisant sur Schopenhauer, chose compréhensible puisque le succès populaire de son œuvre battait son plein en ces années 1890, ¹⁴⁵ ils se concentrent sur le parrainage de ce penseur. Il est intéressant de constater que cette vision les rend aveugles au dénouement optimiste, tant fustigé par les critiques des années 1860, lesquels ignoraient encore Schopenhauer. Tout en donnant des interprétations opposées de certains aspects du drame, aucun d'eux n'en vient à le rejeter en bloc.

Le corpus de textes des années 1862–1892 relatif à la *Tragédie* regroupe deux types de réception reproductive, la traduction et l'étude critique. Le transfert proprement dit s'effectue grâce aux traducteurs, même s'il serait erroné de sous-estimer l'activité des critiques dont le rôle est d'attirer l'attention sur l'œuvre et sur ses versions allemandes. Les exégètes sortent en partie des rangs des traducteurs, certains parmi eux sont des écrivains connus.

La majeure partie de ces lecteurs actifs et compétents appartient à l'aire linguistique à la fois germanophone et hungarophone que constituait à cette époque l'Autriche-Hongrie. Seul un traducteur, Alexander Dietze, et trois critiques, Theodor Opitz, Rudolf Gottschall et Bernhard Münz, sont issus de l'aire culturelle purement germanophone. Signalons toutefois que Gottschall et Opitz étaient originaires d'un espace frontalier et que Dietze avait longuement séjourné dans l'aire linguistique hungarophone. Rappelons aussi que Dietze et Opitz étaient parvenus à apprendre le hongrois, le dernier même sans avoir vécu en Hongrie.

Au niveau géographique, Leipzig est le lieu principal à partir duquel s'opèrent les contacts entre l'œuvre de Madách et des lecteurs germanophones. Compte tenu du nombre important de livres traduits du hongrois édités à Leipzig, le fait n'est pas étonnant.¹⁴⁶ Paraissent dans cette ville : quatre études ou articles de journaux en 1863, 1864 et 1865, une étude volumineuse en 1885, deux traductions en 1886 (dont l'une est rééditée la même année), une nouvelle étude, ainsi qu'une troisième traduction en 1888, suivie en 1891 d'une quatrième, puis de deux rééditions d'une traduction plus ancienne. On admettra que l'implication de quatre éditeurs de livres¹⁴⁷ et de cinq éditeurs de journaux ou de revues¹⁴⁸ dans la diffusion d'un seul auteur hongrois décédé jeune en ne laissant qu'un seul ouvrage important représente à cette époque un succès sensationnel. Le changement survenu à la tête de la revue *Magazin für die Literatur des In- und Auslandes* prouve *a contrario* l'importance de l'ouverture d'esprit des éditeurs. En effet, Karl Bleibtreu qui n'avait que mépris pour la littérature hongroise, cessa toute publication relative à cette dernière lorsqu'il succéda à Josef Lehmann.¹⁴⁹ Si déjà le premier article annonçant la parution de la *Tragédie* n'était pas resté sans écho – Theodor Opitz rendit compte de nombreuses réactions de lecteurs, alors même qu'aucune traduction n'était en vue¹⁵⁰ – on peut imaginer l'intérêt suscité par autant de traductions et d'articles. La présence parmi les critiques et traducteurs de l'écrivain Rudolf Gottschall¹⁵¹ favorisa probablement le processus de réception. Le jugement élogieux de ce dernier, formulé en 1865 dans les pages de la prestigieuse revue *Blätter für literarische Unterhaltung*,¹⁵² trouva très certainement une résonance dans les milieux littéraires, l'auteur jouissant alors d'une autorité importante. Son intense activité philologique,¹⁵³ lyrique, dramatique et romanesque se prolongea en effet jusqu'au milieu des années 1890. Jugée épigonale par la postérité, son œuvre dramatique eut à l'époque plus de succès que celle de Hebbel.¹⁵⁴ Des signes extérieurs témoignent, du reste, de sa popularité d'alors. Déjà conseiller de la cour, il fut anobli par l'Empereur en 1877.

Grâce aux efforts conjugués de ces personnalités clés, la *Tragédie de l'homme* fut rendue accessible à un nombre relativement important de lecteurs germanophones. Précisons que par 'personnalités clés' nous entendons autant les éditeurs créant les supports matériels que les lecteurs actifs transposant l'œuvre hongroise en langue allemande ou l'expliquant et la mettant en valeur.

**Des écrivains germanophones face à la *Tragédie* (1865–1892)
Réactions anecdotiques ou significatives?**

Alors que l'immense majorité des lecteurs germanophones ne s'est pas exprimée sur sa perception de l'œuvre hongroise, les impressions de lecture d'une certaine partie du lectorat germanophone se sont transmises à la postérité. Ces lecteurs étant des acteurs connus de la vie littéraire, les philologues hongrois de l'époque s'en firent en effet l'écho. En 1887, Lajos T. Náményi annonce à ses compatriotes que la *Tragédie de l'homme* est l'œuvre de la littérature hongroise qui a remporté le plus grand succès en Allemagne en 1886. A l'en croire, « Vischer, Felix Dahn, le prince Georg de Meiningen, Georg Ebers, Friedrich Spielhagen, tous s'expriment avec enthousiasme sur l'œuvre de Madách ». ¹⁵⁵ Par ailleurs, il évoque la promesse faite par l'historien de la littérature Johannes Scherr de traiter la *Tragédie* dans un ouvrage à paraître ¹⁵⁶ et attribue au traducteur Alexander Fischer le mérite d'avoir popularisé le drame hongrois. Győző Morvay, dans son ouvrage publié en 1897, cite parmi les admirateurs de la *Tragédie* Theodor Vischer, Paul Heyse, Gustav Freytag, Adolf Wilbrandt, Johannes Scherr, Richard Nordmann et Theodor Storm. ¹⁵⁷ Dans un article de 1903, József Bayer énumère les mêmes noms, tout en omettant les deux derniers et en précisant qu'il ne mentionne que les plus illustres. ¹⁵⁸ Dans la perspective de notre étude, la contribution de Morvay est la plus précieuse. Elle confirme en effet l'activité importante déployée par Fischer pour faire connaître la *Tragédie* (et sa traduction). Elle est également l'unique source qui garde la trace de jugements élogieux, tirés en grande partie de la correspondance inédite de Fischer. De brèves déclarations formulées dans le cadre d'un échange épistolaire ou bien quelques lignes d'un ouvrage d'histoire littéraire pourraient paraître négligeables. Si nous nous sommes néanmoins intéressée à elles, c'était afin d'en extraire des renseignements sur les canaux de diffusion et le degré de notoriété de la *Tragédie* entre 1865 et 1896.

Compte tenu du rôle important de Leipzig dans le processus de réception, il va de soi que ceux des écrivains mentionnés qui y vivaient ont eu l'occasion de découvrir l'œuvre de Madách. Tel pourrait être le cas de Georg Ebers (1837–1898) et de Gustav Freytag (1816–1895). Enseignant l'égyptologie à l'Université de Leipzig de 1870 à 1889, Ebers était aussi l'auteur de nombreux romans historiques. Par sa thématique historique et plus particulièrement par le tableau d'Égypte, la *Tragédie* devait attirer son attention. Freytag, lui, est susceptible d'avoir eu des relations privilégiées avec Rudolf Gottschall, originaire comme lui de Silésie et ayant fait comme lui ses études universitaires à Breslau. Après avoir enseigné la littérature allemande à l'université de cette ville, Freytag se tourne vers le monde du théâtre à Leipzig et à Dresde, où il fréquente Heinrich Laube, Ludwig Tieck et Richard Wagner. A la suite des événements révolutionnaires auxquels il prend part, Freytag se fixe à Leipzig pour y prendre la direction des *Grenzboten*.

Cet hebdomadaire de politique et de littérature, professant des idées nationales et libérales, publie entre 1849 et 1880 un nombre considérable de recensions d'ouvrages consacrés à la Hongrie, ainsi que quelques présentations de traductions d'auteurs hongrois. C'est dans les colonnes de ce journal que la qualité des traductions d'un Adolf Dux, d'un Karl Maria Kertbeny, d'un Agost Greguss et d'un G. Stier fait l'objet d'un examen de la part du rédacteur austro-hongrois, Mor Eisler.¹⁵⁹ Du reste, Freytag connaissait Kertbeny personnellement, ce dernier ayant collaboré à sa revue dans les années 1850.¹⁶⁰ Un second médiateur pourrait être la comédienne hongroise, Lilla von Bulyovszky.¹⁶¹ En sa qualité de conseiller du théâtre de la cour de Gotha, Freytag l'avait côtoyée à partir de 1859. Membre du Théâtre National de Budapest, écrivaine et traductrice de pièces de théâtre, celle-ci pourrait avoir communiqué autour d'elle son admiration pour la *Tragédie*. Compte tenu de ses conceptions libérales,¹⁶² de sa passion pour l'histoire¹⁶³ et pour le théâtre,¹⁶⁴ il est aisé de concevoir que la *Tragédie* ait éveillé la curiosité de cet écrivain allemand. Quoi qu'il en soit, selon Morvay, Freytag considérait la *Tragédie* comme une œuvre remarquable par sa structure, sa richesse d'idées et sa teneur philosophique, même s'il regrettait que la magie poétique en fût absente.¹⁶⁵ Inspiré de la défaite de la lutte hongroise pour l'indépendance, la trame de son roman *Eine Familie in Nagyenyed* constitue un reflet supplémentaire de son intérêt pour la Hongrie. Du reste, dans son roman-fleuve *Ahnen* (1872–1880) où il retrace l'histoire du peuple allemand du IV^e siècle à 1870, Freytag semble faire dans le roman ce que Madách réussit au théâtre, transposé certes au plan strictement national. Parmi les huit époques¹⁶⁶ qui lui servent d'arrière-plan historique, la fresque du treizième siècle, peignant la société chevaleresque et les croisades, fait penser au tableau de Constantinople dans la *Tragédie*. En chroniqueur fidèle de l'histoire allemande, Freytag, à l'inverse de Madách, ne fait pas l'économie de la Réforme.

L'exemple de deux autres admirateurs illustres de Madách, Friedrich Theodor Vischer et Johannes Scherr, prouve que la *Tragédie* n'était pas inconnue dans le sud-ouest de l'Allemagne et en Suisse, avant même que la traduction de Ludwig Doczi paraisse à Stuttgart et y soit rééditée à deux reprises en 1891. Vischer et Scherr, l'un et l'autre plus connus de nos jours par leurs travaux philologiques que par leurs productions littéraires, étaient des correspondants d'Alexander Fischer.

Ami de jeunesse de David Friedrich Strauss et d'Eduard Mörike, Friedrich Theodor Vischer (1807–1887) fut proche du cercle des poètes souabes et enseigna au *Polytechnikum* de Zurich (1855–1866),¹⁶⁷ puis à Tübingen et à Stuttgart. Ses conceptions anticléricales et évolutionnistes, qu'il partageait avec Strauss, ainsi que ses études approfondies du *Faust* le rendaient apte à une lecture objective du « Faust hongrois ». En effet, Vischer fut l'un des premiers à mettre en évidence les emprunts de Goethe¹⁶⁸ et à critiquer, dès 1844, le *Faust II*, en déplorant l'absence d'un épisode où Faust se verrait engagé dans l'histoire de son siècle, en particulier

dans la Guerre des Paysans (1525) comme défenseur du peuple.¹⁶⁹ Cette attitude critique l'incita à publier, à vrai dire sous couvert d'un pseudonyme, une parodie du *Faust II*, intitulée *Faust. Der Tragödie dritter Teil*¹⁷⁰ (1861). Elle fut rééditée en 1886, « augmentée d'une polémique anti-française, anticléricale et anti-démocratique ».¹⁷¹ Les détournements de motifs goethéens effectués par Madách pouvaient par conséquent, paraître à Vischer un procédé artistique légitime. S'il n'a pas consacré d'étude à la *Tragédie*, il a exprimé son admiration pour l'œuvre hongroise en la qualifiant de « puissant acte d'esprit, dont la littérature hongroise peut être fière à juste titre ».¹⁷² Il regretta toutefois que son auteur ait enfreint toutes les règles du drame.

Johannes Scherr (1817–1886), dont l'œuvre critique dépasse également l'importance de sa création de nouvelliste, est originaire de la même aire géographique. Partisan inconditionnel de la solution « grobdeutsch »¹⁷³ et membre influent du parti démocrate allemand, il est obligé de fuir l'Allemagne pour la Suisse, où il obtient une chaire d'histoire au *Polytechnikum* de Zurich en 1860. Il y côtoie Vischer et découvre le drame hongrois peut-être par son intermédiaire. Mais le cas de figure inverse est tout aussi probable, Alexander Fischer ayant dédié sa traduction (1886) à Scherr. Dans une lettre adressée au traducteur, Scherr exprime l'espoir que cette œuvre éminente attirera l'attention sur la littérature hongroise.¹⁷⁴ Le reflet durable de son intérêt pour la *Tragédie* se lit toutefois déjà dans l'édition augmentée de son *Allgemeine Geschichte der Weltliteratur* (1880),¹⁷⁵ laquelle parut avant même que Fischer eût découvert la *Tragédie* et contacté Scherr. Parmi les dramaturges hongrois cités, Madách est, après Vörösmarty, celui auquel Scherr consacre la plus grande place, résumant l'action de son œuvre principale dont il vante la composition audacieuse. Par ailleurs, il met en lumière son pessimisme et son hostilité envers les Allemands, manifeste dans sa satire *Le civilisateur*.¹⁷⁶ Ce jugement hâtif qui risquait de nuire à la popularité de l'écrivain hongrois, Madách y brossant la caricature non pas des Allemands mais des oppresseurs autrichiens, est à mettre sur le compte d'un nationalisme virulent caractéristique de cette époque.¹⁷⁷ Par la suite, dans l'édition augmentée de son ouvrage *Bildersaal der Weltliteratur* (1884/5), où il concentre pourtant en une page et demie l'histoire de la littérature hongroise, Scherr semble vouloir réparer cette erreur en faisant l'éloge de la *Tragédie de l'homme*.¹⁷⁸ Il y cite même un poème de Madách, destiné à prouver qu'en réalité son auteur n'était pas pessimiste. Cette volonté de « disculper » Madách révèle que Scherr connaissait les attentes de son lectorat, aux yeux duquel le pessimisme était une tare. Ce même reproche avait du reste été adressé à Scherr lui-même dans un ouvrage polémique, paru en 1886 à Berlin.¹⁷⁹

L'année de la première mention de la *Tragédie* par Scherr datant de 1880, celui-ci ne peut avoir consulté que la traduction de Dietze pour rédiger le chapitre de son histoire universelle de la littérature consacré à la Hongrie. C'est là la preuve

qu'une traduction, aussi décriée qu'elle soit, joue toujours un rôle dans le transfert d'une œuvre étrangère.

Après Leipzig et le sud-ouest de l'Allemagne, c'est à Munich, et plus particulièrement dans le cercle munichoïse des *Krokodile*,¹⁸⁰ que la renommée de Madách était la plus importante. Plusieurs de ses admirateurs, comme Adolf Wilbrandt, Paul Heyse¹⁸¹ et l'historien et professeur de droit Felix Dahn, étaient en effet membres de cette société littéraire. Heyse semble avoir joué un rôle de médiateur particulièrement actif auprès de certains écrivains. Nouvelliste, dramaturge et poète lyrique, il faisait à la fois partie du groupe munichoïse et du cercle berlinois *Tunnel über der Spree*,¹⁸² Heyse entretenait des rapports avec les écrivains souabes et rendait régulièrement visite à Gottfried Keller à Zurich. Comte tenu de ces contacts multiples, il est possible que Johannes Scherr ou Theodor Vischer, présents à Zurich dans les années 1860, puis à Stuttgart, aient attiré son attention sur Madách. A moins que Heyse lui-même l'ait découvert avant eux par l'intermédiaire de la comédienne hongroise déjà mentionnée, Lilla von Bulyovszky.¹⁸³ En effet, de 1867 à 1871, celle-ci faisait partie du théâtre de la cour à Munich, où elle comptait parmi ses admirateurs plusieurs membres du cercle des Crocodiles, dont Adolf Wilbrandt et Emmanuel Geibel, ami intime de Heyse. Si la date de sa découverte de l'œuvre reste incertaine, l'appréciation formulée par Heyse sur la *Tragédie* est en tout cas postérieure à l'adaptation scénique de 1883 à Budapest. Admirant « la structure incommensurable » du drame hongrois, Heyse s'étonnait en effet qu'on ait pu l'adapter à la scène.¹⁸⁴ Cette remarque ayant été citée pour la première fois en 1897, il n'est pas impossible que Heyse ait assisté à l'une des premières représentations de langue allemande.

L'exemple du célèbre prosateur d'Allemagne du Nord, Theodor Storm (1817–1888), met une fois de plus en évidence le talent de communication et l'extrême mobilité de Paul Heyse à l'intérieur de l'Empire. Storm était également membre du cercle berlinois *Tunnel über der Spree* où il s'était lié d'amitié avec Theodor Fontane et Paul Heyse. L'amitié avec ce dernier remonte au début des années 1850 et s'intensifie vers 1880.¹⁸⁵ C'est probablement par la médiation de Heyse que Storm découvre la *Tragédie*, qu'il qualifie à la fois de singulière et de grandiose. Selon le témoignage de Morvay, Storm avait déclaré qu'aucune œuvre littéraire récente n'avait exercé une impression aussi forte sur lui que la *Tragédie de l'homme*.¹⁸⁶

Sans figurer au nombre des adeptes de Madách, Theodor Fontane, autre membre illustre du *Tunnel über der Spree*, était un admirateur d'écrivains hongrois. Son roman *Graf Petöfy* (1884) témoigne de son intérêt pour la Hongrie. Selon Robert Gragger, il avait été initié à la littérature magyare par Karl Maria Kertbeny.¹⁸⁷ Malgré la qualité médiocre de ses travaux,¹⁸⁸ ce traducteur fécond pourrait avoir fait connaître Madách à Fontane, étant lui-même l'auteur présumé d'une traduction de la *Tragédie*, demeurée à l'état de manuscrit.

Aux côtés des membres de l'association poétique berlinoise évoquée, il convient de mentionner encore le romancier Friedrich Spielhagen,¹⁸⁹ cité en 1887 parmi les connaisseurs de la *Tragédie*. Collaborateur de plusieurs journaux berlinois depuis 1862, puis rédacteur des *Westermanns illustrierte deutsche Monatshefte* de 1878 à 1884, il peut avoir côtoyé Heyse ou Storm dans la capitale de la Prusse (puis de l'Empire).¹⁹⁰ Il est plus probable qu'il ait lu la traduction de Fischer, qui parut et fut rééditée à Berlin en 1886. Toutefois, ayant enseigné à Leipzig (1854–1860), Spielhagen a probablement découvert la *Tragédie* par l'intermédiaire de relations leipzigéennes.

Quant à Richard Nordmann, énuméré dans la liste des admirateurs de la *Tragédie* alors célèbres, il s'agit du pseudonyme de Marianna Margaretha Langkammer (1866–1922), comédienne et publiciste. Son engagement dans le *Münchner Ensemble* en 1889/90, puis au théâtre de Kassel et à Leipzig, laissent supposer qu'elle connaissait Gustav Freytag, Rudolf Gottschall et/ou Paul Heyse. Elle participa également à la *Wiener Theaterausstellung* de 1892 où elle peut avoir assisté à une mise en scène de la *Tragédie*. Après avoir abandonné sa carrière d'actrice, elle s'installe à Vienne où elle se consacre à l'écriture et devient correspondante des quotidiens *Wiener Extrablatt*, *Neue Wiener Tagblatt* et *Neue Freie Presse*. On peut supposer que ce soit dans l'un de ces quotidiens qu'elle s'est prononcée sur la *Tragédie*. Selon Morvay, Madách était, à ses yeux, en dépit de sa mort prématurée, un génie dont l'esprit continuerait à triompher grâce à son œuvre principale.¹⁹¹ Langkammer étant proche du mouvement féministe de l'époque, son admiration pour la *Tragédie* prouve que la vision de la femme n'y est pas aussi dévalorisante qu'une certaine tendance de la critique voudra l'affirmer.

Quel bilan pouvons nous tirer des documents rassemblés ici, documents auxquels on pourrait reprocher leur caractère souvent conjectural? Bien que des initiatives pour diffuser la *Tragédie* ne soient démontrées que pour Alexander Fischer et que le rôle de médiateur joué par Paul Heyse, Lilla von Bulyovszky et Karl Maria Kertbény demeure, lui, hypothétique, on peut cependant constater ce qui suit :

- Les contacts attestés de Kertbény avec Freytag et Fontane prouvent l'intense activité déployée par ce traducteur pour faire connaître les grands noms de la littérature hongroise.
- Les liens également prouvés entre l'actrice hongroise et les membres du cercle de Munich rendent vraisemblable l'hypothèse selon laquelle cette femme intelligente et cultivée aurait attiré l'attention de ses admirateurs sur la *Tragédie*.
- Enfin, l'appartenance de Paul Heyse à deux cercles littéraires, ainsi que ses contacts tant épistolaires que physiques avec des poètes d'Allemagne du Sud, tout comme avec des écrivains isolés de Suisse et d'Allemagne du Nord,

témoignent de l'existence de flux d'informations entre des hommes et femmes de lettres connaissant effectivement le drame de Madách.

Sans produire de véritables textes présentant ou commentant la *Tragédie*, ces écrivains allemands expriment, tout comme les exégètes, leurs jugements positifs, parfois également critiques, sur la *Tragédie*. On peut donc classer leurs réactions dans une sous-catégorie de la réception reproductive. Dans la mesure où elle est pratiquée par des personnalités en vue, celle-ci peut jouer dans la vulgarisation d'une œuvre un rôle aussi important, voire plus efficace, que celui de philologues ayant produit des critiques détaillées. Ajoutons cependant qu'aucun parmi les hommes de lettres ne possède l'autorité d'un Goethe ou d'un Arany.

Des traces de réception productive en Allemagne

Quelques-uns des écrivains répertoriés comme admirateurs de Madách se distinguent par la création d'une œuvre qui semble instaurer un dialogue avec le drame hongrois. Dans un premier temps, nous nous intéresserons à deux membres du cercle de Munich, pour lesquels la connaissance du drame de Madách n'est pas établie formellement : Julius Grosse (1828–1902)¹⁹² et Adolf Schack (1815–1897).¹⁹³ L'une de leurs œuvres respectives présente en effet avec la *Tragédie* des points communs permettant de conclure à une réminiscence de celle-ci, fût-elle inconsciente. L'épopée *Abul Kazims Seelenwanderung, Dichtung in zwölf Gesängen* de Grosse (1872) ressemble étrangement à la *Tragédie*. Que son auteur ait eu connaissance de cette dernière semble probable, vu le nombre de personnes de son entourage qui s'en faisaient une haute idée. Qu'il l'ait connue avant la rédaction de son drame, reste cependant à prouver.

Le héros de Grosse, Abul Kazim, derviche indien, relate les migrations de son âme, de la Chine à l'Égypte, où il connaît dix existences successives pour atteindre, à l'issue de la dernière métamorphose, l'état de sérénité suprême. L'analogie principale entre l'œuvre de Grosse et celle de Madách réside dans leur structure. L'épopée allemande est également construite sur la succession d'un grand nombre de brefs épisodes indépendants les uns des autres, mais ceux-ci ne se déroulent que dans deux pays. Comme dans la *Tragédie*, ce noyau est inséré dans un cadre, constitué par l'épisode initial présentant le derviche et par la scène finale de son entrée dans le paradis hindouiste. La thématique de la réincarnation constitue une seconde analogie, la *Tragédie* ayant été interprétée, à plusieurs reprises, dans l'histoire de sa réception, comme la preuve que son auteur adhérait à cette doctrine. Parmi les avatars d'Abul Kazim, celui du pharaon fait penser au tableau d'Égypte chez Madách.

S'agissant maintenant de l'auteur lyrique, épique et dramatique Adolf Schack, ce sont également des analogies, mais cette fois-ci plus nombreuses, entre la *Tragédie* et son épopée *Nächte des Orients oder Die Weltalter* (1874) qui suggérèrent l'idée d'une filiation. Le premier à avoir rapproché les deux œuvres fut un critique de théâtre de Hambourg en 1892.¹⁹⁴ Des études plus approfondies furent ensuite menées, d'abord par le philologue hongrois Hugo Bakonyi,¹⁹⁵ puis par le chercheur allemand Dieter Lotze.¹⁹⁶ Quant à la preuve que Schack connaissait effectivement la *Tragédie*, Bakonyi, pas plus que Lotze, ne réussit à la produire. En 1919, alors que Schack était moins oublié qu'aujourd'hui, voire même considéré par certains comme le plus grand écrivain allemand récent,¹⁹⁷ Bakonyi pouvait encore espérer que la correspondance de Schack apporterait quelques lumières sur le sujet. Faute de preuves tangibles, il s'en remit à l'érudition infinie de cet auteur pour expliquer les similitudes, qui, selon lui, ne pouvaient provenir que d'une familiarité avec le drame hongrois.¹⁹⁸ En 1961, Lotze ne fut pas en mesure d'apporter davantage de précisions que Bakonyi, car la correspondance était toujours inédite (et l'est d'ailleurs restée jusqu'à nos jours) et il alléguait les différences entre les deux œuvres pour nier l'existence d'une filiation.¹⁹⁹ Selon nous, l'appartenance de Schack au cercle de poètes munichoïses, que les deux chercheurs semblent ignorer, est d'une importance non négligeable. Puisque trois écrivains du groupe au moins avaient découvert la *Tragédie*, des échanges sur celle-ci eurent certainement lieu, mais probablement de vive voix, ce qui expliquerait l'absence de documents écrits. Ajoutons que Schack put également prendre connaissance de la *Tragédie* lors d'un de ses nombreux séjours à Vienne, dont le dernier remonte à 1872.²⁰⁰ Signalons enfin que si le drame hongrois avait influencé la création de Schack, celui-ci aurait pu garder le silence sur sa découverte, de peur accusé de plagiat. Ce qui est certain, c'est que Schack avait conçu très tôt le projet d'un mystère intitulé *Lucifer*, qui, débutant par la chute des anges, aurait embrassé toute l'histoire de l'humanité et se serait terminé par la réconciliation de Dieu avec Satan.²⁰¹ Bien que nous sachions peu de choses sur la première version de la *Tragédie* qui portait justement le titre en question, ce point met en pleine lumière une remarquable parenté de vues entre les deux écrivains. Celle-ci prouve que, tout en appartenant à deux aires linguistiques différentes,²⁰² ils vécurent dans le même espace culturel. La question de savoir si Schack a abandonné son projet après avoir découvert la *Tragédie de l'homme* est condamnée à rester sans réponse.

Quoi qu'il en soit, l'épopée de Schack, qui pouvait s'inspirer de nombreuses autres œuvres, comme par exemple de *Abu Kazims Seelenwanderung*, présente un certain nombre d'analogies frappantes avec la *Tragédie*. Le héros des *Nächte des Orients* revit en rêve plusieurs époques de l'histoire de l'humanité, de l'âge de pierre à l'époque contemporaine, en passant par la Grèce de Périclès, l'époque des croisades et la Renaissance romaine. Il est accompagné d'un magicien qui, à l'instar de Lucifer, dépeint chaque époque sous des couleurs sombres et se réjouit des

déceptions de son compagnon. Chaque scène historique se termine par l'exécution du héros, sous les railleries sarcastiques du magicien. Certaines de ces mises à mort sont empêchées par le réveil du héros, détail qui rappelle plusieurs tableaux de Madách. Dans deux épisodes du voyage à travers les âges de l'humanité, l'écrivain allemand soumet l'Église catholique à une critique acerbe. Ainsi dénonce-t-il le commerce des reliques, la barbarie des croisades, leur cortège de pogromes et l'Inquisition. Enfin, le dénouement optimiste semble s'inspirer de la *Tragédie*, même si c'est paradoxalement le magicien qui incite le héros à croire dans le progrès de l'humanité.

La différence fondamentale est que l'épopée de Schack ne comporte pas de visions du présent et de l'avenir. Son auteur, satisfait de voir l'Allemagne réunie sous l'égide de la Prusse et non pas de l'Autriche, dont il condamna la politique d'oppression, renonce à peindre les vices de son temps, bien que son protagoniste quitte l'Occident pour fuir la civilisation. A son retour d'Orient, le héros est accueilli par la nouvelle de la proclamation du second *Reich* à Versailles.

Si Bakonyi et Lotze ont raison d'insister sur les différences, également nombreuses, qui séparent les deux œuvres, ils négligent le fait que certaines peuvent être lues comme des correctifs apportés à des défauts ou imperfections de la *Tragédie*. On a, par exemple, reproché à Madách d'avoir accordé à son Adam, à la fin ou au début de chaque tableau, de brefs instants où il est conscient de parcourir l'histoire de l'humanité, sans pour autant revenir à l'endroit où il s'est endormi. Schack, lui, procéda ainsi : son héros se réveille après chaque rêve pour débattre avec son accompagnateur et se rendort ensuite. Par ailleurs, on a blâmé le caractère non dramatique de la *Tragédie* et supposé que l'auteur se mettait en scène en la personne d'Adam. Schack, pour sa part, a opté pour le genre de l'épopée et choisi pour héros « le poète », son alter-ego. On a également critiqué dans la *Tragédie* l'alternance entre personnages historiques et figures anonymes. Schack, en ce qui le concerne, ne fait jouer à son héros que des rôles d'anonymes de condition modeste. Notons enfin que Schack, en adepte de la théorie de l'évolution,²⁰³ put être choqué tant par la vision idyllique des premiers hommes peinte dans la *Tragédie* que par l'illustration de l'involution de l'humanité. Son épopée pourrait donc être une réponse à Madách, dans le but de lui opposer sa vision du monde strictement matérialiste et évolutionniste.

Le dernier écrivain allemand, également membre du cercle de Munich, à avoir admiré la *Tragédie* et à s'en être, nous semble-t-il, inspiré est Adolf Wilbrandt (1837–1911). Originaire de Rostock, Wilbrandt se fixe en 1859 à Munich, où il est accueilli dans le cercle des Crocodiles et subit l'influence de Paul Heyse. En 1871, il s'installe à Vienne, où il devient directeur du *Burgtheater* (1881–1887), puis se retire dans sa ville d'origine. A l'instar des autres écrivains du même groupe, il produit un nombre considérable de drames, ainsi que quelques romans et nouvelles. Il a en outre laissé une œuvre de traducteur²⁰⁴ et rédigé la première

biographie de Hebbel (1863). En dépit de ses grands succès, surtout au théâtre (en 1878 il obtient le prix Schiller), Wilbrandt est considéré, de son vivant déjà, comme un épigone de Schiller et de Friedrich Halm.²⁰⁵ Dans ses remarques sur la *Tragédie*, il vante la force d'invention et l'imagination fertile de son auteur, mais critique le caractère trop kaléidoscopique de l'œuvre, considérant que l'hétérogénéité des tableaux est contraire aux règles du drame.²⁰⁶

L'œuvre de Wilbrandt qui retiendra notre attention est *Der Meister von Palmyra* (1889), drame d'idées, considéré comme sa meilleure pièce. Dieter Lotze fut le premier à affirmer qu'elle avait probablement subi l'influence de la *Tragédie*.²⁰⁷ Associant le motif d'Ahasvérus à la doctrine de la réincarnation, cette pièce fait penser, à première vue, à *Abul Kazims Seelenwanderung* de Julius Grosse, que Wilbrandt ne mentionne pas plus dans ses mémoires que le drame hongrois. Il relate même que sa pièce aurait été jugée avant sa première mise en scène comme « un drame dans un fauteuil impossible à représenter, parce qu'il différerait de toutes les œuvres connues ». ²⁰⁸ Cette remarque, qui pourrait du reste s'appliquer à la *Tragédie*, prouve, à notre sens, que Wilbrandt, soucieux de paraître original, évitait de parler de ses modèles. Renouvelant le motif du Juif errant, Wilbrandt prête à son héros, Appelles, le désir de vivre éternellement. C'est ainsi que celui-ci connaît quatre nouvelles existences au cours du drame. Débutant au Moyen Age, l'action se passe à Rome, à Constantinople sous l'empereur Julien l'Apostat, puis à Palmyre. Amoureux d'abord de Zoé, une martyre chrétienne, Appelles la retrouve successivement sous les traits d'une prostituée romaine, d'une chrétienne, d'un jeune homme et d'une jeune veuve. L'amour qui lie le protagoniste à la prostituée romaine est entaché d'infidélité, ce qui rappelle à la fois le tableau de Rome et celui de Prague où Kepler a une épouse infidèle. Enfin, chez Wilbrandt aussi, la femme, en dépit de son ambiguïté, tout en oscillant donc entre bonté exemplaire et abjection, symbolise la transcendance qui conduit le héros à la Rédemption. En dehors des points communs déjà évoqués, certaines scènes présentent de fortes analogies. Celle de Rome se termine chez les deux écrivains par une menace de mort et par une conversion. Les deux scènes de Constantinople mettent en lumière la contradiction entre l'idéal chrétien et une attitude non chrétienne et mettent en scène un couple dont l'amour ne peut se réaliser. Les deux pièces opposent, du reste, un représentant positif et un représentant négatif du christianisme.²⁰⁹ Notons enfin les analogies entre les deux héros : ils adoptent tantôt un rôle actif, tantôt un rôle d'observateur, ils se heurtent, l'un comme l'autre, aux démagogues dans leur lutte pour la liberté du peuple, enfin ils continuent à lutter, tout en se résignant et en aspirant à la mort.²¹⁰ Tous les deux atteignent à la fin du drame un âge avancé.

Il nous semble évident que Wilbrandt a repris de nombreux motifs, sinon de la *Tragédie* elle-même, tout au moins de Goethe et de Grosse. Plus qu'Adam, son personnage central incarne un caractère faustien, animé d'une joie créatrice et as-

pirant à une vie remplie de travail et de plaisirs. Si l'on se souvient que Wilbrandt reprochait à l'œuvre de Madách son caractère kaléidoscopique, l'on conçoit qu'il ait réduit le nombre d'épisodes de son drame à cinq.

Conclusion

Embrassant du regard toute l'histoire de la réception de la *Tragédie*, nous pouvons tout d'abord affirmer que la période que nous venons d'évoquer est la plus féconde, tant pour les traductions que pour la qualité des critiques et l'emprise exercée sur des écrivains allemands. Par conséquent, il est à peine exagéré d'affirmer que dans les années 1865–1890 Madách jouissait, dans les milieux littéraires de l'espace germanophone, d'une importante notoriété, laquelle ne manqua d'ailleurs pas d'irradier vers d'autres aires linguistiques par le truchement des traductions allemandes. Dès 1886, la traduction de Fischer permit ainsi à Jaroslav Vrchlicky (1853–1912) de découvrir la *Tragédie* et de publier aussitôt ses impressions de lecture dans une revue. Dans le même article, ce dernier incita Frantisek Brabek (1848–1926), traducteur maîtrisant le hongrois, à traduire en tchèque le drame de Madách. Travaillant seul ou en collaboration avec Brabek, Vrchlicky acheva la version destinée à la scène à partir des traductions de Fischer et de Doczi.²¹¹ Publiée sous le nom de Brabek, celle-ci servit à la première mise en scène pragoise de la *Tragédie* en 1892 et fut suivie un an plus tard par la traduction de Brabek.

La version allemande de Lechner permit le transfert de la *Tragédie* vers l'aire linguistique polonaise. Après une première transposition peu réussie, publiée en 1885 par le peintre hungaro-polonais Juliusz Wojcikiewicz sous le pseudonyme de Juliusz Hen, Teresa Prazmowska, traductrice de littérature française, publia sa traduction réalisée à partir du travail de Lechner.²¹²

Enfin, l'une des premières versions russes, celle de Nyikolaj Holodkovszkij,²¹³ traducteur renommé, mais ignorant le hongrois comme Prazmowszka, avait été réalisée à partir de la traduction de Sponer.²¹⁴ La censure, qui avait détruit la première traduction de V. A. Szein et de V. Stovik²¹⁵ imprimée en 1900, se borna cette fois-ci à la suppression de certains passages des tableaux de Londres et de Paris.

Cette première étape du transfert se caractérise par l'importance quantitative et la diversité des modes de réception. Nous avons recensé deux types de réception reproductive, critiques et traductions, et des exemples de réception productive. Pour ce qui est des critiques, elles furent non seulement positives, mais encore émises par des personnalités de la vie littéraire faisant autorité. Quant aux traductions, exceptionnelles par leur nombre (huit en l'espace de 30 ans), l'une d'elles tout au moins, celle de Doczi, possédait des qualités reconnues comme littéraires,

son traducteur étant un dramaturge et une personnalité en vue. Nous avons donc là les premiers indices d'une canonisation. S'il s'était agi d'un drame anglais, espagnol ou italien, pour ne citer que les langues occidentales les plus parlées en Allemagne (et en Europe), les lecteurs savants se seraient reportés aux travaux critiques parus dans la langue d'origine. Le hongrois n'étant pas accessible aux lecteurs germanophones, il convient de signaler la parution, en 1887, de la première histoire de la littérature hongroise en langue allemande consacrant une large place à la présentation de Madách et de son œuvre.²¹⁶ Son auteur, Johann Heinrich Schwicker, classe la *Tragédie* parmi les classiques de la littérature universelle en alléguant sa vision du monde cosmopolite, sa construction audacieuse, la vision positive de la femme et l'effet cathartique de l'ensemble. Pour appuyer son propos, il cite les jugements émanants de deux autorités, celui de Mór Jókai et celui de Friedrich Theodor Vischer.²¹⁷ Tout en étant critique vis-à-vis de certaines faiblesses du drame, Schwicker confirme donc la « canonisation » en Allemagne de cette œuvre, parue un quart de siècle auparavant. Que cet ouvrage ne soit pas passé inaperçu, ses rééditions en 1888 et 1889 chez le même éditeur à Leipzig, puis en 1896 à Gera, en sont la preuve.

Par ailleurs, il convient de rappeler que la majeure partie des écrivains allemands alors favorables à Madách était des protestants libéraux et libres penseurs. Un ouvrage polémique émanant d'un critique du mouvement littéraire catholique allemand, Heinrich Keiter,²¹⁸ en fournit d'ailleurs indirectement la preuve en accusant plusieurs d'entre eux, Rudolf Gottschall, Gustav Freitag, Paul Heyse, Adolf Schack, d'être par leur anticléricalisme virulent des « empoisonneurs » (*Brunnenvergifter*).²¹⁹ Dans la période où la seule forme de réception de la *Tragédie* était la lecture, l'œuvre était perçue comme la création complexe et originale d'un écrivain progressiste, démocrate et anticlérical, s'inspirant des grands philosophes allemands et des chefs-d'œuvre de la littérature universelle. Cependant, deux remarques critiques de commentateurs catholiques²²⁰ laissent présager pour l'avenir de violentes réactions de rejet.

Notes

- ¹ Précisons qu'une de celles-ci, celle d'Alexander Fischer, est la transposition de la première adaptation hongroise, faite par Ede Paulay en 1883, qui omet le deuxième tableau de Prague, le tableau de l'Univers et la fin du tableau de Londres.
- ² Adolf DUX, « Die Tragödie des Menschen. Dramatisches Gedicht von Emerich Madách », in : *Pester Lloyd*, 26 janvier, 2 et 9 février 1862. Nous analyserons plus loin ces articles. Selon Kerényi, le *Pester Lloyd* aurait publié une première annonce de la *Tragédie* dès le 17 janvier 1862, qualifiant l'œuvre, à l'instar du quotidien hongrois *Sürgöny* du 16 janvier, de « *Faust* de la littérature hongroise ». KERÉNYI, 684.

- ³ Ce quotidien allemand paraissant depuis 1855 à Pest avait, selon la *Ungarische Revue*, de nombreux lecteurs à l'étranger. *Ungarische Revue*, 1881, n°1/2.
- ⁴ RADÓ, *op. cit.*, 317.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*
- ⁶ Id., *op. cit.*, 318.
- ⁷ *Ungarische Nachrichten*, 1863, n° 6 (9 janvier) et n° 7 (10 janvier).
- ⁸ Theodor OPITZ, « Ein philosophischer Dichter der Ungarn. Des Menschen Tragödie », in : *Magazin für die Literatur des Auslandes*, 8 avril 1863, 157–159.
- ⁹ *Magazin für die Literatur des Auslandes*, 22. April 1863.
- ¹⁰ Emerich MADÁCH, *Die Tragödie des Menschen*, Aus dem Ungarischen übertragen von Alexander DIETZE, Pest, Adolf Kugler, 1865, 244. Elle est rééditée la même année avec une préface de Wolfgang von DEÁK : Emerich MADÁCH, *Die Tragödie des Menschen*. Aus dem Ungarischen übertragen von Alexander DIETZE. Pest, Gebrüder Pollack, 1865.
- ¹¹ *Koszorú*, t. 1 n° 19, 10 mai 1863. Selon un article récent, cette publication en feuilleton n'aurait pas eu lieu en raison de l'avancement lent du travail. PRAZNOVSZKY, « Madách, a Tragédia és a kortársak 1861–1864. A Madách-kultusz jelenségei » (Madách, la *Tragédie* et les manifestations du culte de Madách), in : *Palócföld*, 1993, 234.
- ¹² Les termes imprimés en italique mettent en évidence les maladroites lexicales, ceux soulignés les fautes de langue.
- ¹³ MADÁCH, *op. cit.*, trad. DIETZE, 6.
- ¹⁴ Julian WEIß, « Die Tragödie des Menschen », in : *National-Zeitung*, 17 juillet 1886.
- ¹⁵ Károly ERDÉLYI, « Madách és fordító » in : *Magyar Szemle*, 1895, n° 7, 74–75.
- ¹⁶ Un second article anonyme, probablement du même auteur Theodor Opitz, fait état de nombreuses réactions de lecteurs suite à la publication de la recension, lesquels n'avaient certainement pas manqué d'acheter la traduction. *Magazin für die Literatur des Auslandes*, 22 avril 1863.
- ¹⁷ Seul l'emploi de l'expression « Urverneinungsgeist » trahit le fait qu'Opitz était en possession d'extraits de la traduction de Dietze.
- ¹⁸ *Grenzboten*, 1864, 2^e semestre, t. 4, 399.
- ¹⁹ KOMÁROMI, *op. cit.*, 7.
- ²⁰ *Meyers Konversationslexikon*, Leipzig–Wien, Bibliographisches Institut, t. XIX, Jahres-supplement 1891, 937.
- ²¹ Rudolf GOTTSCHALL, « Eine ungarische Faustiade », in : *Blätter für literarische Unterhaltung*, Leipzig, 1865, n° 34, 540.
- ²² OPITZ, *op. cit.*, 159.
- ²³ Adolf DUX, « Die Tragödie des Menschen. Dramatisches Gedicht von Emerich Madách », in : *Pester Lloyd*, 26 janvier 1862.
- ²⁴ OPITZ, *op. cit.*, 159.
- ²⁵ MARGENDORFF, *op. cit.*, 53.
- ²⁶ Adolf Dux l'utilise aussi, en évoquant une « Faustiade » récente, le *Demiurgos* (1852–1854) de Wilhelm Jordan (1819–1905), de même qu'Adolf Silberstein une vingtaine d'années plus tard dans sa critique de la mise en scène de Paulay. Cela est d'autant plus étonnant que, selon le *Duden. Das grobe Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache in 8 Bänden*, Mannheim, Leipzig, Wien, Zürich, Dudenverlag, 1993, ce terme ne s'est pas imposé dans la langue allemande.
- ²⁷ Rappelons que, vers le milieu du XIX^e siècle, le thème de Faust revient à la mode autant dans les théâtres que dans les librairies, alors que dans la deuxième moitié du siècle, aucun auteur ou compositeur de renom ne s'attaque à un *Faust*. DABEZIES, *op. cit.*, 127–135.
- ²⁸ GOTTSCHALL, *op. cit.*, 540. Il s'agit des œuvres de Zygmunt Krasinski (1812–1859), la première publiée en 1835, la seconde en 1836.

- 29 *Ibid.*
- 30 *Ibid.*, 542.
- 31 *Ibid.*, 541.
- 32 Breslau est le nom allemand de Wrocław, capitale de la Silésie. Ce duché polonais passa sous domination autrichienne en 1526, puis sous domination prussienne en 1763.
- 33 Son importante œuvre, lyrique, épique, romanesque et dramatique comporte également de nombreuses études portant sur la littérature anglaise, allemande et chinoise. Julius WENSFERT, *Biographisch-literarisches Lexikon für die Haupt-und Residenzstadt Königsberg und Ostpreussen*, 1898, et Hans SCHRÖDER, *Lexikon der hamburgischen Schriftsteller bis zur Gegenwart*, Hamburg, Perthes-Besser und Mauke, 1851–1883.
- 34 GOTTSCHALL, *op. cit.*, 540.
- 35 DUX, *op. cit.*
- 36 OPITZ, *op. cit.*, 159.
- 37 GOTTSCHALL, *op. cit.*, 541.
- 38 DUX, « Die Tragödie des Menschen. Dramatisches Gedicht von Emerich Madách », in : *Pester Lloyd*, 9 février 1862.
- 39 « [...] so würde 'die Tragödie des Menschen' zu den bedeutendsten Werken zählen, welche die Weltliteratur [...] besitzt ». OPITZ, *op. cit.*, 159.
- 40 GOTTSCHALL, *op. cit.*, 542.
- 41 DUX, *op. cit.*
- 42 OPITZ, *op. cit.*, 158.
- 43 GOTTSCHALL, *op. cit.*, 542.
- 44 Gottschall (1823–1903) est un écrivain fécond, auteur de recueils de poèmes, d'épopées, de comédies, de tragédies, de romans et d'un recueil d'études sur la littérature allemande. Afin de donner une idée de l'importance de son œuvre dramatique, notons qu'Elisabeth Frenzel, dans son ouvrage consacré aux mythes littéraires, mentionne huit de ses œuvres dramatiques.
- 45 « in das blaue Meer eines vertrauensseligen Optimismus ». GOTTSCHALL, *op. cit.*, 542.
- 46 DUX, *op. cit.*
- 47 OPITZ, *op. cit.*, 158.
- 48 *Ibid.*, 159.
- 49 DUX, *op. cit.*
- 50 La fondation de ce club fut précédée en 1857 par la création à Iéna d'une bibliothèque hongroise sous la direction de Soma Kolbenheyer et János Czéner, laquelle disposait vers la fin du siècle de 2000 ouvrages. HELLE, *op. cit.*, 166.
- 51 Un intellectuel hongrois, Kassai Michaelis György, avait légué sa bibliothèque en 1724 aux étudiants hongrois de Wittemberg. Celle-ci fut accueillie par le club hongrois de Halle, puis par l'Institut hongrois de Berlin. *Ibid.*, 53.
- 52 Le *Leipziger deutscher Verein* avait exprimé sa solidarité avec la population viennoise. Des Leipzigöis s'étaient rendus à Vienne comme observateurs privés, voire même pour participer aux luttes révolutionnaires. Tel était le cas de Robert Blum, écrivain politique et rhéteur populaire, dont l'exécution à Vienne avait déclenché des émeutes dans sa ville d'origine. Après l'échec de la révolution d'octobre, Leipzig avait donné asile à des révolutionnaires autrichiens. Pourtant, Leipzig n'était pas une ville révolutionnaire, à la différence de Dresde. En effet, les étudiants révolutionnaires de Dresde qui s'étaient réfugiés à Leipzig y furent arrêtés. Rolf WEBER, *Die Revolution in Sachsen 1848/49 : Entwicklung und Analyse ihrer Triebkräfte*, Berlin, Akademie-Verlag, 1970, 288–297.
- 53 *Wiener Zeitung*, 1864, n° 246 ; *Neue Freie Presse*, 1864, n° 43 ; *Fremdenblatt Wien*, 1864, n° 279 ; Adolf DUX, « Madách », in : *Pester Lloyd*, 12 octobre 1864 (n° 233).
- 54 *Breslauer Zeitung*, 1864, n° 475. Il ne nous a pas été possible d'obtenir cet article.

- 55 « den absoluten Wert dieser Dichtung ». Adolf DUX, « Emerich Madách », in : *Magazin für die Literatur des Auslandes*, 1864, n° 44, 702.
- 56 Compte tenu des liens de Dux lui-même et d'Opitz avec le romancier et l'homme politique József Eötvös, il s'agit sans doute de cet ami de Madách.
- 57 La mention répétée du poète Pál Jámbor, parlementaire comme Madách, laisse supposer que cet écrivain hongrois de second rang aurait pu servi d'informateur. Celui-ci joua, en effet, le rôle d'intermédiaire entre János Arany et Imre Madách à partir de mai 1861. György RADÓ, *Madách Imre, Életrajzi Krónika*, Salgótarján, « Balassi Bálint » Nógrád Megyei Könyvtár, 1987, 250. Un autre « informateur » possible pourrait être Karl Maria Kertbeny, mentionné comme auteur d'une traduction de la *Tragédie*.
- 58 « eine schwache und unverstandene Nachahmung des *Faust* ». *Illustrierte Zeitung*, 19 novembre 1864, 356.
- 59 De son vrai nom Karl Maria Benkert (1824–1882), ce traducteur de Petöfi, d'Arany et de Jókai était considéré alors par certains contemporains comme l'un des plus grands connaisseurs de la littérature hongroise. *Magazin für die Literatur des In- und Auslandes*, 1880, tome 49, n°14, 194. Selon le témoignage d'une étude récente, il était jusqu'au début des années 1860 le propagateur le plus actif de Petöfi dans l'aire culturelle germanophone.
- 60 Constant von WURZBACH, *Biographisches Lexikon des Kaiserthums Oesterreich*, Wien, Kk Hof- und Staatsdruckerei, 1867, t. 16.
- 61 Wurzbach y cite, entre autres, un article paru dès 1861 (*Pest-Ofner Zeitung*, 1861, n° 134) que nous n'avons pas réussi à nous procurer. Quelques inexactitudes qui se sont glissées dans son compte-rendu, comme par exemple l'affirmation selon laquelle le pendant humoristique de la *Tragédie* aurait été presque achevé et la référence à une traduction allemande par Gustav Emich, en réalité le premier éditeur hongrois, peuvent faire penser qu'il s'agit d'une erreur de date.
- 62 *Der ungarische Reichstag*, Pest, Carl Osterlamm, 1861, t. II. 53–59.
- 63 « [...] die Dichtung, *Az ember tragédiája*, welche seinen Ruf begründete ». WURZBACH, *op. cit.*
- 64 « Eine übelwollende und unverständige Kritik verwirft Madách's Dichtung in Bausch und Bogen [...] ». Alexander FISCHER, « Die Tragödie des Menschen von Emerich von Madach », in : *Auf der Höhe, Internationale Revue*, t. XVI, 283.
- 65 Adolf SILBERSTEIN, « Der ungarische 'Faust' (Erste Aufführung der Madách'schen 'Tragödie des Menschen' am Nationaltheater, 21. Sept.) », in : *Pester Lloyd*, 21 septembre 1883.
- 66 Emerich MADÁCH, *Die Tragödie des Menschen*. Dramatische Dichtung. Nach Edouard Paulays Bühnenbearbeitung übersetzt von Alexander FISCHER, Budapest, Eggenberger, 1886, 192.
- 67 Emerich MADÁCH, *Die Tragödie des Menschen*. Dramatische Dichtung. Aus dem Ungarischen übersetzt von Josef SIEBENLIST. Pressburg und Leipzig, C. Stampfel, 1886, 214.
- 68 Celle-ci omettait le deuxième tableau de Prague, le tableau de l'univers et la fin de la scène de Londres.
- 69 RADÓ, *op. cit.*, 321 sq.
- 70 « Auch die jetzt erschienene Übersetzung lässt zu wünschen übrig, aber sie ist lesbar und gibt wenigstens einen Begriff von der Schönheit des Werkes ». WEIß, *op. cit.*
- 71 Alexander FISCHER, *Petöfis Leben und Werke*, 1889.
- 72 RADÓ, *op. cit.*, 323.
- 73 Emerich von MADÁCH, *Die Tragödie des Menschen*. Dramatisches Gedicht. Aus dem Ungarischen übersetzt von Andor von SPONER, Késmárk, Paul Sauter, 1887, 230.

- ⁷⁴ Emerich MADÁCH, *Die Tragödie des Menschen*. Dramatische Dichtung. Aus dem Ungarischen übersetzt von Julius LECHNER von der Lech. Mit Vorwort von Maurus Jokai. Leipzig, Philipp Reclam jun., 1888, 200 p. (Reclams Universal Bibliothek 2389–2390).
- ⁷⁵ WEIB, *op. cit.*
- ⁷⁶ Győző MORVAY, *Magyarászó tanulmány « Az Ember Tragédiájához »*, Nagybánya, 1897, 248; Piroška REINHARD, « Madách német nyelven », in : *Philologiai dolgozatok a magyar–német érintkezésekről*, Budapest, Hornyánszky, 1912, VII[1], 302.
- ⁷⁷ Poète et auteur de satires, « héritier de l'esprit classique et romantique », von Platen (1796–1835) devait sa popularité, en partie, aux attaques personnelles de Heinrich Heine. Dans *Die Bäder von Lucca*, celui-ci avait raillé le penchant homosexuel de Platen, confirmé par le journal intime de l'écrivain. Waldemar OEHLKE, *Die deutsche Literatur seit Goethes Tode*, Halle, Max Niemeyer, 1921, 72.
- ⁷⁸ RADÓ, *op. cit.*, 323–325.
- ⁷⁹ Né en 1841 à Pest, dans une famille originaire de l'Allemagne du Sud, Lechner était professeur de dessin industriel.
- ⁸⁰ Klára NEY, « A ' Tragédia ' első teljes német szövegének fordítója » (Le premier traducteur allemand du texte intégral de la ' Tragédie '), in : *Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények*, 69, n° 1, 79.
- ⁸¹ Tiborc FAZEKAS, *Bibliographie der in selbständigen Bänden erschienenen Werke der ungarischen Literatur in deutscher Übersetzung (1774–1999)*, Hamburg, Eigenverlag des Verfassers, 1999.
- ⁸² RADÓ, *op. cit.*, 326.
- ⁸³ NEY, *op. cit.*, 78.
- ⁸⁴ Emerich MADÁCH, *Die Tragödie des Menschen*. Dramatisches Gedicht. Aus dem Ungarischen übersetzt von Ludwig DOCZI. Stuttgart, Cotta, 1891, 200.
- ⁸⁵ RADÓ, *op. cit.*, 327.
- ⁸⁶ MADÁCH, *op. cit.*, trad. DOCZI, 8 sq. Les caractères en italiques mettent en évidence les tournures maladroites.
- ⁸⁷ Emerich von MADÁCH, *Die Tragödie des Menschen*. Dramatische Dichtung. Dem ungarischen Originale nachgedichtet von Eugen PLANER, Halle a. d. S., Otto Hendel, 1891, 150. (Bibliothek der Gesamt-Literatur des In- und Auslandes, n° 541/ 542).
- ⁸⁸ Il pourrait éventuellement être apparenté à l'actrice Minna Planer (1809–1866), première épouse de Richard Wagner.
- ⁸⁹ RADÓ, *op. cit.*, 329.
- ⁹⁰ Selon le témoignage d'un article du traducteur déjà mentionné Károly Erdélyi, consacré à la comparaison des traductions existantes, il aurait, lui aussi, terminé une traduction de la *Tragédie*, laquelle, toutefois, ne fut pas publiée. *Neue Temesvárer Zeitung*, 1894, n° 14.
- ⁹¹ Il s'agit d'une étude approfondie de 45 pages qui a d'abord été présentée comme conférence au club scientifique à Vienne, pendant l'hiver 1891, un an avant sa publication sous forme de brochure.
- ⁹² Ce traducteur est l'auteur de l'article le plus long (49 pages), dont plus qu'un quart est consacré à la biographie de l'auteur.
- ⁹³ FISCHER, *op. cit.*, 287 sq.
- ⁹⁴ Romulus KATSCHER, « Imre Madách », in : *Unsere Zeit, Deutsche Revue der Gegenwart*, Leipzig 1888, t. 2, 549.
- ⁹⁵ Ferdinand GRASSAUER, *Generalkatalog der laufenden periodischen Druckschriften an den österreichischen Universitäts- und Studienbibliotheken*, Wien, Herder, 1898.
- ⁹⁶ Journaliste, écrivain et traducteur, Leopold, Romulus Katscher (1853–1939) qui était originaire de Temesvár (Timișoara) en Transylvanie travailla à Paris, Berlin, Budapest, Vienne et

- en Suisse. Il s'engagea plus particulièrement pour le pacifisme et le progrès social en fondant la Société Hongroise pour la Paix (1895) et le Comité Européen de Réformes Sociales (1913).
- 97 August SIEBENLIST, *Des Menschen Tragödie. Einführende Worte*, Wien, 1892, 3.
- 98 *Délmagyarországi Közlöny*, 1892, n° 7, 9, 10, 11. L'auteur est Kálmán Könyves.
- 99 Károly ERDÉLYI, « Madách és fordítói » (Madách et ses traducteurs), in : *Magyar Szemle*, 1895, n° 7, 74/5, n° 8, 86–88.
- 100 « ein in Szenen eingeteiltes phantastisches Gedicht ». WEIß, *op. cit.*
- 101 FISCHER, *op. cit.*, 273.
- 102 « Daher bleibt der Versuch einer scenischen Darstellung der Tragödie des Menschen und des ganzen Faust immer ein Versuch ». *Ibid.*, 287.
- 103 « graue Theorie ». Bernhard MÜNZ, « Die *Tragödie* des Menschen von Emerich von Madách », in : *Das Magazin für die Literatur des In- und Auslandes*, Dresden, 1889, Jg. 58, 583.
- 104 « [...] es geschieht ihm so, wie Schopenhauer einmal über Hebbel bemerkt, bei welchem 'neben tatsächlichen naiven Zügen, noch eine Menge ungestalteter Philosophie zurückgeblieben ist' ». SIEBENLIST, *op. cit.*, 39.
- 105 FISCHER, *op. cit.*, 287.
- 106 MÜNZ, *op. cit.*, 582.
- 107 « Und der Dichter hat Recht, dass er nur Adam die Wucht der Ereignisse empfinden lässt, [...] Der Anteil des Weibes an der Geschichte ist gering [...] ». FISCHER, *op. cit.*, 282.
- 108 SIEBENLIST, *op. cit.*, 44.
- 109 FISCHER, *op. cit.*, 249.
- 110 En 1885 est fondé à Vienne le « Verein der Schriftstellerinnen und Künstlerinnen », en 1888 le « Verein für erweiterte Frauenbildung », également à Vienne; la même année est fondée en Allemagne la « Deutsche Akademische Vereinigung », appelée plus tard : « Verein Frauenwohl ».
- 111 « Goethe hat [...] auf die Volkssage zurückgegriffen ». FISCHER, *op. cit.*, 284.
- 112 « [...] in den Bürgern, [...], ja selbst im Bettler, die quellende Lust am Leben [...], während bei Madách an den gleichen Gestalten die Gebrechen der Zeit zum Ausdruck kommen ». FISCHER, *op. cit.*, 274.
- 113 SIEBENLIST, *op. cit.*, 44.
- 114 *Id.*, *op. cit.*, 9.
- 115 Hermann Sudermann (1857–1928), connu d'abord par ses romans *Frau Sorge* (1887) et *Der Katzensteg* (1888), était applaudi, à cette époque, pour ses drames naturalistes *Ehre* (1889) et *Sodoms Ende* (1890) qui présentent une vision critique de la société.
- 116 SIEBENLIST, *op. cit.*, 21.
- 117 Siebenlist fait allusion à l'utopie socialiste d'Edward BELLAMY, *Looking Backward 2000–1887*, Houghton, Misslin, 1889.
- 118 SIEBENLIST, *op. cit.*, 19.
- 119 *Ibid.*, 23. Siebenlist fait allusion au météorologue et vulcanologue autrichien Rudolf Falb (1838–1903), qui prédisait un refroidissement progressif des températures. Il devint célèbre par ses conférences et par ses prédictions de catastrophes naturelles, dont aucune ne s'est réalisée : un tremblement de terre à Athènes le 5 mai 1894, un tremblement de terre au Chili en 1895, voire même la fin du monde le 13 novembre 1899 par la collision de la terre avec une comète. *The New York Times*, 1^{er} octobre 1903.
- 120 La première de *Parsifal* eut lieu en 1882 à Bayreuth.
- 121 SIEBENLIST, *op. cit.*, 39. Peer Gynt, drame d'idées de l'écrivain norvégien Henrik Ibsen, publié en 1867, a été traduit en allemand dans les années 1880. La première mise en scène en langue allemande n'eut lieu qu'en 1902 au *Deutsches Volkstheater* à Vienne, mais d'autres drames d'Ibsen furent représentés sur de nombreuses scènes allemandes entre 1876 et 1900.

- L'Allemagne fut le premier pays étranger où le dramaturge norvégien connut le succès. L'engouement pour Ibsen en Allemagne était tel qu'il y eut même, à partir de 1887, des parodies de ses pièces. Nikola ROSSBACH, *Ibsen-Parodien in der frühen Moderne*, München, Martin Meidenbauer, 2005.
- 122 SPONER, *op. cit.*, XIV/XV.
- 123 MÜNZ, *op. cit.*, 582.
- 124 WEIß, *op. cit.*
- 125 « [...] dem größten Dichter aller Zeiten ». WEIß, *op. cit.*
- 126 Elle est qualifiée de « grande », « grandiose », « audacieuse », « hautement singulière », « unique en son genre », d'« une clarté transparente » et d'une « construction prométhéenne ».
- 127 FISCHER, *op. cit.*, 237. En outre, Fischer constate une parenté entre la vision de l'histoire de Madách et celle de Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767–1835) qui voyait dans l'histoire une alternance de succès et d'insuccès, de bonheur et de malheur. Humboldt était connu en Hongrie pour son intérêt porté à la linguistique comparée, lequel l'avait amené à apprendre, entre autres langues rares, le hongrois.
- 128 « Schopenhauer nennt die Geschichte einen langen, wüsten Traum der Menschheit, und Lucifer lässt den Menschen diesen schweren Traum erleben ». *Ibid.*, 286.
- 129 SIEBENLIST, *op. cit.*, 27.
- 130 Ludwig DOCZI, « Die Welt ein Traum », in : *Neue Freie Presse*, 1890, XI.
- 131 KATSCHER, *op. cit.*, 548.
- 132 « [...] es ist dramatisierter Schopenhauer mit der schließlichen 'Verneinung des menschlichen Willens zum Leben' ». Adolf SILBERSTEIN, « Doczi's Madách-Übersetzung », in : *Beilage des Pester Lloyd*, 2 mai 1891.
- 133 SIEBENLIST, *op. cit.*, 41.
- 134 Richard ROOS, « Introduction », in : Arthur SCHOPENHAUER, *Le monde comme volonté et comme représentation*, trad. en français par A. Burdeau, nouvelle éd. revue et corrigée par Richard Roos, Paris, PUF, 1966, XV sq.
- 135 *Ibid.*, XVI.
- 136 WEIß, *op. cit.*
- 137 « Eigenthümlicher Weise ist dem Dichter gerade jene Szene, in welcher Adam seine, des Dichters, Zeit erlebt, am wenigsten gelungen. Die Menschen sind hier leiblich und geistig verkrüppelt, denn sie athmen nicht die frische Luft, sondern den mephistischen Dunst des Pessimismus ». FISCHER, *op. cit.*, 276.
- 138 *Ibid.*, 250.
- 139 Du point de vue de la graphie, le dogme de l'identité de nature du père et du fils (Homousion) ne se distingue de la doctrine de la simple similitude de nature (Homoiusion) que par la présence d'une seconde lettre « i ».
- 140 SIEBENLIST, *op. cit.*, 15.
- 141 « [...] das Ganze ist gleichsam ein Athemzug des kommenden, noch tolleren, noch mehr nach dem ewigen Nichts diesseitiger Erfolge heischenden Säculums [...] ». *Ibid.*, 19.
- 142 FISCHER, *op. cit.*, 276.
- 143 « das lächerlichste Zerrbild eines Idealstaates ». *Ibid.*
- 144 Victor Adler, le chef du parti, était plus proche de Ferdinand Lassalle que de Karl Marx.
- 145 L'exégèse savante fut inaugurée par la publication de l'ouvrage de Kuno Fischer, *Sopenhauers Leben, Werke und Lehre* (Heidelberg, 1893), conférant au philosophe droit de cité dans les universités. ROOS, *op. cit.*, XVII.
- 146 L'éditeur publiant le plus grand nombre d'ouvrages hongrois était Brandstetter. HELLE, *op. cit.*, 165.
- 147 Wilhelm Friedrich, C. Stampfel, Philipp Reclam junior et Otto Wigand.

- 148 Josef Lehmann, éditeur de *Magazin für die Literatur des Auslandes*, F. A. Brockhaus, éditeur de l'hebdomadaire *Blätter für literarische Unterhaltung*, Leopold von Sacher-Masoch, éditeur de la revue internationale *Auf der Höhe*, enfin Friedrich Bienemann, éditeur de *Unsere Zeit*.
- 149 Lajos T. NÁMÉNYI, « Irodalmunk külföldön 1886-ban » (Notre littérature à l'étranger en 1886), in : *Egyetemes Philologiai Közlöny*, 1887, 176.
- 150 *Magazin für die Literatur des Auslandes*, 22 avril 1963.
- 151 Gottschall (1823–1909) était l'auteur de nombreux travaux d'histoire littéraire, de recueils de poésie, d'épopées et de drames. Originaire de Breslau en Silésie, il devint le rédacteur en chef des *Blätter für literarische Unterhaltung* (1865–1888), historien de la littérature et critique influent. Tout en étant tombé dans l'oubli, il tient une place importante dans le dictionnaire des mythes d'Elisabeth Frenzel pour avoir revisité de nombreux personnages légendaires ou historiques, tels que Merlin, Barberousse, Ulrich von Hutten, Thomas Münzer, Frédéric le Grand, Schiller et Byron.
- 152 Elle était présente dans les bibliothèques autrichiennes, contrairement aux trois autres revues littéraires publiant des articles sur Madách. GRASSAUER, *op. cit.*, 684.
- 153 *Theater und Drama der Chinesen* (1887), *Die deutsche Nationalliteratur des 19. Jahrhunderts*, 4 tomes (1892⁶) et *Studien zur neuen deutschen Literatur* (1892).
- 154 H. A. et E. FRENZEL, *Daten deutscher Dichtung. Chronologischer Abriss der deutschen Literaturgeschichte*, Köln, Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1971, t. II, 417.
- 155 « Vischer, Dahn Félix, György a meiningeni herceg, Ebers György, Spielhagen Frigyes, mind elragadtatással szólnak Madách művéről », NÁMÉNYI, *op. cit.*, 180.
- 156 Náményi ignore que Scherr avait mentionné la *Tragédie*, dès 1880, dans son *Allgemeine Geschichte der Literatur*. Voir *infra*, 112.
- 157 MORVAY, *op. cit.*, 212 sq.
- 158 József BAYER, « Egy német író az Ember Tragédiájáról » (Un écrivain allemand sur la *Tragédie de l'homme*), in : *Egyetemes Philologiai Közlöny*, 1903, 55.
- 159 Eisler y porte un jugement particulièrement sévère sur les traductions de Kertbeny, révélant que la qualité des traductions de celui-ci était déjà contestée par les contemporains. Mária RÓZSA, « Magyarország a Grenzboten című folyóiratban », in : *Magyar Könyvszemle*, 2006, n° 1–2, 32–50.
- 160 *Ibid.*
- 161 Robert GRAGGER, *Lilla von Bulyovszky und der Münchner Dichterkreis*, München und Leipzig, Duncker & Humblot, 1914, 3.
- 162 Contrairement à son compatriote Gottschall, Freytag restera fidèle à ses conceptions libérales jusqu'à sa mort en refusant le titre de noblesse qui lui fut également proposé.
- 163 A Leipzig, il se lia d'amitié avec les historiens Theodor Mommsen et Heinrich Treitschke. OEHLKE, *op. cit.*, 294.
- 164 Freytag fut auteur lui-même de drames et de comédies dont une, *Die Journalisten*, fut longtemps très appréciée. Mais s'il demeure connu aujourd'hui, c'est surtout grâce à son roman de négociants *Soll und Haben* (1855), qui le situe dans la lignée de Dickens et de Scott.
- 165 MORVAY, *op. cit.*, 213.
- 166 L'action se déroule aux quatrième, huitième, onzième, treizième, seizième, dix-septième, dix-huitième et dix-neuvième siècles.
- 167 Il s'y lia avec Gottfried Keller. Bernd BREITENBRUCH, *Gottfried Keller. Mit Selbstzeugnissen und Bilddokumenten*, Reinbek bei Hamburg, Rowohlt Taschenbuchverlag, 2002¹², 120 (Rororo Bildmonographien, Nr. 50136).
- 168 Friedrich Theodor VISCHER, *Goethe's Faust. Neue Beiträge zur Kritik des Gedichts*, Stuttgart, Meyer & Zeller, 1875.

- ¹⁶⁹ György LUKÁCS, *Faust und Faustus, Vom Drama der Menschengattung zur Tragödie der modernen Kunst*, Ausgewählte Schriften, München, Rowohlt, 1965, 157.
- ¹⁷⁰ A côté de Vischer, le critique influent Wolfgang Menzel (1798–1873) de Stuttgart était un ennemi déclaré de Goethe depuis 1827, époque où Menzel faisait encore parti du groupe des écrivains du *Junges Deutschland*. Par la suite, après sa rupture avec ce groupe, il continua à attaquer Goethe en lui reprochant son absence de vertu et de sentiment national. Fritz MARTINI, *Deutsche Literaturgeschichte*, Stuttgart, Kröner, 1958, 352.
- ¹⁷¹ DABEZIES, *op. cit.*, 141.
- ¹⁷² « Eine gewaltige Geistestat, auf die die ungarische Literatur mit Fug und Recht stolz sein kann ». BAYER, *op. cit.*, 55.
- ¹⁷³ Cette prise de position en faveur de l'inclusion de l'Autriche dans le nouvel empire, ne signifie pas que Scherr était catholique. Au contraire, il affichait ouvertement son anti-catholicisme. Voir son jugement défavorable porté sur Calderon dans sa *Allgemeine Geschichte der deutschen Literatur*, Stuttgart, Carl Conradi, 1880, 133.
- ¹⁷⁴ BAYER, *op. cit.*, 55.
- ¹⁷⁵ Dans la précédente réédition, la cinquième, il ne l'avait pas encore mentionnée.
- ¹⁷⁶ SCHERR, *op. cit.*, 435.
- ¹⁷⁷ Les critiques de Vischer et de Menzel à l'égard de Goethe en sont d'autres témoignages parlants.
- ¹⁷⁸ Id., *Bildersaal der Weltliteratur*, Stuttgart, Kröner, 1884/5.
- ¹⁷⁹ Moritz MÜLLER, *Über der Weisheit letzten Schluss. Mit kritischen Bemerkungen über pessimistische Ansichten von A. Schopenhauer, E. v. Hartmann, Ph. Mainländer, Max Nordau, Johannes Scherr und andere Pessimisten, sowie diejenigen demokratischen Parteigenossen, welche der pessimistischen Weltanschauung huldigen*, Berlin, Wilhelm Friedrich, 1886.
- ¹⁸⁰ Ce *Dichterkreis*, dont les chefs de file furent Emmanuel Geibel et Paul Heyse, s'était constitué entre 1851 et 1867 autour du roi Maximilien II de Bavière. Ses membres venaient de régions et d'horizons très différents : à côté d'une majorité d'écrivains, on trouvait là le chimiste Justus Liebig, l'historien Heinrich von Sybel, l'historien du droit Felix Dahn et l'intendant de théâtre Franz Dingelstedt.
- ¹⁸¹ Durant quelques décennies, la popularité de Heyse (1830–1914) fut telle que le frère de Maximilien II l'anoblit et que le prix Nobel de littérature lui fut décerné en 1910.
- ¹⁸² *Tunnel sur la Spree* était une société littéraire fondée à Berlin en 1827 par Gottlieb Moritz Saphir. Bien que né à Pest, Saphir ne pouvait pas avoir servi de médiateur, étant décédé en 1858, deux ans avant la publication de la *Tragédie*.
- ¹⁸³ En 1876, Lilla von Bulyovszky (1834–1909) retourna en Hongrie pour se consacrer à l'écriture ainsi qu'à l'adaptation de pièces de théâtres hongroises et françaises pour des théâtres allemands.
- ¹⁸⁴ MORVAY, *op. cit.*
- ¹⁸⁵ OEHLKE, *op. cit.*, 472.
- ¹⁸⁶ MORVAY, *op. cit.*
- ¹⁸⁷ Robert GRAGGER, « Ungarische Einflüsse auf Theodor Fontane », in *Ungarische Jahrbücher für historische und soziale Wissenschaften*, Leipzig, Duncker & Humblot, 1912, janvier, 220–224.
- ¹⁸⁸ Voir *supra*, 110, note 554.
- ¹⁸⁹ Né à Magdeburg en 1829, Spielhagen se fixa à Berlin en 1862 et y mourut en 1911.
- ¹⁹⁰ Un argument infirmant cette hypothèse est que Spielhagen serait devenu membre du cercle s'il avait eu des relations suivies avec ces écrivains. Il suffisait en effet d'être invité trois fois pour en faire partie.
- ¹⁹¹ MORVAY, *op. cit.*, 212.

- 192 Originaire de Thuringe (Erfurt), Grosse était poète, romancier et dramaturge. Venu à Munich pour devenir rédacteur en chef de la *Neue Münchner Zeitung*, il rejoint le cercle des poètes munichoïses dès 1852, au sein duquel il est surnommé le « dernier poète romantique ». Son intense activité de dramaturge lui vaut d'occuper le poste de secrétaire général de la *Fondation Schiller* à Weimar de 1870 à 1902. Si les historiens de la littérature allemande omettent généralement son nom, Elisabeth Frenzel, elle, évoque cinq de ses drames, *Bothwell*, *Meister Albrecht Dürers Erdenleben*, *Da Ponte und Mozart*, *Grober Alexander*, sans nommer le drame qui retient notre attention. Elisabeth FRENZEL, *Stoffe der Weltliteratur, Ein Lexikon dichtungsgeschichtlicher Längsschnitte*, Stuttgart, Kröner, 1992.
- 193 Son œuvre de traducteur de l'indien, du persan, de l'espagnol et du portugais est plus importante que son œuvre littéraire. Si son nom est moins oublié que celui de Grosse, c'est grâce à la célèbre galerie de peintures qu'il a léguée à la ville de Munich.
- 194 Voir *infra*, 138.
- 195 Hugo BAKONYI, *Az Ember Tragédiája és egyik német rokonműve : Schack gróf « Világkorszakai »*, Belgrad, 1917.
- 196 LOTZE, *op. cit.*, 303–317.
- 197 Bakonyi cite ce jugement de C. HALLING, « A. F. Gr. v. Schack » in : *Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen und Literaturen*, XXX/X.74 B., 1885. BAKONYI, *op. cit.*, 8.
- 198 *Ibid.*, 6.
- 199 LOTZE, *op. cit.*, 317.
- 200 Adolf Gr. v. SCHACK, *Ein halbes Jahrhundert, Erinnerungen und Aufzeichnungen*, Stuttgart, 1887, 258. Schack connu à Vienne des intellectuels, parmi lesquels Hebbel est le plus illustre. La première représentation de la *Niebelungentrilogie* de Hebbel à Weimar (1861), sous la direction de Dingelstedt qui fut auparavant metteur en scène à Munich et membre du cercle munichoïse, donne à penser qu'il existait un réseau de relations à l'intérieur duquel Schack servait d'intermédiaire.
- 201 SCHACK, *op. cit.*, 376.
- 202 Il faut rappeler que Madách, tout comme l'intelligentsia hongroise dans son ensemble, appartenait à la fois à l'aire linguistique hongroise et à l'aire linguistique allemande.
- 203 Dans son épopée, Schack voulait démontrer qu'un âge d'or n'avait encore jamais existé, mais serait atteint dans l'avenir.
- 204 Il traduisit des drames de Sophocle, Euripide et Calderon. LOTZE, *op. cit.*, 295.
- 205 Cf. *Meyers Konversationslexikon*, Leipzig, Wien, Bibliographisches Institut, 1906. Sous le pseudonyme de Friedrich Halm, le baron Münch-Bellinghausen (1806–1871) connu de grands succès à Vienne avec ses tragédies se situant dans la lignée de Grillparzer.
- 206 MORVAY, *op. cit.*, 212.
- 207 LOTZE, *op. cit.*, 295–302.
- 208 « [...] ein undarstellbares Buchdrama [...], weil er von allen bekannten Bühnenwerken abweicht ». Adolf WILBRANDT, *Erinnerungen von Adolf Wilbrandt*, Stuttgart, Cotta, 1905², 76.
- 209 Les personnages positifs sont l'apôtre Pierre et la martyre Zoé, les figures négatives le patriarche et l'apostat Jarchai. LOTZE, *op. cit.*, 299.
- 210 *Ibid.*, 300.
- 211 Selon Radó, la version théâtrale aurait été faite exclusivement à partir de la traduction de Doczi. Celle-ci étant parue en 1891, il nous semble plus probable que Vrchlicky ait travaillé jusqu'à cette date avec l'adaptation de Fischer. RADÓ, « Az ember tragédiája a világ nyelvéin », 117 sq.
- 212 *Ibid.*, 95.
- 213 Elle parut en 1904 à St Petersburg, sans mention de la traduction allemande dont elle dérive.

- ²¹⁴ László KRIZSÁN, « 'Az ember tragédiája' Oroszországban », disponible sur (<http://madach.hu/MadachIThonlap/tanulmanyok/SzimposiumIII/Krizsan.htm> page consultée le 10/11/2008).
- ²¹⁵ A en juger par le nom à consonance germanique – Stein – du premier traducteur, il pourrait s'agir également d'une traduction faite à partir de l'allemand.
- ²¹⁶ Johann Heinrich SCHWICKER, *Geschichte der ungarischen Literatur*, Leipzig, Friedrich, 1889, 850–878.
- ²¹⁷ Id., *op. cit.*, 873 sq.
- ²¹⁸ Heinrich KEITER, *Konfessionelle Brunnenvergiftung. Die wahre Schmach des Jahrhunderts*, Regensburg, Leipzig, Verlag Heinrich Keiter, 1896.
- ²¹⁹ Richard v. KRÁLIK, *op. cit.*, 23.
- ²²⁰ Celles d'Adolf Dux et d'August Siebenlist, voir *supra*, 89 et 105.

MAGYAR SZEMLE AND THE CONSERVATIVE MOBILIZATION AGAINST *VÖLKISCH* IDEOLOGY AND GERMAN *VOLKSGESCHICHTE* IN 1930s HUNGARY

GERGELY ROMSICS

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In the 1930s in Hungary, the periodical *Magyar Szemle* (*Hungarian Review*) ranked as the foremost intellectual review of conservative thinking. Edited by the pro-establishment historian Gyula Szekfű, the journal provided important intellectual ammunition to the traditionalists of the right, in other words those who for various reasons sought to hold on to István Bethlen's version of moderate conservatism in ideology and a parliamentary system of limited pluralism and authoritarian checks in practice. The 1930s, however, bore witness to several challenges to the Horthy regime. The rise of the extreme right and the emancipatory (though often also fervently nationalist) program of the so-called *népi* (populist or *narodniki*) writers presented coherent political alternatives to the prevailing order for the first time since the marginalization and emaciation of the left in the wake of the 1918–19 revolutions. Simultaneously, the country had to grapple with the emergence of Nazi Germany as an expansionist great power in the region. In this complicated situation, authors of *Magyar Szemle* confronted what they perceived as a dual threat: the increasing appeal of German imperialism and German political and historical thinking. Many intellectuals of the time, feeling that the German political challenge should be resisted through the adoption and adaptation of innovative German thinking on politics and history, espoused the new ideologies emanating from the unquestioned cultural center of Central Europe in some form. *Magyar Szemle*, however, emerged as a hub for public intellectuals who sought to hold on to a conservatism both more traditional and more open to some of the ideas of liberalism and who refused to abandon the established view of Hungarian history for a more ethnically conscious vision of the past. In the context of the dual German challenge of the 1930s, *Magyar Szemle* represented a site of intellectual resistance not so much against direct German political ambitions but against the new wave of German political thought and interpretations of history.

Keywords: *Magyar Szemle*, *völkisch* idea, National Socialism, populism, historicism, Hungarian history, conservative revolution

The Rise of the *Völkisch* Idea in German Historiographical and Political Thought

Germany in the 1920s seemed almost beyond comprehension and explanation even to its contemporaries. Every observer noted that a vast process of ideological and cultural fermentation was underway. The meanings of key political terms, foundational concepts of social and state life, were changing, while various groups, periodicals and institutions were taking shape, ceasing to exist, undergoing transformations, or falling into insignificance. Nonetheless, with the passing of years it became increasingly evident that this process had spilled over in a particular direction: an ideology had acquired solid form that, having expelled the one-time right-wing and left-wing companions-in-arms as now ideologically incompatible, was articulating ever more clearly its views and conception of the world. The new notions around which *völkisch* conservative revolutionary thinking was organized reinterpreted the relationship between state and nation. Whereas before 1914 the Prussian heritage, in other words the cult of the state, had unambiguously marked the mentality, from the realm of scholarship to the public square, after 1919 a new actor gained increasing prominence in German history and the vision of a brighter German future: the *Volk*.

Historicism, the view of the past that had dominated German historiography throughout much of the 19th century and well into the 20th, proceeded from the hypothesis that in the course of history specific political and conceptual forces exercise an influence in accordance with the exigencies of different eras and the prevailing thought of a given period.¹ These forces are manifest first and foremost in the organization of the state, which can be conceptualized as the objective form of political will and ideas. Accordingly, the state represents a scale of values and strives to attain set goals. In the international context these goals can come into conflict with one another, but they are also subject to change. The conception of the state itself can be permanent, but the path leading to its political realization and its realization itself change as a function of prevailing circumstances. Thus for the historicist, ideas and *Realpolitik* create and write history collectively. It is however important to note that each of these actors, as it were, is conceived of as a product of history, indeed the historical nature of their being is their most basic quality. For this reason there can exist no generally applicable measure of validity. The political conduct of a state must be analyzed as the course of a particular idea and institutional system, both products of history, moving ever closer to the attainment of perfection.

The *Volk*, the subject of the new cult, brought with it a reassessment of the past and a newly formed image of the future. The most intellectually active forces of the German right began to seek the answer to the question of the nature and substance of the (alleged) peculiar German quality, the “core” (the German *Volkstum*)

that, independent of history, distinguished Germans from all other nations. In the history of ideas the products of this conception and the perspectives to which it gave shape are denoted with the expression *völkischer Gedanke*, or *völkisch* idea, while the larger processes of intellectual fermentation are known as the “conservative revolution” or “young conservatism”.

Many members of the old right-wing intellectual elite and professors occupying influential positions in academic life were unable to identify with the new manner of thinking. They did not vanish from public life, although their informal positions were shaken, and henceforth they no longer determined the guiding principles and terminologies of political and historical thinking. For many members of the younger generation and innumerable public groups, not to mention right-wing political forces, their conceptions, which seemed too Western and liberal and at the same time too conservative, were no longer decisive. Their thinking, which emphasized the strength of the state and history, was unacceptable for many, as the German state had cracked and almost crumbled in 1918 and 1919, and history had seemed to forsake the nation. New ideas were needed that would prove that other, more enduring, forces would counterbalance political failure. Thus for many the notion according to which the German *Volk* was an eternal force, independent of the state and capable of defying history, was appealing. More so than ever, the prevailing winds of the new era were “German winds”.

According to the emerging view of history, race and state, the *Volk* bears its own idea within itself and struggles in the course of history for self-realization. In this context historical will, which 19th century historicism conceives of as intention brought into being in the form of a state, is not the product of historical possibilities and exigencies, but the temporal manifestation of an ahistorical instinct. In other words the roots of the identity of a historical agent do not lie in history itself, but rather exist *a priori* as ideas or *völkisch* character that predates statehood. From this point of view, whether a narrative proceeds from the concept of the *Volkstum* or the race is of secondary importance. In other words *Volksgeschichte* is essentially compatible with racial history (*Rassengeschichte*), understood in the strict sense of the term. In both cases the important thing is that the “individuality of the German people” is posited as a quality existing above history, the constancy of which in the face of changes is functionally and textually more important than its source in race or ethnic group.²

In the ideology of *Volksgeschichte*, the state springs from the *Volk*, and the measure of its workings is their correspondence to the character of the *Volk*, the balance of the achievements and failings in the creation of the conditions necessary for its development. The goal of social history was to reveal this eternal ethnic character and demarcate the range of its influence. The historiographical reflection of this school of thought thus also preserved the fundamental premise according to which “the ‘*Volk*’ precedes the state”.³ One of the vital tasks of this his-

toriography in the demarcation of historical periods was the establishment of periods of (alleged) ascension and (alleged) decline, of the “rise” and “ebb” of the tides of the *Volk*.⁴ Parallel to this, however, it strove to reveal the ahistorical substance, the posited permanence awaiting discovery beneath the flow of political history. In other words it endeavored to give a historical reconstruction of “the inimitable soul, impossible to counterfeit, of the *Volk*, bound to the soil and to its homeland,” to use the words of Adolf Helbok, one of the radical ideologues of *Volkstumsforschung*.⁵

The *völkisch* idea and German great power ideology were molded together in the revised concept of *Mitteleuropa*, which itself proved to be a very elastic model. Its prototype was the Ottonian Empire, but its territory extended far beyond these borders.⁶ Its single function was clear: “by giving form to Central Europe, to rise to be the leading nation of Europe”, in other words to assume simultaneously its pan-German *völkisch* and supranational regional roles and meet the greatest task springing from the idea of the *Volkstum*.⁷

The ideology of the Third Reich integrated this heritage, as it embedded politics deeply in a myth of destiny and *Volk*, although mixed with a kind of cult of technology and the future that was characteristic of very few of the currents of the conservative revolution.⁸ Thus the *völkisch* idea, which became the canon under the Weimar Republic and was linked to notions of order and empire under the Third Reich (although maintaining its essential contents), bore peculiarly German, anti-liberal and often anti-modernist ideological connotations. In its final and most propagandistic incarnation under National Socialism the term eventually became a strategic ideologeme expressing transcendence of social disparities and differences of worldview, signifying bonds more general even than the state, and mandating eastward expansion (territorial or political) as a direct outgrowth of the geographical position and political character of the German *Volk*.

Initial Responses to *Volksgeschichte* in Hungary

The reception of the scholarship of the Weimar Republic in Hungary seems to have been a bit slow if one considers that the educated stratum of Hungarian public life followed trends in the German academia with close attention. On the other hand, it could be regarded as surprisingly fast in comparison with the reception of late historicism, which took some fifty years to show its influence in Hungary. It is worthwhile to identify the basic milestones of this process. Towards the end of the 1920s one can discern in the pages of the journals *Századok* (Centuries) and *Magyar Szemle*, first in the reviews and later in articles, a tendency to interpret German *völkisch* history as a political threat. In this context there was no rift between Hungarian scholarly life and public discourses. The concept of *völkisch*

Mitteleuropa constituted a threat to the existence of the Hungarian nation because it regarded a considerable part of the historical (and present) lands of the country as German *Volksboden* and an even larger part as German *Kulturboden*. From this perspective every German work that dealt with the geography, culture or history of the German communities of Hungary was interpreted as a challenge to the ambition of Hungarian politics to assert control in the region. This sense of threat was reinforced by the swing to the right in German politics, but also by the debate that had broken out well before 1933 among the German communities of Hungary concerning their identity as members of the Hungarian political community or the German *Volk*. At stake was the question of whether the German minority would define itself collectively with reference to the Hungarian state or the German fatherland. In other words, would it withdraw from the community of the host state and thereby implicitly also from its jurisdiction?⁹

Parallel to the reception of new German expansionist thinking, a rupture took place in the Hungarian scholarly community, and the battle between historicism and the *völkisch* view of the past began. The goal for both tendencies was to avert the danger of the German threat, but they nonetheless came into conflict with each other because of their profound ideological differences. *A történetírás új útjai* (The New Paths of Historiography), edited by Bálint Hóman and published in 1931, attests clearly to the fact that the reception of the methods and theories of German scholarship in Hungary had not yet identified the profoundly divisive rift in German historiography between late historicism and *Volksgeschichte*.¹⁰ Both Gyula Szekfű and Elemér Mályusz contributed to the volume, both under the heading of *Geistesgeschichte*, which each author used as a synonym for contemporary historiography. In contrast, in German historiography there had been a continuous debate since the publication of the works of social history by Karl Lamprecht on the constitution of the *Volk* and the collective psyche. The last stage of the debate in Germany was the canonization of the *völkisch* reading of history described above, which also represented the close of the historicist era. The initial obliviousness to this debate in Hungary and its subsequent sudden incorporation into scholarly thinking is illustrated again by the fact that in 1932 Szekfű wrote the preface to *A magyar nemzet története az ősidőktől napjainkig* (The History of the Hungarian Nation from Ancient Times to the Present Day), by Miklós Asztalos and Sándor Pethő.¹¹ In 1934, however, when Asztalos's text was published as an independent volume with only slight modifications,¹² Szekfű attacked his views in a highly critical review published in *Magyar Szemle*. His review, which had the dimensions of a self-standing essay, was entitled *Népiség, nemzet és állam* (Volkstum, Nation, State). It has since become famous as the first reaction of Hungarian historicism and conservatism, not to the German challenge, but to the new methodology of historiography stemming from the *völkisch* school of thought.¹³

In the 1930s *Magyar Szemle*, the representative conservative periodical, continued to publish reviews and articles on the institutional and methodological innovations of German historical scholarship every year. In the light of these, in 1934 *Volksgeschichte*, which initially and quite inexplicably had simply been thought of as part of *Geistesgeschichte*, was given separate treatment, both by historians and in public discourse. In contrast to Szekfű, the young although already well-known Mályusz believed that in opposition to German *Volksgeschichte*, which functioned to legitimize German supremacy, Hungarian historiography should emphasize Hungarian *Volksgeschichte*. In other words Hungarian historians should borrow their model from German scholarship, although with the aim of fighting off German political ambitions. However, Mályusz's approach demanded the use of terminological and conceptual tools viewed by the authors of *Magyar Szemle* as inapplicable to Hungary (as they expressed in a series of articles beginning in 1935).¹⁴ Thus a methodological and theoretical debate became inevitable.¹⁵

The spark that ignited the debate was, as already mentioned, the publication in 1934 of Asztalos's *A nemzetiségek története Magyarországon a betelepülésüktől máig*, the first work of Hungarian historiography deliberately written from the perspective of *Volksgeschichte* (although it bore numerous traces of the traditional view of history as well). In 1928 Asztalos, who had completed his doctorate in 1922, took a long trip to Germany, where he became familiar with the methodologies of *Volksgeschichte*.¹⁶ His oeuvre exemplifies how an author who began on the history of nationalities came to found the school of Hungarian *Volksgeschichte* on the basis of the methodologies of German scholarship. *A nemzetiségek története Magyarországon* focuses on the collapses, in Asztalos' view inseparably intertwined, of the Habsburg Monarchy and the Hungarian state. In his analysis of the processes of collapse, the premises of German *Volksgeschichte*, according to which the history of the Habsburg state should be read first and foremost as a history of dissolution, entered into a synergistic relationship with the notion of the viability of the Hungarian state. The *Volksgeschichte* critique of the idea of multinational statehood offered an explanation as to why historical Hungary, seen otherwise by Asztalos as viable, disintegrated. Its fall was a consequence of the place it held in the larger framework of a multinational state, in other words a state that stood in opposition to the ineluctable energies of the *Volk*.¹⁷

Asztalos' work deserves particular emphasis in a discussion of the history of ideologies in Hungary. He was the first Hungarian historian to juxtapose the superficiality of political activity, the essential subject of historicism, with the profoundness of *völkisch* politics, which allegedly rested on the laws of nature. He was also the first to subordinate human agency to a force that existed independently of history. This force created an interpretive and critical framework for the assessment of every historical era and event from a fixed, *völkisch* perspective

(the only point of view recognized as valid). History lost its autotelic quality and its open-ended character, while politics and human agency lost the freedom of determining their aims. Furthermore, *A nemzetiségek története Magyarországon* constituted the first work of Hungarian *völkisch* historiography to be met with broader interest in Hungarian public thinking at the time (first and foremost in Szekfű's aforementioned critical review), and it represented the first consistent attempt to rethink Hungarian history through an organic coupling of the findings and methodologies of German and Hungarian *Volksgeschichte*. The attention it was given, however, was not solely a response to the assertions contained in the text. At the time Hungarian public discourse was growing sensitive to the challenges issued in the discourses of German scholarship, and in its attempts to offer replies to these challenges Hungarian intellectual life on the right was gradually splitting in two. It made little difference that the greater part of Asztalos's book had been published some seven years earlier. Its publication in 1934 for the first time as an independent volume coincided with and no doubt contributed to the appearance, in mature form, of the reactions to German influence.

***Magyar Szemle* and Resistance to the *Völkisch* View of History**

While *Századok*, which had an extensive review section, may have offered the most detailed expositions of the products of German historiography, *Magyar Szemle* was nonetheless the most influential organ of their social reception. Between 1929 and 1932 one can discern a palpable increase in interest in *Volkswissenschaft* and German concepts of foreign policy, but from 1932 this interest turned into deliberate resistance. The turning point may have come when Otto Albrecht Isbert, a minor German researcher, expounded on the distinctive aspects of the *völkisch* view of history, emphasizing the point that, while "consciousness of *völkisch* solidarity was increasingly overshadowing the old notion of the state", this naturally would not alter the "ineluctable interdependency" of the German and Hungarian peoples.¹⁷ He nonetheless attacked the old Lesser German and Greater Hungarian views of history, which in his view "saw only the state, not the *Volk*".¹⁸ Mályusz noted this as well in a subsequent essay in which he characterized the state-centric approach of "Bismarck and his contemporaries" as outdated, arguing that since 1919 "the state has grown pallid, and its place in political thinking has been taken over by the *Volkstum*, unbound from state borders". Turning against Isbert, however, Mályusz cautioned against the threats posed by the new form of nationalism in German historiography, calling for the invigoration of "Hungarian cultural nationalism," which "would spur the spiritual resistance of the Hungarian race".¹⁹

However, *Magyar Szemle* did not adopt Mályusz's program of countering the German challenge by using the methodology of the "invader" to refute his arguments and detect the contours of a strong *völkisch* Hungarian state in centuries past and future. On the contrary, the two above-mentioned essays remained something of an isolated phenomenon. In contrast, a rather homogeneous discourse was taking shape at the time that brought together critical interrogation of current politics, philosophy of history and identity politics, and history itself. Adopting the main premises of Szekfű's view of history, it attacked the newly emerging ideological danger. As part of the critical scrutiny of contemporary political tendencies, the works addressing the situation in Germany and Austria specifically examined the effects of the *völkisch* idea in the two countries. Shortly before the publication of the two essays, Gyula Moravek had already analyzed the influence of the "*Volkstum Gedanke*", which he interpreted as a reaction to defeat in the war, the threat of "Americanization", and Marxism, anticipating or even presaging the radicalization of these ideas under National Socialism.²⁰ Another essay examined a further aspect of *völkisch* ideology in the search for an explanation of the appeal of Nazi ideas among the petite bourgeoisie and the youth. In the view of its author, Elek Máthé, "the Germans [were] again on the road towards making themselves unpopular among other peoples, not through the *parvenu* arrogance of Germany under Kaiser Wilhelm, but rather through the deification of their race".²¹ Noted historian Béla Pukánszky's literary review expanded its scope to include popular literature, arriving at the conclusion that in German literature "the outlines of the idealized image of a new ideal collective are emerging".²² Other writings called attention to the extremism of Rosenberg's myths of race and the danger of a general shift in the political spectrum of the Weimar Republic to the right, as other parties were swept up in the currents of Nazi radicalism.²³

In contrast to the political trends in Germany, Austria, which was also undergoing a general shift to the right (although in the direction of the corporatist state, not the National Socialist dictatorship), was seen in a considerably more positive light. In 1932 – quite early – a detailed account of Austrian identity-political endeavors was published, emphasizing in particular the work of Joseph Lux and Friedrich Funder and the allegedly Latin features of the new Austrian self-image. The account did not fail to mention, however, the fact that a significant segment of society, in particular the youth, were committed adherents of the *grossdeutsch* (or Greater German) idea.²⁴ In an essay published in *Magyar Szemle* in 1934, Csaba Csapody took a clear stand in support of the view according to which Dollfuss's new order and new creed, which were both "German and independent", might prove able to advance the true mission of the German *Volk* (understood as disseminating culture in Central Europe and declared as having been abandoned in favor of Nazi saber-rattling), and he strove to maintain an optimistic view of the chances for the survival of an independent Austria. In general, *Magyar Szemle* accepted

and positively appraised the identity politics project of the corporatist Austrian state, which it saw as a political ideology that offered Austrians a regional and open German identity, in contrast to the racial and *völkisch* premises of National Socialist thought. Proceeding from a conviction in the power of history to shape a collective mindset, it was hoped that the new consciousness would inoculate Austrian society against the allure of Nazi ideas, making Austria itself capable of fulfilling its old historical role in a new form and under new circumstances.²⁵

As a kind of mirror image of this identity project, in writings that were published in *Magyar Szemle* and elsewhere, the same authors, in addition to noting the threat posed by the German *völkisch* idea, strove to present an authentic Hungarian and conservative political and historical alternative in which the two dimensions were inseparably mixed. The historicist outlook became one of the foundations for fleshing out this alternative. In contrast to the saturation of the *grossdeutsch* idea with *völkisch* ideology, the new conservative-historicist synthesis emphasized “only [the continuity of] the Hungarian political idea”, positioning it as a notion that permits varied ethnic and cultural attachments and reclaims community only in the sphere of constitutional questions and foreign policy. Diverse variations on this idea surfaced repeatedly in the periodical. Jakob Bleyer, for instance, who as a prominent member of the German minority in Hungary and leader for a time of the Ungarnländische Deutsche Volksbildungsverein was fighting against his own *völkisch* opposition, came out in defense of “multilingual and multinational Hungary”, the legacy of which was more universal than the new and disturbing “Hungarian racial idea”. Hence the “old” formula was seen as accommodating the nationalities in a firm political alliance within the political nation. One year later Szekfű harshly criticized the advocates of “Hungarian autotelism”, condemning the forces striving to form a “collective Hungarian *völkisch* spirit” and thus forsaking community and solidarity with all the peoples of historical Hungary.²⁶

This notion found its most detailed expression in Tibor Joó’s works on the history of ideas. Joó situated historicism and the Hungarian imperial idea in a tightly intertwined and conceptually interdependent system. Basing his argument on the idea of the imperative to preserve a place among “great nations”, Joó rejected the notions of the populist-*narodniki* writers concerning a future politics based on the confederation of the Hungarian nation and the other small nations of the region. He strove to reinvigorate the tradition of the empire-building equestrian Hungarian nomad, who does not represent a force from before history, but rather a historical people formed over the course of the centuries.²⁷ Furthermore, *Magyar Szemle* was combative in its opposition to the similarly racial “Turanism”, which it saw as a kind of *völkisch* Orientalism that had turned away from the plan of building a regional empire, a task that history had allegedly assigned to the Hungarian people. In general, the periodical represented, in its rejection of racial theories of history,

the historical and voluntary concept of nation and a westward orientation, understood as a necessary consequence of historical experience.²⁸ In an essay published in *Napkelet* (The East) in 1929 Gyula Kornis, who also contributed numerous articles to *Magyar Szemle*, gave pithy expression to the view according to which, “whoever considers himself a member of a nation, is a member of that nation”, and the nation itself, as an “intellectual-ethnic principle”, on the one hand “refers to a community of intellectual and cultural goods” and on the other is manifested through the state in politics.²⁹ Kornis and Joó supported their thesis with references to the German bourgeoisie and its contributions to modern Hungary, which were often the target of attacks by populist-*narodniki* writers.³⁰

The concept of the historical nation was complemented with an increasingly precise definition of the *Geistesgeschichte* version of historicism, i. e., one that emphasized inter-subjective understandings of the historical situations that guided the political actions of communities. This touched on the conceptual exposition of the absolute quality of temporality, the unavoidable relativization of historical assessment, and the dependence on perspective, just as it implied the historical genesis of all social phenomena.³¹ Logically, its application led to the ascertainment of the primacy of the state and the interrogation and rejection of the absoluteness of *Volkstum*, since as an approach *Geistesgeschichte* rejected any notion of ahistorical or absolute facts and phenomena.³²

The Memory of the Monarchy in *Magyar Szemle*: The Multinational State as an Alternative to the *Völkisch* Idea

The definition of the historical place of the Dual Monarchy by members of the circle gathered around *Magyar Szemle* was essentially compatible with Szekfü’s ideas. György Ottlik, chief editor of the *Nouvelle Revue de Hongrie*, characterized the Danubian region as the collision zone of “great historical forces”. In his view, the enduring achievement of the Habsburgs had been the creation of a local synthesis protecting all the peoples of the region, an accomplishment that had not since been surpassed, as the emerging German threat was making clear at the time he was writing.³³ In Ottlik’s view, for instance, Czechoslovakia would eventually have to relinquish any animosity towards its southern neighbors and “seek a rear-guard in Austria and Hungary, either through a joint restoration of the legitimate heir to the Habsburg throne” or by some other means. Otherwise there would be no guarantee of its survival.³⁴ The example of Czechoslovakia shed light on one of the general features of the Danubian territories: given their precarious position in the face of external threats, the peoples of the region had to join forces and find a supranational framework that would ensure the further development of each.³⁵

In the view of these authors, this increasingly urgent necessity also demonstrated that while the collapse of the Dual Monarchy may well have entailed grievous losses for Austria and Hungary from a territorial point of view, from an economic and political point of view it had constituted a blow for all the peoples of the Danubian territories. The obliteration of the division of labor and the assurance of stability represented by the Habsburg Empire made necessary the old-new “political consciousness, understood in the Danubian sense”, and made dangerous the “*völkisch*”, “Turanian”, and “pagan” ideologies that denied the interdependence of the states and nations of the region.³⁶

Within the limitations of a realistic assessment of the circumstances and possibilities at the time, the authors gathered around *Magyar Szemle* saw the most favorable solution to the problems faced (in their assessment) by the peoples of Central Europe in the revival of some multinational structure, thereby breaking from the traditional currents of the Hungarian view of history. Their conclusion entailed a positive reappraisal of the state-building traditions of the Habsburgs. Ottlik, for instance, declared, “From the perspective of *Geistesgeschichte*, during its rule the Habsburg House, standing at the helm of the vast Austrian empire, became the clearest representative of the ‘European’ *Volk*”.³⁷

These conclusions did not, however, entail a complete purging of any memory of the Habsburg-Hungarian conflicts from the texts. Among the authors who gathered around Szekfű, Mihály Ferdinandy, for instance, preserved numerous elements of the Protestant *kuruc* tradition. He considered the Hungarian *Volk* to be “one of the small peoples oppressed by the *Gesamtmonarchie*”, and viewed the Habsburgs as an obstacle to “natural development” and the revival of the “flexible, old, humanist Hungarian state idea of the Middle Ages”. In contrast to Szekfű, Ferdinandy was unambiguous in his claim, in connection with the history of the eighteenth century, that both the course and the limits of development had been determined by the dynasty, and even Domokos Kosáry, a student of Szekfű’s, contended that when the two had come into conflict, the interests of the dynasty had always prevailed over the interests of the Hungarian territories.³⁸

If in connection with the eighteenth century one observes the emergence of competing interpretations, assessments of the Reform Era show a broad consensus. The authors of *Magyar Szemle* and the writers who held similar views shared Kosáry’s conclusion, according to which “the reign of Francis I, which lasted from 1792 to 1830, meant a lost generation for Hungary”.³⁹ Ferdinandy viewed 1848 as a justified response to “the blindness, ill-will, and unintelligence of the government at the turn of the century”, while Kornis saw the struggle for independence as part of the tradition of constitutionalism that had evolved against the absolutist tendencies of the ruling house.⁴⁰

These assessments were not, however, accompanied by any supposition of an underlying necessary opposition between the Habsburg dynasty and the Hungar-

ian *Volk*. The era of Habsburg reaction, in other words the negative “other side” of the Reform Era, remained a period characterized by increasingly tense conflict between two interdependent political actors, a conflict the origins of which simply lay in the mistakes of the Habsburg House. This opposition, however, was not cloaked in any historical-philosophical garb, nor was it cast as an eternal or inevitable antithesis of interest.

The portrayal of the period as a matter of mere incident enabled the authors to interpret 1867 as an unambiguous expression of newly discovered harmony. In the anti-*völkisch* and anti-German discourse of *Magyar Szemle* the Compromise constituted proof of both the interdependence of Hungary and the Habsburg dynasty and the viability of a new (or rather old) order in the Danubian region based on concord and consensus, not *Volkstum* or *völkisch* ideology (nor on an absolutist and unitary basis). Criticism was leveled at the consequences of the Compromise, rather than its principles, including the liberal-nationalist assimilationist furor that engulfed many members of the political class, directing energies away from projects of prosperity in the multinational state towards a fight both with the dynasty and the nationalities over issues of purely symbolic significance.⁴¹ In contrast, the Monarchy was seen as the bearer of genuine, attainable promise, a state the shared dynastic and Hungarian tradition of which had been “precisely that it melted and merged traditions... it had had the spirit of a pastor, tending to its peoples, in other words flocks, at least until the sheep turned into consciously nationalistic wolves”.⁴² The authors only differed in their assessments of the Compromise as either a momentary or an absolute optimum.⁴³

Thus 1867 grew into a mythical moment, an expression of both the resurrection of the thousand-year Hungarian political tradition and the conclusion of the decades-long political battle waged out of necessity against Vienna. For Szekfű, the Hungarian instinct for politics, and thus the claim to empire, was proof of the “mature political realism” forged in “centuries-old foundries” (to offer a summary of his view of the essence of the Compromise, in lieu of a long-winded analysis of *Magyar Történet*, the five-volume history book by Gyula Szekfű and Bálint Hóman published in 1935).⁴⁴ In addition to figuring as evidence of Hungarian political acuity, 1867 was also often cast as a turning point in Szekfű’s writings that essentially abrogated the conflict-ridden system of relations between the Habsburg House and the Hungarians. According to István Bethlen, prime minister from 1921 to 1931 and considered Szekfű’s foremost ally, before 1867 the Habsburgs “had seen the calling of their rule in the territories of the Monarchy as the creation, out of their entire empire, of a state under unified Austrian German leadership, preferably with a German-speaking government”. The Compromise made it clear that the dynasty had had a startling realization: “Its function was not to lay the foundation for the hegemony of the German *Volk* on its territory”. It rec-

ognized that “new tasks had arisen”, thereby marking the beginning of a new era of cooperation and collaboration.⁴⁵

It is significant that the stances of Ottlik and Ferdinandy, the two authors who were the most critical of the Habsburgs, were more favorable in their assessments of 1867 specifically than of Habsburg rule in general. In 1934 Ottlik characterized the Habsburg concept of the state as an idea of “general servitude,” counterbalanced as of 1867 by the open and tolerant “alternative” of Hungarian civilization. In 1936, however, he wrote admiringly of the Compromise in absolute terms, in other words not merely as an improvement over the state structure of the earlier period, but as a good solution in and of itself, and he identified the Habsburg Empire as the state with the most European mentality of the Great Powers.⁴⁶ Similarly, in 1941 Ferdinandy, who earlier had described the Habsburg state as a “swooning” empire disfigured by the “rigid, centuries-old mask” of the dynasty, celebrated the restoration of the Empire in modern form and the reestablishment of the “ancient German–Hungarian equilibrium” by “Hungarian statesmen” and the “wisdom” of Francis Joseph.⁴⁷ He assessed the Compromise on the basis of the fact that after 1867, “the Habsburg Monarchy was able once more, and for the final time, to continue in its role as a Great Power”, while “the Hungarian kingdom again was able to continue its imperial tradition, if perhaps within certain limits”.⁴⁸

As an interpretive move, the decision to place the Compromise on a pedestal demanded an explanation for the collapse of the Monarchy, and first and foremost historical Hungary, other than the inadequacies of the state system of the Dualist Era. The explanation, however, was at hand. Since the publication of Szekfű’s *Három Nemzedék* (Three Generations) in 1920, critical assaults on pre-1918 Hungarian politics were continuously cropping up, whether in Ottlik’s 1933 *Új Hungária* (New Hungary) or in the articles published in *Magyar Szemle*. The attacks focused in particular on political nationalism and chauvinism, which had broken with the autochthonous, tolerant Hungarian imperial idea created by the circumstances of history and the nomadic legacy of the steppes.⁴⁹ This interpretation stood in sharp contradistinction to the *völkisch* imperial idea, which demanded firmness of purpose and offered an antithetical assessment of the era. The discourse called the restraint and political realism of the 1867 generation of politicians (Ferenc Deák, Gyula Andrássy, etc.) to account, in other words the premise, which the Habsburgs had learned to esteem in 1867, that history is not a cycle of collisions of *völkisch* wills, but rather the representation of interests spanning the stages of ever-shifting, open-ended historical development and manifest first and foremost, in the spirit of political realism, in the search for compromise. Firm demands stemming from faith in absolutes constitute little more than stubborn denials of the “other” absolute. The historicist tendencies shared by Szekfű and others

saw the *völkisch* idea as one such combative ideology, taking issue with its (perceived or real) core assumptions and thereby developing into a synthesis of Hungarian conservative and traditional liberal views of history, as well as the most thorough and consistent attempt between the two World Wars to formulate a historicist idea of Hungarian identity.

Conclusion

As the most prominent journal of public conservative thinking in Hungary in the 1930s, *Magyar Szemle* functioned in part as a site of resistance to the tendencies of the conservative revolution and *völkisch* ideology emanating from Germany. Interestingly, the authors of *Magyar Szemle* confronted not only the essentialist ideologies of ascendant National Socialism, but also the ideologically and methodologically similar (even derivative), if politically opposed, notions of the Volk as the guiding principle and ultimate end of history in Hungary as well. As an organ of opposition to *völkisch* ideologies, whether German or Hungarian, *Magyar Szemle* represented an attempt to preserve political conservatism from ethnic essentialisms. This article sought to reconstruct the intellectual mobilization undertaken by Gyula Szekfű with the aim of demonstrating how the *völkisch* challenge had to first be identified as such and could subsequently be proven to be an “inappropriate” logic for interpreting Hungarian history. Interestingly, the anti-*völkisch* mobilization rested not merely on the widespread dislike for Nazism among contributors, but also on their interpretation of Hungary as a site of coexistence under imperial supervision provided by the “core” nation, Hungarians. In this sense, the conservative mobilization and its ideology may hold little appeal today, yet it nevertheless demonstrated the incompatibilities between interwar old and new right-wing thinking, and the potential conservative thought held at the time as a reservoir of counter-ideology to German penetration.

Notes

- ¹ For detailed discussion and thorough analysis of this state-centric approach see the work of Georg Iggers (1997) *Deutsche Geschichtswissenschaft: eine Kritik der traditionellen Geschichtsauffassung von Herder bis zur Gegenwart* (Vienna, Cologne, Weimar: Böhlau).
- ² Bernd Faulenbach (1980) *Ideologie des deutschen Weges: die deutsche Geschichte in der Historiographie zwischen Kaiserreich und Nationalsozialismus* (München, Beck), 33 and 294–5.
- ³ Erich Zöllner (1984) *Probleme und Aufgaben der österreichischen Geschichtsforschung* (Munich: Oldenbourg), 97.

- 4 Wolfgang Wippermann (1981) Der “deutsche Drang nach Osten”: Ideologie und Wirklichkeit eines politischen Schlagwortes (Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft), 102.
- 5 Willi Oberkrome (1993) *Volksgeschichte: methodische Innovation und völkische Ideologisierung in der deutschen Geschichtswissenschaft 1918–1945* (Göttingen, Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht), 38.
- 6 Jürgen Elvert (1999) *Mitteleuropa!: Deutsche Pläne zur europäischen Neuordnung (1918–1945)* (Stuttgart, Steiner), 62.
- 7 Henry Cord Meyer (1955) *Mitteleuropa in German Thought and Action 1918–1945* (Den Haag: Nijhoff), 301; Michel Grunewald (1997) ‘Reichseuropa gegen Paneuropa: Die Europa-Auffassung der jungkonservativen Zeitschrift *Gewissen*’ in Idem, *Le discours européen dans les revues allemandes 1918–1933* (Bern, Lang), 313–42. See in particular 328–9.
- 8 Uwe Ketelsen (1976) *Völkisch-nationale und nationalsozialistische Literatur in Deutschland 1890–1945* (Stuttgart, Metzler), 62; Jeffrey Herf (1984) *Technology, Culture and Politics in Weimar and the Third Reich* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 35–7.
- 9 Angela Gröber (2003) “A kisebbségtől a népcsoportig: Fogalmak és elképzelések” (From Minority to Ethnic Group: Terms and Concepts), *Pro Minoritate*, 4, 35–50.
- 10 Bálint Hóman (ed.) (1931) *A magyar történetírás új útjai* (Budapest: Magyar Szemle Társaság); Elemér Mályusz (1931) ‘A népiség története’ in Hóman (ed.) *A magyar történetírás új útjai*, 237–68; Gyula Szekfű (1931) ‘A politikai történetírás’ in Hóman (ed.) *A magyar történetírás új útjai*, 395–444.
- 11 Miklós Asztalos and Sándor Pethő (1933) *A magyar nemzet története az ősidőktől napjainkig* (Budapest: Lantos).
- 12 Miklós Asztalos (1934) *A nemzetiségek története Magyarországon a betelepülésüktől máig* (Budapest: Lantos).
- 13 Gyula Szekfű (1934) “Népiség, nemzet és állam”, *Magyar Szemle*, 22, 5–13.
- 14 Among the most significant of these, in order of the year of publication, one should mention the following: Gyula Szekfű (1936) ‘Politikai érzékünk társadalmi alapjairól’ (The Social Foundations of Our Political Acuity), *Magyar Szemle*, 26, 297–306; András Rónai (1936) ‘Államterület és népiség’ (The Territory of the State and the Volkstum), *Magyar Szemle*, 28, 113–20; Viola Tomori (1937) ‘A német népiség-kutatás’ (German Volkstumsforschung), *Magyar Szemle*, 29, 143–52; Mihály Ferdinandy (1938) ‘A lázadó Koppány mítosza’ (The Mythos of Koppány the Rebel), *Magyar Szemle*, 32, 244–53; Gyula Szekfű (1939) ‘A népi elv két arca’ (The Two Faces of the Völkisch Idea), *Magyar Szemle*, 35, 5–12; István Csekey (1939) ‘Magyarság és asszimiláció’ (Hungarian-ness and Assimilation), *Magyar Szemle*, 36, 16–22.
- 15 Vilmos Erős gives by far the most thorough interpretation of this debate, which is mentioned or studied in its fragmented details by numerous historians. Erős situates the methodological differences of the two historians at the center of his analysis. Vilmos Erős (2000) *A Szekfű–Mályusz-vita* (The Debate between Szekfű and Mályusz) (Debrecen: Csokonai). See in particular 34–53.
- 16 Béla Pomogáts (1999) ‘Magyarság és Erdélyiség – Asztalos Miklós emlékezete’ (Hungarian-ness and Transylvanian-ness – The Remembrances of Miklós Asztalos), *Bárka* (Ark) 4, 50–4.
- 17 Otto Albrecht Isbert (1932) ‘A magyarországi németiség birodalmi német szempontból’ (The Germans of Hungary from the Imperial German Perspective), *Magyar Szemle*, 15, 231–41. See in particular 231.
- 18 *Ibid.*, 238–9.

- ¹⁹ Elemér Mályusz (1932) 'Az új német nacionalizmus történetírása' (The Historiography of the New German Nationalism), *Magyar Szemle*, 15, 241–54. See in particular 241 and 246.
- ²⁰ Endre Moravek (1932) 'A német kaleidoszkóp' (The German Kaleidoscope), *Magyar Szemle*, 14, 127–34. See in particular 130–1.
- ²¹ Elek Máthé (1932) 'Nemzeti gondolat a német nemzeti szocialista mozgalomban' (The National Idea in the German National Socialist Movement), *Magyar Szemle*, 15, 308–20. See in particular 315.
- ²² Béla Pukánszky (1932) 'A mai német regény' (The German Novel of Today), *Magyar Szemle*, 14, 22–30. See in particular 23.
- ²³ Antal König (1932) 'A német katolikusok és a nemzeti szocializmus' (The German Catholics and National Socialism), *Magyar Szemle*, 15, 124–35. See in particular 133–4.
- ²⁴ Idem (1933) 'Ausztiria belső kérdései' (Austria's Interior Questions), *Magyar Szemle*, 18, 67–74. See in particular 68–70.
- ²⁵ Csaba Csapody (1934) 'A keresztény rendi állam publicisztikája Ausztriában' (The Journalism and Pamphleteering of the Christian Corporist State in Austria), *Magyar Szemle*, 21, 26–31. See in particular 26.
- ²⁶ Jakab Bleyer (1929) 'A magyar és német viszony' (The Relationship between Hungarians and Germans), *Magyar Szemle*, 5, 122–4; Gyula Szekfű (1930) 'Az ifjúság társadalomszemlélete' (The Social Attitude of the Young), *Magyar Szemle*, 8, 207–15. See in particular 211.
- ²⁷ Tibor Joó (2001) 'A magyar nemzeti szellem' (The Hungarian National Spirit) in Idem, *Történefilozófia és metafizika* (Philosophy of History and Metaphysics), edited by Tamás Gusztáv Filep (Budapest: Ister), 155–99. See in particular 166; Idem, 'Öncsonkítás' (Self-mutilation) in *ibid.*, 231–6. See in particular 236. Also see Idem (1990) *A magyar nemzeteszme* (The Hungarian National Idea) (Szeged: Universum, [reprint]), 32, 141 and 168–208.
- ²⁸ Szekfű 'A 'turáni-szláv' parasztállam' (The 'Turanian-Slavic' Peasant Nation); Gyula Németh (1931) 'A magyar turánizmus' (Hungarian Turanianism), *Magyar Szemle*, 11, 132–40. See in particular 135; Idem (1932) 'Van-e még történeti érzékünk?' (Do We Still Have a Sense of History?), *Magyar Szemle*, 14, 162–72. See in particular 171.
- ²⁹ Gyula Kornis (1929) 'Nemzeti megújulás' (National Renewal), *Napkelet*, 7, 481–94 and 561–76. See in particular 482–3. See also Julius (Gyula) Kornis (1938) *Hungary and European Civilization* (Budapest: University Press), 3.
- ³⁰ László Ottlik (1934) 'Pax Hungarica', *Magyar Szemle*, 22, 289–99. See in particular 294; Béla Pukánszky (2000) *Német polgárság magyar földön* (The German Bourgeoisie on Hungarian Lands) (Budapest: Lucidus), 31 and 52–74.
- ³¹ Péter Váczy (1932) 'Szellemtörténet' (History of Ideas), *Nyugat*, 24, 101–9. See in particular 102. Also see Kornis, *Hungary*, 4, and István Dékány (1933) 'Történelmi értékelés és átértékelés' (Historical Assessment and Reassessment), *Századok*, 67, 129–64. See in particular 130.
- ³² The most theoretically rigorous and terminologically subtle analysis is that of István Dékány (1931) 'A szellemtörténet történelmi alapon megvilágítva' (The History of Ideas, Illuminated on Historical Grounds), *Századok*, 65, 337–86. Gratz gives a more accessible and trenchant discussion of similar ideas. Gusztáv Gratz (1932) 'Állami közösség és népközösség' (State Community and Volk Community), *Magyar Szemle*, 15, 297–308. See in particular 297–302. Also see Gyula Szekfű (1939) 'A népi elv két arca' (The Two Faces of the Völkisch Idea), *Magyar Szemle*, 35, 5–12. He offers a critique of specific works of historiography in Idem (1939) 'Időszerű történeti munkák' (Timely Historical Works), *Magyar Szemle*, 35, 222–30. See in particular 227.
- ³³ György Ottlik (1936) 'Ausztiria problémája' (The Problem of Austria), *Magyar Szemle*, 26, 105–15. See in particular 105.

- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, 109.
- ³⁵ András Rónai (1936) 'Államterület és népiség' (The Territory of the State and the *Volkstum*), *Magyar Szemle*, 28, 113–20. See in particular 117.
- ³⁶ Kálmán Pongrácz (1937) 'A dunai államok gazdasági kapcsolatai' (The Economic Relations of the Danubian States), *Magyar Szemle*, 29, 124–32. See in particular 124 and 131; Ferdinandy 'A lázadó Koppány mítosza', 244–53. See in particular 250.
- ³⁷ György Ottlik 'Ausztia problémája', *op. cit.*, 113.
- ³⁸ Mihály Ferdinandy (1938) 'Középeurópai alakzatok' (Central European Configurations) in Ring (ed.) *Helyünk Európában*, 430–47. See in particular 433. Also see *Idem* (1941) *Mi magyarok: Tíz tanulmány a magyar történelemből* (We Hungarians: Ten Essays on Hungarian History) (Budapest: Rózsavölgyi), 403, and Domokos Kosáry (1943) *Magyarország története* (The History of Hungary) (Budapest: Országos Közoktatási Tanács), 140.
- ³⁹ Kosáry *Magyarország története*, *op. cit.*, 174.
- ⁴⁰ Ferdinandy 'Középeurópai alakzatok', *op. cit.*, 445; Kornis *Hungary*, *op. cit.*, 10.
- ⁴¹ László Ottlik *Uj Hungária felé*, *op. cit.*, 3; Gusztáv Gratz (1929) 'Polzer gróf emlékiratai' (The Memoirs of Count Polzer), *Magyar Szemle*, 5, 145–56. See in particular 147.
- ⁴² László Cs. Szabó (1933) 'Könyvek a Monarchiáról' (Books on the Monarchy), *Nyugat*, Vol. 25, No. 1, 375–8. See in particular 376.
- ⁴³ Kornis *Hungary*, *op. cit.*, 11; Kosáry *Magyarország története*, *op. cit.*, 264–5.
- ⁴⁴ Gyula Szekfű 'Politikai érzékünk társadalmi alapjairól', *op. cit.*, 297–306. See in particular 301–2.
- ⁴⁵ István Bethlen (1933) 'A magyarság helyzete a Duna-medencében' (The Situation of the Hungarian Nation in the Danubian Basin), *Magyar Szemle*, 19, 297–317. See in particular 300–2.
- ⁴⁶ László Ottlik *Pax Hungarica*, *op. cit.*, 295.
- ⁴⁷ Ferdinandy 'Középeurópai alakzatok', *op. cit.*, 444–6; *Idem Mi, magyarok*, *op. cit.*, 432.
- ⁴⁸ Ferdinandy *Mi, magyarok*, *op. cit.*, 432.
- ⁴⁹ György Ottlik 'Ausztia problémája', *op. cit.*, 113; Ferdinandy *Mi, magyarok*, *op. cit.*, 436.

TRANSITION TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY: MYTH OR REALITY IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

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Twenty years after the fall of the Berlin Wall and five years after the biggest EU enlargement it is worth taking stock of the experiences of transition in Central and Eastern European countries in the context of sustainable development. The following article focuses on the principal economic, social, environmental, and institutional aspects of sustainable development in Central Europe, in particular in Hungary. The key challenges in the region are shared: how to respond to global financial and economic crises while avoiding deep social tensions and protecting the environment for future generations.

Keywords: transition, EU enlargement, sustainable development, environment, Central Europe, Hungary

Many studies have been devoted to analyses of the transition to market economy and democratic society in the context of environment quality and sustainable development. Rather than attempt to offer any kind of comprehensive assessments of the available literature, the following article focuses on the principal trends in economic, social, and environmental progress in Central and Eastern Europe, in particular in Hungary.

Of the recent publications on the subject, the book edited by Bochniarz and Cohen is particularly worthy of mention (Bochniarz and Cohen, 2008). In the study written by Archibald and Bochniarz the authors investigated sustainability issues in Central European countries using a wide range of statistical data and empirical knowledge, focusing primarily on the period between 1990 and 1996. They argued that the rapid liberalization of these countries was one of the major sources of the significant improvement in economic, social, and environmental performance (Archibald and Bochniarz, 2008).

EU Enlargement

Twelve countries from Central and Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean joined the European Union in two waves, the first in 2004 (ten countries with 75,000,000 citizens) and the second in 2007 (two countries with 30,000,000 citizens).

The latest enlargements of the European Union have brought greater economic prosperity for all EU citizens and made Europe a stronger player in the world economy. The enlargement helped further unleash the growth potential and increase the resilience of the European economy by deepening economic integration and boosting competitiveness. The enlarged EU is now the largest integrated economic area in the world, accounting for more than 30% of the world's GDP and more than 17% of world trade (European Commission, 2009).

Rapid integration has brought many benefits for growth, but it also created vulnerabilities in some of the new member states that have been further accentuated by the current economic and financial crisis.

Foreign investment in the new member states surged quickly and boosted economic restructuring, growth, and employment. However, in several countries, rapid and unchecked domestic credit growth, fuelled by foreign borrowing, overheated the economy and led to large external imbalances, sharp increases in labor costs outstripping increases in productivity, and hikes in real estate prices. As a result, in some countries foreign capital was increasingly channeled to non-productive uses. With the large increase in the cost of capital brought about by the global financial crisis, countries with large external imbalances now face major adjustment challenges. These challenges, however, are not unique to new member states; some of the old member states face similar problems.

The enlarged EU is now better positioned to address current and future challenges. The reformed Stability and Growth Pact provides a medium-term anchor that underpins the credibility of fiscal policy, while allowing sufficient flexibility in the short run. In parallel, the revamped Lisbon process helps identify and focus on the structural reforms that are necessary to further enhance growth potential and resilience. This process has been supported by the Cohesion Policy, which translated Lisbon objectives into regional catch-up and development strategies. The Cohesion Policy provided substantial support to EU member states, both in terms of vital financial assistance and much needed expertise. The accession process has significantly improved living standards in the new member states, fostering economic and social cohesion within the Union. Income per capita rose from 40% of the old member states' average in 1999 to 52% in 2008. It is estimated that the accession process boosted economic growth in the new member states by about 1.75% per year over 2000–2008, when growth increased from 3.5%, on average, in 1999–2003 to 5.5½% in 2004–2008 (European Commission, 2009).

Rapid trade integration has fostered a more efficient division of labor and strengthened competitiveness in the EU. The degree of trade openness in the new member states has reached a very high level. Their average GDP share of exports and imports now amounts to 56% of GDP, up from 47% before enlargement.

New member states have been rapidly modernizing their economies. They have developed functioning market economies and the capacity to cope with competitive pressures and market forces within the single market. They have also increasingly aligned their production structures with those of the old member states. Agriculture and manufacturing are more important in the new member states (amounting to 4.5% and 21.25% of GDP respectively in 2006, compared with 1.5% and 16.75% in the old member states). Nonetheless, the service-based and knowledge-intensive economy has grown in recent years. The share of services in GDP grew from 56% of GDP in 1995 to 63% in 2006, compared to 72% of GDP in the old member states. Investments from old member states have been a key driver of economic transformation in the new member states.

Foreign investment was particularly high in the financial sector. As a result, foreign ownership in the banking sector in the new member states now ranges from almost 100% in Estonia and Slovakia to some 30% in Slovenia (compared with below 20% on average in the Euro area).

The current severe global economic crisis poses major new challenges for national policies. The crisis impacts all member states through declining trade, reduced availability of financing, plummeting household wealth and deteriorating confidence, though EU membership, and to a greater extent membership in the Euro zone, provides protection and a stability anchor.

The financial crisis has also exposed other vulnerabilities. In several new member states over-optimistic expectations about enterprise profits and household income fuelled capital inflows and credit growth that surpassed sound equilibrium levels. In many cases, this led to unsustainably high current account deficits. Foreign currency denominated loans have also expanded markedly in several countries. This has made households and corporations more vulnerable to currency depreciation.

These recent events underscore the fact that in all new member states further major efforts are needed to safeguard the achievements of the latest EU enlargements, particularly regarding income convergence, financial integration, and foreign direct investment into converging member states. The EU's policy frameworks are helpful in facing these challenges, and enable the new member states to continue to inject dynamism into their economies in the medium and long run. However, the results will mainly depend on sound domestic economic policies and an appropriate institutional framework. The implementation of cohesion policy and the EU's rural development policy, focused on long-term objectives, helps create conditions for sustainable growth.

Total transfers from the EU budget to the new member states amounted to around 2% of their GDP in 2007 and are expected to increase to 3% by 2013 (European Commission, 2009). There were huge regional disparities in the European Union on the basis of GDP per inhabitant. In 2006 GDP per capita ranged from 25% of the EU-27 average in Nord-Est in Romania (Nord-Est is a term used to refer to a development region in the largely agricultural north-eastern part of the country) to 336% in inner London. Despite the convergence of new member states towards the EU average, there are nonetheless significant inequalities in economic topography.

The European Economic Recovery Plan adopted by the European Council in December 2008 proposes a counter-cyclical macro-economic response to the crisis in the form of an ambitious set of actions to support the real economy. The aim is to avoid a deep recession. The plan is anchored in the Stability and Growth Pact and the Lisbon Strategy for Growth and Jobs.

The strategic aims of the Recovery Plan are to:

- Swiftly stimulate demand and boost consumer confidence;
- Lessen the human cost of the economic downturn and its impact on the most vulnerable. Many workers and their families are or will be hit by the crisis. Action can be taken to help stem the loss of jobs; and then to help people return rapidly to the labor market, rather than face long-term unemployment;
- Help Europe prepare to take advantage when growth returns so that the European economy is in tune with the demands of competitiveness and the needs of the future, as outlined in the Lisbon Strategy for Growth and Jobs. This means pursuing the necessary structural reforms, supporting innovation, and building a knowledge economy;
- Accelerate the shift towards a low carbon economy. This will leave Europe well placed to apply its strategy for limiting climate change and promoting energy security: a strategy which will encourage new technologies, create new ‘green-collar’ jobs and open up new opportunities in fast growing world markets, keep energy bills for citizens and businesses in check, and reduce Europe’s dependence on foreign energy.

An immediate budgetary impulse has been made amounting to 200 billion Euros (1.5% of EU GDP), made up of a budgetary expansion by member states of 170 billion Euros (around 1.2% of EU GDP) and EU funding in support of immediate actions of the order of 30 billion Euros (around 0.3 % of EU GDP). An additional 105 billion Euros for “green economy” between 2007–2013, including renewable energy sources, energy efficiency, railways, clean urban transport development, is expected to be spent (European Commission, 2008).

Recent Economic Development in the EU-10 Region

The deepest global recession since World War II has clouded the economic outlook in the EU-10 region (the EU-10 refers to Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia). The EU-10 economies grew only modestly in the fourth quarter of 2008 (by 1%), and are likely to have contracted in the first quarter of 2009. EU-10 countries are projected to contract by around 3% in 2009 and reach 0% growth in 2010, down from growth rates of 4.1% in 2008 and 6.2% in 2007. The collapse in export demand and the global deleveraging have resulted in a sharp economic downturn. Deep trade and financial integration with the rest of the world, and especially the Euro area, makes the region highly vulnerable to the reduction in external financing and the contraction in manufacturing exports (World Bank, 2009).

Economic activity is expected to contract in 2009 in all EU-10 countries and to recover only modestly, and only in some countries, in 2010. The Baltic countries are expected to suffer the most severe contraction. In the first quarter of 2009, the year-on-year reduction in GDP ranged from 18% in Latvia and 16% in Estonia to 3.5% in Bulgaria and 3.4% in the Czech Republic.

Manufacturing plummeted in the fourth quarter of 2008 and the first months of 2009, as sales of investment goods and consumer durables collapsed. In early 2009, industrial production contracted year-on-year between 20% and 30% in Estonia, Latvia, Hungary, the Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic, a shock comparable only to the sharp slump of the early 1990s. Stocks of inventory, which had increased at the onset of the crisis, are now being slashed. The export-oriented manufacturing sector, in particular machinery, automobile, transport and electric equipment, but also the labor intensive industries, such as textiles and clothing, have been affected the most (World Bank, 2009).

The deterioration in the labor markets is closely linked to the downturn in economic activity. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are expected to see large increases in unemployment in the wake of the substantial contraction in the economy. Unemployment rates in these countries more than doubled relative to the same period of 2007, reaching levels that are among the highest in the EU. Employment growth was negative in Hungary and the Baltic states in the last quarter of 2008. Unemployment is also rising in the other countries of the region, and is likely to exceed 10% of the labor force in the Slovak Republic, Hungary and Poland by 2010. Return migration of the over 1,000,000 EU-10 citizens who moved to crisis-hit countries such as the UK, Ireland, and Spain since 2004 is adding further pressure to domestic labor markets (World Bank, 2009).

Main Socioeconomic and Environmental Trends in Wider Europe

The pan-European region harbors rich cultural and environmental diversity. More than 870,000,000 people live in the region, more than half of them in Western and Central Europe (WCE), making the EU one of the most densely populated areas of the world, with more than 100 people per square kilometer. This is in stark contrast to the relatively sparse populations of Eastern Europe and Central Asia, where the average density is well below 20 people per square kilometer.

Economic recovery in recent years has resulted in an increase, in relative terms, of national income in virtually all countries of the pan-European region. Economic growth rates have been particularly high in South Eastern Europe (SEE) and EECCA (Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia) countries. The number of independent states in the region has increased from 33 in 1990 to 53 in 2007, during which time the EU expanded from 15 to 27 member states.

Air pollution, mainly by fine particles and ground-level ozone, continues to pose a significant threat to health. It shortens average life expectancy in WCE by almost one year and affects the healthy development of children. Most air pollutants have increased in EECCA by more than 10% as a result of economic recovery, increases in transport, and the lack of effective air pollution protection policies. In EECCA the poor quality of the data precludes an in-depth assessment of air quality and its consequences. However, the limited data available indicates that the main health threat in EECCA and SEE is, as in WCE, from small particles and their toxic constituents (EEA, 2007).

More than 100,000,000 people in the pan-European region still do not have access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation. In EECCA and SEE the quality of the water supply and sanitation services has deteriorated continuously over the past 15 years, with the rural population most affected. One-third of the pan-European population lives in countries where water resources are under substantial pressure. High leakage losses in water distribution systems, poor management and maintenance of irrigation systems, and unsustainable cropping patterns exacerbate the impacts of droughts and water scarcity.

Emissions of greenhouse gases have increased in recent years in most European countries and are projected to continue to do so in the future. Many European countries have adopted national programs to reduce emissions, but some of them will still have difficulties in reaching their Kyoto targets. The Kyoto Protocol, under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, and its first commitment period represent only a first step in addressing climate change. Global emissions will have to be reduced by up to 50% by 2050 to limit temperature increases to a maximum of 2°C above pre-industrial levels, the target proposed by the EU as necessary to avoid unacceptable climate change impacts in the future.

Biodiversity decline and loss of ecosystem services continue to be a major concern across the pan-European region. In addition, the number of invasive alien species in the region continues to increase. The overarching target of the Kiev Resolution to halt biodiversity loss in the region by 2010 will not be achieved without considerable additional efforts and resources. Communication, education and public awareness programs, however, are being implemented according to the Kiev Resolution. There has been significant progress in creating ecological networks: the Pan-European Ecological Network and Natura 2000 Network are taking shape, but there is still insufficient information on their conservation status (EEA, 2007).

The concept of sustainable consumption and production has become more prominent on the policy agenda since the Kiev Conference. However, few concrete outcomes have emerged, and implementation strategies and tools to measure environmental impacts need to be put in place. Per capita resource use levels have remained stable in all regions over recent years, and some decoupling has been achieved between resource use and economic growth. Resource use efficiency varies significantly between countries, and is several times higher in the EU-15 than in the EU-10 and SEE countries, and up to twenty times higher than in EECCA. Patterns of consumption are changing rapidly, driven by socioeconomic changes. The consumption categories causing the highest life-cycle environmental impacts are food and beverages, private transport, and housing. In the EU, tourism and air travel are emerging as key areas of future impacts.

The pan-European region is generating ever more waste. Landfill, environmentally the least preferred option, is still the most common method of waste management across the pan-European region. EU member states have made some progress in limiting the share of municipal waste going to landfill. Many EECCA and SEE countries have developed waste strategies and legislation for waste, but they still need to be implemented effectively. Proper waste collection and safe landfilling remain a challenge. In some EECCA countries an even bigger challenge is ensuring the environmental safety and cleanup of hazardous waste sites inherited from the past (EEA, 2007).

Recent Economic and Social Trends in Hungary

Between 1995 and 2006 the Hungarian economy showed an uneven trend influenced by changing external and internal economic and social conditions. Since the change of regime the economy has become more open, while in key sectors productivity and competitiveness have improved. These developments were supported by several factors, such as modern technical improvement, changes in the

structure of production, better logistics, and last but not least increasing labor intensity.

In the period starting in 1997, for the first time since the change of regime the dynamic economic growth was not followed by a dangerous deterioration of the external balance of payments. As a consequence of the package of measures introduced in 1995 (one-time currency depreciation, introduction of an import surcharge, measures restricting demand) the indicators of equilibrium improved spectacularly, but at the same time economic growth temporarily slowed down.

Subsequently, as of 1997 the volume index of GDP rose dynamically, peaking at 5.2% in 2000. In this period industry and construction were the engines of growth. From 2001 the growth rate declined. The reasons for this were the deterioration of external economic conditions and the worldwide spread of poor business performance, which was followed by significantly lower export growth rates than in previous years. In 2004, when Hungary joined the EU, a business recovery occurred again, which played a key role in GDP growth rate, which reached 4.8%. The spectacular improvement was due to the improved agricultural output on the production side and the dynamic increase of exports and investments on the expenditure side. In the next two years, in 2005 and 2006, the growth rate declined again, and the driving force in these years essentially was the above-average increase of three branches: manufacturing, wholesale and retail trade and repair, and financial intermediation.

The consolidated gross debt of the general government is one of the criteria of the Maastricht Treaty that has to be met in order to enter the Euro area. According to the Treaty, the gross government debt must not exceed 60% of the gross domestic product (GDP), or it has to decrease and approach the threshold to a sufficient extent and at a sufficient rate. This is a requirement of long-term sustainability of government. In Hungary government debt decreased gradually and substantially in the second half of the 1990s, reaching the lowest point in 2001, which was far below the 60% threshold. Government debt has been increasing ever since. It exceeded the limit again in 2005 and was the fourth highest within the 27 EU member states in 2007, when it surpassed the value recorded 10 years before. In the European Union the average government debt fluctuated between 61% and 63% in the first six years of the decade, but decreased substantially and fell below the 60% threshold in 2007.

On the basis of per capita GDP in Hungary the differences in economic development of the regions increased in the period between 1995 and 2006. During this time central Hungary, western Transdanubia, and central Transdanubia took the first three places, and either northern Hungary or the northern Great Plain came in last. Over the period under examination GDP per capita increased at a higher-than-average rate in central Hungary and western Transdanubia. Central Transdanubia was close to the average level, while the other four regions fell behind by

different measures. The variable of development was 2.05 and 2.63 times higher in central Hungary than in the northern Great Plain (the last region in the rankings) in 1995 and 2006, respectively. If the figures of central Hungary, due to its special position, are not taken into account, then the per capita GDP of western Transdanubia in 1995 was 1.45 times as high as that of the northern Great Plain, the least developed region. This indicator changed to 1.59 in 2006.

Hungary's GDP per capita was 14,393 purchasing power standards (PPS) in 2005, which was 64.3 per cent of the EU-27 average. GDP per capita in central Hungary exceeded the EU average by 5%, while in central and western Transdanubia these figures were 60–64% of the EU average. The situation of the other regions was much less favorable, since none of these regions reached half the EU average (41–45%). In 2005 GDP per capita in PPS, as compared to the EU-27 average, was higher in Slovenia (86.9%) and in the Czech Republic (76.6%), among the countries of the area, than in Hungary. The figures for Estonia (62.9%) and Slovakia (60.6%) are not far from those of Hungary. The GDP per capita in Romania and Bulgaria, the two new member states, was equivalent to 35% (HCSO, 2008).

The renewed sustainable development strategy (EU SDS) aims to promote a prosperous, innovative, knowledge-rich, competitive, and eco-efficient economy. Energy intensity monitors how much energy is used in a country to produce one unit of economic output, and measures one aspect of eco-efficiency by identifying to what extent there is a decoupling between the growth rates of energy consumption and economic performance. Changes in energy intensity depend on energy efficiency, energy sources used and structural economic changes.

The average energy intensity of the EU-27 declined by almost 15% from 1995 to 2006, a figure very close to the EU-15 average (12.6%). The fall in energy intensity of the Visegrád countries was 30% on average, yet even in 2006 the energy these countries required in order to achieve a unit of economic performance was significantly more than the EU average. Though the energy intensity of Hungary was nearly three times as high as in the EU-27 in 1995, the gap slightly diminished by 2006. It is worth noting that Poland nearly halved its lag behind the EU-27 from 1995 to 2006.

Mass unemployment appeared in Hungary after the transition at the beginning of the 1990s. It reached its highest level in 1993, when the unemployment rate was 12.1%. The decline could be observed until 2001 (5.7%), at which point it began to increase again, and since 2005 it has exceeded 7% (HCSO, 2008).

The main objective of the new EU Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS) in the topic "Social integration, demography and migration" is to reduce the number of people, especially the number of children, at risk of poverty and social marginalization by 2010. In Hungary the national at-risk-of-poverty rate corresponds to the average of the EU-15 member states. While the EU average in-

creased only slightly in the period under observation, the data reveals that though the situation in Hungary was good in 2000 (11%), by 2005 the Hungarian indicator had come to equal the EU-15 average (16%).

Examining the child poverty rate, one observes that it follows the trend of the national average, though it is consistently higher. As opposed to the increase in the national average from 11% to 16%, the child poverty rate grew from 17% to 25%, which means that one fourth of minors lived below the poverty threshold in 2005.

The indicator of the inequality of income distribution is the quotient of the equalized income of the top income quintile and that of the lowest income quintile. It is an important indicator of social inequalities, which is known also as S80/S20. The higher the value, the larger the inequalities.

According to the time series the income quintile share ratio has hardly changed in the 15 old Member states of the EU. It was around 4.5 every year, though there was a slight increase. In Hungary significant growth can be observed. The ratio grew from the 3.3-fold difference registered in 2000 to 5.5-fold by 2005.

In Hungary life expectancy at age 65 was 13.4 years among males, and 17.2 years among females in 2006. The respective values of this indicator were 12.1 and 15.8 in 1995. In 2005 the average life expectancy at age 65 was 16.4 years for males and 20.3 years for females in the EU, in the case of both genders more than three years than in Hungary (HCSO, 2008).

In 2006 most deaths in Hungary were caused by diseases of the circulatory system, followed by neoplasms. These two causes resulted in more than 70% of the total number of deaths. Due to their relative significance, the number of deaths due to diseases of the digestive system, external causes, and diseases of the respiratory system should be stressed as well. These amount to 17% of the total number of deaths. Other causes amount to only 8% of the total number of deaths. The structure of causes of death is very similar for the two genders.

There is a difference in the proportions of the major causes. In 2006 the proportion of deaths due to neoplasms, diseases of the respiratory system, digestive system, and external causes were higher among men, while diseases of the circulatory system led to death more frequently in the case of women.

In order to draw international comparisons we use the WHO mortality rate, standardized for the European population. In all the five main groups of causes of death the standardized rates of Hungarian men are much higher than the EU average. In 2005 the rate of those dying from diseases of the digestive system was more than twice the EU average, while the rate was nearly twice the EU average in the case of deaths due to diseases of the circulatory system. In 1995 the number of deaths from suicide was 50 per hundred thousand for men and 17 per hundred thousand for women. Twelve years later this rate had decreased to 39 per hundred thousand among men and 11 per hundred thousand among women. The difference

between genders did not change in the period under examination. More than 70% of those deceased due to suicide were men. Despite the decrease, Hungarian figures are still considered outstandingly high in an international context. In 2005 the EU average of deaths from suicide was 18 per hundred thousand for men and 5 per hundred thousand for women (HCSO, 2008).

Obesity is an increasingly significant problem in the developed world. Nearly half of the Hungarian adult population is overweight or obese. Data from the population health interview surveys suggests that the middle-aged and elderly are particularly likely to be overweight. More than two-thirds of the male population over age 45 is overweight, and this figure is only slightly lower in the case of women of the same age. In the three years between the two surveys (2000–03) there was a slight increase in the proportion of overweight people for both genders.

The average living standards, housing conditions, health status, employment, and schooling of the Hungarian Roma population are far below the Hungarian average. The income of 82% of this group is below the sustenance level. 56% of the members of the Roma community belong to the poorest 10% of the total Hungarian population. The rate of employment is less than half and the unemployment rate is 3–5 times higher. 12% of the overall population and 19% of children (420,000) live below a widely accepted poverty threshold. The basic document of the National Strategy 2007–32 “Making Things Better for our Children”, adopted by the Parliament in May 2008, addresses the severe problem of child poverty in Hungary.

Environmental Situation and Policy in Hungary

Shifts in social and economic conditions in Hungary from the mid-1980s onwards and the effects of the regime change in 1989 curbed a hitherto intense environmental deterioration and put an end to severe contamination in a number of fields. As a result of this, decreasing environmental pressures have led to the improvement in the quality of the environment.

Air Pollution

In the 1980s a huge, contiguous strip of severely polluted air stretched along the north-east–south-west industrial axis, across the north Hungarian and Transdanubian mountains, enveloping the cities of Miskolc, Budapest and Veszprém to such an extent that air pollution endangered the health of nearly half of Hungary’s population. Due to a decrease in the emission of air pollutants, areas with ex-

tremely high levels of air pollution are now only found in small and scattered patches. Since 2000, the proportion of national territory with poor ambient air quality has fallen from 11% to 6.3%, and the share of the population affected by air pollution has dropped from 40% to 35.9%. The rate of improvement is best seen when comparing levels of sulfur dioxide emissions. In 1980 SO₂ emissions reached 1.633 million tons, whereas in 2006 only 118,000 tons were emitted, representing a 93% reduction (Pomázi-Szabó, 2008a). The emission of nitrogen oxide decreased from 238,000 tons in 1990 to 208,000 tons in 2006, mainly due to the restructuring of the power sector (see *Figure 1*).

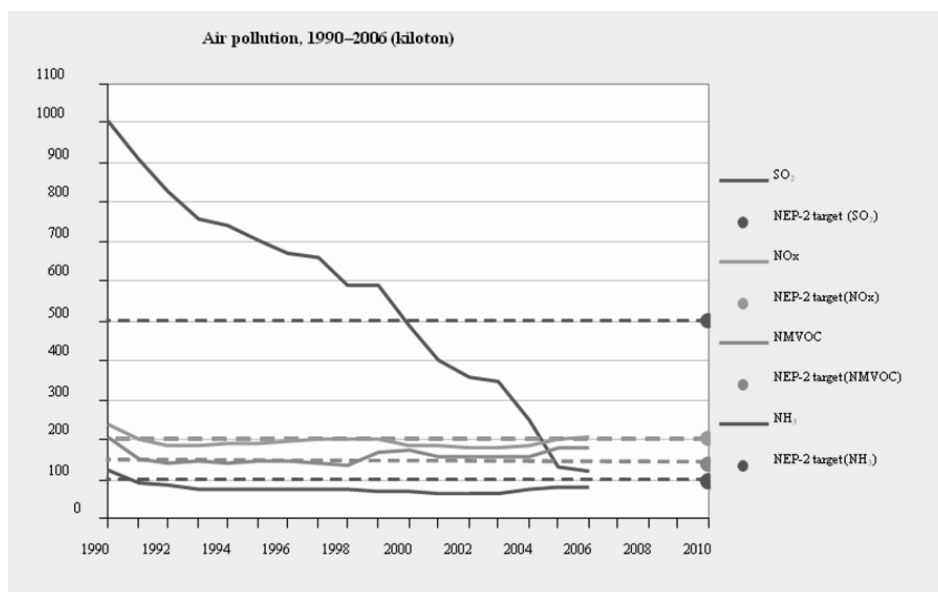


Figure 1. Air pollution

Source: Pomázi-Szabó (2008a).

Over the period between 1980 and 2006, emissions of particulate matter decreased from 576,600 tons to 83,000 tons (i.e., from 54 kilograms to 8 kilograms per capita). The most severely polluted mosaics were found in the vicinities of Budapest, Miskolc, Salgótarján, Pécs, and Szeged. Since the 1990s, air pollution from transport has begun to endanger settlements near motorways and major roads. Suspended particulate matter (PM) poses an extensive problem in Hungary. In 2007 the highest concentrations of PM were measured in cities such as Budapest, Miskolc, Pécs, Szeged, and Várpalota. High PM concentrations are mainly linked to heavy traffic, residential heating and, in some places, local indus-

trial production. Background concentrations of SO₂ have been considerably reduced following the trend in declining emissions. In 2007, SO₂ emission limits were being respected throughout Hungary. Background concentrations of NO₂ have been slightly reduced in recent years, but the annual average emission levels were exceeded in Budapest, Miskolc, and Pécs.

Ground-level ozone is a major concern throughout the country. In 2007 health protection standards were exceeded at all ozone monitoring stations. The highest rates of excess were recorded in Budapest, Dunaújváros, Kazincbarcika, Salgótarján, and Tatabánya.

Ragweed pollen (*Ambrosia artemisiifolia*) potentially affects Hungarians who suffer from respiratory diseases or allergies (see *Figure 2*). In 2004–05 the country's ragweed cover and airborne pollen levels generally dropped, but both increased again in 2006. In 2008 the highest daily concentrations of ragweed pollen (measured in pollen grains per cubic meter) were registered in Nyíregyháza (1,015), followed by Szeged (976), Kecskemét (968), and Győr (957).

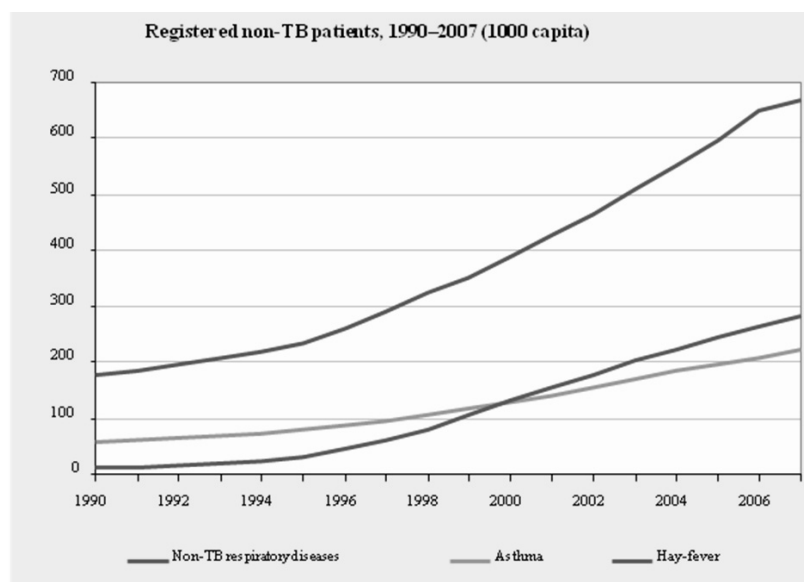


Figure 2. Environmental health

Source: Pomázi-Szabó (2008a).

With regards to climate change, the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from 115.8 million tons in 1990 to 78.6 million tons in 2006 is notable (–32%). The most significant reduction took place between 1988–1992 due to the collapse

of energy intensive industries and the restructuring of the Hungarian economy (see *Figure 3*).

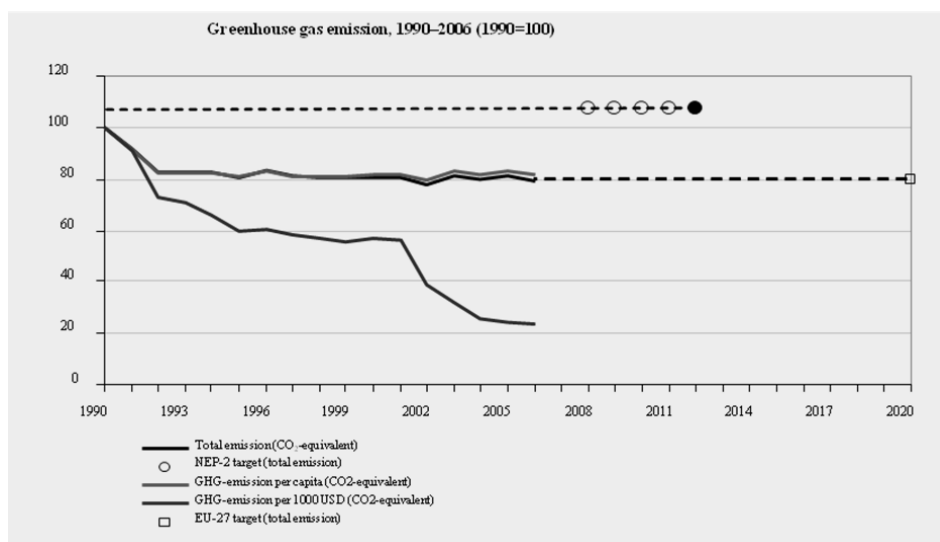


Figure 3. Greenhouse gas emission

Source: Pomázi–Szabó (2008a).

Such a considerable decrease has also come about as a result of changes in the energy generation mix (Pomázi–Szabó, 2008a). To meet future climate change challenges, the Hungarian Parliament unanimously adopted the National Climate Change Strategy in March 2008. Prior to 1990 seventeen coal-fired thermal power stations were in operation, whereas by 2008 only one remained that was exclusively coal-fired. Currently there are ten mixed-fuel power plants (using mostly natural gas, biomass and coal), four that operate on natural gas and oil, while two power plants were permanently decommissioned. Between 1998 and 2006, state expenditure for the purposes of landscape rehabilitation amounted to 20.52 billion HUF (approximately 8,000,000 EUR at current exchange rates), in the wake of terminating uranium ore mining in the Mecsek Mountains. The funding primarily covered tasks related to pollution abatement and clean-up of the site.

The natural environment suffered severely as a result of the activities of the armed forces prior to 1989. The former Soviet Army had completed their gradual withdrawal from military bases in Hungary by 1991. After their departure, 171 registered and abandoned military objects remained in the country, and Hungary

spent around 5 billion HUF on pollution abatement, site clean-up and landscape rehabilitation in the period between 1994 and 2006.

Water Pollution

About 95% of Hungary's surface waters originate abroad, and the borders of the country are crossed by 24 incoming rivers, which bring 114 cubic kilometers of water annually. The risk of surface water pollution is still grave and widespread, especially by nutrients and hazardous substances. The Danube generally has good water quality with regard to chemical pollutants, whereas the Tisza is contaminated by mercury and zinc. Bacterial contamination still prevails in large rivers (e.g., the Danube and the Tisza). Some 60% of the Danube and 90% of the Tisza are accorded 'quality class IV' (polluted) for microbiological parameters, and about 80% of the Tisza's length is accorded qualities IV and V (extremely polluted) for micro-pollutants.

Groundwater accounts for only 16% of total water abstractions, but it provides almost the entire drinking water supply of the country (40% is bank-filtered, about 10% is shallow groundwater and the rest is held in deep aquifers). Shallow groundwater is mostly affected by nitrates originating from agriculture and untreated municipal wastewater.

A national river basin management plan is being prepared in order to implement the EU Water Framework Directive. Hungary is a country prone to inundation and has the largest flood protection system in Europe (more than 4,200 kilometers). In the last decade the country has taken significant steps towards reducing its vulnerability to flood hazards, including the preparation of flood prevention and mitigation plans and the revision of land use planning and local construction regulations.

Despite the progress made in extending the water supply and improving purification technology, 23% of the drinking water (supplying 900 settlements with 2.5 million inhabitants) does not comply with EU standards for ammonium, arsenic, nitrite, fluoride, boron, iron and manganese content. The volume of municipal liquid waste produced in settlements without sewerage systems totals 100,000,000 cubic meters annually. Approximately 95% of this seeps into the soil from poorly or incorrectly constructed septic tanks. Statistics reported 4,690,000 cubic meters of collected municipal liquid waste in 2007. The regional distribution in the volumes of municipal liquid waste can be explained by the widening gap between the availability of piped drinking water and a sewerage system over the period between 1945 and 1995. The drinking water network was completed by the mid-1990s. By 2007 94.7% of dwellings were being supplied by piped water and 69.8% of them were connected to the sewerage network (see *Figure 4*). The

amount of municipal liquid waste decreased during the period between 1990 and 2007 with the extension of the sewerage system, yet certain spatial disparities continue to exist (Pomázi–Szabó, 2008a).

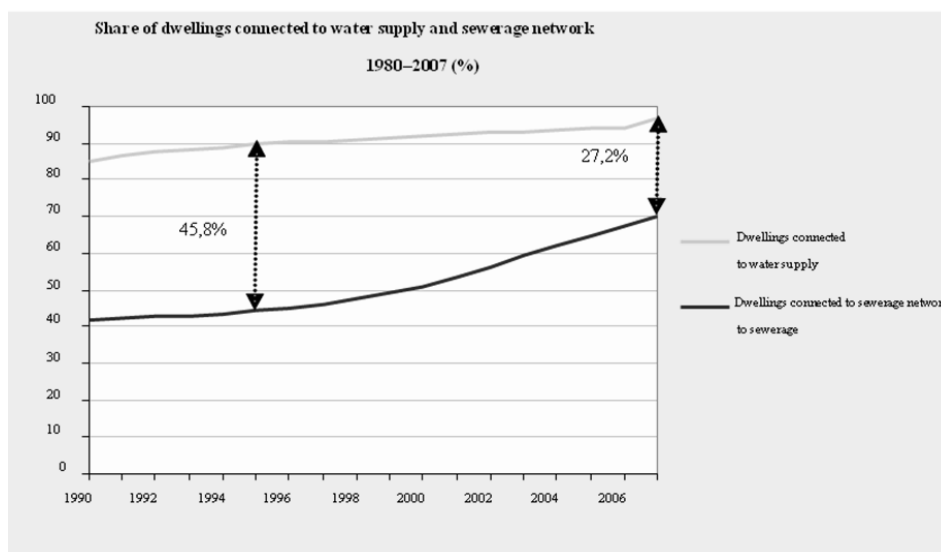


Figure 4. Water supply and sewerage

Source: Pomázi–Szabó (2008a).

Waste Management

Waste management bears a special significance as far as the quality of the environment is concerned, and in 1990 Hungary inherited severe problems in this field as well. The amount of waste being produced by industry and municipalities has been steadily decreasing since the 1980s. In 1990 this amount was 106,000,000 tons, deposited in approximately 2,700 legal landfills. There are no estimates available as to the number of illegal dumps. Due to economic restructuring, the total quantity of waste dropped to 90,000,000 tons by 1995 and 68,700,000 tons by 2000.

Industrial and commercial waste includes the waste material of various technologies and their by-products. Before 1989 the annual amount of waste from production activities reached 100,000,000 tons. By 1992 production waste totaled a yearly 80,000,000 tons, and by 1994 it had dropped to two-thirds of the 1989 quantity. Approximately 500,000,000 tons of industrial waste (99% deriving

from mining, iron ore smelting, steel manufacturing, electricity production, and construction) has been deposited in old landfills. These have been shut and are today mostly reclaimed. An estimated 7% of the waste deposited in landfills qualifies as hazardous, and 90% of it is red mud from alumina extraction, whereas the remaining 10% is drilling mud.

Present-day waste management is regulated by the Waste Management Act of 2000. The National Waste Management Plan (2003–08) sought to minimize the generation of waste, including hazardous waste. Today, of a total of 26,600,000 tons of waste material, municipal waste accounts for 4,700,000, and there are 1,360,000 million tons of hazardous waste. Industrial and commercial waste amounts to 20,500,000 tons and is properly treated.

The amount of collected municipal solid waste increased by 188% in the period between 1990 and 2006 (200.9 kilograms per person in 1990, rising to 455.3 kilograms per person in 2006), yet there are significant regional differences (see *Figure 5*). The increase can be attributed to economic restructuring and changes in the standard of living and consumer habits, as well as to the fact that most settlements (except for major cities) did not have organized refuse collection before 1990 (Pomázi–Szabó, 2008a). The annual amount of collected municipal solid waste is especially high (over 600 kilograms per person) in the counties of Komárom–Esztergom, Veszprém, and Győr–Moson–Sopron. Such high quantities occur for a variety of reasons, including changing consumer habits and changes in heating systems, since central or gas heating does not facilitate the burning of otherwise combustible waste. In small settlements, however, municipal solid waste is handled locally, which is reflected in the low quantities for Békés or Bács–Kiskun counties. The composition of municipal solid waste shows that the nationwide constituents of waste largely mirror that of Budapest. In 2007 decomposing organic matter was the highest proportion of communal solid waste (24.5%), followed by plastics (18.3%) and paper (6.5%). Metal and glass represent the lowest percentages. The total amount of recycled material maintains these proportions. In order to facilitate selective waste collection 4,000 recycling collection points and 74 waste collection yards are available in 500 settlements.

The quantity of hazardous waste has been gradually decreasing since the early 1990s due to industrial restructuring. The aluminum industry, one of the major sources of such waste, has dwindled significantly, thus the quantity of red mud as its residue has decreased too. Hazardous waste output has diminished by 49% in the period between 1996 and 2006. The most significant decrease occurred in Southern Transdanubia, as the amount of hazardous waste per person was nearly thirty times less in 2006 than in 1996. Major causes of the decrease include the closure of excessively polluting, large-scale industrial works, e.g. uranium mines and enrichment facilities, coal mines, tanneries, shoe factories and other chemical plants. Low values are typical of the Somogy and Tolna counties for similar rea-

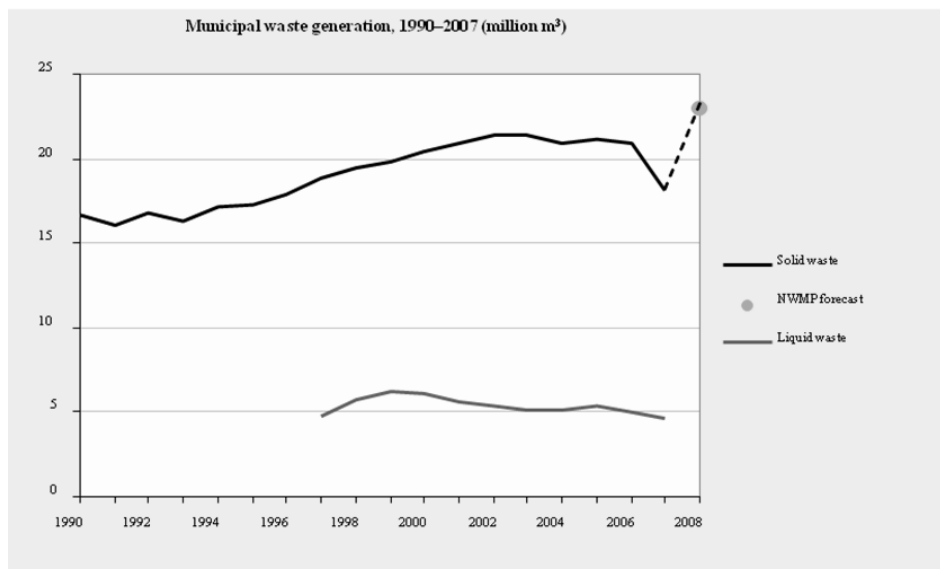


Figure 5. Municipal waste

Source: Pomázi–Szabó (2008a).

sons. The impact of industrial restructuring has resulted in an identically significant decrease in the counties of Komárom–Esztergom and Győr–Moson–Sopron. Obsolete and outdated technologies were replaced with new manufacturing plants. In contrast, the amount of hazardous waste has largely increased in Hajdú–Bihar County with the expansion of the pharmaceutical works. Out of all the counties, it is Veszprém, with its outdated industry, that was responsible for the largest amount of hazardous waste after 2006. Hazardous waste produced in 1997 barely reached 23% of the 1990 levels.

In Hungary, only the nuclear power station at Paks uses nuclear fuel for electricity generation. Annually 58.6 tons of spent nuclear fuel elements are produced here, along with approximately 100 cubic meters of solid and 250 cubic meters of liquid waste of low and intermediate levels of radioactivity. These hazardous waste materials are professionally treated (in hazardous waste incinerators, chemically safe waste dumps and temporary containers). In 1999, about 950 kilograms of chemicals per capita were produced in Hungary, one third of which was toxic. By 2006 the total quantity produced had increased by 15%, while that of toxic chemicals had grown by one third.

Environmental Conflicts and Policy

Attention was drawn to the most serious environmental conflicts in the period between 2000 and 2009 by campaigns led by environmental activists and organs of the mass media, as they ran counter to the interests of environmental protection, and this is something in which civil society has played a significant role. Among trans-boundary conflicts, the cyanide pollution of the Someş (Szamos) and Tisza rivers in Romania (by the gold mine in Baia Mare/Nagybánya) in January 2000 and the heavy metal pollution of the same rivers in March of the same year, this time within the territory of Hungary, count amongst the worst ecological disasters even to have taken place in Europe. According to measurements, some 105 to 110 tons of cyanide were released into the Someş (Szamos) and Tisza, and all living organisms were affected as a result. The estimated amount of fish stock lost reached 1,241 tons on the Hungarian sections of the two rivers.

A chronic conflict has remained outstanding for twenty years between Hungary and Slovakia over the issue of the hydroelectric power plant built at Gabčíkovo (Bős), and the withdrawal of Hungary from the project at Nagymaros, a settlement on the bend in the Danube river. The operation of the Slovakian nuclear power plant at Mochovce (Mohi) and illegal waste transportation and dumping has aroused further concern. Other issues include the illegal disposal of hazardous waste originating from Germany in the Kiskunság National Park, pollution of the River Rába (Raab) from Austria, the planning of a waste incinerator by an Austrian corporation near the Hungarian border at Heiligenkreuz (Rábakeresztúr) in Burgenland, and the opening of a gold mine in Roşia Montană (Verespatak) in Transylvania. The problems of environmental protection are further exacerbated by the large number of domestic issues, the solution of which is mainly the responsibility of the regional environmental authorities and local governments.

At present Hungarian environmental policy is based on the Environmental Act of 1995 and the 2nd National Environmental Program (NEP) for the period 2003–08, along with the 3rd NEP (2009–14), adopted by the Parliament at the end 2009. The Hungarian environmental policy planning gradually moved from the central planning system toward an integrated and participatory approach. The present political agenda is dominated by budgetary consolidation, short-term crisis management and economic convergence with the EU. The Hungarian National Sustainable Development Strategy, adopted by the Government in 2007, provides a long term vision for 2050. In 2008, two important institutions were established by Parliament to enhance the concept of sustainable development and environmental democracy: the National Sustainable Development Council and the Parliamentary Commissioner for Future Generations (acting as ombudsman). The National Sustainable Development Council was established by a resolution of the Parliament in May 2008. The Council represents a consultative and advisory body

of the Parliament on matters relating to sustainable development (mainly at strategic planning and conceptual level). The original purpose was to create a broad, multi-stakeholder consultative platform that is detached from central Government. The Council is chaired by the Speaker of Parliament, 4 co-chairs delegated by: Government, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, parliamentary opposition and civil society. Council members, of which there are 32, are delegated by parliamentary parties, the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Associations of local governments, churches, Alliance of Technology and Science Associations, Hungarian Conference of Rectors, Social and public health NGOs, Ethnic minority NGOs, Environmental NGOs, Generational NGOs, Education and Culture NGOs.

Legislative steps were taken in the early 2000s to create a position of ombudsman of future generations. In 2006 and 2007 multiparty consultations were initiated on the introduction of the ombudsman for future generations, strongly supported by the President of the Republic. The ombudsman was elected by the Parliament for six years after three failed votes in summer 2008 (the election requiring a two-third majority). The ombudsman has the right to investigate the implementation of the constitutional right of citizens to a “healthy environment” in a general manner (policy making, legislation) and in specific cases (individual complaints). He/she can intervene and suspend the execution of administrative decisions if they may lead to irreversible damage, and he/she can call on any person or organization to stop polluting illegally.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has carried out and published for the second time a comprehensive assessment of Hungarian environmental performance (OECD 2008). Over the period between 2000 and 2008 Hungary’s economy continued to grow and the population continued to decline and age. The country underwent further structural changes and integration into the European economy. Hungary acceded to the European Union in May 2004. Imports and exports of goods and services represent 78% of GDP, and more than 85% of the GDP is generated in the private sector. The country has received foreign direct investment reaching 5.4% in 2006. Fiscal consolidation and economic convergence in the EU now dominate the policy agenda.

In addition to the environmental progress between 1990 and 2000, the period also bore witness to consolidation of this progress and alignment with EU environmental *acquis communautaire* (a legal term used in the EU to refer to the total body of EU law passed thus far). But pollution, energy and resource intensities can still be improved and environmentally related health problems subsist. Overall, the road towards environmental convergence within the EU will be a long one, and only one of a number of issues (OECD, 2008). To meet these challenges, Hungary will need to strengthen its environmental efforts in infrastructure building (e.g., for waste and wastewater treatment) and implementation of environ-

mental policies, further integrate environmental concerns into economic decisions, and reinforce international cooperation on environmental issues.

Hungary has developed a comprehensive environmental planning framework, included two National Environmental Programs (for the periods between 1997 and 2002 and 2003 and 2008) and related thematic action programs, with quantitative objectives and performance indicators. Its programming framework formed the basis for the Environment and Energy Operative Program, which specifies the use of EU Funds and Hungarian matching funds for the period between 2007 and 2013 in the context of the National Development Plan. The review period was characterized by the consolidation of environmental legislation, mostly driven by EU environmental *acquis communautaire* and EU membership in May 2004. Three of the four transitional periods granted to Hungary have already expired, leaving only the one for the treatment of urban wastewater, which will last until 2015. Hungary is now also contributing to shape EU environmental policy (e.g., flood management, mining waste, chemicals, ground and bathing waters). The institutional framework for environmental management has evolved over the review period, with the gradual merger of authorities in charge of nature conservation, environmental protection and water quality and quantity management. As recommended in the first OECD review published in 2000 (OECD, 2000), enforcement activities have increased. Inspectorates have acquired both licensing and enforcement responsibilities over all environmental issues and the system sanctions for non-compliance has been significantly strengthened. Progress has been made towards the polluter pays principle and the user pays principle: the use of economic instruments has increased with the introduction of an “environmental load charge”, applied to air emissions and wastewater discharges, and the revision of product charges on packaging wastes. Hungarian firms have greatly expanded their use of environmental management systems. Eco-labeling and green public procurement have also been promoted.

However, Hungarian environmental performance is still not fully in line with OECD-Europe standards and EU targets. In particular, some positive trends of the 1990s have slowed down in recent years (e.g., energy intensity, some air pollutant emissions, waste generation) or even reversed (e.g., the use of fertilizers and pesticides). Some health indicators are also of concern. Implementation of the second National Environmental Program (2003–08) has been lagging, and Hungary appears unlikely to reach its targets in a number of fields (e.g., water quality, waste recovery) (OECD, 2008). This suggests that efforts or available resources have not been always appropriate to implement the new environmental legislation, despite important EU support. The level of PAC (pollution abatement cost) investment expenditure is the same as in the first OECD review (about 1% of GDP), and total PAC expenditure is about 1.6% of GDP. Over the review period, financial and human resource shortage has limited monitoring and enforcement capacity of

inspectorates. Regional and municipal administrations need to strengthen their environmental capacities and their expertise in economic analysis, also with a view to better absorbing EU funds for environmental projects. The effectiveness of economic instruments must be regularly assessed and charges periodically adjusted in order to provide a balanced mix of licensing regulations and economic incentives. Social affordability issues also need to be considered, in particular the interests of the poor.

Urban Sustainability: Case Study of Budapest

The phenomenon of social metabolism and its territorial presence in the cities of OECD and non-OECD countries was analyzed by Pomázi and Szabó (Pomázi–Szabó, 2006) in detail. The examination of urban metabolism requires a multidisciplinary approach, since cities as ecosystems represent complex and comprehensive systems of social, economic and environmental processes. The concept of urban metabolism can help further an understanding of the sustainable development of cities by drawing analogies with the metabolic processes of living organisms. One can discern numerous similarities between the metabolisms of biological organisms and those of cities. Cities transform incoming raw materials, fuels, food and water into the built environment, human biomass, and residuals (Decker et al., 2000). The analysis of urban metabolism practically means the quantitative exploration of inputs and outputs of energy, water, nutrients, raw materials, and wastes.

Urban metabolism can be defined as the complex total of technical, social and economic processes of cities, manifested in growth, energy production and neutralization of refuse. Until now, only a few studies were devoted to the calculation of energy flows in cities. Researchers tended to focus rather on nutrients, raw materials and the hydrological cycle. Urban metabolism is worth studying from different perspectives. First, the exploitation of resources and waste generated can be accurately measured by the features of metabolism; these can be also used as sustainability indicators. Second, the analysis of urban metabolism makes it possible to measure resource efficiency and explore cyclical flows of resources. In addition, this provides a good analytical framework for an account of urban stocks and throughputs and for a better understanding of critical processes (increasing or decreasing ground water resources, heat islands, long term impacts of hazardous construction materials, etc.).

Several factors influence urban metabolism. The urban structure, which included population density and morphology and transport technology, can influence energy and material flow. In the case of cities with large areas and low population densities per capita, the energy intensity of transport is much higher in com-

parison with a compact city. Climate also has a great impact on urban metabolism, since heating energy demand is much bigger in a winter under continental climate than in a mediterranean city. The technology in use, the share of vegetation, energy prices, and the age and quality of the buildings also influence the energy use of cities.

The city studies generally show that metabolism is increasing. This is natural in absolute terms, when the population of cities is also growing. At the same time the per capita values are increasing, too. An American engineer, Abel Wolman, regarded as the father of urban metabolism, described the phenomenon of urban metabolism with reference to the example of a hypothetical city of 1,000,000 inhabitants (Wolman, 1965). According to Wolman, "The metabolism of a city can be defined as all the materials and commodities needed to sustain the city's inhabitants at home, at work and at play". One of Wolman's later followers, Thomas Graedel, defined cities as living organisms: "Cities can be regarded as organisms, and analyzed as such, in an attempt to improve their current environmental performance and long-term sustainability" (Graedel, 1999).

Main Features of Budapest

Hungary's capital, Budapest, together with its surroundings, represents a highly developed metropolitan region in Central Europe where the technical and economic advances have made it possible to support some 2,500,000 people (25% of the country's total population) on a land area of about 2,500 square kilometers. This population depends on a continuous supply of materials, energy and information in everyday function. Economic activities are highly concentrated in Budapest, producing roughly 40% of the national Gross Domestic Product.

Budapest was originally created out of the unification of the settlements of Buda, Óbuda, and Pest in 1873. In the new era of construction (the second half of the 19th century), considerable construction was undertaken, including the construction of housing in the form of apartment blocks, bridges, modern forms of local transportation, streets (first cobblestone and later asphalt), new water and sewer systems, and later gas and electricity systems. In 1950 a change took place that was decisive from a governmental standpoint. On the first of the year, the surrounding cities and other settlements were connected to Budapest, and Greater Budapest came into existence, with 22 districts (currently 23) in place of the old 10, later 14. With the attachment of seven towns and 16 villages to the former Budapest, its area enlarged from 207 square kilometers to 525 square kilometers (an increase of 154%), the number of its inhabitants increased from 1,050,000 to 1,600,000 (an increase of 52%), and the number of its districts grew from 14 to 22 (an increase of 57%). Thus it became the seventh metropolis of Europe of its time.

In 2007, the main social, economic and environmental indicators of Budapest were as follows:

Total population: 1,700,000 million;
Population density: 3,238 per square kilometer;
GDP: 40% of the country's total GDP;
Passenger cars: 35 per 100 capita;
Green areas: 9.9 square meters per capita;
Annual municipal waste generation: 630 kilograms per capita;
Annual CO₂ emissions: 5.7 tons per capita.

Main Economic, Social and Environmental Trends in Budapest

The population of Greater Budapest increased from 1,600,000 in the early 1950s to 2,060,000 in 1980. From 1980 onwards, the population has been dwindling due to the decreasing birth rate on the one hand, and migration to surrounding settlements (suburbanization) on the other. In 2006, the population dropped to 82.5% of its level of 1980. While 19.2% of the country's total population lived in the capital in 1980, only 16.8% of the population of Hungary counted as residents of Budapest in 2006. During this time period, the housing also changed significantly. According to official statistics, there were 536 thousand dwellings in 1960. This number has been increasing continuously, although the pace of the construction of panel blocks of flats begun in the 1960s (1.6% average increase per year) slowed to an annual 0.5% after 1990. Between 1960 and 1990, housing construction took place at a pace that the city had never experienced before.

This increase was characterized by the fact that the city's population per dwelling was 3.3 capita in 1960, while it was less than two capita in 2006. It is also significant that one in five dwellings built in the country during the 1980s was located in Budapest. Panel blocks of flats were planned to last some 30 to 70 years, so the first ones are approaching the end of their life span and require complete renovation or even demolition. In recognition of this situation, one can expect the demolition waste stream to increase significantly in the coming decades (Pomázi–Szabó, 2008b).

Ownership and use of passenger cars expanded from 39,000 in 1965 to 596,000 in 2005, an increase of fifteen-fold. However, as a per capita figure, ownership of passenger cars still hardly exceeds half of the OECD average (35 versus 52). During these four decades, there was a roughly 350% enlargement in the amount of buses, while use of trucks increased by almost three-fold. During the half century covered by the research, inventories of durable goods including refrigerators, washing machines, televisions, etc., grew considerably, and major

transformations occurred in their structure. Since elements of these appliances sooner or later will emerge on the output side of material flows as waste streams and can cause serious environmental consequences, their investigation is indispensable for mapping the overall picture of material flows. However, a detailed analysis of household statistics is required in order to understand the process in depth. According to the data of 2005, the per capita municipal solid waste generation was about 630 kilograms compared with the national average of 460 kilograms and the OECD average of 560 kilograms.

Data for 2005 indicate that hardly half of the population of Budapest was connected to wastewater treatment plants. At the same time, this figure barely approached 35% at the national level, while the OECD average was about 70%. However, a significant increase is probable in the share of the population connected to wastewater treatment plants (WWTP) if a new wastewater treatment plant now under construction, with high purification capacity, is installed.

As far as the emissions of air pollutants are concerned, both Budapest and country data are below, sometimes well below, the OECD average in the case of sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides and carbon dioxide. The gap is very significant for sulfur dioxide. While the national average is near the OECD average, per capita emissions of Budapest are one fifth and one sixth of their values, respectively. In the case of nitrogen oxides and carbon dioxide due to transport volume and concentration, the emissions of the capital exceed the national levels. However, they are only about half of the OECD average.

Evolution of Urban Metabolism in Historical Perspective for 1955–2005

In the longitudinal investigation of the urban metabolism of Budapest the following components were used on the input side: total water consumption, total (natural) gas consumption, total electricity consumption, total quantity of heat, and food consumption. On the output side of urban metabolism data concerning the following components were available for longer periods of time: total wastewater, total municipal solid waste collected, and emissions of air pollutants (CO₂, SO₂, NO_x, CO and particulate matter). On the basis of the study of the total resource use of Budapest covering half a century, three main periods could be distinguished. Concerning the input side of resource efficiency, the first period lasted from 1955 to 1980, which can be considered as the extensive socialist development phase of the metropolis. In this era, energy and water use, as well as food consumption, increased at a significant pace. The next shorter period between 1980 and 1990 can be regarded as a pre-transition period, characterized by temporary stagnation of resource use. The third period, which began in 1990, is distinguished by a robust improvement in resource efficiency (Pomázi–Szabó, 2008b).

This development of resource productivity can be explained by the notable decrease of the population, the transformation of the consumption patterns of the city, and a more consequent application of the “user pays” principle. The latter convincingly shows, for example, that water fees increased by 250% over the course of the last decade, and as a consequence, the consumption habits of households altered rapidly (water consumption decreased by about one fourth). Considering the output side of resource efficiency, a five-year shift can be discerned, compared with the input side. The output side can be divided into the following periods: the first (extensive period) lasted from 1955 to 1975; the second, the era of stagnation or pre-transition period, was between 1975 and 1985, while the third period (the transition period) is still going on, although not so “spectacularly” as in the case of the input side.

The annual quantity of collected municipal solid waste increased by more than 500% (from 120 to 630 kilograms per capita) between 1955 and 2005. This trend unambiguously shows the specific features of the “throw away” consumption society of Budapest. The change in the composition of waste between 1990 and 2005 illustrates the previously mentioned alteration of consumption patterns. At the beginning of the 1990s the share of plastics in waste was about 5%, however, it has been significantly increasing since 1997, and its share approached 17% in 2005 (Pomázi–Szabó, 2008b).

One of the major measuring tools of urban metabolism is the monitoring of waste flows and the diversion of waste streams from final disposal and incineration, namely the prevention and reduction of waste generation, as well as the reuse of waste. “3R” policies (reduce, reuse, and recycle) initiated by Japan and confirmed at several G8 summits can be used at the city level as well, and should be regarded as an important part of sustainable city planning (Namiki, 2008).

Resource-related Targets of the Budapest Environmental Program of 2008–13

In 2007, the Budapest City Council adopted the Budapest Environmental Program for the period between 2008 and 2013. It includes several measures aiming at a more efficient use of natural resources. In the field of energy management, the target was set to reduce total energy consumption of Budapest by 10% by 2013. To this end, the insulation of buildings as well as individual heat metering of blocks of flats and regulation of heating systems will be continued. A 10% reduction should also be reached in energy consumption of the city-owned public institutions. The share of the use of renewable energy sources will reach 5% in total energy consumption.

Green areas play a very important role in the life of a metropolis, since they can reduce significantly the risk of the emergence of a city heat island, for example. According to the Budapest Environmental Program, green area coverage will be maintained at its 2005 level, and the per capita figure will exceed the 2005 level (6.2 square meters). The indicative target to reduce per capita solid municipal waste generation is 540 kilograms and 500 kilograms by 2013 and 2020, respectively (it was 580 kilograms in 2006). The share of selective waste collection should be improved by another 5%, while that of biologically degradable organic waste should be increased from 4% to 25% and that of packaging waste from 50% to 60% by 2013.

Unfortunately, the Budapest Environmental Program does not set up indicative targets for wastewater treatment, although it is one of the most significant environmental problems in the capital of Hungary. In Budapest, untreated wastewater represents a high proportion (only 51% of the wastewater is treated biologically), and almost half of the wastewater is canalized directly into the Danube as a major sink.

Conclusions

Since the change of regimes in Central Europe, numerous significant changes have been made in the context of furthering sustainable development, both on the level of policy and in means and consistency of implementation. Integration into the EU has been one of the driving forces of change, but has brought with it additional challenges on the local, national, and international levels. Maintaining balance between environmental measures and the perceived needs of local populations in the midst of global economic crisis will remain a significant challenge, but carefully tailored policies and several successes of the recent past offer reason for cautious optimism.

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READING THE PLAINS AND THE LAKE: LANDSCAPE IN HUNGARIAN TRAVEL LITERATURE

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Travel writing has enjoyed continuous success since the Renaissance, and has been an important factor in shaping perceptions of individual and group identities. Especially during the second half of the eighteenth century and throughout the nineteenth century travelogues constituted an influential part of the discourse on culture, and helped, through their descriptions of the foreign and a reaffirmation of what is “us”, establish the ideology of nationalism. Works by British authors such as William Wordsworth and the travel writings of Hungarian poet Sándor Petőfi and politician, essayist, and novelist József Eötvös offer examples of different strategies of using landscape as means of affirming contours of national identity.

Keywords: travel writing, landscape, regionalism, cultural travel

Human engagement with the surrounding world, originally at least, is deeply rooted in our primary senses, and as we hang on to this notion of a primordial relationship with the environment we tend to forget that the nature we are experiencing and communicating nowadays is in fact (and for a considerable time has been) a cultural product and our relationship with the environment is based on codes and expectations handed down to us through a long line of cultural transmission. The literary accounts commonly grouped under the umbrella term “travel literature” represent an important part of this transmission process. They are relatively simple narratives that follow a spatial outline, a route, and tell tales of journeys. On the surface, travel narratives serve a double purpose: they record events in the life of the traveler, forming autobiographical building blocks, and they also provide much-needed information for both the fellow traveler and those who stay at home, but remain curious, i.e., the reading public. They are also part of an ecologically oriented discourse: description, assessment and interpretation of the sites visited contribute to the understanding of place that remains one of the foremost goals of a broadly conceived ecological inquiry. Of course, travel writing is first and foremost a kind of literature, a genre that has its own history and theory, its historical periods of ascension, when it was one of the most common forms of literary pro-

duction, along with periods when its popularity diminished, all the way up to the present day, when as a genre it has almost vanished. It is safe to say that the kind of travel writing we discuss in academic settings is a thing of the past, although not because there is no interest in what it does, but because technology has changed radically and there is no reason, assuming financial resources are available, not to produce something similar either as a documentary for television channels specializing in travel or, if resources are limited, as a travel blog. And of course, all modern guidebooks are descendents of tour books, so in an altered format and without the heavy cultural ballast travel writing is alive and well, and, along with cookbooks, constitutes one of the backbones of commercial publishing.

The success of travel narratives is easily explained by pointing out that they satisfy two very strong human drives: curiosity and storytelling. This would place travel literature in the proximity of the novel, the most successful narrative form in Western literature. In fact, it is possible to argue that travel writing, with its clear and simple basic structure of departure, travel and arrival, is a sort of elementary blueprint for storytelling within the category of longer prose. The novel has had a long and varied history, and has undergone transformations at various levels, but *Robinson Crusoe*, *Don Quixote*, *Gulliver's Travels* or *A Sentimental Journey Through France and Italy* (to name four of the most famous novels in the Western tradition) all show parallels with travel writing. On a more philosophical level travel can be considered an epistemological metaphor for the acquisition of knowledge, and can also serve as a model for human life in general, which is itself often described as a journey. So there are plenty of good reasons for the popularity and the sheer volume of travel writing produced in Europe since the Renaissance. As a genre, it caters to a basic need for storytelling and learning, while (and this, of course, should not be forgotten) also fulfilling a practical role, one that in today's world has largely been replaced by magazines, TV programs and, most notably, the internet.

Travel literature as a genre rests on a few presumptions, and although the theoretical literature regarding what constitutes the genre is relatively short and is usually buried under and among historical considerations there are a few factors that are accepted as common.¹ Travelogues describe a person's journey, recount an actual, real event, are written by the person traveling, and are usually, although not necessarily, written in the first person. These essential features then lead to a number of specific characteristics, which, in turn, should guide the investigation of travel literature by asking the right questions. At the heart of all this is the relationship of the traveling individual to the outside world, to the subject that is studied, described and reconstructed in the context of the narrative. The most common form of travel is a journey away from home, away from what is well-known and customary, in other words away from the familiar. This puts the traveler into a vulnerable but at the same time exciting position. The journey is a challenge that

forces the traveler to confront what he knows about himself or herself and about the world, while also adapting to a changing situation. On a psychological level a travel narrative engages the reader because it involves shifts in how humans construct their identity, how the Self is built and tested through its encounters with the Other. The pattern of identity construction, subtle seismic shifts of the land on which they travel, and reconstruction is usually a part of the accounts of traveling individuals, even if it is not brought to the forefront. As we all know from experience, traveling with others can build very strong bonds, and I would argue that this is the side effect of the heightened psychological state that travel so often involves.

In addition to the considerable role travel can play in the development of an individual's character, it has also lasting effects on the communities of both travelers and hosts. It is through interaction that communities develop a sense of unity and devise strategies to deal with those who are not part of their group, something that humans can do both strikingly well and strikingly badly. And it is through interaction with members of different linguistic, religious and cultural groups that group identities are developed and enforced. But just as human identities are not fixed, so do group identities undergo shift and change, the processes of which are highly visible in the history of travel narratives. It is no wonder, then, that the high point of travel writing coincides with the period of emerging nationalism, with the formation of what have famously been dubbed "imagined communities".² Travelogues explore the habits of other nations, describe customs, point out the familiar and the strange, while at the same time encouraging members of the reading community to develop a stronger sense of who they are. The description and construction of national character is a central concern of travel writing, especially in the nineteenth century, and it unfolds in both settings: domestically and abroad. Being abroad helped British authors on the Grand Tour, for example, to determine what made the British different from their neighbors on the continent, while domestic travel was preoccupied with the question of what made the British who they were (or, at the very least, who they portrayed themselves to be). Later on we shall see how Hungarian poet Sándor Petőfi consciously built a unique Hungarian sense of place in his travel writings, with a focal point that is deliberately different from that encountered in most European travelogues. But first we should take a look at a chapter in the history of English travel writing in order to have a sense of comparison with the later Hungarian examples.

Alongside the rich travel narratives of 18th century English literature recounting journeys abroad (notable examples include William Dampier's *A New Voyage Round the World*, 1697; Henry Fielding's *Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon*, 1755; James Boswell's *Account of Corsica*, 1768; and Mungo Park's *Travels in the Interior Districts of Africa*, 1799), one finds an ever increasing number of literary works narrating experiences of domestic travel and explorations of the British

Isles. And while Scotland was quite remote from London, a journey to Edinburgh, for example, still meant exploration of the local or semi-local, furthering the ability to develop a better sense of community. In Thomas Gray's famous account, *Journal in the Lakes* (1775) and its most famous sequel, William Wordsworth's *Guide to the Lakes* (1835), attention is turned towards Cumbria, a relatively small region in the northwest of Britain with a distinctive landscape of small lakes. The change of focus was partially historical or political. Travel in Europe had become more perilous around the turn of the century and in the first decades of the nineteenth century, and relationships between England and France were strained. But it was also, to a great extent, an expression of an evolving British national identity, a discourse that centered around English singularity or originality. This, of course, coincides with a gradually growing middle-class, the primary vehicle of nationalism in all of Europe. This continuously developing reading public was simply more interested in buying individual accounts of travels that also provided them with practical information (Wordsworth's *Guide*, for example, has an itinerary that lists the walking distances between the lakes and the inns and public houses along the way) than in investing in pricey volumes of accounts describing travels around the world that had primarily a scientific purpose and strove only secondarily to entertain.

One should keep in mind that this shift took place at the end or soon after the long 18th century, when the British had had time to refine the art of continental travel through the obligatory Grand Tour.³ This institutionalized form of cultural travel helped to establish the travel narrative as one of the most common literary genres, and, more importantly, it instilled a strong sensitivity towards the experience of landscape. Ultimately it led to the development of picturesque aesthetics, which constituted a complex mixture of visual references, philosophical ideas and an interest in "enhancements", the eighteenth century expression for garden or estate redesign. The picturesque is not simply the transitional period between the aesthetics of Sentimentalism and Romanticism. It is also the aesthetic mother tongue of Romantic poets, who were born at the start of the picturesque movement. It is impossible to understand the Romantic landscape poem without an understanding of picturesque concepts. The first major picturesque author, the Reverend William Gilpin, offers as pertinent an introduction to Wordsworth as does Milton. Gilpin should also be mentioned for his series of *Observations* (influential domestic travelogues that started the aesthetic discourse of the picturesque), since their constant concern is the proper appreciation of landscape: how to look at a site in order to maximize the value of the experience and how to find the best sites over the course of an excursion. This entails an objectification of the visual components of the location, which leads to the formalized visual rhetoric of the picturesque (which, as its critics are keen to point out, can soon become mechanical), but it also helps to crystallize the view according to which landscape is a vehicle

for human expression, and nature a huge canvas for illustrations. The next step is the Romantic landscape poem, in which the natural environment functions as an outward representation of the rapidly inflating Self. Wordsworth's *The Prelude* is an autobiographical mega-poem, while it is also, in great part, a poem on landscape. The growth of a poet's mind is repeatedly associated with places in nature. These places carry the ballast of meaning and serve as mnemonic devices, since they help to reconstruct (or rather construct within the poetic realm of the poem) whatever can be reconstructed from a former Self. What is particularly pertinent in the context of the present discussion is the concept or rather the possibility of mental constructions through the evocation of landscapes or elements of landscape. This is something that we should be able to observe in the travel writings of Petőfi, although in a different context and with a different purpose.

Hungarian literary history usually tells a tale of belatedness, adaptation and transformation that is further complicated by the experience of linguistic isolation. As members of the periphery of European cultural production, Hungarian authors typically exhibit a mixture of longing and singularity: a longing to adopt the practices of the cultural center and a strong sense of singularity, a uniqueness that can't be properly understood from the outside. The question of cultural and national identity and the construction of a national image are recurring questions for Hungarian intellectuals. In the 18th century there emerged a strong need to explain what Hungary and the Hungarians were. Travel literature seemed to be a good medium in which to ponder these questions, and as a result travel literature written in Hungarian is fairly close to the European standard of production in this genre. The volume of travel accounts is of course relatively low, but the genre was easily integrated into Hungarian literary discourse, from the 1620 publication of Márton Szepsi Csombor's *Europica varietas* all the way to the travel diaries of István Széchenyi and beyond. A few examples of the genre are travelogues describing the Hungarian search for the nation's origins and other ventures Eastward, into the past, such as the journey of Antal Reguly, which lead to the first ethnographic description of the Mansi people. Others are travelogues focusing on journeys through Europe, such as the diaries of Miklós Wesselényi or the account of József Irinyi. Finally there were also accounts of domestic travel that promote self-reflection. (It is worth mentioning as a side note that the famous journey of Sándor Kőrösi Csoma, of which there is sadly no first-hand account, ended not with the discovery of the birthplace of the Hungarian nation, but the founding of Tibetology.) Geographical space is temporalised in these travel narratives on an east/west axis. To the east lies the semi-mythical past, while to the west the traveler can find the future.⁴ Széchenyi's primary concern during his trip to Britain was to learn about improvements in engineering, the development of public space, and transportation technologies that might offer the promise of a better future for his country. So, while the conditions of the travel experience were undeniably

worse (for many foreign travelers Hungary was too far, and perhaps even less safe than other European destinations, the roads were often quite bad, and the coach service was underdeveloped), the description of travel was in many ways similar to that of the rest of Europe.

How do Sándor Petőfi's travel writings, the *Úti jegyzetek* (Travel Notes) and the *Úti levelek Kerényi Frigyeshez* (Travel Letters to Frigyes Kerényi), fit into this genre?⁵ They were written immediately after his trips to Upper and Eastern Hungary and Transylvania in 1845 and 1847 and record with considerable autobiographical precision important moments in the life of the young (he was 22 years old in 1845), highly successful, controversial and popular poet. (It is worth noting that Petőfi was the first Hungarian poet to attempt to make a living entirely from writing.) The letters are fictitious, and from the beginning were written for publication, a common literary format at the time. These writings mark a strong departure from the literary norm of their day in their tone and style. Petőfi didn't just present a fresh voice; he was quite radical in his direct and bold manner of addressing the reader and using a colloquial tone throughout his travel accounts. In the case of *Úti levelek*, the epistolary structure helps considerably. A private letter to a good friend might employ a less formal style, but these writings were never intended for anybody other than the curious reading public. The first-person narrative, which addresses the reader directly, breaks with the conventional distance between writer and reader, though the real novelty of Petőfi's travel writings lies in their primary objective of building the private mythology of the poet, something we might now call a public relations campaign. Petőfi understood the power of celebrity, both as a financial tool and as a means of changing aesthetic perceptions. So his travel accounts are first and foremost about the public persona he is promoting; the question of landscape is only secondary. However, once one considers the question of landscape in these writings, one sees a conscious and concentrated effort to alter the common association of sublimity with mountains (the higher, the better) and portray the flat Alföld (the low-lying Hungarian plain) as the most Hungarian of all landscapes. If viewed from the perspective of a picturesque sensibility, the plains lack visual interest, since there is no ruggedness, no juxtaposition, no texture, only perfectly flat grassland. Petőfi was well aware of this and still claims the plains as the center of Hungarian spatial consciousness, a status it has basically retained ever since. In terms of cultural geography an excursion to Hortobágy is a visit to the center of Hungarianness, for foreign and domestic tourists alike. Petőfi was consciously building a group identity out of spatial metaphors that run counter to the aesthetic norm, are easily identifiable and clearly different from the descriptions of the Alps given by English tourists of the Grand Tour. He maintains his admiration for the *puszta* (plains) throughout his *Notes* and *Letters*, and often attacks mountain-mythology directly, although at certain Transylvanian locations during his second trip (Nyirestető, for example)

he tends to forget his mission and expresses his admiration for higher geological formations. In summary, in his travel writings Petőfi is engaged in creating mythologies on two distinct levels: one for a heightened sense of Self that explicitly proclaims himself as the center of the universe and filters all events and reflections of an emotionally charged and anthropomorphic landscape for the purpose of building a private mythology (mostly centered around his beloved and his recent marriage), and another at the level of national identity, as reflected in the native landscape.

A different kind of travel writing emerges at the end of the 19th century in the work of the noted lawyer and journalist, Károly Eötvös, who was famous for having successfully defended the Jews accused in the 1882–83 Tiszaeszlár blood libel, a highly publicized event in Hungarian legal history. On the surface, his *Balatoni utazás* (Journey around Balaton) and *A balatoni utazás vége* (The End of the Journey around Balaton)⁶ are accounts of former travels around his native region, and might suggest comparisons with the tradition of guidebooks to the Lake region in Britain. However, it is soon apparent that his accounts are quite different. They are written in a different style and serve a different purpose. Eötvös is a true regionalist, with an extensive knowledge of local lore, but his real interest is in the preservation of a bygone period. In his work the geographical locations are given only brief discussion. They serve more as backdrops for countless stories of people representative of the region and, most importantly, of a romanticized past. The obvious explanation for this preservationist drive would be the sense that the culture and traditions of 19th century Hungary were swiftly vanishing (the turn of the century was undoubtedly one of the most socially active periods in Hungarian history, a period that bore witness to an unprecedented wave of developments). In order to rescue both the common and the extraordinary and memorialize typical figures and famous events, Eötvös employs a narrative technique that was in itself something of an anachronism: the anecdote. The anecdote is essentially an oral form that partially depends on voice, intonation and timing, in short on the delivery of the story, and if translated into writing it works best in short literary formats, such as short stories. Despite this, it has become an important structural element in Hungarian literature, and has influenced writers from Mór Jókai to Péter Esterházy, especially Kálmán Mikszáth and Gyula Krúdy. Eötvös integrates it into travel literature, producing a written journey that tells less about the environment and more about the habits and customs of the people once inhabiting the landscape. His admiration for Lake Balaton and its beauties is evident throughout, yet unlike in the case of Wordsworth, for instance, his landscape is not so much a geographical location to be explored and described, not so much a vehicle for defining identity or the object of an aesthetically guided reflection with the possibility of reconstructing a former Self, as it is a backdrop for storytelling.

Both the plains of Petőfi and the lake of Eötvös have become central in the spatial identity of Hungarian culture. They function not simply as two of several regions. This is not necessarily because of the works of these authors (although in the case of Petőfi it is possible to argue that his work had a determinative influence), but it is clear that literary accounts, along with visual representations, are able to determine or to alter the image of a region and contribute to the shaping of a national identity as it is expressed through place. The examples of Wordsworth, Petőfi and Eötvös illustrate that landscape can serve different roles in national literary canons, with very different outcomes, but in each instance landscape is far more than just setting. It figures as one of the main characters of narrative, and should be considered as such.

The *liber mundi*, the metaphor of the world as a book that is waiting to be read, is part of the Judeo-Christian tradition (with its famous expression in the opening verses of the gospel of John), and it has been interpreted in various ways, but for members of the literary profession it serves as a sort of assertion that their profession is of special value. If textual interpretation is understood as an endeavor that offers to reveal more than simply the contents of books, the hermeneutics of the literary historian acquires particular importance. There might also be a very literal application of the *liber mundi*. We should read the world and the environment as they appear in texts, while also reading (that is interpreting) the ways in which texts within a tradition have shaped our understanding of place.

Notes

- ¹ For example see: Korte, Barbara (2000) *English Travel Writing from Pilgrimage to Postcolonial Explorations* (New York: Macmillan); Chard, Chloe (1999) *Pleasure and Guilt on the Grand Tour: Travel Writing and Imaginative Geography 1600–1830* (Manchester–New York: Manchester University Press), and Viviès, Jean (2002) *English Travel Narratives in the Eighteenth Century: Exploring Genres* (Aldershot: Ashgate).
For a specifically Eastern European perspective see Bracewell, Wendy and Alex Drace-Francis (Eds) (2008) *Under Eastern Eyes: A Comparative Introduction to East European Travel Writing on Europe* (Budapest: Central European University Press).
- ² See Anderson, Benedict (1991) *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso).
- ³ For details see Chard's *Pleasure and Guilt on the Grand Tour*.
- ⁴ See Irina V. Popova-Nowak 'The Odyssey of National Discovery: Hungarians in Hungary and Abroad, 1750–1850' in Bracewell, Wendy and Alex Drace-Francis (eds) *Under Eastern Eyes*.
- ⁵ Both can be read through the Hungarian Electronic Library (Magyar Elektronikus Könyvtár): <http://mek.niif.hu/06100/06125/html/index.htm>
- ⁶ These are commonly printed together. The last edition is from 1982, in the *Magyar Hírmondó* series of the Magvető publishing house, edited by Károly Szalay.

LOCAL SOVIETS AND COUNCILS IN THE EX-SOCIALIST EUROPEAN STATES WITH SPECIAL REGARD TO HUNGARY (1950–1990)

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The scholarly study and analysis of the Hungarian council system (1950–90) as a system of institutions and structure of public administration is a novel challenge rarely attempted to date in the field of the history of public administration. Although the period of 40 years under study is still something of a grey area for legal historians, there are already researchers and experts who venture into this territory. In addition to offering a historical overview, the present paper also analyses the life and operation of public administration in a specific historical and legal period from legal and administrative aspects. The council system, although undoubtedly still a subject of much debate and criticism, was definitely a possible form of public administration, and today constitutes an integral part of the history of the 20th century.

Keywords: constitutional history, legal history, history of public administration, Hungary 1949–1990, Central Europe, soviet law

The Place of Soviets in the State of the Soviet Union

When the tsarist police opened fire on the crowd demonstrating in Saint Petersburg on January 9th, 1905, nobody could have thought that not only would a new revolution soon start in Russia, but the beginnings of the soviets (*советы*), the new units of future regional public administration, would also begin to develop. Initially, they emerged without any intention to establish a state or to exercise power. At the time of the strikes held on May 1st, the workers set up strike committees organized by the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, or to be more precise inspired by its Bolshevik wing. The first of these was established in a textile industry plant in Ivanovo-Voznesensk. Similar workers' soviets were then organized one after the other in industrial centers.¹

Meanwhile, the first State Duma (1905–06) did not regard the workers' councils as possible organs of public administration at all, and neither did the Russian Fundamental Law, promulgated on April 23, 1906, consider them as constitu-

tional state-forming factors.² It is important to remark that the first workers' soviets were originally organized in Russia not as units of public administration but as organizations inspired by revolutionary hopes, which also carried out *de facto* local tasks of public administration until the arrival of the tsarist forces. However, the memory of these early soviets was preserved among the workers: the financial and personal losses and deprivation suffered in World War I resulted in another strike in Saint Petersburg on February 23rd (March 8th by the Russian calendar), 1917, on the International Women's Day, which once again led to a revolution, this time under organized control.³

The workers there established the soviets, the revolutionary institutions of power, early in the first days. The novelty of the soviets, in comparison with those of 1905, was that similar organizations were soon elected in most of the plants, and city soviets were also established to govern their activities. The (city) soviet of Saint Petersburg held its first session on the evening of February 27th. The Saint Petersburg soviet tried to control the city as a revolutionary governmental organ.⁴ Although the capital was practically under its control, on March 2nd power was handed over to the provisional bourgeois government led by A. F. Kerensky and G. Y. Lvov, in spite of the protests of the Bolsheviks.⁵

Nonetheless, the revolutionary events soon spread to the provinces, and workers' and peasants' soviets sprang up across the country. The situation of so-called dual power arose in this way: the dual state power of the bourgeois forces and the soviets, followed by the struggle between the two. Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, who was aware of the provisional nature of this historic situation, forecast the future in his *April Theses*: the new Russia would be "not a parliamentary republic but a republic of soviets of workers, agricultural laborers and peasants' deputies throughout the country, from top to bottom". In the spring of 1917 both the city soviets, which were elected on the basis of plant and professional principles, and the soviets of peasant deputies and their committees, which were based primarily on the regional principle, were established. Later regional and national centers were organized on the basis of these soviets.⁶ This was done in order to ensure something that was later laid down in the declaration issued by the Second All-Russian Congress, one day after the "socialist revolution", on October 26: "from now on all power is vested with the soviets".⁷

It should also be mentioned that a decree was passed by the All-Russian Central Executive Committee on the right to recall the deputies, a characteristic of the soviet-type system of representation, as early as November 21st (December 4th by the Russian calendar). This right applied not only to the members of the Constituent Assembly, but also to organs of representation elected in cities and in *zemstvos*, the forms of local government that had existed in Russia since the state reforms under Alexander II.⁸

Finally, the people's commissar for interior affairs issued a general call for the transformation of local public administration on December 24th, 1917 (January 6th, 1918 by the Russian calendar). It confirmed that

the organs of local power are the soviets, to which all the institutions of administration, economy, finance and culture-education shall subject themselves. The organization of central and local power in this manner is merely an organizational expression and reinforcement of the political fact that power in the country rests with the proletariat and semi-proletariat.

All the organs of local administration were to be replaced by regional, provincial and district soviets, as well as county and rural soviets in order to cover the entire territory of the country. It was thought that "the coherent, all-homogeneous organization – the Republic of the Soviets" could be accomplished in this manner.⁹

At the same time the council of people's commissars also provided for the legal status of soviets. They were declared to be entirely independent in local matters, but it was added that in the course of the fulfillment of their tasks they had to proceed pursuant to the resolutions of the superior soviet. A high-priority function was the execution of the legal acts of the central power (the council of people's commissars and the central executive committee) and the dissolution of organizations which were considered counter-revolutionary. As regards the internal structure of the soviets, the executive committee and the presidency were mentioned.¹⁰

The development of power exercised by the soviets could have been impeded by actually holding a Constituent Assembly. It was therefore dissolved on the second day of its convocation, on January 6th, 1918.¹¹ In any case, the traditional parliamentary form of government was declared to have outlived its purpose and to be absolutely incompatible with the aim of achieving socialism, as

not national institutions, but only class institutions (such as the soviets) were capable of overcoming the resistance of the propertied classes and of laying the foundations of socialist society.¹²

Finally, on July 10th, 1918 the first Soviet constitution described the public law organization of Soviet Russia as an already existing organization of regional and state organs of power.¹³ Its fundamental proposition was the establishment of a dictatorship of the urban and rural proletariat and the poorest peasantry for the purpose of creating a world without either a division into classes or a state of autocracy (Sections 9 and 10). In this system of public law the soviets were organized on a regional basis and operated in a hierarchical system. On a higher level congresses were recognized as organs of representation, which could be rural,

county, provincial and regional. Their members were elected indirectly through the soviets of deputies. The latter category included the elected organs of cities and other settlements. In these the deputies' mandate lasted for three months.

In addition to the soviet bodies, executive committees also operated both on a higher, regional level (congress) and on a settlement level. Congresses were convoked by the executive committees at least twice a year for regions, every three months for provinces and counties, and once a month for rural districts. If the congresses were not in session, their scope of authority belonged to the executive committees. The system operated in a similar way in city and settlement soviets: executive organs were elected from among the members by the soviets of deputies in order to ensure continuous operation (Sections 53–60). In addition to soviets, special sections of administration had to be organized for the purpose of performing duties (Sections 60–63).

Theoretically, the right to vote was enjoyed by the following citizens of both sexes over the age of 18: all those who acquired the means of livelihood through labor that was seen as productive and useful to society and employed no help for the purpose of making profits; soldiers of the army and navy of the soviets; and citizens of the two preceding categories who in any degree lost their capacity to work. At the same time, the constitution expressly excluded several social strata from exercising the right to vote. These strata included big capitalists, big landowners and private merchants, employees and agents of the former tsarist police and gendarme corps, the members of the House of Romanov and clergy of all denominations (Sections 64–65).

This institutional system of the soviet-type public administration did not change essentially in the subsequent constitutions, either. It represented a special version of regional level state administration with mixed elements of the autonomy of self-government and normative central state control. After the establishment of the Soviet Union (December 30, 1922), the second Soviet constitution was promulgated on January 31, 1924. With regard to content, it only contained provisions concerning the operation of the federal state organs and the legal status of the member republics.¹⁴ The institutions of local and regional soviets were not mentioned.

The 1936 Constitution,¹⁵ which necessarily served as a model for people's democracies in Eastern-Central Europe after 1945, defined the public law framework of soviets as units of public administration in the chapter entitled "The local organs of state authority". According to this, the organs of state authority in territories, regions, autonomous regions, areas, districts, cities and rural localities were the soviets of working people's deputies. The deputies were elected by the working people for a term of two years. Their scope of authority was determined by the federal laws of the Soviet Union and by the member republics' own laws.

The executive and operative organs of the soviets continued to be the executive committees, which consisted of a chairman, vice-chairmen, a secretary and members. The executive organs of the soviets were in double subordination. They were accountable both to the soviet which had elected them and to the executive committee of the respective superior soviet (Articles 94–101). In this way, in 1950 approximately 83,200 local soviets with almost 1.5 million local deputies operated in the Soviet Union.¹⁶

The last, 1977 Soviet federal constitution¹⁷ was considerably more developed and organized in structure than the earlier ones, and the legal status of the soviets was also regulated in more detail. In Chapter 12 this constitution also emphasized the principle that the soviets of people's deputies constituted a single system of bodies of state authority. This comprised all the soviets of people's deputies: the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, the Supreme Soviets of Union Republics, the Supreme Soviets of Autonomous Republics, the Soviets of People's Deputies of Territories and Regions, the Soviets of People's Deputies of Autonomous Regions and Autonomous Areas, and the Soviets of People's Deputies of districts, cities, city districts, settlements and villages. The deputies of the supreme soviets received their mandate for a term of five years, while local soviets were elected for two and a half years. The soviets of people's deputies set up standing commissions, executive-administrative bodies and people's control bodies (Articles 89–92). The executive bodies of soviets were still the executive committees, which had to report on their work at least once a year to the soviets that elected them, to the executive committee of the superior soviet, and to the citizens (Articles 149, 150).¹⁸

Elections were held *pro forma* on the basis of universal, equal, and direct suffrage by secret ballot, and the elected deputies could be instructed. These instructions had to be considered both by the soviets and by the people's deputies in them during their work, in accordance with the state interest of the time. Deputies, who did not justify the confidence of their constituents, could be recalled at any time by decision of a majority of the electors (Articles 95–107).

Characteristics of Local Administration in European People's Democracies

During the five years following World War II, state systems called people's democracy and regarded ideologically as "the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry" were established in Central and Southern European states belonging to the Soviet sphere of interest. This led to the spread of public administration of the soviet and workers' council type, and the *mutatis mutandis* adoption of the soviet model. Thus on the Eastern side of the iron curtain

council systems developed that bore many similarities, partly did away with the national self-governments of the bourgeois era, and operated not as representative bodies but with the participation of the deputies of mass organizations, which were like people's fronts in character.¹⁹

Albania

The Constituent Assembly elections were held in Albania on December 2nd, 1945. The convention assembled on January 11th, 1946 and adopted a decision to transform the state into a people's republic. Soon after, on March 14th, the first Albanian constitution was adopted, while the second constitution was passed after several amendments on December 28th, 1976.²⁰

According to the 1976 Constitution,²¹ the units of Albanian regional public administration were people's councils (*këshill popullor*), which directed all social life in the political, economic, and social-cultural fields and the socialist judicial order and reconciled local interests with the general interests of the state. The people's councils were elected for a term of three years from among the candidates of the people's front (Democratic Front of Albania).

The people's council adopted the local financial plan and budget. From its members it elected the executive committee and the commissions of the council. It directed and controlled the activity of the people's councils at lower levels, and in order to achieve this it issued ordinances and decisions within its competences. A higher people's council could dissolve a lower people's council, order a new election, or abrogate its unlawful or irregular acts (Articles 92–95). The members of the people's councils enjoyed immunity within the territorial unit under the administration of the people's council.

The executive committee was the executive and administrative organ of the people's council. Between sessions of the people's council the executive committee exercised the rights and duties of the people's council, and it had to render account of its activity and report on the implementation of the decisions of the people's council. Albanian executive committees also operated in double subordination. They were dependent on the people's council on the one hand and on the next higher administrative executive organ on the other. The work of the people's council was assisted by specialized organs (Articles 92–100).

Bulgaria

The first elections after World War II were held in November, 1945, and the Great People's Assembly, which carried out constitutional tasks, was summoned.

This activity was a relatively long process in Bulgaria, as the first constitution was adopted only on December 4th, 1947. The second one was promulgated much later, on May 18th, 1971.²²

Pursuant to the 1971 Constitution,²³ the territory of the People's Republic of Bulgaria was divided into municipalities, capital districts and districts. People's councils (*народни съвети*) were the organs of state authority and people's self-government. In principle, their members were driven by the interests of the entire nation as such, by the interests of districts and municipalities as well as by the interests of the population in the constituency. The councils implemented the policy of the state in their own area of competence, in addition to which they made decisions on issues of local interest. In the course of their work, people's councils both passed and enforced resolutions. They controlled the development of the economic, social-health, public service, and cultural and educational conditions in their area. It was laid down as a principle that this activity would be performed with the consideration of all national and local interests and through the sectoral and regional planning of the complex development of the respective unit of public administration.

As part of their legislative activity, people's councils issued resolutions, decrees, regulations and directives. Sessions were held at least four times a year by district councils and at least six times a year by municipal and capital district councils. The Constitution also provided for the possibility to hold a referendum on issues of major significance.

The councils could elect and dissolve executive committees (*извршни одбори*) as operative organs, in addition to which they set up standing and temporary committees as well as specialized administrative organs. The executive committees of higher councils had the right to suspend, or even to abrogate, the implementation of the unlawful or irregular acts and measures of lower-level councils. In any case, higher people's councils had the right to abrogate the legal acts of lower councils (Articles 109–124).

Czechoslovakia

In Czechoslovakia, the Constituent National Assembly was elected on May 26th, 1946. It finally adopted the new constitution on May 9th, 1948, at the same time repealing the 1920 constitution and generally all the rules of law which were in conflict with the new constitution and with the spirit of people's democracy. This fundamental source of law was later amended by several so-called constitutional laws until July 11th, 1960, when a new constitution was adopted by the National Assembly. The latter was modified to a greater extent by Constitutional Act No. 143/1968, which transformed the socialist republic from a unitarian state into

a federation. This was supplemented by Constitutional Act No 144/1968, which contained provisions on the status of ethnic minorities. These three rules of law together formed the constitution of Czechoslovakia.²⁴

According to the 1960 Constitution,²⁵ the organs of state authority and administration were regional, district, and community (city) national committees (*národní výbory*), the members (representatives) of which were elected by the people initially for four and later for five years. The representatives could be recalled and were at the same time accountable to their electors. The national committees were meant to fulfill their duties with the continuous and active participation of the workers. Representatives took an oath and pledged to comply with the people's will at the first session of the national committee.

Economic, cultural, health and social development was controlled, organized and ensured according to plan by the national committees in their respective area. Their primary duties included the satisfaction of the workers' material and cultural needs, the protection of socialist property, and the "socialist order" of society, as well as the implementation of the acts and the enforcement of the rights of socialist organizations. In the course of their work, they had to comply with the development plan of the national economy. They had to manage the material and financial means necessary for the realization of the planned tasks in a responsible manner.

The national committees observed the principle that the interests of the whole nation of the Socialist Republic of Czechoslovakia came before partial and local interests, and that through their overall activity they taught the citizens to fulfill their obligations towards society and the state in a conscious and voluntary way. For this purpose, the committees could pass decrees and set up a council, specialized committees and other organs. The council (*rada*) coordinated the work of the other bodies and institutions of the national committee. The members of the council were elected by the national committee from among its own members. The specialized committees were initiating, supervising and executive bodies, organized according to sectors of administration. Higher-level national committees exercised control over lower-level ones, while being obliged to respect their competences and responsibilities to the fullest extent. At the same time, higher-level committees had the right to abrogate the unlawful resolutions of their lower-level counterparts (Articles 86–96).

The German Democratic Republic

The problems faced by Germany after World War II, namely its division into zones of occupation and the suspension of its sovereignty, were settled in the spirit of the Cold War, and the country, or rather German countries, became an expres-

sion of the global duality of democratic capitalist states and socialist people's democracies. Accordingly, the German Democratic Republic was founded on October 7th, 1949 out of the Soviet zone of occupation (i.e. the five eastern provinces: Saxony, Brandenburg, Mecklenburg, Saxony-Anhalt and Thuringia). The constitution proclaimed then declared the country to be the socialist state of workers and peasants. The second East-German constitution was passed on March 26th, 1968, and it was confirmed with a referendum on April 6th.²⁶

In the GDR, pursuant to the 1968 Constitution,²⁷ locally operating, elected bodies of state authority were called local people's representations (*örtliche Volksvertretungen*). These were established in administrative districts, rural counties, cities, city districts, communes and associations of communes. Their activity was primarily intended to augment and protect socialist property, continuously improve working and living conditions, promote the social and cultural lives of citizens and their communities, increase their knowledge of the socialist state and its laws, ensure law and order, strengthen socialist legitimacy, and protect civil rights.

Local people's representations made resolutions which had a binding force not only on their bodies and institutions but also on other people's representations, communes and citizens in their area. As an executive body, a council (*Rat*) and standing committees were elected, mostly from among the deputies, for performing the tasks. Thus in the system of the public administration of the GDR, contrary to the usual terminology the council meant not the elected representative body itself, but the executive committee. Consequently, it was responsible in its activities to the local people's representation and was subordinated to the higher council. The standing committees (as not only deputies could be members) made it possible for citizens to participate in the preparation and implementation of local resolutions. Local people's representations could form associations for the fulfillment of their duties (Articles 81–84).

Poland

The Polish elections for the Constituent National Assembly were held on January 19th, 1947. They resulted in the victory of the Democratic Bloc (the people's front). An act referred to as the "Small Constitution", or *Mala Konstytucja*, concerning the supreme organs of the republic was passed by the *Sejm* (the Polish Parliament) on February 19th, 1947. A separate act on the citizens' fundamental rights was passed on February 22nd. In 1950 an independent act was adopted on national councils, the organs of local power, as well as on the organization of the administration of justice. The uniform constitution was formulated only on July

22nd, 1952. After several amendments, the quasi new text of the constitution in a uniform structure was promulgated on February 10th, 1976.²⁸

In accordance with the 1976 Constitution,²⁹ national councils (*radly narodowe*) were allegedly the working people's local organs of state authority in large villages, towns, districts of larger cities, and voivodeships. These expressed the workers' will and, in accordance with the intention of the legislators, promoted constructive initiatives in order to enhance the nation's strength and prosperity and develop its culture. They directed social, economic and cultural development in the areas proper to them and also exerted an influence on all public administrative and economic units. They saw to satisfying the population's needs, fought against all manifestations of absolutism and bureaucracy suffered by the citizenry, and organized the institutions of social control. The national councils had the right to determine the social-economic plan and budget of the voivodeship, town, district or large village on the basis of the proposals of the local organs of public administration.

The corporate activity of the national councils was exercised in sessions, which were organized and prepared for by the presidency. The voivods or town presidents or town leaders, district leaders and large village leaders were specifically one-person executive and operative bodies. At the same time, the voivods and the presidents of towns with voivodeship rank represented the government in their respective area of competence. They were all accountable to the national council operating on the given level. The latter were also assisted in their duties by various standing committees.

The national council had the right to abrogate a lower-level national council's legal act if it was deemed unlawful or incompatible with the political line of the state (Articles 43–54).

Romania

The first Romanian elections were held in 1948, following the proclamation of the people's republic. The Great National Assembly, which was convened at the time, adopted the first socialist constitution on April 13th, 1948. This was followed by the adoption of another constitution on September 24th, 1952, which was in effect until 1965. On August 21st, 1965 the third Romanian constitution was ratified, the most important amendment of which was the introduction of the institution of the President of the Republic in 1974.³⁰

Pursuant to the last fundamental law of the Socialist Republic of Romania,³¹ people's councils (*consilii populare*) functioned as the local bodies of state authority charged with management of the local activities of public administration.

Within this framework, they ensured economic, social, cultural, and city policing and community management development, as well as the protection of socialist property, the protection of the citizens' civil rights, and the maintenance of law and order. Their principal duties included accepting the local economic plan and budget, giving their exoneration to closed accounts, and electing and possibly recalling the executive committee. Given the hierarchical nature of the system, higher-level people's councils supervised the resolutions of the lower-level councils, and it was also the right of the people's councils to elect and recall judges, people's assessors, and county public prosecutors. The councils consisted of representatives (*reprezentanți*), who had a mandate for a term of five years in the counties and in Bucharest and a term of two and a half years in cities, communes, municipalities and the districts of Bucharest.

The executive committees and executive offices (*comitaturi executive, birouri executive*) were local operative bodies subordinated to the councils. They had a general scope of authority in the regional units of public administration where the people's council had been elected. The former operated in the counties, in Bucharest, in its districts and in the municipalities, while the latter worked in cities and communes. As part of their main tasks, they executed acts and law-decrees, the decrees of the Council of Ministers, and the other regulations of the higher bodies, as well as the resolutions of the people's council. They prepared the drafts of the local economic plans and budgets and also implemented them after their acceptance by the council. Moreover, they supervised the work of the executive committees or executive offices of the people's council subordinated to the people's council which had elected them.

These executive bodies were also entitled to make resolutions as part of their activities. They were responsible to the people's council, to the higher executive committee or office of the people's council, and ultimately to the Council of Ministers, both as a body and individually. They were assisted in their work by specialized organs of administration (Articles 86–100).

Yugoslavia

In Yugoslavia, where monarchy had been abolished *de facto*, the Provisional People's Assembly (*Skupština*), which also carried out constitutional tasks, assembled as early as August, 1945 and declared the country a democratic, federal state. The actual Constituent Assembly was opened on November 29th, 1945 and it *de jure* decided on the declaration of the people's republic. The first constitution was adopted on January 30th, 1946, the second on April 7th, 1963 and the third on February 21st, 1974.³²

The 1974 Constitution,³³ which was unusually lengthy even by West European standards (consisting of 406 Articles), regarded regional administration as a form of self-management (*samoupravljanje*). This was due to the workers and citizens in settlements, in parts thereof or in several combined settlements. Self-management was interpreted as a collective right and obligation for the purpose of enforcing common interests and satisfying needs. Local communities had to be formed with local statutes and by-laws had to be adopted, which, among others, laid down the rights and obligations of administrative bodies and individual organs.

Communes (*opštine*) represented the basic self-managing social-political community. The communities carried out the tasks of exercising power and administering other social issues, unless otherwise provided for by the Constitution. Their tasks specifically included creating the conditions necessary for the productive lives of workers and citizens and the fulfillment of the material, social, cultural and other common needs in terms of self-management. They ensured the enforcement and protection of human and civil liberties, rights and obligations and the realization of the equality of nations and nationalities. The financial management of the communes was independent and there were possibilities for local referenda.

The principal organs of the self-managing activity of social-political communities were the representative bodies (*predstavnička tela*). These were characteristic of the basic self-managing communities organized on a personal, corporate, and regional basis, and therefore of local communes as well. These bodies were composed of delegates, who were elected by the workers for a term of four years by direct, secret ballot. Delegates could also be recalled. Delegates were nominated in the framework of a front-like organization called the Socialist Alliance of the Working People. The members of higher community representative bodies were decided upon by the councils of the representative bodies of communes on the basis of a ticket.

Various councils (*veća*) were formed within the representative bodies. They made resolutions independently, with equal rights or at the joint session of all the councils in matters belonging to their scope of authority. Such organs included the associated council of labor, the council of local communities, the council of communes, and the council of social policy. Thus essentially a specific, dual-structure system of local representation was realized in Yugoslavia, following the organization of the federative People's Assembly. The tasks of the executive organ were exercised by the executive council (*izvršno veće*), which was accountable to the representative body. The officers of the self-managing organs were also elected for a term of four years, and they could be re-elected once (Articles 114–151).

Fundamental Institutions of the Council System on the Example of Hungary

After 1945, the soviet-type council system and the regional and national representation established on its basis constituted a new alternative to the institution of popular representation in the socialist countries. In both cases the corporate bodies (which were generally referred to as people's councils, or local people's representations in the GDR, national committees in Czechoslovakia and representative bodies in Yugoslavia) were comprised not of representatives who had been elected in accordance with the rules of plural party systems, but deputies who were elected through social-political mass organizations (people's fronts). The reason for this was simply that, with the exception of the GDR and Poland, there was no multiparty system in these countries,³⁴ yet political systems of a state party character also tried to give the impression that the elections expressed the true will of the people, so candidates were nominated not by the party itself but formally by an organ which had the character of a people's front³⁵ but which was essentially the equivalent of the party.

The legal status of the members of the councils elected in this way also differed substantially from that of the representatives of local governments in the bourgeois or contemporary sense. First of all, with the exception of Czechoslovakia and Romania, they were usually not called representatives but people's deputies. As a rule, the mandate of the deputy as a representative was not independent. In principle they could be recalled after their election in each country. This greatly limited their freedom to act. Furthermore, they were dependent on the political leadership. At the same time a hidden right of instruction was also provided for the electors through the obligation to report regularly (imperative-limitative mandate). This, in itself, would not have been a problem but for the fact that in reality the deputies' work was appraised by the party, which also exercised the right of recall.³⁶

The operative and executive bodies of the councils were collegial bodies called executive committees. A different term (council) was used in the GDR and Czechoslovakia, but these should not be mistaken for representative bodies either. The only exception was Poland, where these duties were carried out by voivods, town presidents, district leaders and large village leaders as one-person bodies. In each country the committees were elected indirectly, that is by the council from among its own members, generally on the basis of the nomination of the *Hazafias Népfront* (Patriotic People's Front). As a rule, the executive committees were under double subordination. They were responsible both to the council which had elected them and to the executive committee of the superior council body. As a result, they did not always have autonomy to make decisions even in local matters.

Their resolutions could be abrogated at any time by the regional bodies higher up in the hierarchy.³⁷ Although most constitutions tried to mitigate this by stating that control could be exercised only in the case of a violation of the law, considerations of expediency were not uncommon. For instance, the Polish constitution laid down *ex pressis verbis* that the superior council could abrogate the resolution of a lower council body if it was deemed incompatible with the political line of the state, and the latter was determined by the state party at all times.

Thus it is obvious that no vertical division of the branches of power existed. Furthermore, the states of the people's democracies expressly denied their *raison d'être*. The system of state institutions was regarded as a unified and undivided system in which control was exercised by the working people and peasants through the state party, which was the sole oracle of social interests. At most, the differentiation of state tasks was recognized.³⁸ It follows from the foregoing that even in the 1970s and 1980s councils were not real organs of self-government, in spite of the fact that the states tried to maintain this fiction by emphasizing the principle of democratic centralism.³⁹ This did not mean that every decision was made centrally, on a national level (there were local, politically neutral matters), only that the possibility of such in the sense of public law was provided in each issue. This revealed the true totalitarian nature of the system.

As people's organs, the councils were part of this system. They adopted several functions and solutions from the despised, so-called bourgeois law, at the same time adding to it the ideology of misinterpreted Marxism, which never made mention of a *de facto* dictatorial and totalitarian state in its utopia. Councils were defined as the regional institutions of central, unified state power, which, in addition to managing local matters, invariably enforced the political aims and principles formulated by higher state and non-state organs.⁴⁰ It is essential, as we stand at the close of the first decade of the 21st century, to further our understanding of the system of councils and its complex operation. Political slogans notwithstanding, it constituted an unavoidable part of the 20th century history of Eastern-Central Europe immediately preceding the present constitutional systems.⁴¹

Of the countries under discussion here, Hungary was the only one to ratify only one constitution during the era of people's democracy, namely Act XX of 1949. The most extensive amendment was made by the National Assembly (Parliament) in 1972. Another interesting fact is that formally it is still in force, although the content was fundamentally changed in 1989.⁴²

In terms of public administration, the territory of the People's Republic of Hungary was divided into counties (*megyék*), rural districts (*járások*), cities and communities, of which rural districts were abolished entirely in 1984. County, rural district, city, community and city district councils were delegated by the Constitution as the local organs of state authority. The members of the local councils were elected by the eligible voters in the given area for a different term in each cy-

cle. The detailed rules pertaining to local councils (*helyi tanácsok*) were laid down by separate acts in Hungary, too. Among these, the first council act was passed by Parliament in 1950, the second in 1954 and the third in 1971.⁴³ The greatest novelty in the Act of 1971 was that the self-administrative function of the councils was emphasized, at least in principle.

Scope of Authority and Competence of the Council

The scope of authority of the councils widened and developed throughout the entire period under discussion, both in practice and on the level of normativity, and the Council Act of 1971 defined them in an extremely detailed manner. The rules of authority were usually not listed or repeated in the council's organizational rules. Instead, in these matters reference was usually made to superior rules of law.

Accordingly, at the beginning of the era, the responsibilities of the councils included in particular the management of local economic, social and cultural activities, the execution of acts and higher decrees, the direction and control over subordinate organs of state authority and state administration, the promotion of the protection of state order and public property, the protection of the workers' (the population's) rights, local economic plans and budgets and the supervision of their execution, the direction and control of the work of local economic companies, the support of the workers' (the population's) cooperatives, the election and possibly the recall of the members of the executive committee, the setting up of council commissions and the judgment of legal remedies filed against the resolutions of the executive committee (Article 27 of the Council Act of 1950).

The second council act, while maintaining these stipulations, supplemented the list. Thus several responsibilities were added to the scope of activity of the councils, including tasks relating to health care and social matters, the establishment of companies and organs to address local needs, the monitoring and appraisal of the operation of economic and other organs not subordinated to the councils, the election of the judges and lay assessors of courts, the protection of socialist rule of law and the consolidation of civil discipline, the protection of civil constitutional rights, and the enforcement of the rights of nationalities (Article 6 of the Council Act of 1954).

The third council act, while observing the new, local-government style objectives of the system,⁴⁴ added further tasks to the authority of the councils, including tasks related to regional and settlement development, the provision and supervision of housing, and communal and commercial supply. The settlement arrangement plan was drawn up and supply institutions could be established, including budgetary firms. It was a significant step forward that the rule of law laid down the

possibility, at least in theory, to manage the available financial means independently, within the framework of the accepted budget. The right to establish several institutions was extended by the right to organize institutions supplying the catchment area of the settlement. The town council was entitled to set up institutions of secondary education or institutions providing medical or social care (Articles 9–18 of the Council Act of 1971).

Lawmaking constituted an essential authorization awarded by all the acts to the councils. They were authorized to pass council decrees and resolutions and granted the right to review the resolutions of executive committees. For instance, during the 40 years of its existence, the council of Szeged passed 154 decrees. The most prolific period was the last decade of the communist era.⁴⁵

The two manners of exercising authority, direct and transferable powers, were both included in all three acts. The latter manner merits particular attention from a legal perspective for the reason that the council, provided that a rule of law⁴⁶ allowed it, could delegate the exercise of some of its powers to the executive committee, and in relation to this it was entitled to instruct the committee, or to abrogate or alter its resolutions. At the same time, certain powers could not be delegated. These included the establishment and the direction of the council organization, the drawing up of the development programs, the medium-term financial plan and budget, the defining of the main directions of the activity of the local council, the approval of the settlement arrangement plan, the execution of elections and appointments belonging to the council's scope of authority, the passing of council decrees and the right to elect lay assessors⁴⁷ (Articles 4 and 5 of the Organizational and Operational Rules of 1984; hereinafter referred to as OOR).⁴⁸

The regional competence of the council covered its own administrative area, or given villages (so-called peri-urban villages) in specifically defined cases.

Legal Status of Council Members

The council was a corporate body in character. Its members obtained their assignment as deputies (*küldöttek*) through elections. In terms of public law, deputies cannot be equated with representatives. The most important difference lay in the dependent, imperative nature of a deputy's mandate. A deputy could be instructed or even recalled by his/her electors. Thus in principle, after being elected, deputies legally depended on their electors, or in reality rather on the party. The rules of the elections were laid down in various acts or law-decrees, and also in the supplementary decrees of the Council of Ministers (government) and in the resolutions of the Presidential Council of the People's Republic,⁴⁹ as a new rule of law was adopted by Parliament or by the Presidential Council prior to almost every council election.⁵⁰

In accordance with these rules, elections for council members were held in 1950, 1954, 1958, 1962, 1967, 1971, 1973, 1980, and 1985. The mandate of the last elected council was prolonged by Act XXXIV of 1990 until September 23rd, 1990, that is until the actual change-over to the system of local governments. In the course of the democratic transformation of 1989/90, councils were abolished and replaced with autonomous local governments by Act LXV of 1990. The introduction of the Act on Local Governments labeled the council system as a “dead end in history”, notwithstanding the fact that this piece of legislation was drawn up on the basis of the draft of the fourth council act. While it has been and continues to be frequently criticized, it is still in effect.⁵¹

The council members' work was regarded by the second and the third council acts as an honorable public activity based on the electors' confidence. The council members' mandate, which could be won through nomination by the Patriotic People's Front⁵² and election by the citizens, was partly dependent in nature, as they could not be instructed in particular cases but could, in principle, be recalled by their electors. The number of the town council members changed regularly in each election. In Szeged, for example, their number was the highest between 1954 and 1958 (185 members) and the lowest between 1967 and 1971 (87 members).

The council members' rights included the following: the right to participate in lawmaking (council decrees, resolutions), the right to hold any council office and to participate in the work of the commissions, the right to represent the council, the right to put forward issues and proposals of public interest, the right to convene the meeting of the local electors and to give opinion on the drafts of the decisions of specialized organs of administration if they had a major impact on living conditions, rights and obligations of the citizens living in their constituency (Article 37 of the Council Act of 1971, Article 7 of Law-Decree 23 of 1983, Article 40 of OOR 1984).

At the same time, council members were required to represent the interests of the residents in their constituencies, take an active part in the work of the council, conduct themselves in a manner worthy of public activity and the electors' confidence, contribute to the strengthening of state and work discipline, protect the purity of public life and the property of the state, ensure the enforcement of the rights of the citizenry, observe the rules of legality and “socialist coexistence” in an exemplary manner, maintain direct and regular contact with the population, and enforce the assignments of the electors. Each council member had to report to his/her electors concerning the fulfillment of his/her obligations and the work performed at least once a year, and they cooperated with the residential and street committees⁵³ set up in their constituencies (Article 38 of the Council Act of 1971, Articles 40–41 of the OOR 1984). Another major entitlement of the council members was the right to submit interpellations at council meetings (Article 29 of OOR 1984).

The council members' activity can be reconstructed on the basis of the minutes taken at council meetings. While in the 1950s the speeches made at the meetings almost exclusively approved, welcomed and supported everything, later, particularly from the time of the New Economic Mechanism onwards,⁵⁴ an activity of greater merit unfolded. The members could voice their constructive opinions within reasonable limits. In Szeged, this culminated in the recall of the executive committee in 1988. Incidentally, the entire era was characterized by stereotyped speeches which were comprised of clichés and reminisced about the "liturgical" events of the past. Such notable events were particularly the arrival of the Soviet army in 1944/45, which was obligatorily referred to as liberation in Hungary, and the seizure of power by the Soviets in 1917 in Russia. Further frequently mentioned topics included the glorification of the Soviet Union, Stalin and subsequent leaders, references to the social class war, the fight against exploitation, criticism of the capitalist world economy, the personality cult, and the praise of the Hungarian party leaders, and the repeatedly emphasized development and superiority of socialism. Karl Marx's name was often cited in the service of these aims, notwithstanding the fact that the realities of socialist rule in Hungary had little to do with true Marxism.⁵⁵

The more educated members of the councils and the council organization analyzed and assessed the activity of the organs of the Szeged town council more and more frequently in the last two decades leading up to 1989/90, since an effort was always made to include, in addition to the children of members of the working class, a few intellectuals or possibly scholars (scientists) among the council members.

Corporate Activity of the Council

The council held meetings as required, but not fewer than four times a year. For example, during the 40 years of its existence, the council of Szeged held 173 ordinary and 34 extraordinary meetings.⁵⁶

The council meetings were convened by the executive committee on the basis of the pre-determined annual work schedule, but it was also possible to convene a meeting if proposed by one-fourth of the council members or if ordered by the Council of Ministers (government) or the executive committee of the superior county council. Each council meeting was held according to the agenda accepted by those present. The draft thereof was prepared by the executive committee, with the consideration of the proposals made by the city committee of the party and the county council of trade unions. The council members could also make proposals concerning the subject of the agenda (Article 17 of OOR 1984).

As a rule, the meetings were public, but a closed meeting could also be ordered, especially when cases of incompatibility were discussed. The meeting was

opened by the council president (the chairman of the executive committee) and the meeting was usually presided over by him/her as well.

Customarily, first the reports on the implementation of previously passed resolutions were heard, put forward and presented by the council president (the chairman of the executive committee). Thereafter, the agenda was decided and each item was discussed. The rapporteur presented the written submission and the proposal for the resolution and then answered the questions, remarks and motions for amendment put to him/her during the debate. If no one else requested to speak, the chairman brought the question to a vote, which could be made with a 'yes', 'no' or abstention. In case of a tie vote, the chairman's vote was decisive. The voting was normally open; however, a secret ballot was held when the council president (the chairman of the executive committee), his/her deputy and the members of the executive committee were elected, or when cases concerning the incompatibility of council members were decided. Normally, a resolution could be passed with the majority vote of the council members present. In the case of a qualified vote, the legal norm was deemed to be adopted with the supporting votes of the majority of all the council members. Minutes were taken and the decrees and resolutions adopted were published first in extracts, then from 1971 *in extenso* in the official paper of the council (Articles 23–28, 30, 33 of OOR 1984).

The adoption of decrees was one of the major council rights. This could happen on the basis of a superior rule of law or a measure of a superior organ, or it could be initiated by the council itself with a view to settling local social conditions. When decrees affecting a wide range of the population were prepared, the draft was presented in consultation centers⁵⁷ as well. In consequence of the hierarchical nature of the council system,⁵⁸ the decree adopted had to be submitted to the executive committee of the superior council for legal supervision and approval (Article 36 of OOR 1984).

Council Commissions

In order to fulfill its tasks more efficiently, the council set up permanent and temporary commissions. The commissions were established and their members were elected by the statutory meeting of the council, but it could decide to set up further commissions or terminate or restructure the existing ones. As of 1971, it was compulsory to set up a rules commission and a finance commission, in addition to which the establishment of other commissions could also be provided for by the organizational rules (Article 65 of OOR 1984).

The tasks of these organs varied in character, but they included making proposals, offering opinions, and preparation, supervision and coordination. In the course of addressing these tasks, they participated in formulating and executing

council plans and tasks, gave opinions concerning proposals of great importance, supervised the work and development of the different specialized organs and economic council companies, as well as the activity of non-council organs. They also organized the participation of the population in carrying out council tasks (Articles 56–59 of the Council Act of 1971).

The members of the commission could be nominated by the city committee of the Patriotic People's Front or by any council member, after which they and their chairmen were elected by the council itself. Each commission consisted of at least three members. The chairman and the majority of the members had to be council members. Other members could be nominated by local social and state organs or cooperatives, too. The commissions operated in a collegial form, and sub-commissions could also be set up to address certain matters (Articles 72–74 of OOR 1984).

The concrete tasks of the commissions were laid down in the organizational and operational rules. According to the OOR of 1984, the following commissions operated in Szeged: rules commission, auditing commission, city development and technical commission, production and supply commission, commission of culture and youth policy, commission of health and social policy and commission of law and administration (Article 70 of OOR 1984). In 1984 a peri-urban commission was set up by the Szeged council and by the councils of the neighboring settlements with a view to planned and efficient cooperation.

The Executive Committee and its Functionaries

The duties of the executive committee of the council (*végrehajtó bizottság*) as a general executive and operative organ⁵⁹ included the implementation of rules of law, the harmonized enforcement of national and local public interests, the preparation of council meetings and the organization of the implementation of its decrees, the direction of specialized organs, the supervision of council companies, the direction of administrative council institutions and cooperation with non-council organs. This committee worked in double subordination. On the one hand, it was subordinated to the council which had elected it, and on the other hand to the superior executive committee. Its members were the chairman of the executive committee, who as of 1971 bore the title council president, his/her deputies (deputy council presidents), members elected by the council from among its own members, and the secretary of the committee. The members were elected after being nominated by the Patriotic People's Front (Article 17 of the Council Act of 1950, Article 31 of the Council Act of 1954, Article 41 of the Council Act of 1971). In Szeged the executive committee of the council was made up of some 11-15 members (the number varied in different cycles).

The major duties of the executive committee were to prepare for the council meetings, control and organize the implementation of the council decrees and resolutions, and assist the work of the council members and its commissions. As part of its special powers, it coordinated and supervised the activity of the specialized organs and ensured professional and quick administration. It called the leaders of specialized organs to account. It could annul or modify any regulation issued by the specialized organs if it violated a rule of law or the perceived or alleged interests of the population. Finally, it made decisions in matters of appointment concerning these organs. Moreover, it also appointed the leaders of the council companies and institutions. It could submit a proposal to the superior executive committee (e.g., in the case of Szeged to the executive committee of Csongrád county) and to the superior specialized organs (Articles 41–43 of the Council Act of 1971). Its assignment lasted for the same duration of time as that of the council that had elected it.

The executive committee held its meetings as scheduled in the work plan, but at least once a month. The annual work plan prepared by the secretary contained the date of the meetings, the planned agenda and deadlines, the annual control plan and also individually determined action plans. The meetings were convened by the chairman of the committee (or council president as of 1971). However, it also had to be convened if proposed by the council itself, ordered by the executive committee of the superior council or the Council of Ministers, or initiated by one third of its members.

The meetings of the committee were not public. Its members, the local and superior committee of the party, the executive committee of the county council, the leader of the city public prosecutor's office and the police, the chairman of the local committee of the Patriotic People's Front and finally the presidents of the councils (chairmen of the executive committees) of the neighboring settlements had to be invited for the discussion of matters concerning them. In matters related to their duties, the chairmen of the council commissions and the leaders of the specialized organs were also entitled to be invited and attend (Articles 48–54 of OOR 1984).

The meeting of the executive committee was presided over by the chairman (chairman of the executive committee, council president), or if unable to attend, by his/her deputy. Generally, the president's account was discussed at the beginning of the meeting. It included the presidential decisions made between two meetings and the reasons underlying them, the report on the tasks performed and the manner of their execution (and in the case of any failure to complete a task, the reason for this failure and the person responsible), and other major measures and public events. The rules pertaining to council meetings were to be applied *mutatis mutandis* to the order of the meetings. The majority of the members had to be present for the meeting to have a quorum. The resolutions were passed with the major-

ity decision of the members present. Minutes were taken, which had to be submitted to the executive committee of the superior council and the Council Office of the Council of Ministers⁶⁰ (Articles 55–57 of OOR 1984).

The executive committee was led by the chairman of the executive committee (or council president), who at the same time was the highest ranking functionary in the entire council apparatus. The third council act abolished the term chairman of the executive committee and introduced the term council president.⁶¹ This expressed the legal status of the position more closely, and at the same time it also reflected the name adopted in public use at the time. A council president could only be a confidant of the party.

The chairman (president) was responsible for the preparation of the council meetings via the secretary of the executive committee. He/she presided over them, organized the implementation of the resolutions and decrees, and represented the council. He/she coordinated and assisted the work of council commissions, supervised the execution of the proposals made by the commissions, and informed them concerning major council tasks. The chairman (president) also convened and presided over the meetings of the executive committee, controlled and ensured the implementation of the resolutions, and gave an account of this to both the committee and the council. He/she also informed the latter of the annual activity of the executive committee. His/her tasks included the coordination of the work of council officials. In the course of this he/she could instruct and request reports from them. He/she supervised specialized organs, called their leaders to account, instructed them, and guided the personnel work (Article 59 of OOR 1984).

The chairman of the executive committee (council president) was elected on the nomination of the local committee of the Patriotic People's Front or any council member. Similarly, his/her recall could be initiated by the committee of the People's Front, the executive committee of the superior council, or the members of the local council. The council itself made the decision with the majority vote of the council members. Such an event only happened in exceptional cases, for instance in 1988 in Szeged, when the entire executive committee was recalled.⁶²

There were two deputy chairmen of the executive committee (deputy council presidents), who were appointed by the council. Their main task was to assist the chairman (council president) in his/her work. Accordingly, they participated in directing the council organs. Their duties associated with the supervision of the specialized organs were distributed according to the sectors of administration. At the same time, they performed their own tasks. One of them dealt with matters of planned economy, finance and labor force management, and city development, the other with matters related to education, community culture, health, and sports activities (Articles 60–62 of OOR 1984).

The secretary of the executive committee also assisted the work of the council, the executive committee, and its chairman (council president). He/she had a con-

siderable amount of administrative work to do in connection with the preparation of the meetings and the promulgation of the resolutions, and also in relation to the legal supervision of the official administration by specialized organs and council offices. He/she maintained contacts with several council and non-council organs (e.g., the public prosecutor's office, the court, and the police). If he/she noticed that any regulation made by the council or by its organs violated the law, he/she was obliged to report this (Articles 63–64 of OOR 1984).

The quality of the council apparatus has been the subject of considerable subsequent criticism, and duly so, as during the first decade significant problems arose in the work of the specialized organs of the council. This was rooted in the phenomenon known as cadre policy. Political (background) reliability was the only factor considered when selecting and replacing senior and middle executives. In consequence, not only were the members of the council bodies often entirely unqualified and unsuited to their tasks, but even posts as head of department were filled by people lacking the relevant skills. It took at least a decade to reconcile the requirements of professional competence and political reliability.⁶³ In consequence, several operational anomalies arose in this period. The original profession and qualification of leading council executives was also typical. In Szeged, for instance, among the leading council executives one found a wood technician, a tailor's assistant, an onion gardener, a factory worker, an iron turner, a tiling assistant and an agricultural laborer.

In time the regime realized the resulting difficulties and employed considerably better educated officials. A significant outcome of this was that as of 1971 only a lawyer and as of 1982 only a specialist lawyer could hold the post of the secretary of the executive committee, even on village councils. It is worth emphasizing, however, that there were prominent intellectual experts in this period, too, whose devoted, self-sacrificing work made the administrative machinery work in spite of the many difficulties.

Specialized Organs of the Executive Committee

The tasks of specialized administration within the scope of authority of the council were performed by the specialized organs of the executive committee and by the council offices. The organizational rules of 1984 defined the following specialized organs in Szeged: department of health, department of construction and transport, department of administration, department of industry, department of commerce, department of food and agriculture, department of labor, department of culture, department of finance, department of personnel and further education, department of planning, supervisory department of physical education and sports, secretariat of economics, secretariat of organization and law.⁶⁴ The internal struc-

ture of each organ was determined by the executive committee. The council had and frequently exercised the right to change the structure (Article 77 of OOR 1984).

Their duties included, in particular, compiling the agendas of the corporate meetings in accordance with the regulations of the council or the executive committee or participating in making them, seeing to the implementation of the resolutions passed by the council or by the executive committee and the control thereof, and carrying out the administrative tasks related to the work of the respective council commission. Generally, council companies and other local institutions were also supervised and directed by these organs. The leader of each specialized organ rendered account of his/her activity to the council or to the executive committee at regular intervals. During their operation, these organs were supposed to adhere to the “socialist rule of law”, arrange matters in an expedient and expert manner, refrain from bureaucracy, safeguard the rights of the citizenry, and promote the fulfillment of their obligations (Articles 79–83 of OOR 1984). The specialized organs of the council and the councils themselves had more wide-ranging duties than their predecessors in the former system of municipalities.⁶⁵ All this was a consequence of the centralization efforts of the state apparatus.

The county city office (*megyei városi hivatal*) worked as a special organ in cities of county rank as of 1979. As a rule, it administered official cases of first instance. The rules prescribed for specialized organs applied to its legal status. Its territorial jurisdiction extended to the entire city, and in certain cases to the neighboring settlements as well (Article 85 of OOR 1984).⁶⁶

A Brief Postscript

The soviet-type council system has become part of legal history by now. It was not necessarily a better or worse form of public administration than the system of local governments currently in effect, only different in principle while similar in function. With all its merits and disadvantages, it was one possible model for the structure and institutional system of public administration. Precise knowledge and analysis of this system may be very informative when looking to the future, as well, not only in Hungary but also in Western Europe and the United States, as this type of the institutional system of public administration is still essentially unknown there.

Notes

- ¹ József Perényi and István Dolmányos (1994) *A Szovjetunió története I. Oroszország története 1917-ig* (The History of the Soviet Union. The History of Russia before 1917) (Budapest), 294–9.
- ² Marc Szeffel (1976) *The Russian Constitution of April 23rd, 1906. Political Institutions of the Duma Monarchy* (Bruxelles), Szergej Juljevics Vitte (1964) *Egy kegyvesztett visszaemlékezései* (Memories of a Man out of Favour) (Budapest), 571–625, István Kovács (Editor) (1980) *Az októberi dekrétumok és az első szovjet alkotmány* (The Decrees of October and the First Soviet Constitution) (Budapest), 18–20, III. В. Юшков (1950) *История государства и права СССР. Часть первая* (Москва), 584–631.
- ³ Miklós Kun (1988) *1917. Egy év krónikája* (1917: Chronicle of One Year) (Budapest), 15–35, Юшков (1950) 644–53.
- ⁴ István Dolmányos (1989) *A Szovjetunió története II. 1917–1966* (The History of the Soviet Union II. 1917–1966) (Budapest), 7–8.
- ⁵ Dolmányos (1989), 11–13.
- ⁶ Kovács (1980), 21–50, Dolmányos (1989), 26–7.
- ⁷ ‘Munkás- és parasztküldöttek valamennyi kormányzósági és járási szovjetjének’ (October 26, 1917) (For all the soviets of the worker and peasant deputies) in Kovács (1980), 87. For concrete example see: ‘Dekrétum a központi városi дума feloszlásáról’ (November 16, 1917) (Decree on the dissolution of the Central City Duma of Petrograd) in Kovács (1980), 137–8, see also 47–8.
- ⁸ ‘Dekrétum a küldöttek visszahívásának jogáról’ (November 21, 1917) (Decree on the right of recall of the deputies) in Kovács (1980), 140–1.
- ⁹ ‘A belügyi népbiztos felhívása a helyi önkormányzatok megszervezéséről’ (December 24, 1917) (Call of the people’s commissar for interior affairs on the organisation of local governments) in Kovács (1980), 168–9.
- ¹⁰ ‘A belügyi népbiztos utasítása a szovjetek jogairól és kötelességeiről’ (December 24, 1917) (Instruction of the people’s commissar for interior affairs on the rights and duties of the soviets) in Kovács (1980), 173–4.
- ¹¹ Kun (1988), 656–77.
- ¹² ‘Dekrétum az alkotmányozó nemzetgyűlés feloszlásáról’ (January 6, 1918) (Decree on the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly) in Kovács (1980), 180–2.
- ¹³ ‘Az Oroszországi Szocialista Föderatív Köztársaság alkotmánya (alaptörvénye)’ (Constitution of the Russian Socialist Federative Republic) in Kovács (1980), 217–46, József Ruzsoly (2005) *Európa alkotmánytörténete* (The Constitution History of Europe) (Budapest), 526–53, Pál Horváth (1996) *Bevezetés az egyetemes jogtörténet forrásaiba* (Introduction to the Legal Sources of General Law History) (Budapest), 304–21, Dolmányos (1989), 87–90.
- ¹⁴ ‘A Szovjet Szocialista Köztársaságok Szövetségének alaptörvénye (alkotmánya). January 31, 1924’ (Constitution of the Federation of Soviet Socialist Republics) in István Kovács (Editor) (1982), *A Szovjetunió szövetségi alkotmányai* (Federative Constitutions of the Soviet Union) (Budapest), 129–47.
- ¹⁵ ‘A Szovjet Szocialista Köztársaságok Szövetségének alkotmánya (alaptörvénye). December 5, 1936’ (Constitution of the Federation of Soviet Socialist Republics) in Kovács (1982), 201–24, Pál Horváth (1987) *A szocialista jogtípus fejlődéstörténete* (The History of the Development of the Soviet-type Law) (Budapest), 69–73, Dolmányos (1989), 228–30.
- ¹⁶ Zoltán Sente (2006) *Európai alkotmány- és parlamentarizmustörténet. 1945–2005* (The History of European Constitutions and Parliamentarism: 1945–2005) (Budapest), 135. Concerning the soviets of the age, see: A. A. Aszkerov (1949) ‘Az államhatalom helyi szovjet

- szervei' (The Local Soviet Organs of the State Authority), *Állam és Igazgatás* [Hereinafter *ÁI*] 1949/5–6, 303–11, 1949/7–8, 442–56, István Kovács (1950) 'A szovjetek a Szovjetunió politikai alapja' (The Soviets are the Political Basis of the Soviet Union), *ÁI* 1950/6–7: 436–50, I. Trajnyin (1950) 'A tanácsok – a szocialista forradalom politikai alapja' (Soviets – The Political Basis of the Socialist Revolution), *ÁI* 1950/1, 8–21, 1950/2, 97–107, 1950/3, 149–54, 1950/4–5, 325–30, I. G. Marejeva (1951) 'A helyi szovjet ellenőrzése az igazgatási szervek felett' (The Supervision of the Administrative Organs by the Local Soviet), *ÁI* 1951/9–10, 547–56, A. V. Luzsin (1955) 'A dolgozók küldötteinek városi szovjetjei és a vb. tevékenységével kapcsolatos alapvető módszerek' (Fundamental Methods Connected with the Soviets of the Cities and the Executive Committees), *ÁI* 1955/11: 675–80, J. A. Tyihomirov (1960) 'A helyi államhatalmi szervek további fejlődésének néhány kérdése a Szovjetunióban' (Some Questions of the Further Development of the Local Organs of State Authority in the Soviet Union), *ÁI* 1960/8, 581–94; 'Törvény a szovjet képviselők és tanácsstagok jogállásáról' (Act on the Legal Status of the Representatives and Deputies of the Soviets), *ÁI* 1973/3: 259–66, 'Az OSzSzSzk törvénye a dolgozók küldötteinek városi, városi kerületi szovjetjeiről' (Act of the RSSFR on the Workers' Soviets of Cities and City Districts), *ÁI* 1973/6: 544–61, 'Az OSzSzSzk törvénye a dolgozók küldötteinek járási szovjetjéről' (Act of the RSSFR on the Rural District Soviet of Workers' Deputies), *ÁI* 1973/6: 562–65.
- ¹⁷ A Szovjet Szocialista Köztársaságok Szövetségének alkotmánya. (1977. október 7.) (Constitution of the Federation of Soviet Socialist Republics) in Kovács (1982, 231–82), Horváth (1987, 202–3, 222–9).
- ¹⁸ Horváth (1987), 224–5, Árpád Árvay (1978) 'A helyi szovjetek tevékenységének pártirányítása' (The Control of the Party on the Activities of the Local Soviets), *ÁI* 1978/8–9, 738–46.
- ¹⁹ General literature of the period: Ferenc Fejtő (1952) *Histoire des démocraties populaires* (Paris); augmented edition: *Histoire des démocraties populaires. 1. L'ère de Staline (1945–1952); 2. Après Staline (1953–1963)* (Paris, 1969; 1979; 1992; 1998; 2006); in Hebrew: Tel-Aviv, 1954; in Italian: Firenze, 1955; in Spanish: Barcelona, 1971; in English: New York-London, 1971; in German: Köln, 1973; in Japanese: Tokyo, 1978; in Hungarian: Budapest, 1991; William E. Butler (1983, 1988) *Soviet Law* (London), William E. Butler (1976) *Russian and Soviet Law. An Annotated Catalogue of Reference Works, Legislation, Court Reports, Serials and Monographs on Russian and Soviet Law (Including International Law)* (Zug), William E. Butler (1998) *Collected Legislation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Constituent Union Republics* (New York); László Heka (2008) *A szláv államok jogrendszerei* (The Legal Systems of Slavic States) (Szeged).
- ²⁰ István Kovács (Editor) (1985) *Az európai népi demokráciák alkotmányai* (Constitutions of the European People's Democracies) (Budapest), 65–6.
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- ²⁴ Kovács (1985), 115–17.
- ²⁵ The text of the three constitutional acts can be found in Kovács (1985), 118–81; see commentary in Horváth (1987), 282–5, 309–14, Toldi (1977), 39–67, Szente (2006), 122–4, Rudolf Trela and Jaroslav Chavonec (1971) *A Csehszlovák Szocialista Köztársaság új államjogi elrendezése* (The New Constitutional System of the Socialist Republic of Czechoslovakia) (Bratislava), László Trócsányi (1955) ‘Új jogszabály a csehszlovák nemzeti bizottságokról’ (A New Law on the Czechoslovakian National Committees), *ÁI* 1955/1–2, 79–87, ‘A nemzeti bizottságok albizottságai Csehszlovákiában’ (The Sub-Committees of the National Committees in Czechoslovakia), *ÁI* 1962/4, 312–15, Gyula Fonyó (1966) ‘A csehszlovák községi tanácsok munkájáról’ (About the Work of the Czechoslovakian Local Councils), *ÁI* 1966/5, 435–50; ‘Törvény a csehszlovák nemzeti bizottságokról’ (Act on the Czechoslovakian National Committees), *ÁI* 1967/10, 942–58.
- ²⁶ Kovács (1985), 343–6, László J. Nagy (2003) *Az európai integráció politikatörténete* (A Political History of the European Integration) (Szeged), 39–43, Norman M. Naimark (1995) *The Russians in Germany. A History of the Soviet Zone of Occupation 1945–1949* (Cambridge).
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- ²⁸ Kovács (1985), 317–20).
- ²⁹ The text of the constitution of 1976 can be found in Kovács (1985), 321–40; see commentary in Horváth (1987), 285–91, 314–20, Szente (2006), 121–2, Toldi (1977), 103–41, Adam Lopatka (1976) ‘A helyi hatalmi és igazgatási szervek reformjának befejezése a Lengyel Népköztársaságban’ (Completing of the Reforms of the Organs of Local Power and Administration in Poland) *Jogtudományi Közlöny* 1976/10, 557–65, *A Lengyel Népköztársaság 1983. évi törvénye a tanácsok és a területi önkormányzat rendszeréről (1983. VII. 20.)* (Act of 1983 of Poland on the System of Councils and Territorial Self-Government) (Budapest, 1984), Janusz Golebiowski (1972) ‘A szocializmus építésének általános törvényszerűségei és sajátos vonásai Lengyelországban’ (General and Special Characteristics of the Development of Socialism in Poland) in János Blaskovits (ed.) *A népi Magyarország negyedszázada* (The Quarter of a Century of the People’s Hungary) (Budapest), 167–72, Norbert Kolomejczyk (1972) ‘A párt vezető szerepének egyes kérdései a szocializmus építésében Lengyelországban’ (Some Questions of the Leadership of the Party in the Development of the Socialism in Poland) in János Blaskovits (ed.) *A népi Magyarország negyedszázada* (1972, 173–8), Norman Davies

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- ³⁰ Kovács (1985), 375–6.
- ³¹ The text of the constitution of 1965 can be found in Kovács (1985), 377–402; see commentary in Horváth (1987), 293–5, 326–32, Toldi (1977), 177–94, Szente (2006), 128–9, Jelavich (2000), 323–9, Gheorghe Țuțui and Ionel Nicolae (1972) ‘Átalakulások Románia társadalmi felépítésében’ (Transformations in the Romanian Society) in: Blaskovits (ed.) *A népi Magyarország negyedszázada 197–209*, Catherine Durandin (1998) *A román nép története* (The History of the Romanian Nation) (Budapest), 321–449, ‘A román néptanácsok életéből’ (From the Life of the Romanian People’s Councils), *ÁI* 1954/6–7, 388–92, 1954/10–11, 600–4, Fné [Mrs F.] (1955) ‘A Nagy Nemzetgyűlés és a népi tanácsok működésének néhány időszerű kérdése a Román Népköztársaságban’ (Some Questions of Functioning of the Great National Assembly and the People’s Councils in Romania), *ÁI* 1955/5, 293–7, Fné [Mrs F.] (1956) ‘Néptanácsi választások a Román Népköztársaságban’ (Council Elections in the People’s Republic of Romania), *ÁI* 1956/4, 249–53, Gyula Fonyó (1966) ‘A román községi néptanácsok működéséről’ (About the Functioning of the Romanian People’s Councils of Communes), *ÁI* 1966/8, 749–61.
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- ³⁴ Ottó Bihari (1980) ‘Képviselési rendszer’ (System of Representation) in: Imre Szabó (Editor) *Állam- és jogtudományi enciklopédia* (Cyclopaedia of State and Law Sciences) (Budapest), Vol. II, 986.
- ³⁵ The reason for this was that “it was a typical endeavour to exclude the working population from bodies of representation through legal regulations or by means of some other manipulations”. Some authors, acting along the lines of the ideological guidelines of the era, especially in the 1950s, went as far as declaring universally that “bourgeois elections are the means of falsifying the true will of the people”. Bihari (1980), 984, István Kovács (1953) *A burzsoá alkotmányosság válsága* (The Crisis of Bourgeois Constitutionality) (Budapest), 180–203.
- ³⁶ Ottó Bihari (1963) *Az államhatalmi-képviselési szervek elmélete* (Theory of the Organs of State Authority and Representation) (Budapest), 137–54, Ottó Bihari (1965) ‘A tanácsok államhatalmi jellege’ (State-power Characteristics of the Councils), *ÁI* 1965/4, 358–70.
- ³⁷ Bihari (1963), 228–31.
- ³⁸ János Beér (1962) *A helyi tanácsok kialakulása és fejlődése Magyarországon (1945–1960)* (The Evolution and the Development of Local Councils in Hungary (1945–1960)) (Budapest) 5–9, János Beér, István Kovács and Lajos Szamel (1964) *Magyar államjog* (Hungarian State

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- ³⁹ Sándor Berényi, János Martonyi and Lajos Szamel (1971) *Magyar államigazgatási jog. Általános rész* (Hungarian Administrative Law. General Studies) (Budapest), 138–53.
- ⁴⁰ There are special studies on the interpretation of socialist ideology and the analysis of the soviet-type public administration from the inside in the legal journal published in Moscow in 1939, the first time under the title Советское Государство и Право. Sources in English include the books of William E. Butler (1992) *Basic Legal Documents of the Soviet Legal System* (New York, 3rd ed.), *Russian Law. Historical and Political Perspectives* (Leyden, 1977), and William E. Butler, Peter B. Maggs and John N. Hazard (1977) *The Soviet Legal System: Fundamental Principles and Historical Commentary* (New York).
- ⁴¹ The main constitutional reforms of the countries mentioned were adopted in 1989 and 1990. In most of them the introduction of democratic legal institutions took place peacefully, with the exception of the revolution in Romania (Christmas of 1989) and the civil war in the former Yugoslavia (1991–95, 1996–99). The German Democratic Republic ceased to exist with the reunion of the German states in 1990. Czechoslovakia split into two sovereign states on the first day of 1993.
- ⁴² Lajos Izsák (2002) *A Political History of Hungary 1944–1990* (Budapest), István Kukorelli (2000) ‘A Historical Outline of Hungarian Constitution and State: 1949–1989’ in Gábor Máthé (ed.) *The Hungarian State 1000–2000. Thousand Years in Europe* (Budapest), 440–53.
- ⁴³ Act I of 1950, Act X of 1954 and Act I of 1971 on the Local Councils.
- ⁴⁴ The Council Act of 1971 emphasized the self-governing nature of local councils, which was also indicated by terminating the legal subordination and superordination between council bodies. However, this applied neither to the executive committees nor to the party organs, which meant that no self-government in the true sense of the word could be realized. County council organs could instruct the city and village council organs in individual cases.
- ⁴⁵ György Szilágyi (2003) *Ahogy a Torony alatt láttam és megéltem... Szemelvények Szeged XX. századi közigazgatás-történetéből* (As I Experienced under the ‘Tower’: Extracts from the History of the Public Administration of Szeged in the 20th Century) (Szeged), 118–72, Tamás Antal (2009) *A tanácsrendszer és jogintézményei Szegeden (1950–1990)* (The System of Councils and Its Legal Institutions in Szeged (1950–1990)) (Szeged), 153–79.
- ⁴⁶ In the period under study, the following qualified as rules of law in Hungary: acts, law-decrees, decrees and resolutions of the Council of Ministers/government and council decrees. Of these, law-decrees may need some explanation. As between 1949 and 1988 Parliament held sessions only for a few days of the year, it could not pass any legislation of merit. The Presidential Council of the People’s Republic was authorized by the constitution to substitute law-decrees for statutory norms. In the hierarchy of legal sources these were on the same level as acts until 1987, thus they could even amend them. Although the Presidential Council had to present these legal sources to Parliament subsequently and in principle Parliament had the right to raise objections, it never did so. See Article 6 of Act XI of 1987 on Legislation.
- ⁴⁷ Lay assessors embodied lay and collective judgement in Hungarian courts. Generally, judicial councils consisted of one professional judge and two lay assessors. Judges had the decisive

role in the process of making decisions. The system of assessors is not of Hungarian origin, it developed from the German *Schöffengericht*. F. Battenberg (1990) ‘Schöffren, Schöffengericht’ in: Adalbert Erler and Ekkehard Kaufman (Hrsg.) *Handwörterbuch zur Deutschen Rechtsgeschichte*. IV. (Berlin), 1463–9, Markus Dirk Dubber (1995) ‘The German Jury and the Metaphysical Volk: From Romantic Idealism to Nazi Ideology’, *The American Journal of Comparative Law* Vol. 43, No. 2, 230–1.

⁴⁸ Decree 1/1984 of the Council of Szeged, City of County Rank, on the Organizational and Operational Rules of the Council. In: *Szeged Megyei Városi Tanács Közlönye* 31 March 1984. No. 3, 3–40.

⁴⁹ The *Presidential Council of the People’s Republic* was a collegial head of state in Hungary between 1949 and 1989. This meant that the rights of head of state were exercised not by one person (e.g., President of the Republic) but by this body, which consisted of 21 members: a chairman, two deputy chairmen, a secretary and 17 members who were elected by Parliament from among its own delegates. Consequently, the members were necessarily members of Parliament as well, with the restriction that a member of the Council of Ministers could not be a member of the Presidential Council at the same time. Essentially, it also functioned as a substitute for Parliament. As such, it was entitled to issue law-decrees on its own, with the requirement of subsequent submission to Parliament, and it could also pass other decrees and resolutions. Antal Ádám (1959) *A Népköztársaság Elnöki Tanácsa* (The Presidential Council of the People’s Republic) (Budapest), Antal (2009), 130–1.

⁵⁰ Law-decree 31 of 1950, Act IX of 1954, Law-decree 22 of 1954, Act III of 1958, Act V of 1962, Act III of 1966, Act I of 1970, Act VI of 1976, Act III of 1983 and Act XI of 1989. For a detailed description of these elections see Szilágyi (2003), 58–75, Kukorelli (2000), 449–50.

⁵¹ Act LXV of 1990 on Local Governments and Act LXIV of 1990 on Election of the Members of Local Governments and the Local Mayors.

⁵² The *Patriotic People’s Front* (and its predecessor, the Hungarian Independent People’s Front) functioned as a sort of socialized counterpart of the state party (the Hungarian Workers’ Party, then as of 1957 the Hungarian Socialist Labour Party) as of 1954 to make it appear as if elections were not entirely one-party in Hungary. Officially, it constituted the “mass foundation” of the councils. In reality, although it served as an umbrella organization for several social organizations, it was a political organization controlled by the party, which, among exercising other powers, nominated the members of Parliament and the council members. No opposing candidate could be nominated until 1971, and votes against the candidate of the People’s Front were usually regarded as invalid. For more details see: *A magyar Népfront története* (The History of the Hungarian People’s Front), Vol. 2. (Budapest, 1977), 178–488.

⁵³ Street committees were officially the population’s unprompted social organs of representation. Their activity, as was the case with other, similarly mass-social institutions of the era, was of a nature of mass movement and organization as they performed tasks of mobilization, information and opinion survey in the framework of the People’s Front. At the same time they represented the interests of the citizenry as well as organized social labor and saw to the adherence to the rules of the blocks of flats. In addition, they also made the citizens’ direct surveillance possible for the secret services. Antal (2009), 163–9, Béla Révész (2007) ‘A titkosszolgálatok a politikában és a politológiában’ (Secret Services in Politics and Politology), *Acta Jur. et Pol. Szeged*. Vol. 70, No. 13. (Szeged).

⁵⁴ The New Economic Mechanism between 1968 and 1974 aimed to realize the major transformation of the Hungarian economy under directive plan instructions and to establish “simulated market conditions”. It had significant results. Economic performance increased drastically, as did the standard of living and the pace of urbanization. The economy of Hungary became the most prominent among the socialist countries in Central Europe. This period was nicknamed

- “goulash communism”. T. Iván Berend and György Ránki (1972) *A magyar gazdaság száz éve* (100 Years of the Hungarian Economy) (Budapest), 227–304, T. Iván Berend (1988) *A magyar gazdasági reform útján* (The Way of the Hungarian Economic Reform) (Budapest), 177–366, T. Iván Berend (1979) *A szocialista gazdaság fejlődése Magyarországon* (Development of Socialist Economy in Hungary) 1945–1975. (Budapest), 142–56.
- ⁵⁵ See arguably his most important work: Karl Marx (1906) *Capital. A Critique of Political Economy. The Process of Capitalist Production*. Translation from the German by Samuel Moore, Edward Aveling; edited by Frederick Engels; rev., amplified according to the 4th German edition by Ernest Untermann (New York).
- ⁵⁶ For the statistics thereof see: Szilágyi (2003), 114.
- ⁵⁷ *Consultation centers* functioned as a form of manifestation of “socialist democracy” in the period of the third council act. These were established in the wake of the recognition of the social-political importance of work in one’s dwelling area. As de-concentration centers in given areas of the city, they served as places for consultation for the district party leadership and People’s Front committee, the city council members, resident and street committees and inhabitants interested in public matters. In reality their work had little importance.
- ⁵⁸ The hierarchy of the council system was based on the principle of “democratic centralism”. This meant that each council and council organ could be instructed by the superior organs of state authority or state administration, which in turn were controlled by the analogous party organs. Therefore, however, as much as the third council act attempted to ease this obvious system of dependence, real local governments did not exist at that time, either. The possibility to instruct executive committees existed throughout the entire period, which is why it was possible, if deemed necessary, to control local decisions by the metropolitan government and party organs. This was also the reason for the administrative patronage: the authority of the superior executive committees to approve decrees and resolutions. László Kiss (2000) ‘A tanácsi szervek politikai (párt) irányításának néhány kérdése Magyarországon’ (Some Issues of the Political (Party) Control of Council Organs in Hungary) in: József Petrétei (ed.) *Emlékkönyv Ádám Antal egyetemi tanár születésének 70. évfordulójára* (Budapest–Pécs), 134–6, Berényi–Martonyi–Szamel (1971), 428–32.
- ⁵⁹ János Sári (1979) *A tanács végrehajtó bizottsága és tisztségviselői* (The Executive Committee of the Council and Its Functionaries) (Budapest), Pál FÜRCHT (1974) ‘A tanács és a végrehajtó bizottság kapcsolata’ (The Connection of the Council and the Executive Committee), *AI* 1974/12, 1125–34.
- ⁶⁰ The technical supervision of the council organization was carried out in the government by the Department of Government Secretariat for Local Councils, and as of 1971 by the Council Office of the Council of Ministers as a special organizational unit in the government. János Beér (1962) *A helyi tanácsok kialakulása és fejlődése Magyarországon (1945–1960)* (The Evolution and the Development of Local Councils in Hungary (1945–1960)) (Budapest), 417, Beér–Kovács–Szamel (1964), 325.
- ⁶¹ See Article 51 of Act I of 1971.
- ⁶² László Blazovich (ed.) *Csongrád megye tanácsainak tisztségviselői* (Functionaries of the Councils of Csongrád County) (Szeged, 2007), 34. For their and many other people’s biographies see: György Antalffy (Chief Editor) *A munkásmozgalom Csongrád megyei harcosainak életrajzi lexikona* (Biographical Encyclopaedia of the Fighters of the Working-Class Movement in Csongrád County) (Szeged, 1987).
- ⁶³ Ferenc Dallos (1950) ‘Helyes munkaszervezéssel javítsuk végrehajtó bizottságaink munkáját’ (Let us Improve the Work of Executive Committees with the Proper Organization of Work), *AI* 1950/8–9, 507–15, Gyula Bodovszky (1952) ‘Emeljük a végrehajtó bizottságok munkájának színvonalát’ (Let us Raise the Level of Work of Executive Committees), *AI* 1952/7,

350–6, Imre Zagyva (1960) ‘A tanácsi végrehajtó bizottsági vezetők képzésének néhány problémája’ (Some Problems of the Training of the Leaders of the Executive Committees of Councils), *AI* 1960/11, 853–7, Ottó Farkas (1963) ‘A végrehajtó bizottságok vezetői képzésének néhány kérdése’ (Some Issues of the Training of the Leaders of Executive Committees), *AI* 1963/12, 908–18, József Károlyi (1967) ‘A végrehajtó bizottságok vezetőinek szakmai és politikai továbbképzése’ (Professional and Political Further Education of the Leaders of the Executive Committees), *AI* 1967/7, 628–35, Berényi–Martonyi–Szamel (1971), 549–66.

⁶⁴ Blazovich (2007), 35–9.

⁶⁵ Municipal public administration existed between 1872 and 1950 in Hungary. Essentially, it was of a local governmental nature, yet it cannot be identified with local governments in the classical sense on account of the composition of the municipal committee on the one hand, and the considerably milder control exercised by the government on the other. József Ruszoly (2004) *Szeged szabad királyi város törvényhatósága (1872–1944)* (The Municipality of the Free Royal City of Szeged) (Szeged).

⁶⁶ Antal (2009), 327–40.